

On Cusp Of Retirement, Kashmiri Lecturers Still Await Regularization

Umer Ahmad

Waiting for the regularization of their services, around 500 contractual teachers serving the Higher Education Department of Jammu and Kashmir from the last 20 years, have crossed their upper-age limit.

"We've reached the twilight of our careers," says Dr. Yousuf Nengroo, Vice President All Jammu and Kashmir Contractual Teachers Association (JKCTA).

"Contractual college faculty is being tossed from pillar to post by the very department they have served."

Many successive governments, Dr. Yousuf said, have

kept these teachers in the loop with fake promises.

"During former chief minister Omer Abdullah's tenure, we went on hunger strike," he said. "Omar's advisor Mubarak Gul assured regularization after seven years of service, but it never happened."

Many meetings were conducted during different governments till 2017, Dr. Yousuf said, but nothing changed.

"I'm 39-year-old with M.phil, Ph.D and NET qualifications, plus 10 years of experience as a contractual teacher and yet I'm working only as need-based," Dr. Yousuf said.

"Similarly, our President, Fayaz Ahmad is 54 years old



and is 6 years behind the government fixed retirement age. Where will we go now? We have no other job option left," he told Kashmir Observer.

A move to Court

Fake promises eventually forced these contractual teachers to move to court for

6 JUSTICE MARGEY GAVE A JUDGMENT

and directed the department to take our services on a regular basis rather than inviting applications from us every year. But the department keeps violating the court order."

regularization of services through the J&K Special Provisions Act.

"Justice Margey gave a judgment and directed the department to take our services on a regular basis rather than

inviting applications from us every year," says Dr. Yousuf. "But the department keeps violating the court order."

During the contract, these teachers are made to sign affidavits, for not claiming regularization of their services.

"Being highly qualified and unemployed, we're forced to sign that affidavit," Dr. Yousuf said. "Even justice Magrey said that these affidavits are being used under hard situations. We serve in difficult places, be it Tanghdar or Keran. Our contractual lecturers go there with a meager salary of Rs. 18000 and teach students at border areas. No permanent lecturer goes there. But still, no justice is being done with us." **More on P10**

Plan In Place To Deal With Anti-Nationals: DGP



Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Amid a widespread crackdown against the Popular Front of India, Director General of Jammu and Kashmir Police Dilbag Singh on Tuesday said a comprehensive plan is in place to deal with militant and anti-national elements in the country.

The police chief further said action against the militant networks would definitely have a positive impact and there was no need to look at the country-wide raids from a communal angle.

Singh was talking to reporters on the sidelines of the award distribution ceremony of the 11th J&K Shooting Championship, organised by the Jammu and Kashmir Rifle Association in collaboration with the J&K Sports Council and the National Rifle Association of India from September 20 to September 27 here.

"There is a very comprehensive kind of plan in place to deal with terror elements and also those who are anti-national. Any action against the terror networks will weaken such groups and will definitely have a positive impact," he said.

More than 150 people allegedly linked with the PFI were detained or arrested **More on P10**

HM Shah's J&K Visit Rescheduled To Oct 4, 5: BJP

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Union Home Minister Amit Shah's visit to Jammu and Kashmir from September 30 has been postponed and he will arrive next week to address two mega rallies, a senior BJP leader said Tuesday.

Director General of Police Dilbag Singh, who visited Rajouri and Baramulla, the venues of the two public rallies, said all necessary security arrangements have been made.

BJP J&K president Ravinder Raina said the home minister's visit has been rescheduled for October 4 and 5 when he will tour Rajouri in Jammu and Baramulla in north Kashmir and address public rallies.

Earlier, he was supposed to



reach Jammu on a three-day visit to the Union Territory on September 30 and hold public meetings in Rajouri on October 1 and Baramulla on October 2.

"I received a call from the office of the Home Minister and was told that since Prime Minister Narendra Modi has left for Tokyo for the **More on P10**

Government Orders Robust Mechanism To Regulate Highway Traffic

Over 30,000 Apple Laden Trucks Left Srinagar Since Sept 1: Officials

Observer News Service

Jammu: Some 48,845 cargo trucks, including 30,756 laden with apple have moved from Srinagar to Jammu through Jammu-Srinagar national highway since September 01, officials said here on Tuesday. The report came amid growing outrage over stranding of fruit laden trucks along the Srinagar-Jammu highway.

The LG administration meanwhile has stressed on traffic police to put in place



the robust communication and information mechanism to regulate traffic of heavy motor vehicles

(HMs) along the critical points on the vital stretch. The directions in this regard were **More on P10**

Fruit Growers Claim Losses Worth Crores

AGENCIES

The halting of Apple trucks on Srinagar-Jammu National Highway and low demand of the fruit has led to losses worth thousands of crores this month alone. President of Kashmir Valley Fruit Growers cum Dealers Union (KVFGDU) Bashir Ahmad Basheer said that the fruit industry has suffered losses in thousands of crores in the ongoing **More on P10**

Kidnapped Infant Recovered In Kishtwar



Observer News Service

Jammu: Barely a few hours after a six-month-old baby was allegedly kidnapped from the district government hospital in Jammu and Kashmir's Kishtwar district, police rescued him and also nabbed the woman abductor, officials said.

Police had earlier in the day said a burqa clad woman had kidnapped the baby boy and had circulated the alleged kidnapper's pictures

Pole Reviews Arrangements In Baramulla

The Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole on Tuesday visited this North Kashmir district to review arrangements for the upcoming visit of Home Minister, Amit Shah to Jammu and Kashmir. Flanked by DGP Dilbag Singh, ADGP Kashmir Vijay Kumar, DIG North Kashmir Udhay Bhaskar Billa, Deputy Commissioner Baramulla Dr Sehrish Asgar, the the Div Com also visited Showkat Ali Stadium Khawaja Bagh here to take stock of the arrangements put in place ahead **More on P10**

I RECEIVED A CALL FROM THE OFFICE OF THE HOME MINISTER and was told that since Prime Minister Narendra Modi has left for Tokyo for the state funeral of former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Shah has to stay at the national capital and cannot attend any function outside it."

Officials To Face Heat For Feeders With Highest Power Losses

Smart Metering In Jammu-Srinagar To Be Done By March 2023

Observer News Service

Jammu: The Union Territory administration on Tuesday directed the power development department (PDD) to repair dysfunctional meters to put an end to the flat-rate system of billing, besides identifying the feeders with highest power losses followed by action against the officials.

These directions were passed by Chief Secretary Dr Arun Kumar Mehta while chairing a review meeting of the power sector in Jammu & Kashmir

at the Civil Secretariat on Tuesday, an official spokesperson said.

The CS, he said, was informed about the status of 1.15 lakh smart meters being installed in Jammu and Srinagar cities in addition to the additional 6 lakh meters to be installed subsequently.

"It was informed that 91% of the installed smart meters are already communicating and more than 64 thousand of those meters have been billed by June 2022," he added.

Mehta, as per the spokesperson said that J&K is being given utmost

priority in installation of smart meters and stressed that all these 7 lakh meters must be installed and be made operational by March 2023.

He said that the CS also called for repairing dysfunctional meters putting an end to the flat-rate system of billing by the department.

"Strict directions were passed by the Chief Secretary for completion of Kishtwar-Khellani power line to ensure robust power supply to district Kishtwar," the spokesperson said. The CS, he said, also **More on P10**

J&K Reports 18 Corona Cases

Jammu and Kashmir reported 18 fresh cases of novel Coronavirus on Tuesday, taking the number of people infected since the onset of pandemic in the Union Territory to 479102. Officials said that 11 new cases were detected in Kashmir Valley and the remaining seven from Jammu division. In the Valley, they said, Srinagar reported 8 new cases of virus, Budgam 2 and Kulgam one. The remaining seven districts reported no new cases of Covid-19 on Tuesday. In the winter capital, Jammu reported 3 new cases of infection, **More on P10**

Woman Injured In Bear Attack

A woman was attacked and injured on Tuesday by a black bear in South Kashmir's Anantnag district. Shameema Begum was busy outside her house in Utersoo village of the district on Tuesday morning when a black bear appeared there and attacked her, reports said. Shameema's cries, reports said, alerted her family and neighbours, who rushed to the spot and chased away the bear. However, in the bear attack, she sustained grievous injuries. The injured **More on P10**

Man Found Dead In Bijbehara

A man was found dead under mysterious circumstances on Tuesday in South Kashmir's Anantnag district. According to reports, a body was spotted by the locals lying at Shiekh Mohalla Bijbehara, following which they informed the police about it. A police team later on reached the spot and shifted it to District Hospital Anantnag for medico-legal formalities. Confirming it, a police official identified the deceased as Fayaz Ahmad Bandy son of Ghulam Rasool Bandy, a resident of Bijbehara. **More on P10**

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Study Reveals That Babies React To Taste And Smell In The Womb

ANI

Scientists took 4D ultrasound scans of 100 pregnant women to see how their unborn babies responded to flavours from foods eaten by their mothers. The research team scanned some mothers to see fetal facial reactions to the kale and carrot flavours.

