



P3 CITY

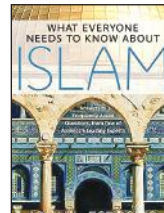
## CHEQUE BOUNCE CASE: SRINAGAR COURT SENTENCES MAN TO ONE YEAR JAIL

A Srinagar Court Friday sentenced a man to one year imprisonment in a cheque bounce case and imposed Rs 32 lakh fine on him. After hearing the complainant through counsel

P7

## READING JOHN L. ESPOSITO'S 'WHAT EVERYONE NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT ISLAM'

Over two decades have passed since the events of September 11, 2001 (or 9/11)—an 'unpleasant and unfortunate event' which is characterized as a 'turning point' in the course of international affairs and has resulted, for the Muslims and their faith, in



P5 STATE

## ALL J&K UNIVERSITIES TO FULLY ADOPT SAMARTH E-GOV PORTAL THIS YEAR

All 11 universities of Jammu and Kashmir will be on boarded on the Samarth E-gov portal, Principal Secretary Higher Education Department, Rohit Kansal



Comparison is the thief of joy

- Theodore Roosevelt

## NEWS DIGEST

### Hybrid Militant, 3 OGWs Arrested: Police

SRINAGAR: Police on Friday claimed to have arrested a hybrid militant and three over-ground workers (OGWs) in two separate operations in Budgam and Baramulla district in the Kashmir Valley. Police, army's 62RR and the personnel of CRPF 43 battalion arrested two militant associates of **More on P6**

### J&K Closes Nine New Corona Cases

SRINAGAR: Nine more people in Jammu and Kashmir tested positive for Coronavirus on Friday while no fresh fatality due to virus was reported from the Union Territory during the last 24 hours. According to officials, Kashmir Valley reported six new cases of Covid-19 **More on P6**

### 3 From Punjab Killed In Jammu Accident

JAMMU: Three Punjab residents were killed when a "speeding" car they were travelling in fell down into a gorge in Nagrota area of Jammu on Friday. Official sources said a Celerio car (PB6SAF-4794) driven by Gurdeep Singh son of Gurtej Singh of Moga Punjab with two others persons **More on P6**

### Man Allegedly Ends Life In Sopore

SRINAGAR: A 40-year-old man allegedly committed suicide by hanging himself in Dangerpora locality of Sopore, reports said Friday. Reports said that the man allegedly ended his life following a family dispute. He was taken to the sub-district hospital, Sopore where doctors declared him dead on arrival. Meanwhile, Police have taken cognizance **More on P6**

# Encounter Near Pahalgam, 3 Militants Killed

- Hizb's Longest Surviving Commander Ashraf Molvi Among Those Slain
- Successful Operation On Yatra Route Success For Us: IGP Kashmir



File Photo

## Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Three militants, including a top commander of Hizbul Mujahideen, were killed in an encounter between militants and security forces near the popular tourist resort of Pahalgam in South Kashmir on Friday.

The encounter took place in the area which is witnessing heavy security presence due to the upcoming annual Amarnath Yatra.

Inspector General of Police

(IGP) Kashmir Vijay Kumar said that Ashraf Molvi (one of oldest surviving militants of HM outfit, was killed along with two other militants. He said that successful operation on the Yatra route is a major success for government forces.

Official sources identified other two militants as Roshan Zameer of Aswara Kanelwan in Bijbehara and Muhammad Rafiq Drangay of Hayar Bijbehara who too were active since last several **More on P6**

## 200 Militants Ready To Sneak Into J&K: Army

Lt Gen Dwivedi said that infiltration is drastically down, yet currently there are 200 militants staged across the border ready to be launched into Jammu and Kashmir. The ceasefire along the Indo-Pak border has been working 'well' since February 2021 agreement, he asserted. He said that the number of trained militants in Jammu and Kashmir is dwindling with each passing as 21 foreign militants have been eliminated this year so far in absence of local shelter and support.

"The number of terrorists staged across the Indo-Pak border are approximately 200. They are waiting across (LoC) to be launched to this side," Dwivedi **More on P6**

**INCriminating MATERIALS, HUGE CACHE** of arms and ammunition were also recovered from the site of encounter. In this connection, Police has registered a case under relevant sections of law and investigation has been initiated."

## CBI Raids RTO Office In Srinagar

### Agencies

SRINAGAR: The sleuths of Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Friday carried out a raid at the Regional Transport Office (RTO) here in this capital city.

Official sources said that the raid was conducted following complaints of wrongdoings by the officials of RTO Kashmir in registration of fresh and re-registration of different types of vehicles from outside the Union Territory.

They said incriminating documents and other related documents **More on P6**

## Unemployment Rate In J&K Dips To 15.6% In April

### Zaid Bin Shabir

SRINAGAR: The unemployment rate in April for Jammu and Kashmir has declined to 15.6 percent, as per the Indian think tank Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy's (CMIE) monthly frequency data.

According to the CMIE, the unemployment rate in the erstwhile state of J&K for the month of April, 2022 has declined to 15.6 percent in comparison to the drastic rate recorded at 25 percent in March 2022.

As per the data available, the unemployment rate (UR) in march had hit a new record with 25 percent



unemployment in the first quarter of 2022. The UR had astronomically risen since last year and has touched its worst value in 2022, when compared

to the past five years. Pertinently, last month, the unemployment rate seems to be going towards poverty in J&K despite **More on P6**

## Labroo Assumes Charge As Director DIPR

### Observer News Service

Srinagar: Akshay Labroo, an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of Tripura cadre, on Friday assumed the charge of Director Information and Public Relations here.

After assuming the charge, Labroo, an IAS officer of 2018 batch, took a detailed round of the office complex and also interacted with the officials



of different sections of the department, an official spokesperson said.

While interacting with the officials, he said, the new Director asked them to work with utmost sincerity and dedication.

On Wednesday, Labroo was transferred and posted as Additional Secretary in the Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat and was also assigned charge of the post of Director, Information, J&K. He earlier **More on P6**

## CPI (M) Rejects J&K Delimitation Recommendations

### Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The CPI(M) on Friday hit out at the Jammu and Kashmir Delimitation Commission, saying the recommendations made by it are "unjustified" and "illogical".

The Delimitation Commission on Jammu and Kashmir, which was formed in March 2020, on Thursday notified its final report giving six additional assembly seats to Jammu region and one to Kashmir Valley and bringing areas of Rajouri and Poonch under the Anantnag parliamentary seat.

The Jammu division will now have 43 assembly

seats and Kashmir 47 in the 90-member house.

"The recommendations of the J&K Delimitation Commission are blatantly unjustified and illogical. It has recommended to increase six seats in Jammu region while only one in Kashmir valley," it said.

"The Commission considered the 2011 census for delimiting territorial constituencies. Population is the cardinal parameter in such a process. According to the census, the population of Kashmir is 68.9 lakh while that of Jammu is 53.8 lakh," it said.

The commission has recommended **More on P6**

## Police Raids Houses Of Hurriyat Activists In Jammu

### Agencies

Jammu: The Jammu and Kashmir Police on Friday conducted raids at the premises of two people accused of sedition and rioting in Jammu and recovered incriminating documents and material, officials said.

The raids were conducted at the premises of Rayees Ahmed Malik and Mohd Sharif Sartaj in Dalpatia mohalla and Khatikan Talab here.

They are accused in a case of sedition and rioting registered in 2007 in Jammu after objectionable and sensitive slogans were allegedly raised during a

visit of separatist leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) of Jammu Chandan Kohli said the raids were conducted by police teams in the presence of executive magistrates.

Literature of the banned Jamaat-e-Islami, forms for medical admission in Pakistan, a report regarding Pakistani national Abdul Rehman who visited the area and was later deported, literature related to the Jammu and Kashmir freedom movement, a phone diary containing Pakistani numbers, a cash register, and an identity card pertaining **More on P6**



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For Appointment : 0194 2500919, 70069-84366, 88720-27366 SATGURU PARTAP SINGH HOSPITALS Sherpur Chowk, G.T. Road, Ludhiana-141003

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# Study Shows Plastic Used For Mulching Leading To Soil Contamination

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi- Plastic sheets being used for mulching -- a practice of covering the soil to retain temperature and moisture to facilitate higher crop production are leading to microplastic pollution in agricultural soil, according to a new study.

Microplastics are tiny plastic materials less than 5 mm in diameter and are regarded as a major source of plastic pollution in the environment.

NGO Toxics Link tested soil samples in agricultural belts in Karnataka and Maharashtra under the study titled Plastic Mulching: Microplastics in Agricultural Soils and found tiny plastic particles at various depths, indicating soil contamination due to the rampant use of plastic mulch sheets.

A total of 30 samples were collected from mulched and un-mulched fields and dumpsites -- areas being used by farmers to dump used plastic sheets, other plastic waste and waste material -- from varying depth in the selected regions.

The soil samples were tested at the Manipal Academy of Higher Education and microplastics were detected in all of them.

The abundance of microplastics in the mulched soil samples was much higher than the un-mulched soil samples. This clearly points towards a possible contamination of soil due to the usage of plastic mulch sheets, the report read.

The highest microplastic contamination -- 87.57 pieces per kg of soil -- was found at a dumpsite in Maharashtra. This was almost double the abundance in mulched soil, indicating that plastic mulch sheets dumped around the agriculture area cause pollution, the researchers said.

In case of all mulched soil samples, the highest concentration of microplastics 40.46 pieces per kg of soil was found at a depth of 15 cm in Badgaon in Maharashtra, whereas the lowest concentration of 8.45 pieces per kg of soil was found at a depth of 30 cm in Khanapur in Karnataka.

Among all un-mulched sites, Aurnol in Maharashtra recorded the highest concentration (20.54 pieces per kg) of microplastics at a depth of 15 cm, while Hukkeri in Karnataka had the lowest concentration (2.83 pieces per kg) at the same depth.



**The highest microplastic contamination -- 87.57 pieces per kg of soil -- was found at a dumpsite in Maharashtra. This was almost double the abundance in mulched soil, indicating that plastic mulch sheets dumped around the agriculture area cause pollution, the researchers said.**

Use of plastic in modern agriculture is jeopardising the overall sustainability of our ecosystem. The plastic used for mulching is relatively thin, and the removal and recycling of these plastic films from the agricultural field is labour intensive, costly, and challenging. Consequently, it remains in the field or is dumped nearby and ultimately disintegrates into micro-particles (microplastics), accumulating in the soil. The microplastic contamination in the soil can also result in

their uptake by plants or crops, affecting the environment and human health, said Priti Banthia Mahesh, Chief Programme Coordinator, Toxics Link. Mulching has been in use globally for centuries, using dry leaves, straw, trash, etc. for water conservation. The use of plastic film in mulching is a recent development worldwide, and in India, it has been around only for a few decades. The idea of using polyethylene film as mulch in plant production saw its beginnings in the mid-1950s and plastic

mulch was first noted for its ability to increase soil temperature. A recent study detected microplastics in human blood for the first time, with scientists uncovering the tiny particles in nearly 80 per cent of the people tested. A study conducted by Toxics Link in 2020 detected microplastics in the Ganga at Haridwar, Varanasi and Kanpur. Another study conducted by Toxics Link had found microplastics in tap water samples collected from different parts in Goa.

از دفتر نائب تحصیلدار ونگرام با اجلاس ایگزیکٹیف مجسٹریٹ درجہ اول  
مضمون: کاغذات درخواست از جانب: تنویر احمد ولد محمد رمضان ڈار  
ساکنہ موضع اچھیل دوا بگہ تحصیل ونگرام ضلع بارہمولہ برادر عطاء  
RBA سرٹیفکیٹ تحت ایس آر او ۴۹۲ بجٹ دفتر رکشدہ  
استہار برادر آگاہی ہر خاص و عام  
معاملہ مندرجہ عنوانہ صدر میں درخواست سائل/سائلہ دفتر میں زیر کاروائی  
ہے۔ اس سلسلے میں پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ بشمول ریکارڈ طلب کیا گیا  
ہے۔ جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سائل/سائلہ موضع اچھیل دوا بگہ میں رہائش  
پزیر ہے اور کنڈیڈیل افراد پر مشتمل ہے  
تنویر احمد ڈار 45 سال ٹیکسدار  
وحیدہ بیگم زوجہ تنویر احمد 43 سال گھریلو کام  
رکشدہ بانو دختر 17 سال زیر تعلیم  
اسکے علاوہ کوئی فرد یا افراد کنڈیڈیل میں نہیں ہے۔ اور کنڈیڈی مہوار آمدنی ماہوار  
مبلغ 8000 ہے۔ اور سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص یا  
اشخاص کو کوئی عذریا اعتراض ہو تو وہ دفتر ہذا میں اندر سات ایم ایسے اعتراض یا  
عذرات اصالتاً/وکالتاً یا مختارن پیش کرے بعد گزرنے معیاد کوئی بھی عذریا  
اعتراض قابل سماعت نہیں ہوگا۔ تحریر اصدرو۔۔۔

نائب تحصیلدار pd

## FATEH KHAWANI

Mst.Beeba Begum Wife Of Abdul Khaliq  
Dar Resident Of Rampora Chattabal  
Srinagar Passed away on Thursday  
5 Of May 2022 She congregational  
Fateh Khawani Held on 8th Of May  
2022 at her ancestral graveyard Astan  
Syed Sahb Chattabal Srinagar (Fateh  
Time:10:00Am  
IS RK



## PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for the information of general public that my son namley  
Faaiz Jameel's Date of Birth has erroneously been entered in  
school records of Hill Grange Secondary School Handwara as  
16-09-2009 instead of actual date of birth 16-03-2009. Now  
I intend to make the necessary correction in the school records  
with regard to date of Birth. of my son. Anybody having any  
objection in this regard, can submit his objections in the office  
of Principal Hill Grange Secondary School Handwara within  
a period of seven days from the date of publication of this  
notice. No objection shall be entertained after the stipulated  
date.  
Aejaz Ahamd Lone fko  
Father of Faaiz Jameel

## OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM KASHMIR

### NOTICE

Where a application for transfer  
of ownership has been recieved  
from one. Shri : Altaf Hussain  
Mir S/o: Mohammad Ibrahim  
Mir R/o: Chayira Gune Magam  
Budgam (Transferor) of LMV  
Grand i 10. Vehicle bearing registration number JK04F - 5133.  
Chasis number 49449 Engine no. 54626 Model 2020. in favour  
of Shri.. Shabir Ahmad Dar S/o. Mohammad Yousuf Dar R/o  
Biminipora Shoplan (Tranferee) as well as HPA cancellation  
with M/S J & K Bank B/U Amira Kadal Srinagar.  
Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general  
public that objections if any to the proposed transfer of owner-  
ship 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 newspa-  
per .

No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.771  
Dated 05/05/2022  
Assistant Regional Transport officer  
Budgam Kashmir  
mcb

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my Passport from Delhi to Srinagar . Now I have ap-  
plied for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objec-  
tion in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office  
of the Passport Kendra Srinagar within a period of seven days  
from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objec-  
tion shall be entertained.  
Hilal Ahamd Teli S/O Abdul Ahad Teli  
R/O Bamurada Budgam bmg  
Cell:9541069809

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### 10X MOBILE STORE

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Contact:-9149965005/ 9682370979



## OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER LAKE DIVISION Ist J&K Lake Conservation & Management Authority, Miskeen Bagh

### Public Notice

This office has floated Expression of Interest for Hiring of manual Male labour on  
DBTL mode, for dewatering /Skimming/Lily Extraction in Dal Lake, Nigeen, Brari Nambal  
and Tchuntikul for the year 2022-2023. In print media on In response to the same AEE In  
lake Sub Division has received total number of 1114 forms from male labour participants.  
However, after scrutinizing **110 persons were found ineligible as their age limit  
was not as per the EOI.**

After analyzing the ground situation a trail was conducted for some time and which  
is still going on to distribute all the labour at various location in Dal Lake, Nigeen, Brari  
Nambal and Tchuntikul, so as to establish the distribution of labours at various location as  
per the availability of labours.

The total number of labours which are reporting as on date for dewatering /  
Skimming/Lily Extraction in Dal Lake, Nigeen, for the year 2022-2023 are approximately 649  
per day, which comprises both coming on daily basis and on alternate basis.

Through the medium of this notice one more opportunity is given to the applicants  
who have submitted their forms but have not reported to the work on DBTL Mode, for  
reasons better known to them within weeks' time from the publication of this notice in the  
newspaper and should approach either the office Executive Engineer Lake Division 1<sup>st</sup> or  
Office of the Assistant Executive Engineer In-lake sub-Division for further assigning the  
location of work.

The details of submitted forms are available in the office of the Assistant Executive  
Engineer In Lake Sub-Division/Notice Board Dalgate, Executive Engineer Lake Division  
No.1<sup>st</sup> Miskeen Bagh,  
The details of rejected forms are also available in the Office of the Assistant Executive  
Engineer In Lake Sub-Division.  
No:LDI/ 671-74  
Dated: 05.05.2022

DIPK-NB-672/22

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer  
Lake Division 1<sup>st</sup> LCMA

## Government of Jammu and Kashmir Office of the Principal Regional Extension Training Centre, Kashmir (Budgam)

Principal-etcbudgam@jk.gov.in

RETC/Kmr/Bud/2022-2023-215

Dated: - 5-5-2022

**Subject: Extension of tender notice**

The tender notice published vide No:- DIPK-1298-22 dated:- 28-04-2022 for supply of lunch items  
during training programmes for current financial year 2022-2023 is hereby extended up to 8th of  
May 2022 (A.N) due to poor response observed in view of Idd-ul-Fiter holiday.

Sd/-  
Principal  
Regional Extension Training Centre,  
Kashmir (Budgam)  
DIPK-1575/22

## Office Of M/S Sajad Ahmad Sofi Advocates & Solicitors J&K High Court At Srinagar

Office address: Level II Aksha Mall Exhibition Road Srinagar  
Chamber At: - Top Floor Petition Writer Block District Court Com-  
plex Mominabad, Batamalo Srinagar  
Mobile. 9796112580 7006824907

### NOTICE TO GENERAL PUBLIC

Pursuant to the Instructions relived from 1. Javid Ahmad Bhat  
1 Ghulam Qadir Bhat both sons of Late Abdul Gani Bhat 3. Sa-  
meena Ayaz Bhat Wd/o Mohammad Ayaz Bhat 4. Jasarat al  
Bhat S/o Late Mohammad Ayaz Bhat 5. Shamim Gul Wd/o Gul  
Mohammad Bhat 6. Mubarak Gul S/o late Gul Mohammad Bhat  
all residents of Natipora Srinagar there in after referred to as my  
Client in this notice to general public) Serve notice of following  
facts to general public

Whereas, my clients want to intimate General Public through  
the medium of this notice that there is litigation pending before  
civil court at Srinagar regarding Hotel Natraj and land beneath  
and appurtenant there to land situated at Pahalgam and also  
residential house along with land situated at Natipora Srinagar.  
My clients through the medium of this notice intimating general  
public that don't go for any transaction, deal or whatever with  
any one with regard to selling or purchasing of above mentioned  
properties. In case any person enters into any transactions lor  
sale or purchase of above said properties shall be dealt with in  
accordance with law Moreso. he shaA also be responsible For any  
loss suffered thereof upon my clients,  
fko  
ADVOCATE SAJAD AHMAD

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for fertilizer license .If anybody having any objec-  
tion in this regard He/She May contact office of the Chief Agri-  
culture officer Anantnag within the period of 7 days .After that  
no objection will be entertained.  
NAME: Sayeed Jahanaara  
D/O:- Syed Gh Nakishbandi  
R/o: Ahoo Paison rna

## PUBLIC NOTICE

This is inform general public that I have applied for pesticides  
license. In this regard any person having any objection He/She  
may contact office of the PPO Lal Mandi Srinagar within seven  
days from the date of publication of this notice. No objection  
shall be entertained after that.  
Name: Sayeed Jahanaara  
D/O: Syed Gh Nakishbandi  
R/O: Ahoo Paison rna

## Lone Family Bereaved

with profound grief and sorrow, we inform the demise of our  
Beloved mother, Zeba begum W/o Late Haji Ghulam Qadir Lone  
who died on Friday 4th Shawal 1443 Hijri 06-05-022  
(inna Lillahi Wa Innaa Lillayhi Raajoon)

The Congregations Fateh Khawani shall be held at our ancestral  
graveyard at Village Shrar-I-Shali (Tehsil Pampore) on Monday  
7th Shawal Hijri 1443. (09-05-2022) After Fajar Prayers. Con-  
gregational Prayers Thereafter, Shall Also Be Held At Our Resi-  
dence Shrar-I-Shali.