A study led by Durham University's Fetal and Neonatal Research Lab, UK, took 4D ultrasound scans of 100 pregnant women to see how their unborn babies responded after being exposed to flavours from foods eaten by their mothers.

Researchers looked at how the fetuses reacted to either carrot or kale flavours just a short time after the flavours had been ingested by the mothers.

Fetuses exposed to carrot showed more "laughter-face" responses while those exposed to kale showed more "cry-face" responses.

Their findings could further our understanding of the development of human taste and smell receptors.

The researchers also believe that what pregnant women eat might influence babies' taste preferences after birth and potentially have implications for establishing healthy eating habits.

The study is published in the journal Psychological Science.

Humans experience flavour through a combination of taste and smell. In fetuses it

is thought that this might happen through inhaling and swallowing the amniotic fluid in the womb.

Lead researcher Beyza Ustun, a post-graduate researcher in the Fetal and Neonatal Research Lab, Department of Psychology, Durham University, said: "A number of studies have suggested that babies can taste and smell in the womb, but they are based on post-birth outcomes while our study is the first to see these reactions prior to birth."

"As a result, we think that this repeated exposure to flavours before birth could help to establish food preferences post-birth, which could be important when thinking about messaging around healthy eating and the potential for avoiding 'food-fussiness' when weaning."

"It was really amazing to see unborn babies' reaction to kale or carrot flavours during the scans and share those moments with their parents." The research team, which also included scientists from Aston University, Birmingham, UK, and the National Centre for Scientific Research-University of Burgundy, France, scanned the mothers, aged 18 to 40, at both 32 weeks and 36 weeks of pregnancy to see fetal facial reactions to the kale and carrot flavours.

Mothers were given a single capsule containing approximately 400mg of carrot or 400mg kale powder around 20 minutes before each scan. They were asked not to consume any food or flavoured drinks one hour before their scans.



The mothers also did not eat or drink anything containing carrot or kale on the day of their scans to control for factors that could affect fetal reactions.

Facial reactions seen in both flavour groups, compared with fetuses in a control group who were not exposed to either flavour, showed that exposure to just a small amount of carrot or kale flavour was enough to stimulate a reaction.

Co-author Professor Nadja Reissland, head of the Fetal and Neonatal Research

Lab, Department of Psychology, Durham University, supervised Beyza Ustun's research. She said: "Previous research conducted in my lab has suggested that 4D ultrasound scans are a way of monitoring fetal reactions to understand how they respond to maternal health behaviours such as smoking, and their mental health including stress, depression, and anxiety."

"This latest study could have important implications for understanding the earliest evidence for fetal abilities to sense and

discriminate different flavours and smells from the foods ingested by their mothers." Co-author Professor Benoist Schaal, of the National Centre for Scientific Research-University of Burgundy, France, said: "Looking at fetuses' facial reactions we can assume that a range of chemical stimuli pass through maternal diet into the fetal environment."

"This could have important implications for our understanding of the development of our taste and smell receptors, and related perception and memory." The researchers say their findings might also help with information given to mothers about the importance of taste and healthy diets during pregnancy.

They have now begun a follow-up study with the same babies post-birth to see if the influence of flavours they experienced in the womb affects their acceptance of different foods.

Research co-author Professor Jackie Blissett, of Aston University, said: "It could be argued that repeated prenatal flavour exposures may lead to preferences for those flavours experienced postnatally. In other words, exposing the fetus to less 'liked' flavours, such as kale, might mean they get used to those flavours in utero."

"The next step is to examine whether fetuses show less 'negative' responses to these flavours over time, resulting in greater acceptance of those flavours when babies first taste them outside of the womb."

Stargazers Capture Jupiter, Its 4 Moons In Rare Closest Date With Earth

IASNS

Stargazers across the world were left mesmerised when they caught the closest glimpse of the giant gas planet with its four moons -- some lucky ones saw it with just binoculars.

People took to Twitter with images and videos they captured of Jupiter along with its four largest moons -- Io, Europa, Ganymede and Callisto, called the Galilean satellites.

"After staying up all night shooting it, here is my shot of Jupiter at 'Opposition'. This is the closest it has been to Earth in 59 years," tweeted Andrew McCarthy, a stargazer from Arizona state in the US.

From the viewpoint of Earth's surface, opposition happens when an astronomical object rises in the east as the Sun sets in the west, placing the object and the Sun on opposite sides of the Earth.

Aloke Kumar, Associate Professor at Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru, tweeted: "Jupiter so bright. It is peering right through the clouds! You can even see three of the Galilean moons!"

Some people took the shots of Jupiter with high-end cameras of their smartphones, and some with large telescopes were able to see the Great Red Spot.

Jupiter's opposition occurs every 13 months, making the planet appear larger and brighter than any other time of the year.

Recruitment of Assistant Sub Inspector (Stenographer) and Head Constable (Ministerial) in CISF-2022

Online applications are invited from Male & Female Indian citizens for filling up the following temporary posts of Assistant sub Inspector (Stenographer) in the Pay Level-5 (Rs.29,200-92,300/- in pay matrix) and Head Constable (Ministerial) in the Pay Level-4 (Rs.25,500-81,100/- in pay matrix) in Central Industrial Security Force.

2. Category wise vacancies for the post of Assistant sub Inspector (Stenographer) and Head Constable (Ministerial) are as follows which may increase or decrease at any time or stage of recruitment :-

Name of post	Existing vacancies					Total
	UR	SC	ST	OBC	EWS	
Assistant Sub Inspector (Stenographer)						
Direct Male	40	13	7	25	9	94
Direct Female	6	1	0	2	1	10
Departmental (LDCE)	11	2	1	4	0	18
Total	57	16	8	31	10	122
Head Constable (Ministerial)						
Direct Male	132	47	23	86	31	319
Direct Female	17	5	2	9	3	36
Departmental (LDCE)	33	9	4	17	0	63
Total	182	61	29	112	34	418

For complete details please see the advertisement / notification in the Employment News / Rozgar Samachar dated 24.09.2022 or visit CISF website i.e. <https://cisfrect.in>.

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FATEHA KHAWANI TODAY

With profound grief, we inform the demise of retired **Prof. Dr. Mohammad Ashraf Mir** (SKUAST) R/o Chanapora Iqbal Colony, Srinagar who breathed his last on Monday 26th Sept. 2022. Congregational Fateha Khawani will be observed today 28th Sept. 2022 at 10:00AM at graveyard Chanapora near BSF camp.

Bereaved: Mir Family
Cell No's: 9999046463, 9906917858

انتقال بر ملا

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ANNOUNCES ADMISSION TO CLASSES NURSERY AND LKG FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2023-24

Eligibility:

- ❖ Girl children born between 01-April-2019 to 31-March-2020 only are eligible for admission to Nursery in the academic year 2023-24.
- ❖ Girl children born between 01-April-2018 to 31-March-2019 only are eligible for admission to LKG in the academic year 2023-24.

EVENT	DATE	TIME
Commencement of Online Registration	Saturday, 01 October 2022	00:00:00 hrs.
Closure of Online Registration	Sunday, 02 October 2022	23:59:59 hrs.
Filling in the Online Registration Form for EWS category in School office	Sunday, 02 October 2022	02:00 PM – 04:30 PM
Submission of duly signed completed Registration Form with supporting documents in the school office	Time Slots will be uploaded on 06 October 2022 at 05:00 pm on school website www.pchssrinagar.com . Submission of forms in school will be allowed only as per the time slots. The dates and timings are tentative and are subject to change.	

Please note:

- ❖ All candidates have to register through our online registration portal www.pchssrinagar.com. For a parent having more than one child, individual applications are to be filled for each child.

EWS Category Reservation (upto 20%)

- ❖ Parents claiming consideration under EWS category shall annex attested photocopy of requisite EWS certificate from concerned authority. Those who wish to do the online registration under EWS category in school are required to carry the soft copies of following documents in Pendrive:
 1. Latest Passport size photograph of the candidate, father and mother of 3.5 x 4.5 cm in size and in jpg format with white background, the size of which shall not exceed 20 KB.
 2. Scanned copies of Date of Birth of the candidate in jpg/pdf format, the size of which shall not exceed 500 KB.
 3. Original EWS certificate
- ❖ Further updates will be available on school website www.pchssrinagar.com

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Principal

Date: 28-09-2022
Ref No. PCHSS/CI/305/EX/16



Recruitment Of Assistant Registrars, Junior Assistants

Aspirants Question Delay In Recruitment Process From KU Authorities

Agencies

Srinagar: In view of the alleged reports that said that the recruitment process for the posts of Assistant Registrar and Junior Assistant at University of Kashmir (KU) has been 'quashed by Raj Bhawan' following the allegations of some fraudulent activities, a dilemma has gripped among the aspirants for these vacancies.

It has been learnt that the posts were advertised in 2019 but were not filled up within the stipulated time of two years as per the university's own recruitment rules.

"In 2021, the then Vice Chancellor Talat Ahmad has extended six months to the validity of the lapsed posts, the aspirants said. However the recruitment process which includes final recruitment couldn't be completed even during these six months," they added. The aspirants said, "When the new VC, Dr Neelofar took charge of the university; she decided to refer the matter to the Chancellor with full case history of both the recruitment processes for a final decision in the matter."

"The file was sent to Raj Bhawan last month but the final decision is awaited," said a KU official in the recruitment Section. He said no further direction or correspondence has been made by the Chancellor's office with the University.

Many aspirants however said they have been told by some university officials unofficially that "these posts are being re-advertised because the recruitment process has been reportedly quashed by the Chancellor's office after serious allegations of fraud were inquired into and found to be prima-facie true".

"We want to know the final decision. We will apply for some other posts if the recruitment process has been declared null and void," said a group of aspirants for posts of Assistant Registrar.



3 Day Meet For Holistic Dev Of Agriculture Kicks Off At SKUAST

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The second Union Territory Level Apex Committee (UTLAC) meeting started at SKUAST-K on 27th September 2022 under the chairmanship of Dr.Mangla Rai former Director General ICAR.

The three day meeting is being held to review various joint projects formulated by SKUAST-Kashmir, SKUAST-Jammu and Development Departments, GoJK for holistic development of agriculture and allied sectors in the UT of J&K with the main objective of transforming subsistence agriculture to sustainable

agri-economy through investment of knowledge, technology and capital.

The 3 day deliberations of the UTLAC will go a long way in finalization of the projects for doubling contribution of Agri-GDP, 100% seed replacement rate, double resource use efficiency, reducing food waste, triple food processing, building capacity to meet the quality planting material, establish 300 functional and profitable FPOs, vocational skill trainings and build state data banks using AI and ICT tools. The committee is perceived to have a monitoring mechanism besides, quantification of organic waste generated from

dairy to be used in the Agriculture sector with prioritization of disease management in poultry and livestock.

The meeting is being attended by Dr.Ashok Dalwai, CEO NRAA, Sh. Atal Dulloo IAS Financial Commissioner(Additional Chief Secretary), Agriculture Production Department, Dr. P.K. Joshi, Secretary NAAS, New Delhi; Dr. Prabhat Kumar Horticulture Commissioner; FWD, Dr. S.H. Gupta Former Director, IARI, Dr. J.P. Sharma, Vice-Chancellor-SKUAST-J and Dr. Nazir Ahmad Ganai, Vice-Chancellor, SKUAST-Kashmir.

DC Inspects Upgradation works At Major City Hospitals

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In order to have onsite assessment of different works undertaken in various City Hospital for augmentation of healthcare infrastructure, the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad visited SMHS, Bone & Joint and Lal Ded Hospital on Tuesday.

At SMHS Hospital, the Deputy Commissioner took stock of the works proposed for amount of Rs 87.92 lakh under MPLAD funds for infrastructure development including face lifting/renovation of OPD(ENT) of Block-B, main Hall of Wards 11 and Ward 09, OPD, Ophthalmology and front portion of OPD, creation of Canopy and extension of entrance area.

Similarly, repair of paid wards of IPD block and exterior face lifting and repairing of ceiling of OPD (Block-B).

On the occasion, the DC asked the concerned executing agencies to speed up the

pace of work at the Health facility so that visiting patients, attendants, hospital staff get better services in the Hospital.

At Bone & Joint Hospital, the DC took stock of the Rs 88.95 crore project for construction of an additional block of 120 bedded specialized orthopaedic units including 6 bedded ICU in B&J Hospital being executed by NPCC.

On the occasion, the DC took round of under construction building and directed the executing agency to redouble the manpower and work in double shifts to complete the project under the set deadline of December, 2022.

The DC accompanied by Medical Superintendent B&J, Dr Suhail and other officers also inspected the proposed site for the construction of additional blocks of the Bone & Joint Hospital to expand its infrastructure for which land has been already acquired.

Later, the Deputy

Commissioner visited the construction site of a new 200-bedded Extension Block of Lal Ded (LD) Maternity Hospital being constructed at a cost of Rs 132 crore to overcome the extra burden and heavy flow of patients.

The DC inspected the pace and progress of ongoing works of the project and stressed the JKPC officers to accelerate the pace of works to ensure its time bound completion timeline for which is October, 2023.

Aijaz was apprised about the physical status of the ongoing work. He was informed that the five-floor building will have a complete Oncology Department, High End Labour Room, and 4 Operation Theatres and a big Diagnostic Laboratory and Neonatal Unit. In addition, there will be a ground plus 5-floors with parking space, patients waiting lounge, canteen, new-born section, and hospital equipment and also space for wards.

Downtown Legacy Tour Flagged Off On World Tourism Day

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Secretary Tourism & Culture, Sar-mad Hafeez on Tuesday launched several tourism related activities to mark the World Tourism Day celebrations at Zabarwan Park here on Tuesday.

On the occasion, the Secretary Tourism flagged off the Downtown Legacy Tour and Heritage Walk.

Director Tourism Kashmir, Fazl ul Haseeb; Managing Director, J&K Tourism Development Corporation, Minga Sherpa, heads and representatives of Travel & Trade, tourists, students and other concerned were also present on the occasion.

The Downtown Legacy Tour would explore art and culture of old Srinagar, besides showcasing traditional locations which include Sheher-e-Khaas Bazaar, Khanqah-e-Maula, Tomb of Zainul Abideen's mother, Pathar Masjid, Jamia Masjid, Raghunath Temple, Hari Parbat Fort (Koh-e-marran)

and Gurudwara Chattipadshahi.

The events were organized by J&K Tourism Development Corporation and J&K Tourism in association with Aabe Rawan.

Speaking on the occasion, Hafeez reiterated that J&K Tourism has taken several initiatives to boost local sightseeing and Downtown sightseeing is another step in this regard.

He observed that the theme of WTD is Rethinking Tourism and J&K has already started on it since 2020. He said that during COVID-19 Pandemic, Tourism Industry was one of the worst hit and that is where Rethinking Tourism comes into handy and there is need to rethink our tourism and find ways and means to revive its pristine glory.

He also congratulated Kashmir Tourism Forum and tourism players alike for participating in these events.

He reaffirmed that J&K Tourism is trying to concentrate more on experiential tourism and working to enhance that experience for tourists.

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2479488,2452222,2452155
CAPD: 18001807011
SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +91 94841 00200

AIRPORTS


SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

RAILWAYS

SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259
ANANTNAG: 01932-228243
BARAMULLA: 0194-102029
BIJBERA: 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 1 Rabi ul Awwal 1444	PRAYERS	
	FAJR	5:00
	ZUHR	12:22
	ASR	4:39
	Magrib	6:25
	ISHA	7: 45

This Day In History

- 1906 - US troops reoccupy Cuba, stay until 1909
- 1914 - German forces move into Antwerp Belgium (WW I)
- 1915 - Battle of Kut-el-Amara: British defeat Turks in Mesopotamia
- 1923 - Abyssinia (Ethiopia) leaves League of Nations
- 1924 - French government names Gen Serrail governor-general of Syria
- 1926 - Russia & Latvia treaty of neutrality signed
- 1928 - Prussia forbids speech from Adolf Hitler
- 1928 - US acknowledge Chinese government of Chiang Kai-shek
- 1939 - Estonia accepts Soviet military bases
- 1939 - German-Soviet Frontier Treaty is signed by Joachim von Ribbentrop and Vyacheslav Molotov; redraws German and Soviet spheres of influence in central Europe and transfers most of Lithuania to the USSR
- 1944 - Battle of Arnhem, Germans defeat British airborne in Netherlands
- 1950 - Indonesia becomes 60th member of UN
- 1959 - Explorer VI reveals an intense radiation belt around Earth
- 1961 - Syria withdraws from United Arab Republic
- 1972 - Japan & Communist China agree to re-establish diplomatic relations.

From KO Archives

Political Strands in Jobs Racket Revealed

'NC Block President Has Earned Rs 40 Lakh Duping Jobless Youth'

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Several political strands appear to be attached to the recently unearthed fake jobs scandal in Shopyan, with a block president of a political party arrested along with a gazetted officer and four others so far.

Scores of fake appointment orders for government jobs are reported to have been seized from the arrested persons.

Investigations have revealed that the arrested political functionary has extracted Rs 40 lakh from jobless youth so far by luring them with promises of government jobs, and the network was spread all over the valley. The sensational racket came to light when a Chatragam resident, Abdul Ghaffar Bhat, filed a complaint with the Zainapora police that one Ali Muhammad Ganai of his village had demanded a bribe of Rs 1 lakh from his son for securing him a job in the Social Forestry Department, and gobbled up Rs 70,000 as advance.