### BEREAVED

Mushtaq Ahmed Lone, Mohd Iqbal Lone, Mohd Hanief Lone,  
Nisar Ahmed Lone (Sons ) And Waaeda Banu (Daughter)  
9419005299, 9419021884, 9419079578 INF





## KU Awaits Appointment Of VC

### Agencies

Srinagar: Kashmir University is presently awaiting the appointment of new Vice-Chancellor to take the control of the institution.

Senior faculty members in the university have appealed to the LG to make the final selection without any delay.

Notably, the Search Committee constituted by Raj Bhawan in December last year to find the new VC for the Kashmir University has already submitted a panel of three names to the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on April 23 for choosing the final candidate.

Sources revealed Prof. Mujeibur Rahman Khan, Dr. Seemi Farhat Basir and Prof. Farooq Masoodi are the three candidates in fray for the prime position.

The panel is submitted as per the provisions of the Jammu and Kashmir Universities Act 1969, which makes the LG as the appointing authority for the VC in his capacity of being the Chancellor of all State Universities in the UT.

A group of faculty members from the Kashmir University said that the Honorable Chancellor should make the final selection expeditiously so that the prevailing academic uncertainty and administrative indiscipline in the university are not allowed to worsen any further.

"We are grateful to the Search Committee as well as the LG for expediting the Search Committee process. We request the Honorable LG to make the final selection without any delay," the faculty members who wished to remain anonymous said.

They said that some vested interests and unscrupulous elements in the present university administration are allegedly spreading false information regarding the panel submitted by the Search Committee to create confusion among the university teachers and employees.

The three year term of caretaker VC Prof Talat Ahmad ended in August last year following which the Chancellor constituted the Search Committee headed by Dr Pankaj Mittal, Secretary-General, Association of Indian Universities to find the new VC. Prof Muhammad Miyan, former VC MANU Hyderabad and Dr Najma Akthar, VC Jamia Millia Islamia were its two members. Moreover, the three-year term of KU Registrar Dr Nisar Ahmad also ended in January this year.

Following allegations of malfunctioning and maladministration under the present university dispensation, the faculty members have urged the LG that the new Vice-Chancellor must ensure the lost academic glory of the Kashmir University is restored in the eyes of the public. (KNT)

### Cheque Bounce Case

## Srinagar Court Sentences Man To One Year Jail

### Agencies

Srinagar: A Srinagar Court Friday sentenced a man to one year imprisonment in a cheque bounce case and imposed Rs 32 lakh fine on him.

After hearing the complainant through counsel advocate Aamir Masoodi and defense counsel, court of Judge Small Causes Srinagar presided over by Fayaz Ahmad Qureshi observed that the accused issued cheques probably considering he is executing certain pieces of papers to cause delay.

Court said that the accused not only defeated the object of Negotiable Instrument (NI) Act but he also cheated the complainant by issuing cheques giving her assurance that these

cheques would be encashed in due course.

"But unfortunately, for the complainant two cheques issued by the accused turned out to be only pieces of papers which could not get the complainant her own money assured by the accused to be paid by virtue of the cheques."

It also said that this has not only shaken the trust of the complainant in dealings through negotiable instruments but has also stalled money from free circulation and it has deprived the complainant of her own money.

Court added that the accused shall pay a compensation amount of Rs 32, 24, 000 less by amount of Rs 4 Lakhs which he has already paid, within a period of one month.

## The Jammu And Kashmir State Board Of School Education

### BRANCH OFFICE MAGAM

The candidates whose photograph is published in this notice is claiming to have lost the original marks certificate of 11th & 12th under Below mentioned particulars  
Name : Sheemu Manzoor  
D/o : Manzoor Ahmad Khan  
R/o Matwah Kawarhama



#### Details of Marks Certificate lost

Higher Secondary School Examination (class 11th )  
Roll No 22405226 Session /Year 2020  
Higher Secondary School Examination (class 12th )  
Roll No 32405281 Session /Year Annual . 2021

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

Sd/ Assistant Secretary  
Sub Office Magam

bmg

## PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of "D Class" Contractor Card . If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/ her objection in the office of the upper intending engineer R and B Circle ANANTNAG/ KULGAM KHANABAL Within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Mohd Yousuf Malik  
S/O : Gh Ahmad Malik  
R/o Kamad

ma



A tourist dressed in traditional Kashmiri attire poses for a picture in Dal Lake on Friday. KO Photo Abid Bhat.

## Sterilization, Vaccination Key To Curb Dog Menace In Kashmir: DAK

### Observer News Service

Srinagar: Doctors Association Kashmir (DAK) on Friday said sterilization and anti-rabies vaccination holds the key to curb the menace of stray dogs in the valley.

"Sterilizing and vaccinating the dogs would effectively control their population, prevent rabies and reduce canine attacks," DAK President Dr Nisar ul Hassan in a statement said.

Dr Hassan said sterilization is the only scientific birth control measure for bringing the stray dog population under control.

"The World Health Organization (WHO) has suggested that the dog sterilization programme would be successful only when carried out on fast track mode," he said.

"WHO standards recommend that around 70 per cent of dogs should be sterilized within three months of the start of the process".

The DAK President said mass vaccination of stray dogs would reduce the risk of human rabies. "In order to prevent rabies transmission, 70 percent of the dog population need to be vaccinated," he said, adding that "prevention of the transmission of rabies at its source through dog vaccination is the most cost-effective strategy to save lives."

"Sterilized and vaccinated dogs



are non-aggressive and rabies free," said Dr Nisar. "They are infertile and their population gradually decreases in size over time," he said.

General Secretary DAK Arshad Ali said in absence of a major sterilization programme and vaccination, the menace of stray dogs is growing in the valley and is taking a heavy toll on the people.

"Every day a large number of people are falling prey to dog bites. The canines are storming streets, chasing cars, pulling down bicycle riders and often attacking pedestri-

ans and school children," he said.

Spokesperson DAK Dr Riyaz Ahmad Dagga said there has been an unprecedented increase in the number of dog bite cases over the years.

"In last 10 years, 58,000 people have been bitten by stray dogs in the valley. Every year 4 to 5 thousand dog bite cases are being reported in GMC Srinagar," he said.

"Some of the victims have died of rabies as unvaccinated stray dogs are a potential source for the fatal disease," he added.

## Government of Jammu & Kashmir Office of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Mechanical Division (North) Sopore

### e-Tender

NIT No.: PHE/MDNS/DB/E-02 of 2022-23

INVITATION: For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir online e-bids in two Cover System, (Technical and Financial) are hereby invited from SSI Unit holders / registered/reputed firms having existing workshop, to fix rate contract for repairs to damaged electro-mechanical equipment installed at different WSSs of District Baramulla, Bandipore and Kupwara for one financial year i.e., 2022-23 from the date of finalization of rate contract.

S. No.	Name of work	Cost of tender document (Rate in Rs)	Estimated Cost (Rs in Lacs)	Earnest money (Rate in Rs)	Validity of offer	Position of funds
1	Fixing of rate contract for repairs to electrical equipment installed at different WSSs of PHE Mechanical Sub-Division Baramulla (District Baramulla) for one financial year i.e., 2022-23	Rs 1000.00	Rs 12.00	Rs 240000.00	365 Days	Under M&R
2	Fixing of rate contract for repairs to electrical equipment installed at different WSSs of PHE Mechanical Sub-Division Sopore (District Baramulla and Bandipore) for one financial year i.e., 2022-23	Rs 1000.00	Rs 16.00	Rs 320000.00	--do--	--do--
3	Fixing of rate contract for repairs to electrical equipment installed at different WSSs of PHE Mechanical Sub-Division Handwara (District Kupwara) for one financial year i.e., 2022-23	Rs 1000.00	Rs 8.00	Rs 160000.00	--do--	--do--
4	Fixing of rate contract for repairs to mechanical equipment installed at different WSSs of PHE Mechanical Sub-Division Baramulla (District Baramulla) for one financial year i.e., 2022-23	Rs 1000.00	Rs 13.00	Rs 260000.00	--do--	--do--
5	Fixing of rate contract for repairs to mechanical equipment installed at different WSSs of PHE Mechanical Sub-Division Sopore (District Baramulla and Bandipore) for one financial year i.e., 2022-23	Rs 1000.00	Rs 17.00	Rs 340000.00	--do--	--do--
6	Fixing of rate contract for repairs to mechanical equipment installed at different WSSs of PHE Mechanical Sub-Division Handwara (District Kupwara) for one financial year i.e., 2022-23	Rs 1000.00	Rs 10.00	Rs 200000.00	--do--	--do--
7	Fixing of rate contract for repairs to HT Distribution Transformers and AVR's installed at different WSSs of PHE Mechanical Sub-Division Baramulla, Sopore and Handwara (District Baramulla, Bandipore and Kupwara) for one financial year i.e., 2022-23.	Rs 1000.00	Rs 19.00	Rs 380000.00	--do--	--do--

The tenders consisting of qualifying/eligibility criteria, technical specifications, general and commercial terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the website <https://jktenders.gov.in> from 05-05-2022 (10:00 am).

The bids shall be submitted in electronic format on the website <https://jktenders.gov.in> from 05-05-2022 (10:00 am) to 17-05-2022 (6:55 pm). The bids uploaded on the website up to due date and time will be opened on the time and date, in the office of the Executive Engineer, P.H.E. Mechanical Division (North) Sopore.

The complete bidding shall be online.

Prequalification bids shall be opened online in the office of the Executive Engineer, P.H.E. Mechanical Division (North) Sopore on 18-05-2022 at 2:00 pm after which the financial bids of qualifying bidders shall be opened.

The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 01 year from the date of opening of bids. The time of completion for each individual repair work/s shall be 03 days from the issuance of allotment order.

Note: The total estimated amount can increase or decrease and shall depend upon quantity / extent of damages during the year.

No. PHE/MDNS/DB/481-88  
Dated: 30-04-2022

DIPK-1562/22

Sd/  
Executive Engineer  
Jal Shakti (PHE) Mechanical Division (North)  
Sopore

### DIAL-EMMA

- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,245222,2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
- Ambulance: Kashmer EMS Service: +91 94841 00200



### AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311



### RAILWAYS

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



### HIGHWAY STATUS

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



HIJRI  
CALENDAR  
05 Shawwal  
1443

## PRAYERS

FAJR	4: 02
ZUHR	12:28
ASR	5:18
Magrib	7:21
ISHA	8: 53

## This Day In History

- 1748- French troops conquer Maastricht in the War of the Austrian Succession
- 1832- Greece becomes independent, Otto of Bavaria is chosen as king
- 1873- US marines attack Panama
- 1891- Battle in Bunyoro: Capt F Lugard stops Muslim rebellion, 300 killed
- 1895- Russian scientist Alexander Stepanovich Popov demonstrates to the Russian Physical and Chemical Society his invention - the world's first radio receiver in St. Petersburg. Celebrated as Radio Day in Russia.
- 1912- Columbia University approves plans for awarding the Pulitzer Prize in several categories, after established by Joseph Pulitzer
- 1919- A draft of the Versailles Treaty is shown to Germans
- 1920- USSR recognizes Georgia's independence
- 1928- Pulitzer prize awarded to Thornton Wilder for "Bridge of San Luis Rey"
- 1934- Pulitzer prize awarded to Sidney Kingsley for his play "Men in White"
- 1939- Germany and Italy announce an alliance known as the Rome-Berlin Axis
- 1941- British House of Commons votes for Winston Churchill (477-3)
- 1945 - World War II: British troops enter Utrecht, Netherlands
- 1945 - World War II: Unconditional German surrender to the Allies signed by General Alfred Jodl at Rheims
- 1947 - General MacArthur approves Japanese constitution
- 1947 - Paraguayan government unleashes contra revolt
- 1954 - French surrender to Vietnam after 55-day siege at Dien Bien Phu
- 1954 - US, Great Britain & France reject Russian membership of NATO
- 1955 - USSR signs peace treaty with France & Great Britain
- 1963 - SETC Telstar 2 launched (apogee 6,700 miles (10,800 km))
- 1975 - Small Astronomy Satellite Explorer 53 launched to study X-rays
- 1986 - Iraq bombs a Tehran oil refiner
- 1992 - US space shuttle STS-49 launched (maiden voyage of Endeavour)
- 1993 - South Africa agrees to multi-racial elections
- 1998 - Mercedes-Benz buys Chrysler for \$US40 billion and forms DaimlerChrysler in the then largest industrial merger in history
- 1999 - Kosovo War: In Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, three Chinese citizens are killed and 20 wounded when a NATO aircraft bombs the Chinese embassy in Belgrade
- 1999 - Pope John Paul II travels to Romania becoming the first pope to visit a predominantly Eastern Orthodox country since the Great Schism in 1054.

From KO Archives

## Sumo-Borne Men Abduct, Beat Cop

### Observer News Service

S RINAGAR : A traffic police constable was admitted in the hospital in a critical condition after being dropped half dead by some unidentified abductors outside the Batwara gate of the army headquarters in Badamiabagh cantonment here this afternoon.

According to reports, Gulam Muhammad (belt No1556), a constable in the traffic control department deployed in the Regal chowk to enforce one way movement stopped a white Sumo from proceeding in the wrong direction. At this, the unidentified persons pounced on the constable and beat him.

Watching the scuffle, some shopkeepers tried to rescue the policeman. But, the Sumo-borne men putted him in and fled away. The incident took place in broad day light at 3:45 p.m. At about 6.30 p.m. the army authorities informed the police about the constable lying at the mall gate of the BB Cantt almost half dead. However, the police refused to pick up the injured constable and instead demanded the in-spector general of police or any other senior officer to go to the spot for the purpose. Eventually, it was the superintendent of police traffic, Riyaz Ahmad Bedar, who went to the BB Cantt gate and removed the constable to the SMHS hospital where the doctors attending on him said, late in the evening, that his condition was stable.

(Kashmir Observer, 07 May, 2000)



## Dozens Of Israeli Settlers Storm Al Aqsa Complex

Agenceis

Dozens of Israeli settlers have stormed the yards of Al Aqsa Mosque compound, protected by the heavy presence of Israeli forces deployed on the first day following the end of Eid al Fitr, which marks the end of the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

Israeli forces attacked Palestinians on Thursday at the Islam's third holiest site in occupied East Jerusalem.

A crowd of Palestinians gathered in protest and scuffles broke out when the police went to arrest one of them. Police fired rubber-coated bullets and tear gas on Palestinians as some sheltered inside the mosque itself. The police could later be seen just inside an entrance to the mosque.

The police said they responded to dozens of people who were shouting incitement and throwing stones, and that one police officer was lightly injured.



But Palestinian witnesses said there was no sign of rock-throwing initially. Some of those who sheltered inside the mosque began throwing stones when police started to enter the building. The witnesses spoke on condition of anonymity because of security concerns.

Under informal arrangements known as the status quo, Jews are allowed to visit the site but not pray there. In recent years, they have visited in ever-increasing numbers with police escorts and many have discreetly prayed, angering the Palestinians as well as neighbouring Jordan, which is

the custodian of the site.

The Palestinians have long feared that Israel plans to eventually take over the site or partition it.

### 'Playing with fire'

Israel says it is committed to maintaining the status quo of the site, but carried out several rounds of attacks on Muslim worshippers during the month of Ramadan in April.

Visits by mostly nationalist and religious Jews resumed on Thursday after being paused for the last 10 days of Ramadan and the Eid al Fitr holiday.

Thursday is also Israel's Independence Day and in recent days fringe groups had called on Jewish worshippers to celebrate by waving Israeli flags at the holy site.

The calls were widely circulated by Palestinians on social media, along with calls to confront any such display.

Hussein al Sheikh, a senior

## Azaan On Loudspeakers Not A Fundamental Right: Allahabad High Court



Agenceis

**Prayagraj:** The Allahabad High Court on Friday ruled that delivering the azaan on loudspeakers is not a fundamental right.

The court made this remark while dismissing a petition filed by one Irfan of Budaun district, who sought permission to play azaan using loudspeakers in the Noori Masjid.

"The law has now been settled that use of loudspeaker from mosque is not a fundamental right. Ever otherwise

a cogent reason has been assigned in the impugned order. Accordingly, we find that the present petition is patently misconceived, hence the same is dismissed," said the court.

The court further said that although azaan is an integral part of Islam, delivering it through loudspeakers is not a part of the religion.

"Azaan is an integral part of Islam, but giving it through loudspeakers is not a part of Islam," a bench headed by Justice BK Vidla and Justice

Vikas said.

Ruling on the petition, a two-judge bench of the Allahabad High Court had noted that there have been previous instances where courts have ruled that the call for prayer on a loudspeaker is not a fundamental right.

Azaan is the Islamic call to prayers which is given five times at prescribed times of the day. A muezzin is a person who proclaims the call to the daily prayer five times a day at a mosque.

## Pakistan Rejects Jammu & Kashmir Delimitation Commission Report

Agenceis

Pakistan's Foreign Ministry has summoned India's Chargé d'Affaires here and handed a demarche conveying Islamabad's categorical rejection of the Delimitation Commission report.

The Delimitation Commission has been tasked by the Indian government to redraw the boundaries of assembly and parliamentary constituencies in Jammu and Kashmir.

The three-member panel, headed by Justice (ret'd) Ranjana Desai, on Thursday signed the final order on redrawing the assembly constituencies of the Union Territory.

The Delimitation Commission on Jammu and Kashmir, formed in March 2020, on Thursday notified its final report giving six additional assembly seats to Jammu region and one to Kashmir Valley. Jammu division will now have 43 assembly seats and Kashmir 47 in the 90-member House.

On Thursday, Pakistan's Foreign Office, which summoned the India's Charge d'Affaires to the ministry, told the Indian diplomat that the Delimitation Commission was aimed at "disenfranchising and disempowering" the Muslim majority population of Jammu and Kashmir.

Pakistan categorically rejects the report of the so-called Delimitation Commission' for Jammu and Kashmir, the Foreign



Office said in a statement.

The Indian side was conveyed that the entire exercise was farcical and had already been rejected by the cross-section of political parties in Jammu and Kashmir because through this effort, India only wanted to lend legitimacy' to its illegal actions of August 5, 2019, the statement said.

India's decision to revoke the special status of Jammu and Kashmir in 2019 outraged Pakistan, which downgraded diplomatic ties and expelled the Indian High Commissioner in Islamabad.

India has categorically told the international community that the scrapping of Article 370 in 2019 by the country's Parliament was its internal matter.

India has also repeatedly told Pakistan that Jammu and Kashmir was, is and shall forever remain an integral part of the country. It also advised Pakistan to accept the reality and stop all anti-India propaganda.

The Foreign Office statement

said that it was emphasised to India's Charge d'Affaires that the ulterior motive of the Indian government was evident from the fact that under the garb of so-called delimitation, the representation of Muslims in the re-designated constituencies were reduced to their disadvantage.