The complaint said that to dupe people, Ganai used fake appointment orders prepared by his son, Altaf Ahmad. The Zainapora-police station registered a case under sections 419, 420 and 467 of the RPC, and handed the case over to the superintendent of police for Shopyan, Joginder Singh.

In the meantime, the police arrested Altaf Ahmad, and seized a Social Forestry uniform, an identity card and a fake appointment order from his possession.

The superintendent of police said that a suspicious list of 200 employees under the name of the Social Forestry Department was published in a newspaper, and on investigations it was found to have been issued by a shopkeeper in Budshah Chowk, Srinagar, Manzoor Ahmad.

As the case was pursued, Manzoor told the police that the list had been given to him by an acquaintance who often came to his shop and passed himself off as a DFO.


The superintendent of police laid a trap and arrested the phony DFO when he next visited the shop. He was later identified as Ghulam Nabi Bhat of Kawoosa, Budgam, who was an employee of the forest department.

"Twenty fake appointment orders and a number of identity cards were seized on the instance of Bhat, and during interrogation he had revealed the names of several of his accomplices, following which a gazetted officer of the civil secretariat, Abdul Majeed Zargar of Neehama, Beeru, and Muhammad Yaqoob Sheikh of Makhdoom Sahib Srinagar and Ghulam Nabi Bhat of HMT were arrested.

A further 40 fake appointment orders, state subject certificates and educational certificates were recovered after their questioning.

The SP said that Zargar used to work in the secretariat's General Administrative Department, and had been suspended in a case of fictitious appointments, but had later been reinstated.

(Kashmir Observer, September 28, 2000)



The Jammu & Kashmir Bank Ltd.
Impaired Assets Portfolio Management Department (IAPMD)
Zonal Office Srinagar
M.A. ROAD Srinagar, Kashmir-190001

Possession Notice

Notice under Section 13 (4) of the SARFAESI ACT, 2002 read with Rule 8 (1) of the Security (Enforcement) Interest Rules, 2002.

Whereas Mr. Asaf Rasool Kanue as the Authorized Officer of the Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers under section 13(2) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued Demand Notice dated 02.12.2021 thereby calling upon the Borrower namely M/S R. P Tourism Infrastructure & Contractors Pvt Ltd through Directors/Mortgagors/Guaranters 1). Mr.Mehraj ud din Yatoo S/O Mohammad Shaban Yatoo R/O Rawat pora, Bagaat Barzulla, near M.E.T School Srinagar-190005 (Director/Mortgagor/2). Ms. Ishrat.W/O Mehraj-ud-DinYattoo R/O Rawatpora, Bagaat Barzulla, near M.E.T School Srinagar-190005 (Director/Guarantor) 3) Mr. Feroz Ahmed Shiekh S/O Ghulam Nabi Shiekh R/O Fatehpura, Ganderbal (Mortgagor) to repay an amount of Rs 7,99,50,964.94 (Rupees Seven Crore Ninety Nine Lacs Fifty Thousand Nine Hundred Sixty Four And Paise Ninety Four Only) being the balance outstanding as on 30.11.2021 in the accounts of the Borrower, within 60 days from the date of the said notice together with the future interest and other charges thereon.

The said borrower having failed to repay the said amount, notice is hereby given to the said borrower in particular and the public in general that the undersigned being authorized officer of the J & K Bank Ltd. has taken symbolic possession of the mortgage property described herein below, in exercise of the powers conferred on me under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules, on this the 21st day of September, 2022.

The said borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned against dealing with the said property in any manner whatsoever and any dealings with the said property will be subject to the charge of the J&K Bank Limited for the amount in aggregating to Rs 8,86,84,477.94 (Rupees Eight Crore Eighty Six Lacs Eighty Four Thousand Four Hundred Seventy Seven And Paise Ninety Four Only) together with future interest thereon from 31-08-2022 and other charges incurred or to be incurred.

The borrowers attention is invited to the provisions of Sub-section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of the time available, to redeem the secured assets.

Description of the Immovable Property
(As per the schedule provided in mortgage deed/latest particulars including any accreditations)
Mortgage of three storied residential house along with land underneath & appurtenant thereto measuring 05 Marlas, bearing Khasra No: 2377 min, Khewat No: 360 and Khata No 1853 situated in Estate: Natipora; Tehsil :Srinagar South; District: Srinagar, standing in the names of Mr. Mehraj ud din Yattoo.

Date: 21.09.2022
Place:- Srinagar

DIPK-NB-4085/22

Asaf Rasool Kanue
Authorized Officer



Regd. No. A-2586

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Supreme Court Reserves Verdict On Pleas Challenging Centre's 10% Quota For Poor



Agenceis

New Delhi: The Supreme Court today reserved its verdict on a batch of pleas challenging the validity of the 103rd Constitution amendment providing 10 per cent reservation to economically weaker sections (EWS) persons in admissions and government jobs.

A five-judge Constitution bench headed by Chief Justice Uday Umesh Lalit reserved the verdict on the legal question of whether the EWS quota violated the basic structure of the constitution after hearing a battery of senior lawyers including Attorney General KK Venugopal and Solicitor General Tushar Mehta in the marathon hearing that lasted for six-and-a-half-day.

Academician Mohan Gopal had opened the arguments in the case before the bench, which also comprised Justices Dinesh Maheshwari, S Ravindra Bhat, Bela M Trivedi, and JB Pardiwala, on September 13 and opposed the EWS quota amendment by terming it as 'deceitful and a backdoor attempt' to destroy the concept of reservation.

Senior lawyers including Ravi Verma Kumar, P Wilson, Meenakshi Arora, Sanjay Parikh, and KS Chauhan and advocate Shadan Farasat also assailed the quota, saying it also excluded the poor belonging to the Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) categories, and defeats the creamy layer concept.

Tamil Nadu, represented by senior advocate Shekhar Naphade, also opposed the EWS quota, saying the economic criteria cannot be the basis for classification and the top court will have to revisit the Indira Sawhney (Mandal) judgement if it decides to uphold this reservation.

On the other hand, the attorney general and the solicitor general vehemently defended the amendment, saying the reservation provided under it was different and had been given without disturbing the 50 per cent quota meant for the social-

ly and economically backward classes (SEBC).

Hence, the amended provision does not violate the basic structure of the Constitution, they said.

The solicitor general argued in detail about the state's power to take affirmative action to elevate the poor among the general category and said the constitutional amendment strengthens the basic feature of the Constitution and its validity cannot be tested on grounds of some statistics.

He said the EWS quota was "necessitated" to benefit the general category poor, a "large segment" of the population not covered under any existing reservation scheme.

Senior advocate Gopal San-karnarayanan, appearing for NGO 'Youth for Equality', supported the EWS quota scheme, contending it was "long overdue" and a "right step in the right direction." The top court heard as many as 40 petitions and most of the pleas, including the lead one filed by 'Janhit Abhiyan' in 2019, challenged the validity of the Constitution Amendment (103rd) Act 2019.

The Central government had filed some petitions seeking the transfer of pending cases, challenging the EWS quota law, from various high courts to the top court for an authoritative pronouncement.

The bench, on September 8, had framed three broad issues for adjudication arising from the pleas challenging the Centre's decision to grant 10 per cent reservation to EWS in admissions and jobs.

The bench had said the three issues suggested by the attorney general for the decision "broadly" covered all the aspects relating to the petitions on the constitutional validity of the decision to grant the reservation.

"Whether the 103rd Constitution amendment Act can be said to breach the basic structure of the Constitution by permitting the State to make special provisions, including reservation, based on economic criteria," read the first issue framed.

India, Pak Both Partners Of US With Different Points Of Emphasis: Biden Admin

AGENCEIS

India and Pakistan are both partners of the US with different points of emphasis, the Biden administration said Monday, a day after visiting External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar questioned the rationale behind the latest American F-16 security assistance to Islamabad.

Referring to the argument made by the US that F-16 sustenance package is to fight terrorism, Jaishankar had said everybody knows where and against whom F-16 fighter jets are used. "You're not fooling anybody by saying these things," he said in response to a question during an interaction with Indian-Americans.

"We don't view our relationship with Pakistan, and on the other hand, we don't view our relationship with India as in relation to one another. These are both partners of ours with different points of emphasis in each," State Department Spokesperson Ned Price told reporters at his daily news conference.

"We look to both as partners, because we do have in many cases shared values. We do have in many cases shared interests. And the relationship we have with India stands on its own. The relationship we have with Pakistan stands on its own," he said.

Early this month, the Biden administration approved a USD 450 million F-16 fighter jet fleet sustainment programme to Pakistan, re-



versing the decision of the previous Trump administration to suspend military aid to Islamabad for providing safe havens for the Afghan Taliban and the Haqqani network.

"We also want to do everything we can to see to it that these neighbours have relations with one another that are as constructive as can be possible. So that's another point of emphasis," Price said in response to a question.

Responding to another question, Price said it is "not in Pakistan's interest to see instability and violence in Afghanistan".

"The support for the people of Afghanistan is something we discuss regularly with our Pakistani partners; our efforts to improve the lives and livelihoods and humanitarian conditions of the Afghan people, and to see to it that the Taliban live up to the commitments that they have made," he added.

Pakistan is implicated in many

of these same commitments: the counterterrorism commitments, commitments to safe passage, commitments to the citizens of Afghanistan, Price said. "The unwillingness or the inability on the part of the Taliban to live up to these commitments would have significant implications for Pakistan as well."

"So, for that reason, we do share a number of interests with Pakistan regarding its neighbour," Price said.

The United States, he noted, has been intensely focused on the devastation that has resulted in the loss of life resulting from the torrential floods that have devastated large areas of Pakistan.

"We have provided tens of millions of dollars in relief for these floods. The Secretary today will have additional details on further US assistance for the Pakistani people, in light of this humanitarian emergency that Pakistanis are facing," he added.

SC Allows Election Commission To Hear Shinde Faction's Claim Of Being 'Real' Shiv Sena

AGENCEIS

The Supreme Court Tuesday allowed the Election Commission to go ahead with the hearing of Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde group's plea seeking recognition as the real Shiv Sena and allocation of the party's bow-and-arrow poll symbol to it.

Justice D.Y.Chandrachud, heading a constitution bench, rejected the plea of the Uddhav Thackeray-led faction seeking to restrain the EC from deciding the Shinde group's claim over the 'original' Shiv Sena.

"We direct that there would



be no stay of the proceedings before the Election Commission," the bench also comprising Jus-

tices M.R.Shah, Krishna Murari, Hima Kohli and P.S.Narasimha said.

Neo-Fascists Win Big In Italy, Meloni Set To Be Country's First Woman PM

AGENCEIS

A party with neo-fascist roots, the Brothers of Italy, won the most votes in Italy's national elections, looking set to deliver the country's first far right government since World War II and make its leader, Giorgia Meloni, Italy's first woman premier, near-final results showed on Monday.

Italy's lurch to the far right immediately shifted Europe's geopolitical reality, placing a eurosceptic party in position to lead a founding member of the European Union and its third-largest economy.

Right-wing leaders across Europe immediately hailed Meloni's victory and her party's meteoric rise as sending a historic message to Brussels.

Near-final results showed the centre-right coalition netting some 44 per cent of the parliamentary vote, with Meloni's Brothers of Italy snatching some 26 per cent.

Her coalition partners divided up the remainder, with the anti-immigrant League of Matteo Salvini winning nearly nine per cent and the more moderate Forza Italia of ex-Premier Silvio Berlusconi taking around eight per cent.

The centre-left Democratic Party and its allies had around 26 per cent, while the 5-Star Movement — which had been the biggest vote-getter in the 2018 par-



liamentary elections — saw its share of the vote halved to some 15 per cent this time around.

Turnout was a historic low of 64 per cent. Pollsters suggested voters stayed home in part in protest and also because they were disenchanted by the backroom deals that had created the three governments since the previous election.

"If we are called to govern this nation, we will do it for everyone, we will do it for all Italians and we will do it with the aim of uniting the people (of this country)," Meloni said. "Italy chose us. We will not betray (the country) as we never have."

While the centre-right was the clear winner, the formation of a government is still weeks away and will involve consultations among party leaders and with President Sergio Mattarella. In the meantime, outgoing Premier Mario Draghi remains in a caretaker role. — AP

Foreign Companies Looting Yemen's Oil Must Heed Warnings: Ansarallah

AGENCEIS

Yemen's Ansarallah resistance group renewed a warning to foreign oil companies operating in areas under the control of the Saudi-led coalition and its allies about repercussions if oil revenues are not used to pay the salaries of public sector employees.

"Foreign companies that plunder our wealth should take the warning of the leader of the revolution [Abdul-Malik al-Houthi] seriously, if the salaries and the other points necessary to renew the truce are not complied with," the spokesman for the resistance, Brigadier General Yahya Saree, tweeted on 26 September.

One week ago, Ansarallah leader Abdul-Malik al-Houthi accused the coalition of looting Yemeni oil, warning foreign companies against "colluding with it."

The most recent extension of the UN-brokered truce between Sanaa and Riyadh will expire on 2 October. The terms of the truce called for stopping offensive military operations by land, sea, and air inside Yemen and across its

borders, facilitating the entry of 18 UN-approved fuel ships to the port of Hodeidah every two months, allowing two flights a week to and from Sanaa International Airport, holding a meeting between the warring sides to improve the freedom of movement of Yemenis, and using Yemen's oil revenue to pay government employees.

However, since the initial signing of the agreement in April, the government in Sanaa says the Saudi-led coalition has violated the terms thousands of times.

The violations did not only involve military attacks, but also the seizure of emergency fuel ships headed for the port of Hodeidah and the plundering of Yemen's natural resources.

During this time, Riyadh has also reportedly looted at least one billion dollars worth of Yemeni oil.

Earlier this month, Ansarallah officials communicated to the UN, the US, and the EU that — if Riyadh continues to violate the terms of the truce — Sanaa's response "will not be limited to the normal military aspects," but will be commensurate to the suffering being inflicted on the Yemeni people.



Ukraine War Enters New Phase As Annexation Votes Draw To Close

AGENCEIS

Annexation referendums in four occupied areas of Ukraine will draw to a close later on Tuesday, paving the way for Moscow to officially seize more territory and expand its military operation, possibly within days.

The votes on whether to join Russia are being held in Kherson, Luhansk, Donetsk and Zaporizhzhia, four regions that make up about 15 per cent of Ukraine's landmass.

While Kyiv and its Western allies dismiss the "sham" polls, Russian media are reporting high turnouts.

In rebel-held Luhansk, the voting rate was above 90 percent by early Tuesday, according to the Kremlin-backed RIA Novosti outlet.

Moscow insists voting is voluntary and the polls are fair, but the results will inevitably favour annexation.

When Russia held a referendum in Crimea after seizing the peninsula in 2014, it declared that 97 percent of people had voted to join Russia.

But even traditional Russian allies such as Serbia and Kazakhstan have said they will not recognise the latest annexation votes.

The five-day exercise has been beset by irregularities, including reports of Russian troops taking ballot boxes door-to-door and coercing Ukrainians into voting.

"In no way, certainly according to the Ukrainians, are these votes legitimate or do they represent any



real kind of guide on what the people living in those occupied territories want," said Al Jazeera's Charles Stratford, reporting from Kyiv.

Kyiv has warned that Ukrainians who assist the votes and annexations will face treason charges and at least five years in jail.

"We have lists of names of people who have been involved in some way," presidential adviser Mikhailo Podolyak told Swiss newspaper Blick.

"We are talking about hundreds of collaborators. They will be prosecuted for treason. They face prison sentences of at least five years," he said.

However, Podolyak said, Ukrainians who were forced to vote would not be punished.

Faced with recent humiliating battlefield setbacks for his forces in Ukraine, President Vladimir Putin hopes the annexation ballot will boost

Russia's performance in the war.

As the votes were under way, the Kremlin cautioned Kyiv faces a devastating escalation of the conflict, all the way up to the use of its nuclear arsenal.

Dmitry Medvedev, deputy head of Russia's Security Council chaired by Putin, spelled out the threat in the bluntest terms yet on Tuesday.

"Let's imagine that Russia is forced to use the most powerful weapon against the Ukrainian regime that has committed a large-scale act of aggression, which is dangerous for the very existence of our state," Medvedev wrote on his Telegram app channel. "I believe that NATO will steer clear from direct meddling in the conflict in that case."

NEWS MAKERS

In A First, Supreme Court Live-Streams Constitution Bench Proceedings

AGENCEIS

New Delhi: In a first, the Supreme Court on Tuesday began live-streaming its constitution bench proceedings.

On September 27, 2018, the then Chief Justice of India Dipak Misra had delivered the landmark judgement on the live telecast or webcast of important proceedings in matters of constitutional importance, saying "sunlight is the best disinfectant".

The proceedings can be accessed at webcast.gov.in/scindia/, said an official. On Monday, a bench headed by Chief Justice Uday Umesh Lalit said the top court will soon have its own "platform" to live-stream its proceedings instead of having to use the YouTube.

In a unanimous decision taken at a recent full court meeting headed by the CJI, the apex court decided



to live-stream proceedings of all constitution bench hearings from September 27, four years after the path-breaking announcement by Justice Misra.

The apex court may live-stream proceedings through YouTube and later host them on its server, sources had said. People will be able to access the proceedings on their cell

phones, laptops, and computers without any hassle.

On August 26, for the first time since its inception, the Supreme Court live-streamed proceedings of a bench headed by then Chief Justice (since retired) N V Ramana through a webcast portal. It was a ceremonial proceeding as Justice Ramana was to demit office that day.

Snowden Gets Russian Citizenship

AGENCEIS

President Vladimir Putin has granted Russian citizenship to US National Security Agency (NSA) whistleblower Edward Snowden, Russia's TASS news agency confirmed on Monday. The American's name was included without fanfare on a list of 72 foreigners who became citizens.