It was underscored to the Indian diplomat that the Jammu and Kashmir dispute was a long-standing item on the agenda of the UN Security Council.

Any illegal, unilateral and mischievous attempt by India to allow disproportionately higher electoral representation to the Hindu population to the detriment of the Muslims, is a mockery of all norms of democracy, morality and India's obligations under the UN Security Council Resolutions and international law, it added.

It was also stressed that the Indian government must refrain from bringing about any illegal demographic changes in Jammu and Kashmir.

## Thousands Fall Sick As Severe Sandstorm Sweeps Across Iraq

Agenceis

**BAGHDAD:** One person died in Iraq and more than 5,000 were treated in hospitals on Thursday for respiratory ailments due to a sandstorm, the seventh in a month, the health ministry said.

Duststorms have increased dramatically in frequency in Iraq in recent years, driven by soil degradation and intense droughts made worse by climate change, with rising average temperatures and sharply lower rainfall.

Residents of six of Iraq's 18 provinces, including Baghdad and the vast western region of Al-Anbar, awoke once again to a thick cloud of dust blanketing the sky.

As the storm swept across Iraq, it shrouded the capital Baghdad and Najaf in ghostly orange clouds of choking dust.

"One death has been recorded in Baghdad" and hospitals "have received no less than 5,000 cases so far," health ministry spokesman Seif al-Badr said in a statement.

Those hit hardest are people suffering from "chronic respiratory diseases such as asthma", and the elderly who suffer in particular from heart ailments, he said.

Badr added that the majority had since been discharged and most cases were of "medium or low intensity".

Dust and sandstorms have always occurred in the Middle East but grown more frequent and intense in recent years, a trend that has been associated with overuse of river water, more dams, overgrazing and deforestation.

The fine dust particles can cause health problems such as asthma and cardiovascular ailments, and also spread bacteria and viruses as well as pesticides and other toxins.

Authorities in Al-Anbar and Kirkuk provinces, north of the capital, urged people "not to leave their homes", said the official INA news agency. The storms are expected to grow

more intense with worsening climate change because higher temperatures and more irregular rainfalls dry out land faster and accelerate desertification.

Sandstorms also cause economic damage by reducing visibility, sometimes to near zero, shuttering airports and highways and causing damage to buildings, vegetation and solar panels.

'272 days of dust'

Hospitals in Al-Anbar province had received more than 700 patients with breathing difficulties, said Anas Qais, a health official cited by INA.

The central province of Salaheddin reported more than 300 cases, while Diwaniya and the province of Najaf, south of Baghdad, each recorded about 100 cases, the news agency added. Oil-rich Iraq, despite its mighty Tigris and Euphrates rivers, is classified as one of the world's five countries most vulnerable to climate change and desertification.

Scientists say climate change amplifies droughts and that their intensity and frequency in turn threaten food security. Experts have said these factors threaten to bring social and economic disaster in the war-scarred country. In November, the World Bank warned Iraq — a country of 41 million people — could suffer a 20-percent drop in water resources by 2050 due to climate change.

The United Nations says about one-third of Iraq's population now lives in poverty. The effects of low rainfall have been exacerbated as the levels of the Tigris and Euphrates drop because of upstream dams in neighbouring Iran and Turkey.

In early April, a government official warned Iraq could face "272 days of dust" a year in coming decades.

The environment ministry said the weather phenomenon could be addressed by "increasing vegetation cover and creating forests that act as windbreaks".

## 'Science Doesn't Lie, Modi Does': Rahul On WHO Report On Covid Deaths

Agenceis

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday attacked the Narendra Modi government over a WHO report that claimed that there were 4.7 million Covid deaths in India, saying "science does not lie. [Prime Minister Narendra] Modi does".

Gandhi also demanded that the government should support the families that have lost loved ones by giving them the mandated Rs 4 lakh compensation. In a tweet, he said, "47 lakh Indians died due to the Covid pandemic. NOT 4.8 lakh as claimed by the Govt. Science doesn't LIE. Modi does."

"Respect families who've lost loved ones. Support them with the mandated 4 lakh compensation,"

the former Congress chief said.

The WHO on Thursday stated that 14.9 million (one million=10 lakh) people were killed either by Covid-19 directly or due to the pandemic's impact on health systems and society.

According to the report, there were 4.7 million Covid deaths in India, which is 10 times the official figures and almost a third of Covid deaths globally.

India strongly objected to the use of mathematical models by the WHO for projecting excess mortality estimates linked to the coronavirus pandemic in view of the availability of authentic data, saying validity and robustness of the models used and methodology of data collection are questionable.

## NEWS MAKERS

## World's Largest White Diamond, 'The Rock', Expected To Sell For \$30 Million

Agenceis

**Geneva:** The largest white diamond ever auctioned will go under the hammer in Geneva next week, part of a sale by Christie's that features two stones weighing more than 200 carats each.

"The Rock", a 228.31 carat pear-shaped stone roughly the size of a golf ball, is expected to sell for up to \$30 million, the auctioneer said.

"Often with these largest stones, they sacrifice some of the shape in order to keep the weight," Max Fawcett, the head of Christie's jewellery department in Geneva, told Reuters.

"This is a perfectly symmetrical pear-shape form and ...one of the rarest gems ever to be sold at auction."

Diamond prices have been buoyed by sanctions on major producer Russia as well as the return of VIP events as



pandemic restrictions unwind.

Mined in South Africa, "The

Rock" was worn by its former owner as a Cartier necklace.

The previous auction record for a white diamond was a 163.41 carat gem sold in 2017.

Christie's is also selling a 205.07 carat yellow, cushion-shaped stoned named "The Red Cross Diamond" since an unspecified portion of the auction proceeds will go to the Geneva-based International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

The gem, which has Maltese cross facets at its base, was first sold by Christie's in 1918 at a London auction where residents sold precious household items to help the war effort. Those proceeds, 10,000 pounds (now \$12,350), helped the British Red Cross Society.

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An ICRC spokesperson said that this time, a portion of the proceeds from the sale would go to bringing clean water to people affected by conflict.

## Pak Woman Shot Dead By Brother For Choosing Dancing, Modelling As Career

Agenceis

**Lahore:** In another suspected case of dishonour killing in Pakistan, a 21-year-old woman has allegedly been shot dead by her brother for pursuing dancing and modelling as a career in Punjab province.

Sidra, a native of Renala Khurd Okara, 130 km from provincial capital Lahore, was modelling for a local clothing brand and danced in theatres of Faisalabad city against the wishes of her family, according to police.

Sidra's parents forced her to quit her profession, terming it "against family tradition" but Sidra insisted on continuing.

Police said Sidra had come home from Faisalabad to celebrate Eid with her family last week.

On Thursday, her parents and brother Hamza had an argument with her over the issue of decency in her profession and beat her for insisting to stick with dancing.



Later in the day Hamza opened fire on Sidra, killing her on the spot, officials said.

A murder case was registered against the suspect. Police claim to have arrested Hamza who confessed to the crime.

Police officer Fraz Hamid said Hamza got infuriated at Sidra when he saw her dance performance on his mobile phone forwarded to him by a relative.

He said Hamza told police

that in a fit of rage he shot his sister dead.

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In February this year, a 19-year-old female dancer Ayesha was shot dead in Faisalabad by her ex-husband.

Cases of dishonour killing are frighteningly regular in Pakistan, especially in areas close to the tribal regions in the north and west.



## LG's Advisor Hails Contribution Of SKUAST-K In Research



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar on Friday remarked that there is a need to strengthen the interface between academicians, researchers, practitioners, industry and government to translate the research into products for the benefit of the society at large.

The Advisor made these comments while addressing the inaugural session of two-day International Conference on 'Recent Advances in Biomedical Sciences and Regenerative Medicine (RAB-SRM 2022)' at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) here.

The Conference is being organised by SKUAST-K in association with the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur and the University of Kashmir. The conference held as part of the Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration (SPARC) programme, Ministry of Education (MoE), Government of India, that aims at improving the research ecosystem of India's higher educational institutions in collaboration with Department of Science and Technology, GoI & World Bank-ICAR funded National Agricultural Higher Education Project for the institutional development of SKUAST-K.

Addressing the large gathering of researchers, post-doctoral fellows and other eminent scholars, Advisor Bhatnagar highlighted that the future lies in the research and development as well as science and technology and therefore it is imperative upon us to give more impetus to different aspects of research.

He added that partnerships and collaborations between institutions are need of the hour to give wide dimensions to the research and thereby subsequent translation of that into the development of society.

Highlighting about the significance of the conference, Advisor Bhatnagar said that this conference will bring together experts, researchers, young scientists and academicians from around the world to disseminate knowledge from interdisciplinary backgrounds. He added that the knowledge provided by the eminent speakers and researchers will

help to foster the research culture in the area of biomedical sciences and regenerative medicine at the universities of Jammu and Kashmir and around the country.

The Advisor further said that the conference will provide an opportunity to discuss recent developments in biomedical research in health and diseases and foster future directions in drug discovery and therapeutic interventions for the development and upgradation of medical technologies across the globe.

Lauding the role of SKUAST-K for its contribution in research, Advisor Bhatnagar said that it is gratifying to know about the excellent contribution of this university both nationally and internationally in terms of research and also the useful applications coming out of it. He also lauded the university for its immense contribution to agriculture sector as well as taking timely and great strides in the implementation of NEP-2020.

Remarking about the recent developments across J&K, Advisor Bhatnagar said that Jammu and Kashmir is on the accelerated path of growth and development. He highlighted that in recent years institutions of par excellence like IIT Jammu, IIM Jammu, AIIMS etc have been established in J&K which are significantly contributing to the development of education sector here.

The Advisor further said that in coming years J&K will emerge as one of the best destinations for higher education across the country.

VC SKUAST-K, Prof Nazir Ahmad Ganai, Prof Ganai, in his address, highlighted the importance of the conference in the present scientific era and hoped that it will provide an opportunity to discuss and deliberate on the issues shared across related fields concerning the improvement in life and working of mankind.

Prof. Ashok Kumar from IIT Kanpur who is also the convener of the conference, in his address, highlighted about the major contours of the conference and said that the main themes of the conference include Bioengineering, Regenerative Medicine, Cancer Biology, Drug Design and Delivery, Vaccine Biology, Tissue Engineering, Biomaterials, Molecular Therapeutics, Animal Biotechnology, Stem Cell Gene Therapy & Biomarkers.

### AMARNATH YATRA

## DHSK Holds 3-Day High Altitude Medical Emergency Training Programme

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Under guidance and directions of Director Health Services Kashmir, Dr Mushtaq Rather, a three-day high altitude medical emergency workshop was organised at Kashmir Skill and Simulation Center ahead of this year's Amarnath Yatra.

The aims of the workshop was to create a pool of trainers to conduct the trainings which shall be deliberated to all the medical, paramedical & supportive staff of the directorate of health services and allied departments.

Dr MA Rather while signifying the importance of the high altitude medical emergency training conveyed that the department has devised a training calendar and all the major stakeholders shall be trained in stipulated time before the com-

mencement of SANJY- 2022.

The resource person for the workshop included Dr Anil Gurtoo, Prof of Medicine, Lady Harding Medical College, Dr Preeti Gupta, Associate Professor Department of Cardiology, Dr Rohit Kumar, Associate Professor Department of Pulmonology and Dr Arun Choudhary, Department of Anaesthesiology (all Safdarjung Hospitals).

The trainers acquainted the participants about the latest protocols and procedures to be adopted while managing a patient of high altitude related illness.

The training was unique in way as field based and problem solving approach was so well put across by the trainers. Real time simulation was done as the participants did hands on management while trekking Pahalgam and Gulmarg range.

## All J&K Universities To Fully Adopt Samarth E-Gov Portal This Year

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** All 11 universities of Jammu and Kashmir will be on boarded on the Samarth e-Gov portal, Principal Secretary Higher Education Department, Rohit Kansal said Friday.

The decision in this regard was taken during a virtual meeting chaired by Kansal to review the implementation of Samarth e-Gov in Universities of Jammu & Kashmir, an official spokesperson said.

He said that the Principal Investigator of the project, Dr Sanjeev Singh from Delhi University presented a detailed presentation detailing achievements and the requisite steps for successful implementation of the project in universities and colleges of J&K.

He informed that Samarth e-Gov ERP automation software is a robust customized software which has over 40 applications under nine modules. The modules, namely- Data Management, Employee Services, Campus Services, Finance, Admission, Recruitment, University Facility, Academics and Governance encompass all academic and administrative affairs of an institute.

The system is already onboard in 38 Central Universities, 13 State Universities; two NITs and IISERS each; one IIIT and IIM each and five Affiliated Technical Universities. Additionally, 20 TEQIP-III institutions and NCERT have also implemented it.

It was informed two Central

Universities and 3 State Universities of J&K have already implemented the ERP system while discussions with IIM Jammu have also started in this regard. The Central University

### Samarth eGov - Suite

PROCESS AUTOMATION SOFTWARE FOR UNIVERSITIES & HEIS

Jammu is actively using most of the Samarth modules.

It was one of the first universities to adopt Samarth Leave Management app entirely to manage its leave applications, recommendations and approvals. It has also started usage in student related modules. University of Jammu has conducted recruitment twice through Samarth Recruitment Module and is actively using CAS (Career Advancement Scheme) App. Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University has initiated usage in Student Lifecycle Module.

Walkthrough sessions have been conducted with Cluster University of Jammu and CU Kashmir which have recently been onboarded and base modules have been configured.

The Principal Secretary appreciated the efforts of the Delhi University in assisting the universities under the Ministry of Education supported Samarth e-Gov portal.

While complimenting the universities which had already implemented the same, he directed that all remaining universities should immediately implement the programme.

Discussions was held on immediate on boarding of universities including University of Kashmir, Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology Kashmir, SKUAST-J, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University, Islamic University of Science and Technology, Awantipora and Cluster University of Srinagar on e-Samarth portal at the meeting. It was decided that these universities would immediately start the process of adoption of the programme.

It was agreed that all universities, the Higher Education Department and the Project Samarth would appoint nodal officers for smooth on boarding process and successful implementation of e-Samarth. Details of all such appointed nodal officers are to be submitted to the Higher Education Department. Timelines would also be set for implementation of separate modules of the ERP system and shared with the Department.

The Principal Secretary suggested that post successful on-boarding of the universities; all 148 colleges of the UT would be taken up for the purpose by affiliating universities.

The meeting was also attended by VCs of SKUAST Dr Nazeer Ganai and Dr J P Sharma, VC of BBGSBU, Dr Akbar Masoodi, VC Central University, Dr Sanjeev Jain, Deans of Universities, Director Colleges, Dr Yasmeen Ashai; Special Secretary HED, Rakesh Badyal and Dr Sourabh from GGM Science College Jammu.

## Specially-Abled Students To Get Extra Time To Write Board Exams

### Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE) has said that it will provide additional 20 minutes per hour to the special abled students appearing in board exams.

"An additional 20 minutes per hour of examination for each of the subject shall be provided to the Children With Special Needs (CWSN) to compensate for additional time required for reading by the amanuensis, understanding the question, fatigue while dictating to the Amanuensis, sitting continuously, etcetera," a JKBOSE official told a local news agency KNO.

The board official also said that if the condition indicated in the medical certificate specified requires a short break, a

break of not more than ten minutes per hour will be permitted in addition to the existing 20 minutes.

The notification in this regard issued by the JKBOSE reads, "Provision of the reader to read the question paper will be allowed in case the examinee does not want a scribe. The role of the reader will be limited to reading the question paper."

It also states that the answer books of CWSN shall be sent separately by the Centre Superintendents to the concerned offices of JKBOSE.

"Use of simple calculators shall be permitted for CWSN in any of the examinations conducted by the Board," reads the notification.

JKBOSE further said, "Orientation or instructions if and as and when required for the

Superintendents, invigilators, evaluators and paper setters will be conducted by JKBOSE in collaboration with Samagra Shiksha, JKSCERT and Child Guidance and WellBeing Centre, (CGWC) IMHANS and Composite Regional Centre (CRC) etcetera."

It also said that the facility of scribe in case of Hand dysfunction in Disabilities as defined in RPWD Act, 2016.

The CWSN shall have the discretion of opting for their own scribe, reader or request to the examination centre, Samara Shiksha, Head of their Educational Institution for the same.

The qualification of the scribe will be one class lower than the CWS examinee.

Candidates will be allowed to change the scribe or reader in case of emergency.

## PDD Develops Portal For Its Employees To Apply For Transfers

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Power Development Department in its endeavour to bring transparency and meritocracy developed online portal for the employees to apply for transfer in consultation with NIC JKUT & JKIT department.

The online portal is accessible on the url <https://pddtransfer.jk.gov.in>.

The portal is linked to CPIS of

the employee and provides options to the employee to apply for transfers across various offices/corporation in PDD.

The portal is to benefit around 20,000 employees borne on the cadre of PDD and are on deputation to various Corporations which include Jammu Power Distribution limited, Kashmir Power distribution Limited, J&K Power Transmission Corporation Limited, J&K power Corporation Limited, J&K PDC, and

other wings of the department.

In addition to the option available for each employee against any post, the online portal is designed to provide the posting details/record sheet of the employee to employer and thus will bring transparency.

All employees/ DDO have been directed to update the CPIS data of employees for true and transparent assessment of employee.

## DARPG To Hold Two-Day Regional Conference At SKICC

LG, Jitendra Singh Expected To Attend The Event

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Union Secretary, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), V. Srinivas on Friday chaired an online meeting regarding review of arrangements for upcoming Regional Conference on "Bringing Citizens and Government Closer-Through Administrative Reforms" at IMPA office, Srinagar.

Director General, J&K IMPARD, Saurabh Bhagat, Officers of DARPG, Department of Administrative Reforms, Inspections and Trainings (ARI), J&K and IT Department, J&K attended the meeting.

Pertinently, the Regional Conference would be organized at SKICC on May 16 and 17, 2022 as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, celebrating the 75th year of India's independence.

The conference would focus on "Innovations in Administration"; "Promoting Wellness through Sports under Khelo India Scheme"; "Jan Bhagidari - People's Participation" and "Holistic Development through One District One Product Scheme".

The dignitaries expected to attend the conference included Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha and Union Minister of State, Prime Minister's Office, Dr. Jitendra Singh besides fifty delegates from 10 states and 2 Union Territories will participate in the event.

The Conference would be coordinated by Nodal Departments including J&K IMPARD and ARI & Trainings, J&K.

## Principal Secretary Jal Shakti Visits Baramulla

Reviews Modalities For Phase II Of Upcoming Project At Nigli In Sopore

Observer News Service

**BARAMULLA:** Principal Secretary, Jal Shakti, Ashok Kumar Parmar on Friday reviewed upcoming prestigious project titled "Comprehensive Plan for Flood Management Works on River Jehlum and its Tributaries -Phase II" during his visit to Baramulla.

Chief Engineer, Irrigation and Flood Control Department, Kashmir and other senior engineers of the district accompanied the Principal Secretary.

Parmar visited Nigli Sopore where he discussed plan of action for execution of Phase II Part A of outfall channel of River Jehlum. The total cost of this phase II flood management project is Rs 1623.43 crore spanning from Anantnag to Uri.

Pertinently, various flood protection works would be taken up under this project along about 79 km stretch of River Jehlum from Nigle to LoC and its tributaries.

The works to be executed would include widening of river by 40 meters for a length of about 19 km, construction of navigation channel at Sopore and improvement to various tributaries.

Principal Secretary had a detailed review of project related issues including compensation

of land and structures, raising of embankments, widening of outfall channel from Sopore to Baramulla and various related matters.

While taking an overall review of the project, Principal Secretary said that the Phase I of the project has been completed smoothly while work on Phase II will also be executed expeditiously. He impressed upon the Chief Engineer Irrigation & Flood Control Department and executing agencies to work in a coordinated manner so that all these vital projects gets completed in time.

Principal Secretary also had a detailed interaction with all stakeholders about their issues regarding implementation of the project.

Earlier, Principal Secretary inspected the starting point of Flood Spill Channel at Padshahi Bagh where he was informed about the status of works being carried out for widening and drugging of the channel.

He also inspected the spill channel at Bemina spot where he was given the status of works of re-sectioning of Bemina bridge besides compensation and rehabilitation process.

He also visited Naidkhai Sumbal and inspected the proposed site for re-sectioning of FSC at the location.

### AMARNATH YATRA

## Double Rush Expected This Year: Northern Army Commander

### Agencies

**UDHAMPUR:** Northern army commander Lieutenant General Upendera Diwedi Friday said that double rush of pilgrims for the upcoming Amarnath Yatra is expected this year compared to 2019.

He called for collective efforts for ensuing hassle free pilgrimage.

Speaking to media men on the sidelines of an event at Udhampur, the General officer Commanding (GoC-in-C) Lt Gen Upendera Diwedi said that the army remains deployed in the areas where Yatra takes place, throughout the year.

"We have set Standard Operating Procedure (SoPs) and Corps commanders in Kashmir have already met LG (Manoj Sinha). I have also met LG and discussed the preparations," the GoC-in-C said. He said that the endeavour is that no militant activity should

take place anywhere from where the Yatra takes place.

"It is being expected that there will be a double rush of pilgrims compared to 2019. So all other stakeholders, including NGOs have to place a collective role to ensure smooth pilgrimage," Lt Gen Diwedi said, adding that "the army has to play a role in medical emergencies and other quick responses during the pilgrimage."

Asked about recovery of weapons left back by US and American forces in Afghanistan from militants in Kashmir, he said some weapons have been recovered.

"We are countering it effectively," GoC-in-C said. About the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), the top army officer said that the de-escalation process in the army is maintaining strategic patience and so far the situation is under control. "Negotiations are being held at top level," he said--(KNO)

## NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of "D Class" Contractor Card. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Superintending Engineer R&B Circle ANANTNAG/ KULGAM KHANABAL Within a period of seven (7) days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

**Javaid Ahmad Malik  
S/o Mohd Yousuf Malik  
R/o Kamad**

## Transforming Youth Into Ambassadors Of Innovation, Peace; Development: Govt

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Mission Youth is a holistic program to bring the interests and empowerment of youth to the centre of policy making, an official spokesperson said Friday.

He said that the Mission Youth has been established as a specialized agency by J&K Government aimed to simultaneously achieve the twin goals of harnessing the rich demographic dividend and transforming youth of J&K into ambassadors of innovation, peace and development through various interventions for Youth Engagement and Outreach.

All the interventions rolled out under Mission Youth are specially customized for the youth, conceived on modern, novel lines and implemented through innovative techniques so that these interventions are able to strike a chord with the youth. Mission Youth, thus, has been perceived by the youth as a beneficial initiative with which they are enthusiastically engaging.

Under Mission Youth, the Government has launched Youth data Portal for creating a database of youth so as to map their support requirements as per their needs and aspirations. 10 District Youth Centres have been approved for

youth engagement at district level.

Furthermore, Super 75 scholarship scheme for both girls and boys has been initiated under which scholarship to the tune of one lakh is being provided to meritorious students from BPL background. A provision for assistance of youth in reputed coaching institutes for upsc and state psc exams under the aegis of Parvaaz Scheme has also been established under Mission Youth.

The most important scheme under the Mission Youth is Mumkin through which small commercial vehicles are provided to beneficiaries, with banking partner extending loan facility up to 100% of the

vehicle's on-road price.

Sahil, a young man says that he has received vehicle through Mumkin Scheme.

"I am thankful to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for launching schemes for the benefit of youth. Everyone can't get Government job. Youth should also look for opportunities in business. Youth upto age of 35 can avail the benefit of Mumkin Scheme", Sahil said.

The manger of Shuhul Mahindra Nowgam, Car showroom Syed Nazik Andrabi says that they have delivered many vehicles to the beneficiaries of Mumkin Scheme. "It has helped unemployed youth

to earn their livelihood. We give them 10% rebate, 10% subsidy is given by Government and rest of the amount is financed by JK Bank. They don't have to pay anything on their own," he said.

TEJASWINI Scheme of Mission Youth aims to promote entrepreneurship among young women. The scheme envisages giving financial assistance upto Rs 5 lakhs to young women for setting up gainful employment ventures, suited to their skills, training, aptitude and local conditions. In the present financial year assistance to more than 2000 women entrepreneurs has been approved under the scheme.

### MISSION YOUTH



KASHMIR  
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Twitter Talks



“All the parking lots are in & around lal chowk, as if Elon Musk has donated flying cars to people in rest of the city. Maddening jams on Nalamar road, Nawakadal, Bohori Kadal, Habba Kadal, Soura, Qamarwari etc. Urban planning is a joke in #Srinagar”

@riyaz\_masroor

“Schools in J&K are staffed with women in huge numbers. These women are mostly married and have a household to look after. They do their best to keep their houses ready for eid, only to be harassed into going to schools on the second day of Eid”

@tooba\_tweets

ADVENTURES IN ARCHIVES

Pandits’ Return

Maximalist and extreme positions tend to get eased out of the discourse and isolated in the face of a more general accommodative approach, particularly on sensitive issues having a strong human connotation. Hardline rhetoric and postures have a brief shelf life and lose their meretricious appeal once it comes to the solid nitty-gritty of sorting out a critical problem.

The migration of the Pandits from the valley was an unmitigated social and political disaster for Kashmir, but sustained efforts over the years appear to hold the promise of paying off in undoing a tragedy of monumental proportions. Whatever the catalyst for the mass exodus might have been, every section of Kashmiri society wants the dignified and safe return of the Pandits. This has been made repeatedly clear by political leaders of all ilk, especially the separatists who have termed the community as an inseparable part of the society.

Granted that the trauma of the sudden uprooting has left deep scars on the community, but there are healing hands in Kashmir ready with the soothing balm to ease the pain of the wounds. There is total unanimity here that the Pandits must resume their lives in the valley as soon as possible. There are absolutely no takers here for the idea that an entire people must be displaced from their homes and hearths, and constrained to live lives of extreme hardship in alien climes.

It is, of course, reasonable on the part of the Pandits to seek safeguards and guarantees from the government to help in building up their lives afresh in the valley, and the administration has come out with a credible package encompassing employment and other forms of assistance to aid the process. The reintegration of the community is a momentous task, as an entire generation has grown up with a sense of being dispossessed, but the overwhelming sentiment of welcome in the valley is bound to smoothen whatever rough patches the process may entail.

There have been unsuccessful attempts by certain vested interests to sow rancour and bitterness in the displaced community against their Muslim brethren, but the cherished memories of shared lives of harmony have been too strong for such devilry. The centuries-old bonds of amity and love have survived the separation of twenty years, and it would be hard to find a soul in either community set against a return to the good days of yore.

Predictably, some quarters have sprung up to capitalize on the collective misfortunes of the displaced by voicing untenable demands like a separate homeland. This might have sounded attractive initially, but as the true colours of its proponents became clear, the idea has begun to have less and less takers.

Today we find the groups with this nefarious agenda of permanently rupturing relations between the two communities hard pressed to muster support. The inherently exploitative nature of such groups has been exposed and they stand marginalized from the community’s mainstream thinking, as borne out by the participation in the recently constituted apex body to oversee the implementation of the prime minister’s rehabilitation package.

This is not to say that such forces cannot do mischief, for there is unmistakable evidence of a minuscule section of the community having been influenced by a poisonous philosophy. But thankfully, this trend, witnessed during the economic blockade of the valley last year, is very limited in scope, and repugnant to the basic ethos of the community.

As stated at the outset, refractory politics has a rather limited life span, and cannot endure in the face of reason and realism. This is precisely what has come to pass with the hyped maximalism of the past. With the vitiating manipulations of vested interests on the wane, the task of hammering out the contours of the return of the Pandits to their true home must be speeded up.

The article is an editorial from KO’s archives and was originally published on 12 June, 2010

Is Government e-Market System  
Draining State Exchequer?

Stationery & Office Supplies Department be made nodal agency to make purchases through GeM

Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat

With an aim of removing the malpractices in various Government procurements and to increase transparency and efficiency (time & cost) of procurement, Government of India brought Government e-market system also known as GeM on 8th December 2017. This was made mandatory for every Government department to buy and hire services.

However, in a recently held Press Conference held at Jammu, Balvinder Singh a noted RTI activist said,

“Because of several shortcomings in the Govt e market system -GeM approximately 20 to 50 per cent commission is being involved in transaction made through GeM and as official data, there is annual turnover of Rs 2,200 crore in J&K”.

During the Press Conference, Balvinder Singh exposed many shortcomings of the GeM portal. He said that one of his RTI application filed in the Directorate of Health Services Jammu revealed how the person in charge of GeM made procurements that brought huge losses to the state exchequer that amounts to crores of rupees annually. He said that several purchases were made 30 to 300% higher than present market rates of the purchased items. The RTI activist obtained rate quotation for some items on March 12, 2022 for purchase of an Ultrasonography (USG) Machine BPL Model E-Cube 5 @ Rs 9,91,200, with three years warranty. The machines were purchased by the Directorate of Health Services Jammu (DHSJ) @ Rs 13,18,000. Around 7 USG machines were purchased for which Rs 79,06,000 (Seventy-Nine Lakh Six Thousand Rupees) were paid vide contract number 511687710463117 dated September 7, 2020. This was 30% higher than the existing market rate which means a loss of Rs 18 lakhs to the state exchequer. Balvinder revealed that the same department purchased eight numbers of Radicon-Binocular Polarizing Microscope @ Rs 58,300 including taxes on 23rd Dec 2020 vide contract No.511687769910866 Dated: 23.02.2022, amounting to Rs. 4,66,400 which was 50% higher than the market value of this product as quotations were already obtained by Mr Balvinder Singh for same product on March 11, 2022 which amounted to Rs 37816 only, including taxes. This is how the Directorate of Health Services deceived the State exchequer to the tune of Rs 1,63,872.

Stationery and Office Supplies Procurement



Stationery and Office Supplies Department (DoSOS) is one of the oldest Government Departments in J&K which was established during the Dogra Rule. It has always been the nodal agency for procurement of stationery, paper and binding material for office use by all Government/Semi-Government Offices and establishments of Jammu and Kashmir. This Department facilitated the supply of these items on uniform rates to each and every department on cashless transactions that was more or less a transparent process.

DoSOS v/s GeM ?

As per Rule 149 of General Financial Rules (GFR)-2017 issued by Ministry of Finance and section 4.17.5 of Manual for Procurement of Goods-2017, procurement through Govt e market -GeM Portal has become mandatory for all Government Departments. The Department of Stationery & Office Supplies (DoSOS) has been purchasing stationery items via e-tendering process in the past. Post creation of GeM, this Department (DoSOS) should have been transformed into a kind of Demand Aggregator which would act as a one stop solution for purchase of all stationery and other allied items from GeM Portal through e- bidding or Reverse Auctioning Mode (RAM) after aggregating demands of all the indenting Departments of J&K.

In view of Rule 149 of GFR-2017 and its subsequent amendment vide Ministry of Finance office memorandum (OM) dated: 02.04.2019, Department of Expenditure, if all the indenting Departments in J&K go for individual purchase from GeM Portal, majority of the departments shall have to go for Direct Purchase Mode (DPM) or Direct Purchase with L1 mode of GeM since hardly any department would be able to cross the ceiling of Rs.5,00,000 (five lakhs) for mandatory bidding, using online

bidding or reverse auction tool provided on GeM. This will lead to higher rates than what could be obtained by this Department after going for bulk purchase from GeM via e-bidding/reverse auction on behalf of all the indenting departments under J&K Government which causes huge losses to Government exchequer.

This goes totally contrary to the Rule 149 (viii) of GFR-2017 and is also in variance to the latest amendment of Rule 149, vide Ministry of Finance OM dated 02.04.2019, Department of Expenditure section (xi). The section 2.3.3.2.1 / 2.3.3.2.2 of GeM handbook also discusses the same aspect of demand aggregation and bunching / bundling.

All this has been discussed in various communications viz. DGSS/Adm./235 dated: 07-09-2020, DGSS/Adm./280-82 dated: 28-09-2020, DGSS/Adm./19 Dated: 22-01-2021, addressed to administrative department by the Director General of Department of Stationery & Office Supplies (DoSOS). These communications also suggested providing a road map for revival of the Department on modern lines.

Pertinently, the aggregate demand of stationery and other allied items of J&K Govt amounts to approximately Rs. 1500 lacs or more as per the budget released by the Finance Department for financial year 2020-21, 2021-22.

Info Obtained Under RTI

In an RTI application addressed to the Chief Secretary, J&K dated:10-08-2021, information was received from various Departments about how they purchased their stationery. From the communications received from various Departments, it was crystal clear that the indenting departments were purchasing stationery items from cooperative stores and GeM but they are going

for piecemeal purchases without demand aggregation of any kind. The RTI replies from Superintendents of District Jail Jammu vide letter No: DJJ/Acctts/1832-33 dt: 29-9-21, Central Jail Srinagar vide letter No Acctts/CJS/1632-33 dt:29-9-21), Central Jail Srinagar vide letter No Acctts/CJ/1532 dt: 15-9-21, District Jail Baramulla vide letter No Estt/234/DJBK/2021/711-12 dt: 28-9-21), DGP, Prisons Department vide letter No Accounts/5671-72 dt: 29-9-21 , Superintendent District Jail Kathua vide letter No DJK/Acctt/1099 dt: 29-9-21 purchased stationery worth lakhs of rupees without demand aggregation thereby losing benefits of bulk purchase incurring latent losses to Government exchequer.

After reorganisation of the erstwhile State of J&K, vide Govt. Order No: 1211-JK(GAD) of 2021 dated: 15-11-2021 the Stationery & Office Supplies Department in UT of Ladakh is to be provided with more employees which is sufficient proof that this department is still functioning in UT of Ladakh, but budget allocated to Department of Stationery & Office Supplies J&K was not released during the last three financial years 2019-20, 2020-21 or 2021-22 and all of a sudden funds released were withdrawn by the Finance Department vide communication No.: FD-VII25 (11)2000 dated: 16-01-2020 stating therein that these funds have been released inadvertently, thus leaving this department in a state of suspended animation

The Department of Stationer and Office Supplies (DoSOS) had stationery depots in 12 districts across J&K. The department through its Purchase Committee and Survey Committee constituted by the Government ensured that the stationery and allied items were purchased at lowest rates and only highest quality items used to be purchased for consumption in the Government Departments besides it also fixed various Rate-contracts. But after purchases started being made through the GeM portal this Department has been made dysfunctional. The Government is planning to wind-up this department. This would be a blunder. Infact, the DoSOS should be made the nodal agency for Govt e marketing (GeM) purchases in J&K which will ensure no further loss to state exchequer.

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

Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat is a Srinagar based activist and columnist. He is an Anant Fellow for Climate Action

A More Lethal Twitter?

Susan Benesch

pany avoided removing tweets or accounts.

In subsequent years, Twitter backed away from that hands-off position, as users protested at how much people were being attacked on the platform. Among innumerable examples, Robin Williams’s 25-year-old daughter Zelda received graphic, horrifying tweets blaming her for his suicide in 2014.

During that period, Twitter staff began rewriting the platform’s rules to prohibit “targeted harassment” and “glorification of violence”.

It was under the latter that former President Donald Trump was finally removed from the platform, after the January 6, 2021 riot at the US Capitol.

Still, Twitter continues to be used to attack individuals across the globe. And there’s another ocean of harmful content: frightening, usually false information about groups of people.

I study this sort of content, which I have dubbed “dangerous speech,” for its capacity to inspire violence between groups of people. Dangerous speech forms a category because it is strikingly similar from one case to another, across languages, cultures, and even time periods. At the Dangerous Speech Project, an independent research team I founded, we have identified innumerable examples, many of which have been followed by killings and even genocide.

We seek the best ways to blunt the power of dangerous speech, on-

line and offline. Musk taking over Twitter doesn’t look like one of them, to say the least.

Our team has found that when incendiary content goes viral, it can easily reach susceptible audiences open to committing violence offline. On Twitter, a frightening message can be boiled down into a memorable hashtag. Following such hashtags and related tweets, people around the world have been tortured and killed.

In the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, rumours spread on Twitter and other media in India that Muslims in the country were planning to infect Hindus with the virus. In just over a week, nearly 300,000 tweets carrying the hashtag “CoronaJihad” were viewed 165 million times, according to Equality Labs, a digital human rights group. This led to multiple attacks.

On April 5, 2020, a Hindu mob dragged villager Mehboob Ali to a field in northern India and beat him severely with shoes and sticks. They accused him of trying to spread coronavirus because he had recently attended a Muslim religious gathering. His attackers demanded to know who else formed part of the conspiracy. When he finally made it to a hospital to seek treatment for his wounds, Ali was isolated as a “corona suspect”. A few days later, two babies died when Indian hospitals refused to admit their labouring mothers because they were Muslim and therefore accused of spreading the virus. Such ac-

cusations persisted in India and led to the torching of 45 Muslim households near Kolkata in May.

Tweets that inspire aggression also often come from powerful government officials, which adds to their influence. During the early stage of the pandemic, a member of the Kenyan parliament tweeted that people should stone a group of Chinese people who had allegedly violated quarantine. In Brazil, President Jair Bolsonaro and his son have repeatedly posted suggestions that LGBTQ people are pedophiles.

None of these posts were taken down under Twitter’s existing rules. Under Musk, the rules are likely to loosen. Pressed on his plans, Musk has elaborated (on Twitter, of course) that “by free speech, I simply mean that which matches the law”. It should be noted that the law on freedom of speech varies greatly from country to country, and many governments enforce it selectively to their own benefit.

In practice, the relevant law for Twitter will be the platform’s own rules, or rather, the Musk rules, if his deal goes through. Then we must hope that Musk learns – and chooses to care – about speech that is worse than damn annoying.

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 Al Jazeera

The author is Founding Director of the Dangerous Speech Project, Faculty Associate with the Berkman Klein Center for Internet and Society at Harvard University



# Reading John L. Esposito's ‘What Everyone Needs to Know about Islam’

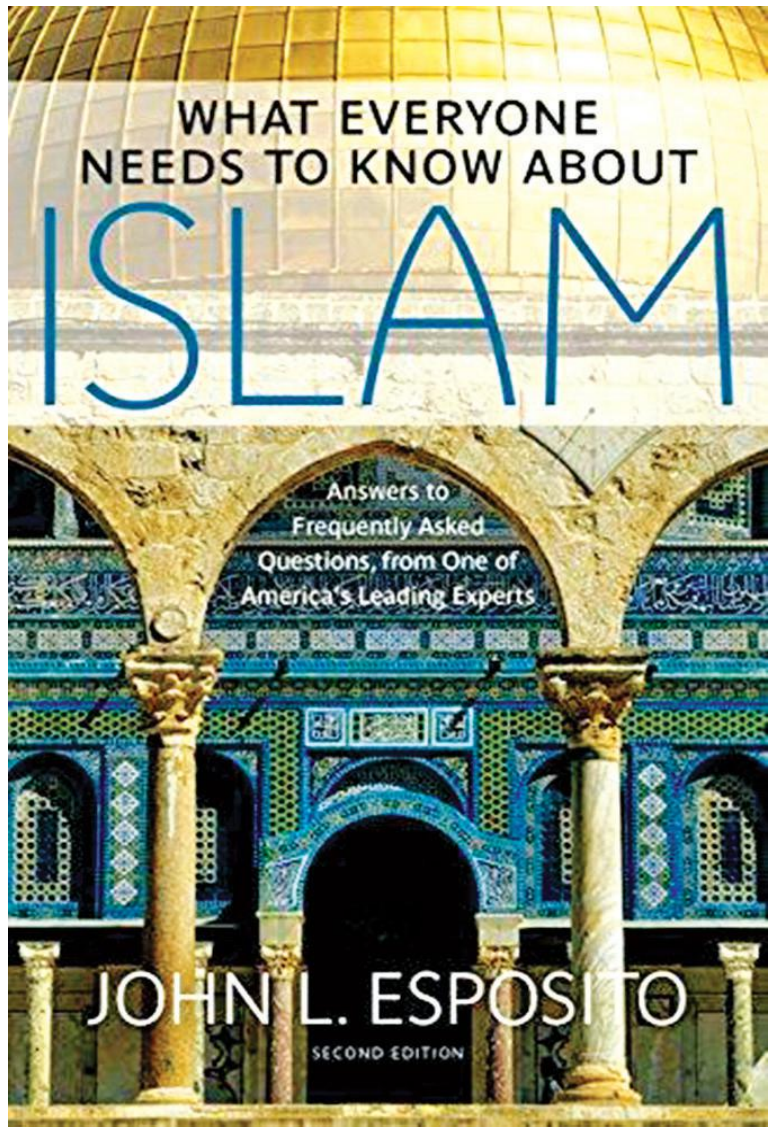
Succinct and Accessible Answers about Islam and Things Islamic

Title: **What Everyone Needs to Know About Islam** (2nd Ed.)