Snowden, who applied for citizenship in 2020 upon receiving permanent residency rights, has not commented on the decision as of Monday evening Moscow time. His wife will also apply for citizenship, according to his lawyer.

The former Booz-Allen contractor is not eligible for mobilization to the Ukrainian front as he did not serve in the Russian army, the attorney said in a statement to media, pouring cold water on



feverish social media speculation that Snowden might be drafted now that he was officially a Russian citizen of military age.

While the fact that Snowden has lived in Russia since fleeing the US in 2013 has been held up as "proof" he was undermining the US government on behalf of Moscow, he was marooned in Sheremetyevo Airport upon arriving from Hong Kong to catch a connecting flight to Cuba after the US canceled his passport mid-flight. He was reportedly en route

King Charles' New Monogram Unveiled As Royal Mourning Ends In UK

AGENCEIS

London: The new monogram to be used by Charles as the UK's new monarch has been unveiled and used for the first time on Tuesday, as the royal family's mourning period for Queen Elizabeth II comes to an end.

King Charles III's new cypher is designed by the College of Arms and shows his initial — C — intertwined with the letter R for Rex, which is Latin for King, and III is marked within the letter R with the imperial crown above the letters.

The all-in-gold royal monogram will be added to various public offices, papers, and street furniture across the UK over the coming months and years, replacing the Queen's cypher E II R.

The Court Post Office at Buckingham Palace became the first to make a frank or stamp post using

the new cypher.

"The post room at Buckingham Palace deals with around 200,000 items of mail each year, including invitations to events, responses to letters and cards received from members of the public and state business," the palace said.

The UK's College of Arms, founded in 1484, creates and maintains official registers of coats of arms and pedigrees. The new cypher design would be one of several options prepared by the College of Arms and then chosen by the King.

A Scottish version features the Scottish Crown and was approved by Lord Lyon King of Arms. The new monarch's monogram is intended for government buildings, state documents and some post boxes, with the decision to change the use of cyphers from the Queen to the King up to the discretion of individual organisations.

Isolated Rain Forecast In J&K



Agencies

SRINAGAR: Weather department on Tuesday had forecast isolated light rain and thunder on Wednesday and Thursday in Jammu and Kashmir.

As regards the mercury, a meteorological department official here said that Srinagar recorded a low of 11.6°C against 14.6°C on the previous night. The temperature was 1.2°C above normal for the summer capital during this time of the year, he said.

Qazigund recorded a low of 9.4°C against 9.0°C on the previous night. The temperature was 0.5°C above normal there, he said.

In Pahalgam, the mercury settled at 6.8°C against 6.4°C on the previous night and it was 0.6°C above normal for the south

Kashmir resort, he said.

Kokernag recorded a low of 10.7°C against 9.0°C the previous night and it was 1.1°C below normal for the place, he said.

World famous Gulmarg resort recorded a low of 6.0°C against 4.0°C on the previous night. It was 1.0°C below normal for the north Kashmir place, he said.

In Kupwara town, the mercury settled at 10.0°C against 12.6°C on the previous night, the official said. It was 0.7°C above normal for the north Kashmir place, he said.

Jammu recorded a low of 22.0°C against 19.7°C on the previous night. It was 0.3°C above normal for J&K's winter capital, he said.

Banihal recorded a low of 10.0°C, Batote 12.6°C, Katra 19.3°C and Bhadarwah 11.4°C. (GNS)

SRINAGAR-URI HIGHWAY PROJECT

Land Acquisition, Improvement Work To Be Expedited: Secy Planning

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Secretary, Planning Development and Monitoring Department, Dr Raghav Langer Tuesday took a review meeting regarding progress of Srinagar-Baramulla-Uri National Highway Project in District Baramulla, along with Deputy Commissioner Baramulla and Officers of Border Roads Organization.

Secretary Planning, who is also the Mentor Secretary for district Baramulla, mentioned that the instant project is having strategic importance and stressed that all efforts shall be put in for its timely completion without compromising the work quality and all bottlenecks shall be removed for its timely completion.

A detailed power point presentation was given by the Lt. Col. Jitender Singh, OC, 53 RCC Project Beacon in which he mentioned that Job for preparation of DPR for improvement of Road Srinagar-Baramulla-Uri (NH-1) from km 14.200 (Narbal) to km 57.800 to NHFL specification and from km 57.800 to km 101.00 to NHDL with paved shoulder has already been sanctioned in 04 packages by MoRTH. Commander, BRTF of Project Beacon apprised the Secretary Planning that the project is on track but there are some issues pertaining to land acquisition which need to be resolved. He said that in few cases, estimates of tree compensation from Horticulture Department and assessment of valuation of structures from R&B Department

are awaited, besides compensation disbursement needs to be expedited by the Collector/ CALA esp along the stretches of Sangrama flyover, Pattan bypass & Baramulla bypass.

Deputy Commissioner Baramulla assured that the estimates of Horticulture and R&B Department shall be furnished within couple of days, meanwhile DC stressed that an immediate action is required to be taken by BRO vis-à-vis road widening, berm filling, construction of passenger sheds and drainage which otherwise become the main cause of traffic jam esp in the Baramulla Town. For compensation disbursement, Deputy Commissioner intimated that the cases are being evaluated on war footing basis and every possible effort is made to finish the process as soon as possible so that land compensation is disbursed efficiently.

The Secretary Planning impressed that if there are any policy related issues, wherein some clarity is required at the Government level, same may be forwarded to the Revenue Department for their earlier resolution. Further, all pending 3G Awards shall be notified within a period of 15 days.

At the end, the Secretary Planning, Development and Monitoring Department directed all concerned to work in harmony and coordination so that all bottlenecks are removed and the project shall be got completed within stipulated period of time so that general public may feel at ease for commuting on this

WAQF BOARD'S NEW ORDER

Restore Shab-Khwani At All Kashmir Shrines

'Decision Taken After Improvement In Overall Law And Order Situation'

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board Tuesday ordered restoration of 'Shab-Khwani' at all shrines and directed the authorities to put in place all necessary arrangements.

An order issued by Executive Magistrate, Tehsildar of J&K Waqf Board, Srinagar, Ishtiyak Mohi-ud-din said that Jammu and Kashmir has been an abode of Sufi Saints and their shrines are spread across the length and breadth of the UT of J&K, whose administrative affairs are managed by the J&K Waqf Board.

Apart from the usual religious practices, the practice of shab Khawani has been a precedence of centuries at these shrines, that was observed with great religious fervour and zeal, preferably on the intervening night of Thursday and Friday," it said, adding that the practice of "Shab-Khwani" at most shrines was discontinued because of the turmoil and deteriorating law and order situation few decades back.

The Chairperson, J&K Waqf



Board has desired that in view of the improvement in overall law and order situation in the UT, the practice shall be resumed to restore the sanctity and religious fervour associated with Shab-Khwani.

"Now, therefore, the general public is hereby informed that "Shab-Khwani" being restored at all shrines of Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board, and shall be preferably observed on the intervening night of Thursday and Friday. However, it can

also be observed on any other night of the week depending upon the local custom and past practice. Executive Officers/ Administrators and the staff posted at shrines are hereby directed to put in place all necessary arrangements to ensure "Shab-Khawani" is observed in a peaceful and serene environment. They shall give wide publicity through public notices and announcements to generate awareness among the devotees in this regard," the order reads.

Bukhari Urges Priority For Fruit Laden Trucks On Highway

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Apni Party president Altaf Bukhari Tuesday appealed Jammu and Kashmir administration to prioritise the movement of fruit-laden trucks on the Srinagar-Jammu national highway so that the fruit growers in the valley do not suffer losses.

Addressing a press conference here, Bukhari expressed his gratitude to the administration for clearing the backlog of trucks on the national highway and allowing the movement of such trucks on Monday.

The Apni Party chief said the party had taken up the issue with J-K lieutenant governor Manoj Sinha, chief secretary Arun Kumar Mehta and other officials.

"Yesterday also, we raised the issue with the chief secretary. We told him that if the issue is not resolved, then we will have to sit with the (fruit) growers at Qazigund, even as we do not want any law and order problem to be created, Bukhari said.

Fruit growers of Kashmir on Monday held a demonstration here against the alleged stopping of apple-laden trucks by authorities at various places along the national highway en route to terminal markets of the country.

However, the administration dismissed the allegations, saying the trucks were being halted due to natural causes.

Bukhari said, I am thankful that he (LG Sinha) took a personal interest and confirmed to me last night that they have cleared the entire backlog.

He, however, said it also raises a simple question that if the administration could clear the backlog in a day, why did they not do it for the last 15 days?

"It is possible, if they mean it, they can clear the backlog, they can give preference to trucks. We appeal to the administration, with



folded hands, that the people of J-K are facing hardship and please do not see only that the tourism sector is doing well, he said.

About 70 per cent of the population is dependent on horticulture and so its an appeal to the authorities to prioritise the movement of fruit-laden trucks, the Apni Party chief said.