Author: **John L. Esposito**

Publication Details: **New York: Oxford University Press, 2011**

Pages: **xix+268**; ISBN: **9780199794133**; **Hardbound**



“ ‘What Everyone Needs to Know About Islam’ provides succinct, accessible, lucid, insightful and even-handed answers to diverse range of questions about Islam and things Islamic

Dr Tauseef Ahmad Parray

Over two decades have passed since the events of September 11, 2001 (or 9/11)—an ‘unpleasant and unfortunate event’ which is characterized as a ‘turning point’ in the course of international affairs and has resulted, for the Muslims and their faith, in an overabundance of ‘academic’ and media attempts to conceptualize the apparent ‘divide’ between ‘Islam’ and Western culture and society. On the one hand, Islam has been frequently used as a ‘violent’ and ‘terrorist’ religion and, on the other, there has been an overwhelming demand for information about Islam. To meet this demand, a number of introductory works on Islam and Muslims, their faith and beliefs are in circulation; however, there are very few comprehensive and concise works on Islam providing clear-cut and precise answers to nearly all the questions related to Islam and things Islamic—be its Islamic core beliefs, Islamic rituals and practices, Islamic history or Islam and Muslims vis-à-vis contemporary challenges. One such example is *What Everyone Needs to Know about Islam* by John L. Esposito (Professor of Religion and International Affairs and of Islamic Studies, Georgetown University, USA). Below is presented a brief assessment of the 2nd edition (published in 2011) of this book.

First published in 2002 and second edition in 2011, Esposito's *What Everyone Needs to Know about Islam* provides, in question-and-answer format (Q&A), “succinct, accessible, sensitive”, and concise but also insightful and even-handed answers to questions that are of diverse range: from the general, basic and fundamental questions like What do Muslims believe? What is the Muslim scripture? etc., to more specific issues like Islam's relation and compatibility with and response to: modernization, democracy, pluralism, capitalism, gender-equality, homosexuality, birth control, abortion, slavery, women rights; and from Islam and Jihad, global jihad, suicide bombing, hijacking, terrorism/ violence, role of internet in Islam, and Islam on environment, to Muslim hip-hop, clash of civilizations, Islamism, and Islamophobia. Speaking to a wide range of audiences, from government agencies to the media, Esposito has identified the most pressing, burning, and critical questions people constantly and consistently pose about Islam.

The second edition offers additional material on current trends in Islamic thought, making it more comprehensive and up to date. Grouped

in major topics, the book is divided into seven (7) main sections viz., General Information; Faith; Islam and Other Religions; Customs and Culture; Violence and Terrorism; Society, Politics, and Economy; and Muslims in the West. It provides basic information on the faith, customs, and political beliefs of Muslims, the followers of Islam.

About the main focus and goal of this book, Esposito states that “many more people today have specific questions and are looking for quick, brief, and direct answers, ones not easily found in historical and religious histories. *What Everyone Needs to Know About Islam* is meant to meet that need. Its primary purpose is to communicate what Muslims believe and why they do what they do. The book is not designed to be read from cover to cover; readers can look for answers to specific questions of interest to them. Because each question and answer is self-contained...” (p. xiv). Thus, this book is about Islamic faith, Muslim beliefs and practices, Islamic history, doctrines, rituals and customs, as well as about Islam and contemporary issues and challenges—ranging from those that have come to the fore-front with the emergence of modernization to those which have merged or intensified after 9/11.

The book consists of 122 questions under seven major headings and the range of answers varies from just a few lines/ sentences to few pages (seven pages being the maximum). There are many additions in the 2nd edition and it seems that these additions were made due to the popular demand, debate, and discussion on such themes and topics, which have intensified and gained prominence and importance after 9/11. Topics and themes such as: Jihad and global jihad, terrorism and violence; Islamism and Islamophobia; pluralism, democracy, multi-culturalism, inter-faith dialogue; Muslims in and of the West; and other related issues and questions:

For instance, regarding ‘Inter-faith dialogue’, ‘Islamism’, ‘secularism’, ‘democracy’, ‘clash of civilizations’, Esposito is of the opinion that:

“Inter-faith dialogue”—of which Muslims have been “suspicious” in the past—along with the “religious and political pluralism, and human rights have become an important part of contemporary Islamic discourse.” (p. 90)

Islamism, among many other such terms, describes “a political or social movement, organization, or person that believes Islam or God's will applies to all areas of life” (p.185).

Secularism, and its Muslim reaction, for Es-

posito is that the term “secularism has often been misunderstood and seen diametrically opposed to religion” (p. 187; italics in original).

On Islam-democracy compatibility, Esposito (referring to modernist Muslim thinkers) says: “Engaging in a process of reform, they argue the compatibility between Islam and democracy by using traditional Islamic concepts like consultation (shura) between ruler and ruled, community consensus (ijma), public interest (maslaha), and ‘the use of human reason to re-interpret Islamic principles and values and to meet the new needs of society’ (ijtihad).” (p. 190).

With regard to clash of civilizations, Esposito maintains that this theory “flattens cultural and historical forces into a caricature distorting the society and religious traditions. It dangerously oversimplifies the encounter between the West and the Muslim world and can become part of the problem rather than the solution.” (p. 214)

In conclusion, it may be argued that most books on Islam, even introductory texts, are not readily accessible to the average reader, as well as being necessarily easy when it comes to finding exact and relevant information on the questions people commonly have. Esposito has filled that gap with this newly updated edition of *What Everyone Needs to Know About Islam*—the best single source for clear and objective information about the new developments, and for answers to questions about the origin and traditions of Islam.

The book stands as a good presentation about the beliefs and practices of Islam which everyone should unquestionably try to become familiar with. However, for topics like violence and terrorism, Islamophobia, democracy, and other such burning and critical issues, readers will need to look for other additional sources so that to gain a clear and detailed information. Taken as a whole, this book is quite a comprehensive and concise guide, providing positive and reasonably balanced view on a wide range of topics relating to Islam.

In sum, dealing with Islam and things Islamic (from past to present), *What Everyone Needs to Know About Islam* could be recommended as an essential, straightforward and easy reference guide for the students and laymen equally; a must read for everyone interested in Islam.

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## COVID-19: No ‘Boost’ Way Out

Prakash Nagarkatti  
Mitzi Nagarkatti

With yet another COVID-19 booster available for vulnerable populations in the U.S., many people find themselves wondering what the end game will be.

The mRNA vaccines currently used in the U.S. against COVID-19 have been highly successful at preventing hospitalization and death. The Commonwealth Fund recently reported that in the U.S. alone, the vaccines have prevented over 2 million people from dying and over 17 million from hospitalization.

However, the vaccines have failed to provide long-term protective immunity to prevent breakthrough infections – cases of COVID-19 infection that occur in people who are fully vaccinated.

Because of this, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently endorsed a second booster shot for individuals 50 years of age and older and people who are immunocompromised. Other countries including Israel, the U.K. and South Korea have also approved a second booster.

However, it has become increasingly clear that the second booster does not provide long-lasting protection against breakthrough infections. As a result, it will be necessary to re-tool the existing vaccines to increase the duration of protection in order to help bring the pandemic to an end.

As immunologists studying immune response to infections and other threats, we are trying to better understand the vaccine booster-induced immunity against COVID-19.

### ACTIVATING LONGER-TERM IMMUNITY

It's a bit of a medical mystery: Why are mRNA vaccines so successful in preventing the serious form of COVID-19 but not so great at protecting against breakthrough infections? Understanding this concept is critical for stopping new infections and controlling the pandemic.

COVID-19 infection is unique in

that the majority of people who get it recover with mild to moderate symptoms, while a small percentage get the severe disease that can lead to hospitalization and death.

Understanding how our immune system works during the mild versus severe forms of COVID-19 is also important to the process of developing more targeted vaccines.

When people are first exposed to SARS-CoV-2 – the virus that causes COVID-19 – or to a vaccine against COVID-19, the immune system activates two key types of immune cells, called B and T cells. The B cells produce Y-shaped protein molecules called antibodies. The antibodies bind to the protruding spike protein on the surface of the virus. This blocks the virus from entering a cell and ultimately prevents it from causing an infection.

However, if not enough antibodies are produced, the virus can escape and infect the host cells. When this happens, the immune system activates what are known as killer T cells. These cells can recognize virus-infected cells immediately after infection and destroy them, thereby preventing the virus from replicating and causing widespread infection.

Thus, there is increasing evidence that antibodies may help prevent breakthrough infections while the killer T cells provide protection against the severe form of the disease.

### WHY BOOSTER SHOTS?

The B cells and T cells are unique in that after they mount an initial immune response, they get converted into memory cells. Unlike antibodies, memory cells can stay in a person's body for several decades and can mount a rapid response when they encounter the same infectious agent. It is because of such memory cells that some vaccines against diseases such as smallpox provide protection for decades.

But with certain vaccines, such as hepatitis, it is necessary to give multiple doses of a vaccine to boost the immune response. This is because the

“ While the current vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe disease, the next phase of vaccine development will need to focus on how to trigger a long-lived antibody response that would last for at least a year, making it likely that COVID-19 vaccines will become an annual shot

first or second dose is not sufficient to induce robust antibodies or to sustain the memory B and T cell response.

This boosting, or amplifying of the immune response, helps to increase the number of B cells and T cells that can respond to the infectious agent. Boosting also triggers the memory response, thereby providing prolonged immunity against reinfection.

### COVID VACCINE BOOSTERS

While the third dose – or first booster – of COVID-19 vaccines was highly effective in preventing the severe form of COVID-19, the protection afforded against infection lasted for less than four to six months.

That diminished protection even after the third dose is what led the



CDC to endorse the fourth shot of COVID-19 vaccine – called the second booster – for people who are immunocompromised and those aged 50 and older.

However, a recent preliminary study from Israel that has not yet been peer-reviewed showed that the second booster did not further boost the immune response but merely restored the waning immune response seen during the third dose. Also, the second booster provided little extra protection against COVID-19 when compared to the initial three doses.

So while the second booster certainly provides a small benefit to the most vulnerable people by extending immune protection by a few months, there has been considerable confu-

sion over what the availability of the fourth shot means for the general population.

### FREQUENT BOOSTING AND IMMUNE EXHAUSTION

In addition to the inability of the current COVID-19 vaccines to provide long-term immunity, some researchers believe that frequent or constant exposure to foreign molecules found in an infectious agent may cause immune “exhaustion.”

Such a phenomenon has been widely reported with HIV infection and cancer. In those cases, because the T cells “see” the foreign molecules all the time, they can get worn down and fail to rid the body of the cancer or HIV.

Evidence also suggests that in severe cases of COVID-19, the killer T cells may be exhibiting immune exhaustion and therefore be unable to mount a strong immune response. Whether repeated COVID-19 vaccine boosters can cause similar T cell exhaustion is a possibility that needs further study.

### ROLE OF ADJUVANTS TO BOOST VACCINE-INDUCED IMMUNITY

Another reason why the mRNA vaccines have failed to induce sustained antibody and memory response may be related to ingredients called adjuvants. Traditional vaccines such as those for diphtheria and tetanus use adjuvants to boost the immune response. These are compounds that activate the innate immunity that consists of cells known as macrophages. These are specialized cells that help the T cells and B cells, ultimately inducing a stronger antibody response.

Because mRNA-based vaccines are a relatively new class of vaccines, they do not include the traditional adjuvants. The current mRNA vaccines used in the U.S. rely on small balls of fat called lipid nanoparticles to deliver the mRNA. These lipid molecules can act as adjuvants, but how precisely these molecules affect the long-term immune response remains to be seen. And whether the current COVID-19 vaccines' failure to trigger strong long-lived antibody response is related to the adjuvants in the existing formulations remains to be explored.

While the current vaccines are highly effective in preventing severe disease, the next phase of vaccine development will need to focus on how to trigger a long-lived antibody response that would last for at least a year, making it likely that COVID-19 vaccines will become an annual shot.

The author's are professors at University of South Carolina. The article is being reproduced by arrangements with The Conversation



# Apple, Google, Microsoft Expand Support For Passwordless Sign-Ins



IAN S

In a bid to make the web more secure, Apple, Google and Microsoft on Thursday announced plans to expand support for a common passwordless sign-in standard created by the FIDO Alliance and the World Wide Web Consortium. The new capability will allow websites and apps to offer consistent, secure, and easy passwordless sign-ins to consumers across devices and platforms. "This new capability stands to usher in a new wave of low-friction FIDO implementations alongside the ongoing

and growing utilization of security keys -- giving service providers a full range of options for deploying modern, phishing-resistant authentication," said Andrew Shikar, executive director and CMO of the FIDO Alliance. While password managers and legacy forms of two-factor authentication offer incremental improvements, there has been industry-wide collaboration to create sign-in technology that is more convenient and more secure. The expanded standards-based capabilities will give websites and apps the ability to offer an end-to-end passwordless

option. "Working with the industry to establish new, more secure sign-in methods that offer better protection and eliminate the vulnerabilities of passwords is central to our commitment to building products that offer maximum security and a transparent user experience," said Kurt Knight, Apple's Senior Director of Platform Product Marketing. Users will sign in through the same action that they take multiple times each day to unlock their devices, such as a simple verification of their fingerprint or face, or a device PIN.

This new approach protects against phishing and sign-in will be radically more secure when compared to passwords and legacy multi-factor technologies such as one-time passcodes sent over SMS. Apple, Google, and Microsoft have led development of this expanded set of capabilities and are now building support into their respective platforms. The move allows users to automatically access their FIDO sign-in credentials (referred to by some as a "passkey") on many of their devices, even new ones, without having to reenroll every account. It will also enable users to use FIDO

authentication on their mobile device to sign in to an app or website on a nearby device, regardless of the OS platform or browser they are running. "This milestone is a testament to the collaborative work being done across the industry to increase protection and eliminate outdated password-based authentication," said Mark Risher, Senior Director of Product Management, Google. Alex Simons, Corporate Vice President, Identity Program Management at Microsoft, said that the complete shift to a passwordless world will begin with consumers making it a natural part of their lives.

# New Plant-Based Covid Vaccine 70% Effective Against Variants: Study

Press Trust Of India

A new plant-based Covid-19 vaccine is nearly 70 per cent effective against symptomatic disease caused by five variants of the coronavirus, according to results of the human clinical trial of the preventive. The vaccine developed by researchers at Canadian biotechnology company Medicago contains coronavirus-like particles (CoVLP) produced in plants which are combined with an adjuvant (AS03) that helps vaccines work better. The phase 3 trial of the vaccine was conducted at 85 centres involving 24,141 adults who were randomly assigned to receive two intramuscular injections of either the CoVLP+AS03 vaccine or placebo 21 days apart. The researchers confirmed Covid-19 by polymerase chain reaction (PCR) test in 165 participants. The study, published on Thursday in the New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM), shows that the vaccine efficacy was 69.5 per cent against any symptomatic Covid-19 caused by five variants. In a statistical analysis, vaccine efficacy was 78.8 and 74.0 per cent against moderate-to-severe disease and among those who were seronegative at the start, respectively, the researchers said. "The CoVLP+AS03 vaccine was effective in preventing Covid-19 caused by a spectrum of variants, with efficacy ranging from 69.5 per cent against symptomatic infection to 78.8 per cent against moderate-to-severe disease," the authors of the study noted. In the vaccine group, there were no severe cases of Covid-19, the researchers said.



“  
The CoVLP+AS03 vaccine was effective in preventing Covid-19 caused by a spectrum of variants, with efficacy ranging from 69.5 per cent against symptomatic infection to 78.8 per cent against moderate-to-severe disease

The median viral load for breakthrough cases was more than 100-fold lower in the vaccine group versus the placebo group, they said. Solicited adverse events were mainly mild or moderate and transient, and occurred more frequently in the vaccine group versus placebo group, according to the researchers. Local adverse events occurred in 92.3 and 45.5 per cent in the vaccine group and placebo group, respectively, and systemic adverse events occurred in 87.3 and 65.0 per cent, respectively, they said. "The potential effect of this plant-based technology in the current pandemic will be greatly influenced by the evolution of the pandemic itself,"

the authors noted. "However, the availability and further development of this platform could have important implications for pandemic readiness," they added. The researchers noted that vaccine efficacy among adults who were 65 years or older could not be determined because of the limited enrollment of participants in this age group. However, previous evidence suggests that the CoVLP+AS03 vaccine induced similar immune responses in both young and older adults, they said. Several authors of the study disclosed financial ties to Medicago which funded the study and is the manufacturer of the CoVLP+AS03 vaccine.

# ‘Children Who Don’t Wear Diapers Sleep Poorly’

ANI

A recent study by the Rutgers School of Nursing has found that children whose parents cannot afford diapers do not get quality sleep. The study, published in the Journal of Developmental Behavioral Pediatrics, is the first to examine the relationship between diaper needs and sleep. "Sleep promotes brain development and solidifies learning and memory," said co-author Sallie Porter, an associate professor at Rutgers School of Nursing. "Children with compromised sleep are more at risk for childhood obesity and emotional and behavioural problems." The researchers surveyed 129 parents of children age 3 and younger who were involved in early development, home visiting and disability support programs on the severity of their diaper needs and their child's sleep habits. The habits include the time it takes for them to fall asleep, how often they wake at night, the longest stretch they sleep and the total number of minutes they sleep. Parents were asked to report difficulties with bedtime routines, sleep problems and sleep locations and their perceptions of their child's quality of sleep. They were also asked if their child had been diagnosed with a developmental disability. They found that 88 per cent of the participating families were food insecure and 76 per cent were without diapers at least once a year, with more than one-third reporting not having diapers monthly. One-third of the children had a

diagnosed developmental disability and 47 per cent of the parents had concerns about their child's development. They found that children in families that struggled to provide diapers were more likely to have disrupted, shorter sleep periods and lower total sleep scores. Parents who worried about not having enough diapers at least monthly are more likely to report their baby's sleep as a problem or difficulty. "Approximately one-third of U.S. mothers report difficulty affording diapers, and prevalence during the COVID-19 pandemic is likely much higher," said Porter.



"Diaper need is associated with an increased incidence of irritated skin and urinary tract infections. It is also related to increased maternal mental health symptoms." Porter says the findings suggest that clinicians should ask about diaper need during well-child visits and then connect families to resources that provide diapering supplies. They should also provide guidance on appropriate sleep practices, including consistent calming bedtime routines.



## Govt Amends Rules Governing Allotment Of Securities By Companies

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** The government has amended rules governing companies with respect to prior approval being mandatory for investments by entities and individuals from countries that share a land border with India.

The rules pertaining to prospectus and allotment of securities under the Companies Act, 2013 were amended by the corporate affairs ministry on May 5.

"... no offer or invitation of any securities under this rule shall be made to a body corporate incorporated in, or a national of, a country which shares a land border with India, unless such body corporate or the national, as the case may be, have obtained government approval under the Foreign Exchange Management (Non-debt Instruments) Rules, 2019," the ministry said in a notification.

The rule refers to Rule 14 in the Companies (Prospectus and Allotment of Securities) Amendment Rules, 2022.

The approval should be attached with the private placement offer cum application letter, the notification said.

About the amended rules,



Akila Agarwal, Partner and Head M&A at Cyril Amarchand Mangaldas, said "this is a procedural change in the relevant forms consequent to Press Note 3".

In April 2020, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) had issued Press Note 3 regarding foreign investments.

With the press note, the government had made its prior approval mandatory for foreign investments from countries that share land border with India to curb opportunistic takeovers of domestic firms following the coronavirus pandemic.

Countries which share land borders with India are China, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Bhutan, Nepal, Myanmar and Afghanistan. As per that decision, FDI proposals from these countries need government approval for investments in India in any sector.

## Indian Firms Register Revenue And Job Growth In UK, Finds 'India Meets Britain Tracker'

Press Trust Of India

**LONDON:** Indian-owned companies operating in the UK have multiplied in the past year, up from 850 to 900, with a corresponding hike in revenues and job creation figures, according to latest research released here.

The 2022 India Meets Britain Tracker', launched on Thursday, revealed these companies employed 141,005 people, up from 116,046 in 2021, and had combined revenues of 54.4 billion pounds, also up from 50.8 billion pounds last year.

India is a very special place, and its growth has been nothing short of remarkable, said Lord Gerry Grimstone, Minister for Investment in the UK's Department for International Trade (DIT).

This growing, confident, outward looking India has benefited the world and certainly benefited the UK. Our relationship is defined by our peoples, our mutual investment and mutual trade. In the last five years, Indian investment into the UK has more than quadrupled and we calculate that it supports almost half a million jobs on our shores, he said, pointing to the ongoing India-UK free trade agreement (FTA) negotiation as the biggest deal yet to come".

The Tracker, released annually by professional services firm Grant Thornton and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) to analyse the contribution of Indian businesses to the UK economy, is now in its ninth edition.

The pandemic has created uniquely challenging economic circumstances over the past two years. Despite this, Indian businesses in the UK have succeeded in expanding their combined

turnover and increasing the number of jobs they support, said Gaitri Issar Kumar, Indian High Commissioner to the UK.

The Tracker also identifies the fastest growing Indian companies in Britain, measured by those with a turnover of more than 5 million pounds, year-on-year revenue growth of at least 10 per cent and a minimum two-year track record in the UK.

For 2022, 37 companies met the qualifying criteria, achieving an average growth rate of over 38 per cent. The fastest growth among these was registered by MSSL (GB) Ltd, part of the Motherhood Sumi group, which bagged the Tracker Award of the year for its 248 per cent growth. The other companies to bag the awards for their fast growth included tech firm Prodata (UK) Ltd, which grew 114 per cent, and Route Mobile (UK) Ltd with 98 per cent.

Despite ongoing challenges faced by all companies over the past 12 months, our latest research finds that the number of Indian companies operating in the UK has increased and that many continue to grow at a rapid rate, with some recording triple digit growth, said Anuj Chande, Partner and Head of South Asia Business Group, Grant Thornton UK.

The majority of the fastest growing companies included in the 2022 Tracker are based in London (46 per cent), continuing the trend seen in recent years. For the ninth year in a row, technology and telecoms companies dominate the Tracker, accounting for 35 per cent of those who qualified for inclusion this year.

This is followed by the pharmaceuticals and chemicals sector (27 per cent) and engineering and manufacturing (14 per cent).

## RBI May Extend Rate Hikes On Worries Over Inflation-Target Breach

Bloomberg

**NEW DELHI:** India's central bank may extend interest rate hikes amid worries that inflation would exceed its mandated target in the next 6 months, although a three-quarter point increase is unlikely in the June meeting, people familiar with the matter said.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) opted for an out-of-cycle hike on Wednesday (May 4) as it did not want to shock the markets with super-sized increases in the June and August meetings, and to prevent inflation from overshooting the authority's 2-6 per cent target range, according to the sources, who did not want to be identified.

RBI governor Shaktikanta Das said the move to raise rates by 40 basis points and withdraw billions from the banking system may be seen as a reversal of the easing implemented in early 2020 to fight the impact of pandemic. That led to speculation in the market that the RBI may consider raising rates by 75 basis points in the June meeting, reversing what it had implemented back then.



RBI's rate actions will be guided by the inflation trajectory and some market expectations of a 75-basis-point hike may be unfounded, according to the sources. The March headline number came as a surprise to the RBI and the April print could also show a spike, the sources said.

India's retail inflation in March rose to a 17-month high of 6.95 per cent, a third straight month of remaining above the monetary policy committee's mandate of 2-6 per cent. If inflation stays above the RBI's 6 per cent tolerance limit for 3 straight quarters, the governor is required to write a letter to

the government explaining the reasons for the surge in prices and the remedial measures.

Bonds sold off after the RBI's shock rate increase, with the yield on 10-year bonds rising by 28 basis points in 2 days to Thursdays.

The RBI is extremely mindful that its hawkish measures will be negative for growth in the short term, but will stabilise it in the medium term, the sources said.

The central bank is unlikely to implement bond purchases like it did last year via the government securities acquisition programme, even though it will support the record borrowing plan, they added.

## All Indicators Show That India Is On The Growth Path: Goyal

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** All the key indicators such as jump in exports and high GST collection in April reflect that the country's economy is on the growth path, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Thursday.

He said that goods and services exports have touched USD 675 billion in 2021-22, while the GST (Goods and Services Tax) collection in April touched the highest ever level of about Rs 1.68 lakh crore, up 20 per cent from the year-ago period.

"So all indicators show that the country is on the right path, growth path, recovery path and the revival path," Goyal said.

He also asked project exporters to diversify and foray into markets of the developed world and urged them not to restrict themselves to government's line of credit projects and projects in the developing world.

The minister outlined the challenges that the global economy has been facing such as the Omicron wave, global supply



chain disruptions, soaring raw material costs, container shortages, financial market volatility and geopolitical tensions.

About the country's target of USD 1 trillion worth of goods and services export each by 2030, he said that the target would be achieved through the participation of all stakeholders.

Further, he urged the banking sector to abandon the mindset of conservatism that has set in the sector and be open to taking some risks.

India has all the necessary ingredients to become a global player in project exports, he said, adding, the world has realised that it is absolutely essential to invest in infrastructure.

"Exim Bank can study what the developed world wants, what are the restrictions in their government contracts..." he said.

He was addressing the 'Summit on Enhancing Global Opportunities for Indian Project Exporters' organized by the Exim Bank New Delhi.

## Kulgam Admin To Hold Series Of Tourism Festivals At Unexplored Tourist Destinations

**KULGAM:** Continuing its endeavors to promote unexplored tourist destination of Kulgam, the District Administration Kulgam is going to hold series of tourism festivals at various unexplored tourist destination of the district this year.

This was stated by the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Dr

.Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat during a meeting of officers held here under his chairmanship to review arrangements for Panchanpatri Festival scheduled to be held on 14th of May.

During the meeting, arrangements for different activities including establishment of stalls, Sports activities, cultural

programme and other activities were reviewed.

The DC directed all the concerned officers to ensure fool proof arrangements to make Panchanpatri festival event attractive and successful. The meeting was attended by CEO-ADA, ADC, ACR, DFO, Tehsildars, TO, DYS&SO, and other officers.

## LIC IPO: Retail Portion Subscribed Fully

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** The retail portion of LIC IPO, the country's biggest-ever, was subscribed fully in the first hour of bidding on day three on Friday.

The Retail Individual Investor (RII) category garnered over 7.2 crore bid, as against 6.9 crore shares set aside for this segment, as per the data on stock exchanges at 11:36 am on Friday.

The segment was thus fully subscribed.

However, the Qualified Institutional Buyer (QIB) and Non-Institutional Investor (NII) portion has been receiving a tepid response. Non-institutional investors' portion was subscribed 50 per cent, while QIBs' portion is still lower at 40 per cent.

The policyholder portion was subscribed over three times, while the reserved employees' segment was subscribed nearly two and half times.

Overall, the IPO is more than fully subscribed as it has received 17,98,42,980 bids, as against 16,20,78,067 shares on sale.

The LIC initial public offering (IPO) will close on May 9.

The government aims to generate about Rs 21,000 crore by diluting its 3.5 per cent stake in the insurance behemoth.

LIC has fixed the price band at Rs 902-949 per equity share for the issue. The offer includes a reservation for eligible employ-



ees and policyholders. The retail investors and eligible employees will get a discount of Rs 45 per equity share, and policyholders will get a discount of Rs 60 per equity share.

The share sale is through an offer-for-sale (OFS) of up to 22.13 crore equity shares. The shares are likely to be listed on May 17.

LIC has cornered a little over Rs 5,627 crore from anchor investors led primarily by domestic institutions. Anchor Investors (AIs) portion (5,92,96,853 equity shares) was subscribed at Rs 949 per equity share.

It has reduced its IPO size to 3.5 per cent, from 5 per cent decided earlier, due to the prevailing market condition. Even after the reduced size of about Rs 20,557 crore, the LIC IPO is going to be the biggest initial public offering ever in the country.

So far, the amount mobilised from the IPO of Paytm in 2021 was the largest ever at Rs 18,300 crore, followed by Coal India (2010) at nearly Rs 15,500 crore and Reliance Power (2008) at Rs 11,700 crore.

## 'Sri Lanka Lost Around 1 Million Taxpayers Since 2019 Tax Cuts'

Press Trust Of India

**COLOMBO:** Sri Lanka lost around 1 million taxpayers in the last two years after the Gotabaya Rajapaksa regime announced sweeping tax cuts in 2019 in its bid to spur growth, Finance Minister Ali Sabry has revealed, as the island nation faced an unprecedented economic crisis.

These tax cuts were introduced in November 2019 in keeping with President Rajapaksa's election pledges.

The Cabinet had slashed the value added tax (VAT) to 8 per cent from 15 per cent and also abolished seven other taxes.

These sweeping tax cuts led to a credit rating downgrade in the following year, prompting Sri Lanka to get alienated in international financial markets.

Sabry told Parliament on Thursday that Sri Lanka lost about 500,000 taxpayers each in 2020 and 2021 after the ill-timed tax cuts were delivered.

From around 1,550,000 taxpayers at the beginning of 2020, the number came down to 1,036,000 in 2020 and to 412,000 in 2021. This is a massive problem for us, Sabry told Parliament on Thursday.

Sri Lanka's foreign reserves dropped sharply from a healthy level of USD 8,864 million in June 2019 to USD 2,361 million in January 2022, according to official estimates.

The COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 only exacerbated

the situation, with tourist inflows and foreign remittances taking a massive hit.

The prolonged and intermittent lockdowns caused by the pandemic prevented the economy from achieving what was originally expected from the tax cuts, Sabry was quoted as saying by the Daily Mirror newspaper.

The 2019 end tax cuts were brought for all tax paying citizens in the country to stimulate economic activity and thereby make use of that reinvigoration as a launchpad for the development of the country. As a result of the pandemic, it failed to deliver the desired results, the minister explained.

In 2018, Sri Lanka's tourism industry boomed and generated USD 4.4 million in revenue, and it dropped to USD 200 million in 2021, mainly due to COVID-19, he said.

However, even before these tax cuts, Sri Lanka was a country with one of the lowest revenue-to-GDP ratios in the world, and the 2019 tax cuts drove Sri Lanka closer to the bottom of this list, the report said.

Subsequently, the government revenue-to-GDP in 2021 was estimated to have declined to 8.7 per cent from 9.1 per cent in 2020, while the tax revenue-to-GDP in 2021 also declined to 7.7 per cent, it said.

Sabry on Wednesday had called the 2019 tax cuts a historic mistake.

### SHORTS TAKES

## Dir Agri Kashmir visits Vegetable SMF Tappar

**BARAMULLA** The Director Agriculture Kashmir, Chowdhary Mohammad Iqbal Friday visited Seed Multiplication Farm (SMF) Tappar Kreeeri district Baramulla.

The Director during the visit inspected various blocks of the farm and took stock of different Agriculture activities.

While interacting with the staff and technical experts of Tappar Farm, the Director said that Department is implementing a prestigious initiative and is endeavouring to optimize the utility of Departmental farms to attain self reliance in the field of seed requirement for Kashmir Division.

He said Department has already fixed bench marks and targets for every departmental farm in the valley so far as the production is concerned and after visiting different farms during the recent times we are satisfied and optimistic that we could achieve those targets in an effective manner, he added.

The Director appreciated the efforts of the concerned technical expert, officers and asked them to work with close coordination, so that the Farms could achieve new heights in the years to come.

He was accompanied by JD Farms Iqbal Singh, Deputy Director Planning Mohammad Younis Chowdhary and other senior officers of the Department.

## Gold Declines By Rs 251; Silver Tumbles Rs 1,080

**NEW DELHI:** Gold in the national capital on Friday dipped by Rs 251 to Rs 51,035 per 10 grams reflecting overnight decline in international precious metal prices, according to HDFC Securities.

In the previous trade, the precious metal settled at Rs 51,286 per 10 grams.

Silver also tumbled Rs 1,080 to Rs 62,435 per kg from Rs 63,515 per kg in the previous trade.

In the international market, gold was trading marginally higher at USD 1,878 per ounce and silver was flat at USD 22.39 per ounce.

"Gold prices traded firm with spot gold prices at COMEX trading 0.13 per cent up at USD 1,878 per ounce on Friday. Gold prices recovered from early lows following weakness in dollar index," said Tapan Patel, Senior Analyst (Commodities) at HDFC Securities. (PTI)

## Sensex, Nifty Crash As Global Markets Lose Nerve; End Week In Red

**MUMBAI:** Dalal Street wilted under intense selling pressure on Friday, mirroring a meltdown in world equities as investors braced for slowing global growth amid policy tightening by central banks.

A sharp drop in the rupee amid a spurt in crude oil prices and unabated foreign fund outflows added to the woes.

The 30-share BSE Sensex dived 866.65 points or 1.56 per cent to finish at 54,835.58. During the day, it tanked 1,115.48 points or 2 per cent to 54,586.75.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty tumbled 271.40 points or 1.63 per cent to settle at 16,411.25.

Bajaj Finance was the top laggard among the Sensex components, skidding 4.91 per cent, followed by Axis Bank, Bajaj Finserv, Nestle, Wipro, HDFC, Infosys, HDFC Bank and UltraTech Cement.

In contrast, Tech Mahindra, PowerGrid, ITC, SBI, NTPC and Sun Pharma recorded gains of up to 2.21 per cent.

On a weekly basis, the Sensex slumped 2,225.29 points or 3.89 per cent, while the Nifty lost 691.30 points or 4.04 per cent.

"Markets were in southward direction right from the start of the trading session and selling intensified thereafter as rising crude oil prices reignited fears that inflation would pose a major challenge going ahead.

"The market is in a dilemma that in a rising interest rate scenario, a more hawkish stance by the RBI going ahead could hurt growth," said Amol Athawale, Deputy Vice President - Technical Research, Kotak Securities Ltd.

In the broader market, the BSE smallcap gauge fell 2.10 per cent and midcap dropped 2.06 per cent.

Most BSE sectoral indices ended lower, with realty shedding 3.53 per cent, followed by metal (3.10 per cent), basic materials (2.80 per cent), consumer durables (2.41 per cent) and IT (2.27 per cent). Utilities and power settled with gains. (PTI)

## Rupee Plummets 57 Paise To Close At 76.92 Against US Dollar

**MUMBAI:** The rupee slumped 57 paise to close at 76.92 (provisional) against the US dollar on Friday, weighed down by a strong American currency overseas and firm crude oil prices.

At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened lower at 76.61 against the greenback, and finally settled for the day at 76.92, down 57 paise over its previous close.

During the trading session, the rupee witnessed an intra-day high of 76.56 and a low of 76.96.

On Thursday, the rupee had closed at 76.35.

The dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.30 per cent lower at 103.44.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude futures advanced 2.31 per cent to USD 113.46 per barrel.

The 30-share BSE Sensex ended 866.65 points or 1.56 per cent lower at 54,835.58, while the broader NSE Nifty fell 271.40 points or 1.63 per cent to 16,411.25.

"Rupee had a sweltering time today as it plunged around a percentage point following risk-off moods and surge in crude oil prices," said Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst, HDFC Securities.

The dollar index touched a two-decade high of 104.06 and headed for the sixth consecutive weekly decline as market participants, pricing-in hawkish Federal Reserves, dumped equities and rushed for US Treasuries, Parmar added. (PTI)



# Only 1% Of Women Drink Alcohol Compared With 22% Of Men: NFHS-5

**New Delhi:** Only one per cent of women in India drink alcohol compared with 22 per cent of men, while 39 per cent of men and 4 per cent of women aged between 15 and 49 years use some form of tobacco, according to the latest National Family Health Survey (NFHS) report. Among the women who consume alcohol, 17 per cent drink almost every day and 37 per cent about once a week. Among the men who drink alcohol, 15 per cent drink alcohol almost every day, 43 per cent about once a week, and 42 per cent less than once a week, the report said.

The NFHS-5 survey has been conducted in around 6.37 lakh sample households in 707 districts in 28 states and eight Union Territories, covering 7,24,115 women and 1,01,839 men to provide dis-aggregated estimates up

to district level.

The percentage of women age 15-49 who drink alcohol is by far the highest among women in Arunachal Pradesh (18 per cent) and Sikkim (15 per cent).

Alcohol use among men is the highest in Goa (59 per cent), followed by Arunachal Pradesh (57 per cent) and Telangana (50 per cent), and is the lowest in Lakshadweep (1 per cent).

The NFHS-5 showed that the proportion of men who drink alcohol decreased from 29 per cent to 22 per cent between NFHS-4 in 2015-16 and NFHS-5 in 2019-21.

During that period, the proportion of women who drink remained unchanged.

The report found that drinking alcohol is more common among women from Scheduled Tribes (4 per cent) than from any other

caste/tribe group.

"Drinking is most common among Christian men (36 per cent) and men belonging to other religions (49 per cent), men with less than 5 years of schooling (33 per cent), men from Scheduled Tribes (34 per cent), and men aged 35-49 (30 per cent)," it stated.

The report also found that use of any kind of tobacco decreased from 45 per cent and 7 per cent among men and women in 2015-16 to 39 per cent and 4 per cent among men and women, respectively, in 2019-21.

"Thirty-nine per cent of men and 4 per cent of women age 15-49 use some form of tobacco. The most common form of tobacco consumption among men is chewing paan masala or gutkha (15 per cent), followed closely by smoking cigarettes (13 per cent),

using khaini (12 per cent), and smoking bidis (7 per cent).

Among men who smoke cigarettes or bidis, 46 per cent smoke 5 or more cigarettes or bidis each day on average. Among women, the most common form of tobacco used is chewing paan masala or gutkha, chewing paan with tobacco, and using khaini (1 per cent).

Among men as well as women, the use of any form of tobacco is higher in rural areas than in urban areas. Among men, in urban areas cigarettes are more popular than any other form of tobacco, it said.