Asked if there was a deliberate attempt to cause losses to the valley's fruit industry, Bukhari said while it "will be carrying it too far" if he said that they are targeting our industry and our economy, the fact is that our people have suffered and our growers have suffered losses.

"There are elements in every administration and I will not exonerate them from this charge that carelessness has not been done, Bukhari said. Whether it has been intentional carelessness or a routine like it has become under this administration because they think they are not answerable to anyone... But, I want to tell them what they did yesterday, try to do it every day now," he added.

On the issue of Kashmiri apples fetching less rates in the fruit mandis in the country, Bukhari urged the government to raise the import duty on the apples coming from outside the country.

He said, "If you are procuring apples from other countries like Afghanistan, first you should see if Afghanistan produces so much apple or not. The apple you are getting in the name of Afghanistan duty-free, is basically from Iran. It is being used to make our people suffer losses," he said.

Army Dedicates 'Friendship Bridge' To People In Ramban

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The army on Tuesday dedicated a newly constructed "friendship bridge" to the people in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district, a defence spokesperson said.

The 37-feet-long, six-feet-wide pedestrian bridge across the Mahu-Mangit stream is capable of handling 1.5-tonne load, Jammu-based army public relations officer Lt Col Devender Anand said.

He said the steel bridge will connect Mahu and Mangit villages and allows pedestrians an easy passage.

Earlier, there was only a temporary wooden bridge that connected the two sides, the spokesperson said, adding people faced numerous challenges while using it.

"In the past, their access to the other side of the village was almost entirely blocked during



the winter and early spring. In the winter, the villagers could not cross the wooden bridge fearing snow, and due to frequent flooding of the stream in spring, it was difficult to go to the other side.

"Now, the bridge has enabled them to move either sides throughout the year as well as get access basic services and markets. Over 1,200 people will benefit from this bridge," the officer said.

He said the villagers expressed their gratitude to the

army for constructing the bridge in less than two weeks.

Meanwhile, the 52 RCC GREF, a wing of the Border Roads Organisation, on Tuesday began re-constructing the 240-foot-long CI-40R Bailey Suspension Bridge (Jhoola bridge) over river Chenab at Maitra in Ramban.

Ramban Deputy Commissioner Mussarat Islam, along with Additional Deputy Commissioner Harbans Lal Sharma, visited the site and took stock of the progress on the re-launching of the bridge.

JJM A Flagship Program, Needs Speedy Implementation: Bhatnagar

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar Tuesday maintained that Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) is a flagship program and needs speedy implementation across Jammu and Kashmir.

The Advisor made these remarks while chairing a meet to review the progress of ongoing works under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) and CAPEX for the year 2022-23 at the Civil Secretariat here.

The meeting was attended by Principal Secretary, Jal Shakti Department, Shaleen Kabra; Mission Director, JJM, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah; Special Secretary, Jal Shakti, Director Finance, Jal Shakti, Chief Engineer, PHE Jammu/Kashmir, Chief Engineer RTIC, Superintending Engineers and other concerned officials both in person and through video.

During the meeting, the Advisor held detailed assessment on Physical and Financial achievements made under CSS/CAPEX/ NABARD/PMDP for the Financial year 2022-23. The Advisor also reviewed the status of JJM works and the infrastructure proposed under the scheme.

Speaking during the meeting, Advisor Bhatnagar impressed upon the officers that the pace of ongoing works shouldn't be slowed down due to routine impediments like weather or other things and due efforts should be made to achieve the objectives of JJM. He impressed upon the officers that there should be no scope for laxity in implementation of JJM as it is a flagship programme and caters to essential requirement of clean adequate water straight to each and every household.

While reviewing the status of major works under JJM, Advisor Bhatnagar enjoined upon the officers that tendering of works

should be expedited and timely allotment of works is imperative. The Advisor called for encouraging wide participation of contractors and for giving wide publicity to tenders so that maximum people participate in them.

Assessing the status of detailed project reports (DPRs) and approval of works, Advisor Bhatnagar instructed the executing agencies to practise due diligence before project planning and asked them that all the bottle necks and hindrances in projects should be removed in coordination with other departments for speedy execution and timely completion of works. He directed them to ensure that contractors possesses necessary machinery for undertaking projects of this magnitude.

For timely completion of projects, the Advisor directed the respective officers that month-wise progress reports as well as plans for fresh works should be submitted to the department. He also called upon them to use Project Management Softwares for effective implementation of this prestigious mission.

During the meeting, Advisor Bhatnagar also reviewed the status of individual Water Supply Schemes (WSS) at various stages of their completion across Jammu and Kashmir. He also reviewed the progress of other projects like the Shahpur Kandi Dam, Ujh Multipurpose Project and River Jehlum Tributaries project.

The Advisor remarked that these projects are of great importance for entire J&K and due commitment should be maintained to complete these projects within the given timelines.

During the meeting, MD, JJM gave a detailed presentation on the progress achieved till date in the implementation of mission across Jammu and Kashmir.

Two Terrorists Killed In Kulgam: Police

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: A day after a Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) militant was killed in an encounter in Jammu and Kashmir's Kulgam, security forces on Tuesday shot dead two terrorists of the proscribed terror outfit in the district, police said.

Security forces launched a cordon and search operation in Ahwatoo area of Kulgam district following information about presence of militants there, a police official said. He said the search operation turned into an encounter after militants opened firing at the security forces who retaliated.

Additional DGP (Kashmir Zone) Vijay Kumar said two JeM ultras were trapped in the cordoned area. "Two local terrorists of proscribed #terror outfit JeM trapped in the ongoing #encounter. Both the trapped terrorists are involved in several terror crime cases," Kumar tweeted.

A police spokesman said both the terrorists were shot dead.

On Monday, a JeM terrorist was killed in an encounter with security forces in Kulgam district. Two civilians and a soldier were also injured in the encounter in the district's Batpora village, police had said.

Govt Unveils New Jail Manual For Superintendence, Management Of Prisons

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The administration of Jammu & Kashmir has unveiled a new jail manual for superintendence and management of prisons in the Union Territory. Sources in J&K's Home department disclosed to a local news agency KNO that the new jail manual has come into effect from August 17, 2022.

"The Prison Manual- 2022 has superseded the manual for the superintendence and management of jails in the State of J&K- 2000" they said, adding that the new manual was notified by the Home department vide statutory order number 381 on August 17, 2022.

The jail manual contains detailed guidelines and instructions for superintendence and management of prisons in J&K Union Territory.

At present, there are 14 functional prisons in Jammu & Kashmir which includes two central jails, 10 district jails, one special jail and one sub-jail. Against lodgement capacity of 3629 inmates, J&K prisons house more than 5000 inmates.

It is worthwhile to mention that the Jammu & Kashmir High Court had repeatedly pulled up the government for delay in finalization of upgraded jail manual.

In February 2019, the court was informed by the state government that the draft jail manual was before a committee for examination.

On April 19, 2019, the High Court was informed by J&K government that delay in the finalization of the Jail Manual was due to preoccupation of the Home department with polling in the erstwhile State.

Azad Greets People On Rabi Ul Awal

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Former Chief Minister Gulam Nabi Azad greeted people on the commencement of the Rabi ul Awal.

Azad said that "the month of Rabi ul Awal marks the birth of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the greatest humanitarian that

ever walked on earth".

In his message, Azad prayed that the month advances peace and prosperity in the nation. "The Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) life is a continuous source of inspiration for the mankind. His detractors also referred to him as the Truthful and the Faithful" he said.

KASHMIR OBSERVER

Acrimony At The UN

The speeches at the United Nations General Assembly by India and Pakistan leaders is a major annual event that attracts a lot of media and public attention in South Asia. One major point of interest is the lingering India-Pakistan animosity, largely driven by their long-standing fight over Jammu and Kashmir. Since revocation of Article 370 in August 2019, the speeches have assumed an even bigger news value. More so, in Kashmir, where people eagerly look forward to these speeches to see if there's anything in store for them.

Pakistan Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif in his speech this year said that while Pakistan looks for peace with India, "sustainable peace and stability" in the region was contingent upon the resolution of the Kashmir issue. Sharif also alleged that India was seeking to turn the Muslim majority Jammu and Kashmir into a Hindu territory through "illegal demographic changes".

India in a hard-hitting reply said it was "regrettable" that he made false accusations against India. Indian diplomat, First Secretary Mijito Vinito, said during the 'Right of Reply' session that Sharif has made accusations against India "to obfuscate misdeeds in his own country and to justify actions against India that the world considers unacceptable." Vinito further said that a polity that claims it seeks peace with its neighbours would never sponsor cross border terrorism. nor would it shelter planners of the horrific Mumbai terrorist attack.

India always brings up terrorism sponsored from across the border and Pakistan makes counter accusations and also seeks to highlight the situation in Kashmir. This acrimonious exchange is a routine spectacle at the United Nations where the mutually antagonistic positions are ritualistically rehearsed at various meetings. Over the last three years, the positions on both sides have become even more rigid and bitter.