"More than six in 10 men and about one-tenth of women with no schooling or less than 5 years of schooling use some form of tobacco. Tobacco use shows a substantial decrease with increasing levels of education among both men and women," it said.

However, almost one-fourth (24 per cent) of men with 12 or more years of schooling use tobacco.

"There is an equally clear and continual decrease in tobacco use with increasing wealth quintiles. More than two in 10 (22 per cent) men in the highest wealth quintile use tobacco, in comparison with 59 per cent of men in the lowest wealth quintile. Nine per cent of women in the lowest wealth quintile use tobacco. Women (11 per cent) and men (52 per cent) from scheduled tribes are more likely to use tobacco than those from any other caste/tribe group," the NFHS said.

The 2019-21 NFHS collected data on attempts to quit smoking or stop tobacco use in the 12 months preceding the survey by women and men age 15-49 who were using any kind of tobacco.

## Court Commissioner's Team Reaches Gyanvapi Mosque For Its Survey, Police Beef Up Security

Varanasi : Amid the Gyanvapi mosque management committee's call to oppose a court's decision to get the religious place and the Shringar Gauri premise videographed and surveyed, a team led by the court commissioner reached here Friday to carry out the judicial direction.

Before the arrival of the court commissioner and his team here, a large crowd of devotees had gathered for Friday prayers.

Some youths also raised 'Har Har Mahadev' slogan evoking a reaction from some Muslim youths who too raised some religious slogans but the police promptly drove them away.

In the Shringar Gauri worship case, the court of Varanasi's Civil Judge (Senior Division) Ravi Kumar Diwakar had on April 26 ordered videography of the Shringar Gauri temple in the Kashi Vishwanath-Gyanvapi mosque complex and

other places after Eid and before May 10.

To carry out its order, the court had appointed advocate Ajay Kumar as its commissioner.

But the Gyanvapi mosque's management committee had announced to oppose the court order for the videography and survey inside the mosque's premises, scheduled to be held on May 6 and 7.

"No one will be allowed to enter the mosque," S M Yasin, joint secretary of Anjuman Intezamiya Masajid, had said last week.

Around the time the survey was to start on Friday, a woman started offering Namaz at gate number four of Vishwanath Temple, prompting police to whisk her to the police station.

Police later said the woman was identified as Ayesha, a resident of Jaipura, and is said to be mentally disturbed.

## CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

### Encounter Near

years now.

Mohammad Ashraf Khan alias Ashraf Molvi a resident of Tangpawa Anantnag as per officials had joined militant ranks in 2013 after working as an Over Ground Worker (OGW) for several years.

They said that after the killing of Hizb commander Dr Saifullah, Molvi was chosen as operational commander of the outfit.

Sources said, around 2:00 am Friday, Police and army's 19 RR launched a cordon and search operation (CASO) in the forest area of Sirchan Top, a few kilometres from the tourist resort of Pahalgam.

The search operation, they said, was launched on the leads developed after the arrest of Hizbul Mujahideen militant Mohammad Ishfaq Shergoiji during an anti-militancy operation in Kokernag on Thursday evening. Besides, the officials said, several CASOs were conducted in various areas of the district.

According to a police spokesperson, the joint party came under heavy fire from militants hiding in the forest area of Sirchan Top when the former started advancing towards the suspected spot.

The search team, he said, returned the fire, setting off a fierce encounter.

In the ensuing encounter, the spokesperson said, three Hizb militants were killed and their bodies were retrieved from the site of encounter.

Giving details of Molvi's long history of "terror crimes", the spokesperson said that he was involved in the killing of Constable Imtiyaz Ahmad at Bus Stand Anantnag on September 9 2017, ASI Mohammad Ashraf near Police Station Bijbehara on December 22 last year, Head Constable Ali Mohd Ganie at Hasanpora Tabeela on January 29 this year, and Mohammad Saleem Dar resident of Larkipora, Fatehpura in Anantnag on April 2, 2020.

On Molvi's directions, he said, militants shot dead Sarpanch Ghulam Rasool Dar and his wife Jawahara Begum at Lal Chowk Anantnag on August 9, 2021.

According to the spokesperson, the killed commander was also well trained in fabricating and planting of IEDs, as he had crossed over to Pck in year 1999 to receive illegal arms training to join "terror folds". Besides, Molvi, he said, was also instrumental in reviving the "terror folds" of Hizb in Anantnag by recruiting the gullible youth into their ranks.

The second slain militant Tantray, according to the spokesperson, was active since 2018 and was involved in several cases including the killings of policemen and a truck driver namely Narayan Dutt of Katra at Fruit Mandi Kanawan.

The third militant Drangay, the spokesperson said, was active since 2019 and was involved in killings of an ASI and a Head Constable.

"Incriminating materials, huge cache of arms and ammunition were also recovered from the site of encounter. In this connection, Police has registered a case under relevant sections of law and investigation has been initiated," he said.

The spokesperson quoted IGP Kashmir Vijay Kumar congratulating the joint team for neutralizing the most wanted militants and conducting operation in a professional manner without any collateral damage.

"He also termed this operation as a major success as the site of operation is close to Yatra route which indicates that the killed terrorists were eyeing to target Amarnath Yatra-2022," he added.

Pertinently, the killing of Molvi comes nearly a fortnight after government forces killed Muhammad Yusuf Dar aka Kantroo, one of the longest surviving militants in Tangmarg sub-district of north Kashmir's Baramulla district after a 40-hour long gunfight on April 22.

He was killed along with two associates in around 40-hour encounter with the joint parties of army, CRPF and police.

Yusuf active for 22 years, was said to be one of the longest surviving militants.

### 200 Militants

said in reply to a question about the security situation along the Line of Control (LoC) and across the J-K border.

He said that the counter infiltration grid is very fool-proof.

"We have made sure that all reserve troops are put in the second tier of defence so that no infiltration takes place," he said.

"In the last twelve months, to say so, the number of ceasefire violations has been very limited — only one to three CFVs took place," he said.

He maintained that militant infrastructure, however, seems to be intact across the border. "There are six major terrorist camps and 29 minor camps. There are temporary launching pads located close to various military establishments," he said.

He said that infiltration not only takes places via mountainous areas and forests but also through International Border via Jammu and also Punjab and Nepal.

"Our aim is to identify these people and neutralize them at the earliest possible time," he said.

The Army commander said that there are 40 to 50 local militants currently operating in the hinterland besides foreign militants, whose number cannot be determined.

"But we have neutralized 21 foreign terrorists till now. It shows that support for sheltering terrorists is dwindling with each passing day," he said.

Dwivedi said local militants who were neutralized were very poorly trained and armed with just pistols.

Expressing concern over radicalisation, he said that teenagers are being recruited increasingly and it is a matter of concern for all.

"They are being educated to get rid of radicalisation being infused in them by Pakistan. After the abrogation of article 370, there is a change," he said.

"Army is playing an important role in bringing this change." Dwivedi said that over 15,000 students in 48 goodwill schools are being taught how to build up a better future for themselves in their own country.

Asked about the probability of revocation of Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) in J-K, he said that AFSPA will automatically go the way there is no need for armed guards and paramilitary on roads.

### Hot, Dry Weather

this time of the season, he said.

Kokernag recorded a low of 9.1°C against 9.7°C on the previous night. It was 0.1°C 'below' normal during this time of the season for the place in south Kashmir, the official said.

Gulmarg recorded a low of 4.0°C against 1.6°C on the previous night, the official said.

While 5.2°C is normal for the world famous skiing resort during this time of the season, the official said that the temperature was 1.2°C 'below' normal for the place in north Kashmir's Baramulla district.

Kupwara town in north Kashmir recorded a low of 9.8°C against 9.6°C on the previous night. The temperature was 0.5°C above normal for the district, the official said.

Jammu recorded a low of 21.9°C against 22.6°C on the previous night, the official said. The temperature was 1.1°C below normal for J&K's winter capital, he said. Banihal recorded a low of 10.6°C, Batote 13.1°C and Bhaderwah 10.2°C, the official added. (GNS)

### Inclusive Growth

has given the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir enviable strength and self-confidence.

"Artificial boundaries were created within the system, which have been removed to ensure growth with equity so that every citizen of J&K benefits from fast economic development, rapid social change and J&K's prosperity," Sinha said.

"In the connectivity sector, earlier only 6.54 KM roads were being built every day, which has now been substantially increased to 20.68 KMs road per day. Approximately, Rs. one lakh crore is being spent on road and tunnel infrastructure, which are opening up new vistas for the people living in far-flung areas," he added.

According to the spokesperson, in 2018-19, only 9,229 projects costing Rs.67,000 Crore were completed. Subsequently, he said, in 2020-21, 21,943 projects with an expenditure of Rs.63,000 Crore were completed.

He further said that the FY 2021-22 set a new record by completing 50,726 projects. The present infrastructure is expected to expand at a much more accelerated rate in the coming days.

"Enhanced connectivity is significant not only for the overall growth of the economy but also to meet the objectives of strengthening institutions for providing basic necessities to all, agriculture, promotion of inclusive growth and generation of employment opportunities. Inclusive growth is the ultimate goal of the government," the LG said, as per the spokesperson.

He said that the LG also highlighted the measures to improve agriculture and horticulture productivity such as diversification of

high-density crops, availability of high-quality seeds, improvement in water management and promotion of technology.

"He said that the all-round improvement in this important sector would contribute significantly toward economic growth of the Union Territory of J&K and employment creation," he added.

### CBI Raids RTO

were seized by the CBI teams.

Sources further confirmed the nexus between touts and officials involved in this large scale fraud going on from last many years, they said, adding that many arrests are expected in the coming days.

RTO Kashmir confirmed the raid was conducted by the CBI sleuths in the early hours of Friday and some documents were seized as well.

He further added that RTO officials also assisted the CBI team. (KNO)

### Unemployment Rate

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitaraman's repeated assurances of a falling unemployment rate in J&K.

The CMIE, a private economic think-tank in India, in its latest monthly report for the month of March 2022 had estimated the unemployment rate for J&K at 25 percent, which as per CMIE data, was the highest since 2016 when the unemployment rate was recorded at its worst— 29.9 percent.

Amid the unrest of 2016, J&K's unemployment rate stood at 25.3 percent in September, 26.3 percent in October and 29.9 percent in November.

As per CMIE, since the start of this year, there has been an increase of 11.8 percent in the unemployment rate. In the month of January, the data notes, J&K's UR stood at 15 percent. Though in the month of February it dipped down to 13.2 percent but in March the rate took an ugly turn and jumped to a grueling 25 percent.

However, the latest UR for the month of April has brought some respite as it has come down 10 percent from the erstwhile unemployment rate of March.

However, the data had come at a time when the passionate J&K administration had gone ahead to say that the employment in the erstwhile state will gradually increase. "Private investments in J&K would increase to Rs 70,000 crore to give fillip to employment and a peaceful environment in the region," J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha had said.

According to the CMIE's "30 day moving average" survey, J&K's 25.0 percent unemployment rate was the second-worst recorded unemployment rate among other states & union territories in India. The erstwhile state was succeeded by the state of Haryana where the unemployment rate stood at 26.7 percent.

Pertinently, a superficial look at last month's data where J&K was standing at an unemployment rate of 25% had brought into forth that roughly over 1.1 million people were jobless in J&K.

Another credible labor survey report which substantiates the chronic unemployment scenario in the region was published by the Union Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation for April-June 2021 quarter. As per that survey, J&K registered a staggering unemployment ratio of 46.3 percent.

If we look at the latest unemployment figures, Haryana has the highest Unemployment rate with 34.5 percent followed by Rajasthan where the UR stood at 28.8 percent. J&K has the fourth highest Unemployment rate in India, as per CMIE.

Meanwhile, as per CMIE, India's national average was recorded at 7.8 percent where urban rate stood at 9.0 percent and rural rate was recorded at 7.2 percent.

Although the government has started the recruitment process for more than 40 thousand posts in 2020-21, most of them are still in the process.

### Army Discusses

most awaited events both for the Northern Command and the Industry -- the North Tech Symposium 2022 -- after a gap of two years," Lt Gen Dwivedi said.

The Northern Command is most actively engaged in counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations in Jammu and Kashmir besides strategic areas in eastern Ladakh.

The theme of the symposium self-reliance in defence through Atmanirbharta and infusion

of new technologies to meet operational challenges of the command' is quite apt and conveys our pressing needs of the day, Lt Gen Dwivedi said.

He said the symposium is aimed at enabling greater engagements with the Indian private sector, R&D organisations and academia, which are Army's potential partners in development, fabrications and induction of technologically-advanced systems to meet the operational needs of the Northern Command.

"The intervening period has made us realise the importance of Raksha Atmanirbharta or self-reliance in defence manufacturing. A large number of initiatives have been undertaken by the government to give the requisite impetus to the domestic defence industry with a view to attain self-reliance," he added.

Over 10 top companies are showcasing their products in defence, surveillance and security sectors at the symposium to enhance the Atmanirbharta' drive of the government in defence technology.

The Army commander said the symposium will pave the way to identify suitable technologies and products for subsequent trials and inductions into the Northern Command, besides facilitating interface with the field army to orient its products towards specific operational requirements.

"It will also enable all ranks to enhance their technological knowledge and threshold for conduct of efficient and smooth operations, he added.

The primary objective of the symposium is to bridge the gap between user requirement of critical defence products and technologies and the capabilities of Indian OEMs and vendors to address the same through their products, leading to speedier procurement by the Northern Command, Lt Gen Dwivedi added.

He said at this stage, alternative solutions are also most welcome.

"The solutions that we seek with respect to the border guarding and internal security challenges will lead to operational convergence of CAPFs such as BSF, CRPF, ITBP and state police co-employed within the Northern Command.

Many initiatives taken thus far, under the able tutelage of the lieutenant governors of both J-K and Ladakh, have been co-opted and integrated by us in our efforts to foster synergy, he said.

The Army commander said this year the event is being conducted in two parts.

"On the first day i.e. today, the seminar is being conducted with the theme self-reliance in defence through atmanirbharta and infusion of new technologies to meet operational challenges of northern command'.

Concurrently, a two-day equipment display and exhibition is being conducted today and tomorrow, wherein Indian industry has joined hands with us to display its products and technologies, he added.

"I am sanguine that the elites present here will optimally utilise this opportunity. We must interact freely with the academia and industry experts and designers to work towards the common objective of enhancing our technological threshold and imbibe the best for our immediate operational requirements," Lt Gen Dwivedi said.

Let us kindle our minds with new ideas and collective approach towards fulfillment of these common objectives," he said.

### Labroo Assumes

was posted as the Mission Director, Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation 2.0 (AMRUT-2.0) is an alumnus of Ramjas College, University of Delhi. Before that, he was posted as Sub-Divisional Magistrate (West) Srinagar.

### CPI (M) Rejects

47 seats for Kashmir and 43 for Jammu while a fair delimitation, based on population, should have given 51 seats to Kashmir and 39 to Jammu, the party said.

"With 44 per cent of the population, Jammu will have 48 per cent of seats while Kashmir with 56 per cent of population will have only 52 per cent of the seats," the statement from the party said.

"Thus, these recommendations are clearly politically motivated aimed at changing the demographic character and composition of J&K. These recommendations must, therefore, be rejected," it added.

The party also said that the "imposition" of the Citizenship (Amendment) Act would divide the country on communal grounds.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah had on

Thursday said the CAA will be implemented once the COVID-19 wave is over.

"Religion can't be the criterion for citizenship. Amit Shah j'i shouldn't forget that India is a secular country," the CPI(M) said as it accused the BJP of fanning "communal frenzy with an eye on elections".

CAA should not be implemented to ensure that the country remains united, it said.

### Police Raids

to Iran were recovered during the raids, the SSP said.

The police officer said a fresh case was registered at Peer Mitha police station under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act after the recovery of incriminating material related to a banned organisation and further investigation was underway.

### Hybrid Militant

Ansar- Ghazwat-ul- Hind (AGuH) in Huroo area of Budgam, a police spokesperson said Friday. He said incriminating materials, including ammunition 1 hand grenade and 25 AK-47 rounds have been recovered from their possession.

The spokesperson identified the accused as Amir Manzoor Budoo of Dangerpora Razwan and Shahid Rasool Ganaie of Puttermulla, Safapora in Ganderbal district.

"Accordingly, a case vide FIR No. 134/2022 under relevant sections of law has been registered at Police Station Budgam and further investigation has been taken up," he said.

The spokesperson also claimed the arrest of a hybrid militant and his associate in Baramulla district.

On specific information regarding movement of militants, he said, a joint checkpoint was established by Police, 46RR, 53Bn CRPF & 2nd Bn SSB near Hilltop Cheradari Baramulla.

"During checking, the joint party observed movement of two suspicious persons who tried to flee from the spot on noticing the joint party. However, the alert party apprehended the duo tactfully," he said.

He identified the duo as Ashiq Hossain Lone of Hyder Mohalla, Ushkara and Uzair Amin Ganie of Kanthbagh.

The spokesperson said that during the search of the accused, incriminating materials, arms and ammunition including 1 Pistol, 1 magazine, 8 live rounds, 2 hand grenades and 2 UBGL grenades were recovered from their possession.

He said that the preliminary investigation revealed that the arrested duo is linked with LeT and have obtained these illegal arms ammunition through some foreign militants of LeT with the intention to carry out "terrorist activities" in Baramulla and its adjacent areas.

"Accordingly, a case under relevant sections of law stands registered in Police Station Baramulla and further investigation is in progress," the spokesperson added.

### J&K Clocks Nine

while three others were detected in the Jammu division, taking the total number of people infected since the onset of the pandemic in J&K to 454088.

In the Valley, officials said, all the new six cases of infection were detected in Srinagar while in the winter capital two were reported from Jammu and one from Poonch.

During the same time, officials said, eight more Coronavirus infected people recovered in J&K.

Also, they said that the death toll in the pandemic remained unchanged at 4751 in J&K—2328 in Jammu and 2423 in Kashmir, as no fresh fatality was reported during the last 24 hours.

### 3 From Punjab

on board was on its way from Udhampur towards Jammu when it met with the accident near Jambhu Zoo along the Highway.

A police officer said that the driver apparently lost control over the vehicle due to "high speed". Besides Gurdeep, the driver, he said, two other persons Sham Lal son of Bhadur Ram and Vikas Kumar son of Ranjit Kumar, both residents of Firozpur Punjab died on the spot. He said bodies were shifted to GMC Jammu for postmortem.

A case (FIR No. 178/2022) under section 279/304-A IPC stands registered in Police station Nagrota, the officer added. (GNS)

### Man Allegedly

of the matter and have started further investigation. (KNS)



## Wushu Gold Medallist From Kupwara Felicitated



Observer News Service

**KUPWARA:** Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Imam Din on Friday gave a Certificate of Appreciation (CoA) and a cash award of Rs.1000 to Gyas Rey-az Lone, a Class V student and resident of Drungsu Shahnagri,

Qalamabad, Kupwara for winning gold medal (Wushu 45 Kg Gold) under special activity programme, 'My Youth My Pride' for the month of April 2022. ADC Kupwara, Ghulam Nabi Bhat, DIO Kupwara, Mohammad Yousuf Mir and father of the student were present at the occasion.

## Chile Files Legal Challenge Over Ecuador's World Cup Place



Agencies

**ZURICH:** A World Cup legal dispute flared with Chile challenging Ecuador's place at the finals tournament over an alleged ineligible player.

The Chilean soccer federation asked FIFA to investigate its claim that Ecuador player Byron Castillo is actually Colombian and not entitled to have played in qualifying games.

The complaint comes more than one month after South American qualifying ended and Ecuador was drawn into a group with host nation Qatar, the Netherlands and Senegal.

"FIFA can confirm that it has received a formal complaint from the Chilean FA in relation to this matter," soccer's governing body said in a statement.

FIFA gave no timetable for a possible disciplinary case ahead of the World Cup kicking off on November 21.

Ecuador placed fourth in the 10-nation South American qualifying group to advance directly to Qatar. Fifth-place Peru has a playoff game next month against Australia or the United Arab Emirates.

Chile placed seventh, seven points behind Ecuador, but argues it could advance if games

involving Castillo were forfeited.

The FIFA rules in cases of ineligible players require results to be overturned as a 3-0 loss.

Ecuador's soccer federation issued a statement rejecting Chile's claims and insisting that Castillo is legally an Ecuadorian citizen.

Chile has now filed complaints against an opponent's player in back-to-back World Cup qualifying programs.

In South American qualifying for the 2018 World Cup, Bolivia forfeited two games in which it fielded an ineligible player as a late substitute. FIFA had received complaints from Chile and Peru about Bolivia defender Nelson Cabrera, who was born in Paraguay and had previously played for Paraguay's national team.

Bolivia lost an appeal at the Court of Arbitration for Sport which said FIFA was right to investigate even when protests were filed weeks after the games were played. That case ultimately harmed Chile. Three extra points awarded to Peru lifted it above Chile to enter an intercontinental playoff that it won.

FIFA wrote stricter rules for the 2022 World Cup requiring all players in qualifying games to produce a "valid permanent international passport" for inspection by match officials. (AP)

## Frankfurt Sets Up Europa League Final Vs Rangers



Agencies

**FRANKFURT:** Eintracht Frankfurt reached its first European final in 42 years by knocking West Ham out of the Europa League, setting up a title game against Scottish club Rangers.

Frankfurt beat 10-man West Ham 1-0 at home to complete a 3-1 aggregate victory in the semi-finals, while Rangers overturned a 1-0 deficit from the first leg by defeating RB Leipzig 3-1 at a raucous Ibrox Stadium in Glasgow.

It is Frankfurt's first European final since beating Borussia Mönchengladbach in 1980 in an all-German matchup in the UEFA Cup, the predecessor to the Europa League. Rangers will be playing its first European final since losing to Zenit St. Petersburg in the UEFA Cup in 2008. The Scottish club is looking for a first European title in 50 years, after winning the Cup Winners' Cup in 1972.

In the inaugural Europa Conference League, Jose Mourinho will have a chance to add another trophy to his collection after his Roma set up a final against Feyenoord in a new third-tier competition.

Tammy Abraham scored the only goal as Roma beat Leicester 1-0 at home to advance 2-1 on aggregate. Feyenoord held Marseille to a 0-0 draw in France after winning the first leg 3-2.

The final will give Mourinho a chance to win his first European trophy since claiming the 2017 Europa League with Manchester United. He has also won the Champions League twice.

Marseille's chances of overturning its deficit against Feyenoord took a blow when playmaker Dimitry Payet limped off in the 33rd with an injury.

Feyenoord reached its first final since being runner-up in the 2002 UEFA Cup. The Dutch club won the European Cup in 1970.

The final is scheduled for May 25 in the capital of Albania, Tirana.

There were also violent clashes in France between Marseille and Feyenoord fans outside the Stade Velodrome stadium before the game.

One video showed a Marseille apparently unconscious on the ground as he was helped by fellow fans, and another showed two groups charging at each other shortly before kickoff just outside the stadium.

## 2022 Asian Games Postponed Indefinitely Amid Covid Surge

Press Trust of India

**BEIJING:** The Hangzhou Asian Games, which were scheduled to take place from September 10 to 25, were on Friday postponed indefinitely amid a recent surge in COVID-19 cases in China, a development that was on expected lines and evoked mixed reactions from Indian athletes.

The new dates will be announced in near future.

An air of uncertainty had been hovering over the 19th edition of the multi-sports Games ever since Shanghai came under a fresh wave of the pandemic, forcing a lockdown in the city.

The Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) Executive Board met in Tashkent on Friday to discuss the situation and felt postponing the Games was the best decision under the circumstances.

"Following detailed discussions with the Chinese Olympic Committee (COC) and the Hangzhou Asian Games Organising Committee (HAGOC), the OCA Executive Board (EB) today decided to postpone the 19th Asian Games, which were scheduled to be held in Hangzhou, China, from 10 to 25 September 2022," the OCA said in a statement, posted on its website.

"The new dates of the 19th Asian Games will be agreed between the OCA, the COC and the



HAGOC and announced in the near future," the statement added.

The Indian Olympic Association (IOA) said the postponement of the Games is "certainly a sort of a setback" for some athletes.

"The postponement of any big event or Games is a disappointment for the athletes. They become older by some months or one year whatever is the case when the Games are rescheduled," IOA Secretary General Rajeev Mehta told PTI.

"Many of our athletes had already started training and preparations for the Asian Games, and IOA feels for them. The postponement was on expected lines due to COVID-19 but this was not in our hands."

The OCA said the HAGOC was well prepared to deliver the Games on time despite global challenges. However, after carefully considering the pandemic situation and the magnitude of the Games, the decision was taken by all the stakeholders.

The name and the emblem of the 19th Asian Games will remain unchanged, and the OCA believes that the Games will achieve complete success through the joint efforts of all parties.

About 11,000 athletes were to compete in 61 sporting disciplines in the Games.

The development comes at a time when China is battling a record number of daily cases in Shanghai, which is only a short train ride away from Games host city Hangzhou.

Hangzhou, the capital of Zhejiang province, is some 175 kilometres southwest of Shanghai. As per the latest update, Zhejiang has recorded 3124 positive cases and one death.

Additionally, the 3rd Asian Youth Games, which was scheduled from December 20-28 in Shantou, China have also been cancelled.

The next Asian Youth Games will therefore be held in 2025 in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.

## IPL: RR Aim To Return To Winning Ways Against Punjab

Press Trust of India

**MUMBAI:** Rajasthan Royals will look to sort out their batting woes and bring their campaign back on track, while an inconsistent Punjab Kings will be eager to keep the winning momentum going in their IPL game here on Saturday.

The Royals were at one point giving Gujarat Titans a strong fight for the top position but the former champions have recently faced minor hiccups. They enter the upcoming fixture with back-to-back losses including to eighth-place Kolkata Knight Riders and laggards Mumbai Indians.

Punjab Kings, on the other hand, will be high on confidence after inflicting a morale-boosting eight-wicket defeat on table toppers GT. The Mayank Agarwal-led side will be eager to keep the winning momentum going as they try to get out of the mid table logjam an inch closer to sealing a playoff spot.

Rajasthan are third on the points table, and it is mostly because of the flamboyant Jos Buttler. The Englishman is currently the league's leading scorer with 588 runs. Against Mumbai he waged a lone battle with the bat while he failed to capitalise on his start against



KKR. Rajasthan lost both games.

The Royals have one of the best, if not the best, bowling attacks this season but the bowlers failed to defend 158 and 152 in their previous two games.

They definitely have the chops to defend below-par totals. Yuzvendra Chahal leads the bowling charts this season with 19 wickets, while the likes of Trent Boult, Kuldeep Sen and Prasidh Krishna have also done well.

The Punjab batting unit has been plagued by inconsistencies. The likes of Shikhar Dhawan, who has been the side's best batter, Liam Livstone and Bhanuka Rajapaksa can tonk the ball, but they need to fire in unison to build or defend a huge total.

Jonny Bairstow has failed to

play the explosive innings he is known for, while skipper Mayank Agarwal has also looked off colour and will be eager to be back among runs.

The bowling attack was right on the money in the win against Titans, restricting them to below 150.

After a relatively underwhelming season by his standards, pace spearhead South African Kagiso Rabada has been on a roll, snapping four wickets apiece in the previous two games.

Punjab have a strong and varied bowling attack. Arshdeep Singh has also been brilliant this season, and although the 23-year-old hasn't picked too many wickets, he has bowled economically.

Match starts 3.30 IST.

## IPL: KL Rahul Man To Watch As KKR Take On LSG

Press Trust of India

**PUNE:** A resurgent Kolkata Knight Riders will be wary of the threat posed by Lucknow Super Giants' in-form skipper KL Rahul when the two sides face off in the IPL here on Saturday.

LSG are sitting in second place with 14 points and are on course to secure a play-offs berth, thanks to a stupendous show by Rahul, who has been their batting mainstay.

Former champions KKR are languishing in eighth spot with eight points and after four wins from 10 games, a positive result would help them stay afloat in the race for a play-offs spot.

Rahul has led LSG from the front, amassing a staggering 451 runs from 10 matches, with two hundreds and as many fifties to be the second highest run-getter this season.

He came up with a vital knock of 77 in their narrow six-run win against Delhi Capitals, which was their third on the bounce. Thus

have a bearing on the match's outcome. Meanwhile for KKR, the biggest worry has been their out of form openers. They have tried different combinations, but none has worked so far.

If they persist with Aaron Finch and Baba Indra-

jith, the two would need to provide an aggressive start. Skipper Shreyas Iyer, who has scored 324 runs from 10 matches, has had a subdued season by his standards. Just two fifties do not justify his talent and the KKR captain needs to get going if the team has to chase or post a big total.

KKR dished out a clinical show when they restricted Rajasthan Royals to a modest 152. While Umesh and Narine were right on the money, Southie, who bled 46 runs, will need to forget the hammering and look ahead.

KKR may also continue with spinner Anukul Roy, who fared well in the last game, which they won to snap their five-match losing streak.

ush Badoni, Deepak Hooda and Krunal Pandya start taking greater responsibility and deliver. Pacer Mohsin Khan, who snared four wickets in their last game, is getting better with every outing, but Dushmantha Chameera and Holder would need to forget their hammering by Delhi. Ditto for Pandya.

The four overs each by spinners Ravi Bishnoi and K Gowtham can

## New Zealand's Ajaz Patel Auctions 10-Wicket Haul Shirt For Hospital



Reuters

**AUCKLAND:** New Zealand's Ajaz Patel is auctioning the shirt he wore to claim all 10 wickets in a Mumbai test in December to raise money for a hospital in Auckland, the 33-year-old left-arm spinner said.

Patel became only the third bowler after fellow spinners Jim Laker of England and India's Anil Kumble – to claim all 10 wickets in an innings of a test match against India at Mumbai's Wankhede Stadium.

The auction attempts to raise money for a play therapist for

the Starship Radiology Department at New Zealand's national children's hospital, Patel said.

"...while it was a special day for me, what they do to help kids and their families is even more significant and I hope the auction on @trademe can raise as many funds as possible for them," Patel said in an Instagram post.

All members of the test squad from that India tour have signed the shirt. Patel has not played for New Zealand since that test but has been picked for the three-test series in England next month.

## England Looking For Split Coaching; McCullum & Kirsten In Frame: Report

Indo-Asian News Service

**LONDON:** Former New Zealand cricketer and the current Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) head coach Brendon McCullum is emerging as front-runner for the post of England's white-ball head coach, while ex-South African opener Gary Kirsten is one of the favourites to take over the Test coach's responsibility as the country looks to split the role after Rob Key took over as the men's team managing director.

A report in mirror.co.uk said on Friday that McCullum and Kirsten are on Key's wish-list as he aims to transform the teams—especially the Test side, which has been on a downward spiral for the last couple of years and has recently lost the Ashes and the away series in the Caribbean.

If England end up hiring separate coaches for the white-ball and Test sides, they will become the only current top cricket-playing nation to split the role. "The ECB's new managing director of cricket, Rob Key, is understood to have approached several potential candidates over the past fortnight, with

former South Africa and India coach Gary Kirsten sounded out specifically about the Test role," the report said.

The 40-year-old McCullum is best remembered for his white-ball exploits, especially T20Is, where he played 71 games for New Zealand, amassing more than 2100 runs at a strike rate in excess of 136.

Key had recently said that he had sought England white-ball skipper Eoin Morgan's advice on coaches, following the Test team's horror run of one win in 17 Test matches.

"I've spoken to Eoin about red-ball cricket as well. Eoin is someone I would speak to about so many different things, and in terms of white-ball cricket he's on top of all that," Key had said, adding, "He (Morgan) knows what he wants and he knows a lot of the coaches around, so he is one of the first ports of call for that." Meanwhile, former Australian cricketer Simon Katich and England's Paul Collingwood too are in the frame along with former limited-overs players Nick Knight and Mark Alleyne.



## Djokovic Advances To Semifinals In Madrid

Agencies

**MADRID:** Novak Djokovic eased to a 6-3, 6-4 win over Hubert Hurkacz on Friday as he advanced to the semifinals of the Madrid Open where he faces a tough Spanish test.

Djokovic, a three-time champion in Madrid, had little trouble on the outdoor clay against Hurkacz, whose poor hitting ended any thoughts of a quarterfinal upset.

Rafael Nadal played Carlos Alcaraz later Friday on center court at the "Caja Mágica" with fans keen to see two generations of Spanish tennis face off. Nadal, who at 35 has won a record 21 Grand Slam titles, will meet the 19-year-old Alcaraz touted by many in Spain as his potential successor.

Nadal, who has won their previous two matches, said Alcaraz was favorite to win as he is in better shape. Nadal is returning from a six-week injury layoff and admitted that he couldn't prepare properly for the tournament, with his focus on the French Open later this month.

Nadal had to save four match points in his three-set win over David Goffin in the third round. Speaking in Spanish, the top-



seeded Djokovic said he will be watching Nadal play Alcaraz.

"(I will be) more relaxed because I won today, but one thing is sure; tomorrow I will face a Spanish rival," Djokovic said.

Djokovic took advantage of Hurkacz's slow start and took a 3-0 lead after the Polish player ceded his first service game by hitting long.

Another spate of unforced errors cost Hurkacz a second-set break when he smacked a forehand long. Djokovic's dominance was never in doubt and he won on his fourth match point.

Djokovic beat Gael Monfils in straight sets to start the tournament. He then had a walkover after Andy Murray withdrew before their match on Thursday.



# ‘Pay The Price’: Israel Hunts Attackers Who Hacked 3 To Death

**Agenceis**

Israeli forces searched for assailants on Friday who carried out an axe and knife attack near Tel Aviv that killed three Israelis before they fled in a vehicle.

Police said they were hunting for two suspects, 19 and 20 years old, from the town of Jenin in the occupied West Bank. Several perpetrators of recent attacks have come from in or around Jenin, and Israeli forces have launched raids that have ignited gun battles there.

According to witnesses, two men leapt from a car swinging axes at passers-by, killing three and wounding four, one critically. Police asked the public to provide information on the suspects after publishing their pictures and names.

“We will get our hands on the terrorists and their supportive environment, and they will pay the price,” Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said after meeting senior officials late Thursday.

Medics described a horrific scene in Elad, an ultra-Orthodox town near Tel Aviv.

Alon Rizkan of the Magen David Adom emergency response service said the “scene of the attack was complex”, adding he had seen a 40-year-old man lying dead near a roundabout, another man unconscious at an adjoining park, and a wounded man next to him. Both later died of their injuries.

The stabbing on Thursday, Israel’s Independence Day, was the latest in a series of deadly assaults inside the country in recent weeks – the worst violence Israel has seen in years. It came as Israeli-Palestinian tensions were already heightened by violence and

repeated incursions by Israeli forces at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound.

Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, whose government administers autonomous zones in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and cooperates with Israel on security, condemned the attack.

“The killing of Palestinian and Israeli civilians leads only to more deterioration at a time when all of us try to achieve stability and prevent escalation,” the official Wafa news agency quoted him as saying.

Defence Minister Benny Gantz announced a closure of the occupied West Bank – in place for the anniversary – would remain in force through Sunday.

For Palestinians, the anniversary of Israel’s 1948 declaration of independence marks the Nakba, or “catastrophe”, when more than 700,000 fled or were expelled during the war surrounding Israel’s creation.

The Palestinian group Hamas, which rules the Gaza Strip, praised Thursday’s attack and linked it to violence at the Jerusalem holy site.

“The storming of Al-Aqsa Mosque can’t go unpunished,” Hamas Spokesperson Hazem Qassem said. “The heroic operation in Tel Aviv is a practical translation of what the resistance had warned against.”

Israel and Hamas fought an 11-day war a year ago, fueled in large part by similar unrest in Jerusalem.

Israel captured the West Bank, Gaza, and occupied East Jerusalem — which includes Al-Aqsa and other major religious sites — in the 1967 Middle East war.

# US Gave Intel That Helped Ukraine Sink Iconic Russian Warship: Report



**Agenceis**

The US provided intelligence that helped Ukraine sink the Moskva, Russia’s flag-ship Black Sea missile cruiser, according to media reports.

Unnamed officials said Ukraine had asked the US about a ship sailing to the south of Odessa, to which Washington said it was the Moskva and helped confirm its location, the BBC reported.

Ukraine then struck it with two missiles, the officials were quoted as saying.

The officials said they did not know that Ukraine would target the Moskva after helping determine its location.

The 510-crew missile cruiser had led Russia’s naval assault on Ukraine, and its sinking in April was a major symbolic and military blow, BBC reported.

At the time, the Russian Defence Ministry said ammunition on board the Moskva exploded in an unexplained fire and the ship tipped over while being towed back to port.

The US is yet to directly address the reports about the Moskva.

However Pentagon spokesman John Kirby denied earlier media reports that the US was providing information about the locations of senior Russian generals on the battlefield, so that Ukrainian forces could kill them.

**WE DO NOT PROVIDE INTELLIGENCE** on the location of senior military leaders on the battlefield or participate in the targeting decisions of the Ukrainian military.”

# Apple, Google, And Microsoft Will Implement Passwordless Sign-In

**Agenceis**

On World Password Day, May 5, tech giants Microsoft, Apple, and Google have announced unanimously their commitment to soon implementing passwordless sign-in across all of their mobile, desktop, and browser platforms.

Passwordless authentication will be coming this year to all main platforms including Android and iOS mobile operating systems; Chrome, Edge, and Safari browsers; and the Windows and macOS desktop.

Senior director of platform product marketing at Apple, Kurt Knight said, “Just as we design our products to be intuitive and capable, we also design them to be private and secure. Working with the industry to establish new, more secure sign-in methods that offer better protection and eliminate the vulnerabilities of passwords is central to our commitment to building products that offer maximum security and a transparent user experience — all with the goal of keeping users’ personal information safe.”

A report by The Verge reveals that a passwordless login process will allow users to choose their phones as the main authentication device for all apps, websites, and other digital services.

Google detailed in a blog post that unlocking the phone with just the default action would be enough to sign in to web services. Using a unique cryptographic token called a passkey shared between phone and website, sign-ins will be possible without the need to enter a password.

A passwordless system will make user sign-in simple, offering security and making it more difficult for hackers to compromise login details.

Microsoft’s vice president for security, compliance, identity, and privacy, Vasu Jakkal, stated in an email, “With passkeys on your mobile device, you’re able to sign in to an app or service on nearly any device, regardless of the platform or browser the device is running. For example, users can sign-in on a Google Chrome browser that’s running on Microsoft Windows—using a passkey on an Apple device.”

The new feature will be possible using a standard called FIDO which uses the principles of public-key cryptography to enable passwordless authentication and multi-factor authentication. A phone can store a unique FIDO-compliant passkey which can be shared with a website for authentication when the phone is unlocked.

Product management director for secure authentication at Google and president of the FIDO Alliance, Sampath Srinivas, made a statement to The Verge, “This extended FIDO support being announced today will make it possible for websites to implement, for the first time, an end-to-end passwordless experience with phishing-resistant security,” said Srinivas. “This includes both the first sign-in to a website and repeat logins. When passkey support becomes available across the industry in 2022 and 2023, we’ll finally have the internet platform for a truly passwordless future.”

Apple, Google, and Microsoft aim to introduce the feature this year even though the new passwordless sign-in capabilities had been in the works for a while,

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