If anything, it also underlines the lingering estrangement between the neighbours that has further deepened since New Delhi's withdrawal of Article 370. Situation can be expected to improve if the leaders of the two countries deem it in their core interest to engage which doesn't seem the case now. This would need a huge leap of faith on both sides.

And if not then we can only hope that the current climate of distrust and antagonism doesn't lead to further escalation of tensions. More so, when due to suspended talks, the two countries lack the diplomatic tools to manage the fallout. It is therefore important that the two countries get back to the dialogue and work towards the resolution of their longstanding issues for durable peace in the region.

OTHER OPINION

Home and abroad

Delivering India's statement at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) this year, External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar spoke of several challenges in India's past, present and future, with a special emphasis on the immediate "shocks" arising from the war in Ukraine, the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and terrorism. In stark contrast to the Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who made pejorative remarks about India, Mr. Jaishankar made no direct comment on Pakistan. Nor did he directly mention India's challenges at the Line of Actual Control, although he criticised China's habit of politicising and blocking UN Security Council terrorist designations. His comments on Ukraine were watched, as they came days after Prime Minister Narendra Modi was lauded by western countries for telling Russian President Vladimir Putin that the "era of war is over". Mr. Jaishankar expanded on Mr. Modi's theme without seeming to either criticise Russia or condone its actions: instead, he said, India stands on the side of peace, of respect for the UN charter, dialogue and diplomacy, and with all those now grappling with the "escalating costs of food, of fuel and fertilizers". His words were even-handed, and require global stakeholders to consider both the risks from the conflict in Ukraine, and from U.S.-EU led sanctions that could exacerbate global economic fragmentation and inflationary trends. The prognosis seems even bleaker, given that just prior to the UNGA, Mr. Putin delivered a speech committing to Russia's ability to use "all weapons", indicating nuclear options, while the Ukrainian President said no dialogue could bring an end to the war, calling instead for more weaponry and a global effort to "punish" Russia.

Above all, Mr. Jaishankar hailed what he called the "New India" under Mr. Modi, spelling out five pledges made at the 75th Independence day anniversary, which includes making India a developed nation by 2047. He added that India is ready to take on enhanced responsibility at the global body, and called for a reformed UN with an expanded Security Council, as a means at righting the "injustice" done to the global south. The year ahead, where India will host the G-20 summit, will, no doubt, test the will and the ability of the Modi government to play the role of global uniter, and what Mr. Jaishankar called a "bridge" between nations polarised by bitter divides. It is a goal which will only be achievable if New Delhi is able to play a similarly uniting role in its own neighbourhood, and bring polarising and divisive forces within India under control.

The Hindu

Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat

While all this is
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Online RTI
A Distant Dream



In 2015, the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) declared 28 September as International Day for Universal Access to Information. Considering that several civil society organizations and government bodies in the world have adopted and currently celebrate this observance, the UN General Assembly also adopted 28 September 2019 as the International Day for Universal Access to Information. This year's theme is 'Artificial intelligence, e-governance and access to information'.

As recently highlighted by I.G. Sinha, e-governance in Kashmir is commendable especially in the context of the e-office project of J&K Government wherein more than 3 lakh files were digitized and work in the civil secretariat was made digital. The e-Office project of the Government is aimed at supporting governance by ushering in more effective and transparent inter and intra-governmental processes. This has transformed office work completely which has now become simplified, responsive, effective and above all, transparent.

While all this is applause-worthy, one cannot help but look at an integral part of the e-governance process that has damped the spirit of such changes. Accessing information online, under the RTI act 2005, is still difficult and with many roadblocks in the way.

On November 30th 2021, the then Information Technology Secretary Government of Jammu & Kashmir, Mr. Amit Sharma, during a TV debate on Door Darshan had said that he would soon ensure filing of applications under the Right to Information Act (RTI) through a dedicated online portal. He was responding to my question when I raised this issue during the said TV programme. Infact, Mr. Sharma assured that not only will online RTI applications be filed through an online mode but residents of J&K would also be able to file applications through a digital portal under the J&K Public Services Guarantee Act (PSGA). It is now almost a year and the promise remains unfulfilled.

PIL for Online RTI application

In 2019, the Supreme Court bench, headed by Justice NV Ramana, issued notices to the Centre, State & Union Territories' Governments after a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) was filed seek-

ing the facility to file RTI applications through a digital platform online). A Non-Governmental Organisation Pravasi Legal Cell, which works for legal empowerment of Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and Indians working in foreign countries and has been doing advocacy to impress upon the state governments to allow filing of online RTI applications, had moved the PIL before the Supreme Court. Advocate Jose Abraham, the counsel of the NGO in the petition had described the RTI Act as a powerful tool but had said that its purpose is met only if applicants get information without delay and through the electronic mode.

For instance, under section 7(1), the information related to life and liberty of a person is to be provided in 48 hrs instead of 30 days and that is only possible when the RTI application is received electronically and reply also provided in the same mode (online). However, when that service is not available to citizens in many states including Jammu & Kashmir, how can this legal provision be realised on ground?

This issue was raised by the NGO in its petition as well. The relevant para of the petition reads:

"One of the most effective provisions in the RTI Act is section 7(1) which states that 'information sought for concerns the life or liberty of a person, the same shall be provided within 48 hours of the receipt of the request' is not effective under the existing system and it severely affects the life and liberty of citizens"

In another case, in January last year, the Supreme Court also issued notices to 25 High Courts for failing to receive online RTI applications even after over 16 years have passed since the enactment of RTI Act 2005. The notice was issued after a PIL was filed by an RTI Activist from Agra, K C Jain, in Supreme Court around 2 years back.

Indian Postal Orders (IPOs) Not Available

As a long-time campaigner of the Right to Information Act (RTI), I have come to the conclusion that getting an Indian Postal Order (IPO) from a post office is a very difficult task. In the last 15 years of my advocacy around the issue, I have not come across a single post office in a mohalla or a village that sells Indian Postal Orders (IPOs). The same is only sold either in General Post Offices or

in bigger post offices. If a person from a remote village in Machil Kupwara wants to file an RTI application, he or she will have to travel all the way from Sogam or its surrounding village to Kupwara town to get the postal order. Is this citizen friendly?

Had online RTI service been available, as is the case in some states like Maharashtra, a resident of places like Machil, Teetwal or Padder in Kishtwar could have filed an application under RTI Act 2005 from a cell phone sitting in his own village.

This is so easy to do and most advisable, yet isn't being done here. RTI Act and Online Applications

There is a clear provision in the RTI Act 2005 that an applicant can seek information through a written application or electronically. The Section 6(1) of the RTI Act 2006 reads:

"A person, who desires to obtain any information under this Act, shall make a request in writing or through electronic means in English or Hindi in the official language of the area in which the application is being made, accompanying such fee as may be prescribed, to (a) the Central Public Information Officer or State Public Information Officer, as the case may be, of the concerned public authority."

When RTI Act 2005 says that applications can be accepted electronically (email etc) why are Govt offices reluctant to accept the applications under this mode or receive fees electronically?

Conclusion

In this digital era when most of the services are available to us in a digital mode, artificial intelligence and e-governance play an important part in improving access to information. They can help bridge the digital divide, by giving citizens access to tailor-made and accessible information. The digital RTI platforms can deliver more efficient and citizen friendly services which are not possible through conventional mode. RTI is a fundamental right which is recognized in 80 % of the nations across the world.

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

All good things inevitably have to come to an end. So did Roger Federer's amazing tennis career which lasted for 24 glorious years, exactly with that of one of his close sporting friends, Sachin Tendulkar's. ("Winner, yet more than winning", Sep. 25). Plagued by recurring injuries, Federer's long absence from tennis had given rise to speculation that the Swiss legend would hang his boots and rac-

quet anytime soon. For the first time in his illustrious career, Federer was missing in action from Grand Slams in a calendar year in 2022. His trophy-laden career had witnessed multiple moments that have left the tennis world astonished and awestruck. But, sadly the hands that held the biggest trophies frequently for years will no longer be seen holding them. A career that spanned across generations has finally come to an end, leaving a

massive void in the beautiful sport.

Seeing the photograph in many newspapers of Federer shedding tears at his swansong at the Laver Cup tournament in London, my eyes too turned moist for a while. That Rafael Nadal struggles to control his emotions seen in the picture, reflects the bonding between the two for decades and manifests the Spaniard's great respect and love and affection for the Swiss legend. Not only Feder-

er had won the admiration of tennis fans across the world with his elegant and effortless style of play, which was poetry in motion, but he also won their hearts with his humility and modesty. A sporting legend and a gentleman in equal measure - tennis will never be the same without Roger Federer.

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Is It Time For Your Flu Shot?

Libby Richards

At this point in the COVID-19 pandemic, nearly everyone has experienced the panic and uncertainty that come with having mild COVID-like symptoms – such as a cough and sore throat – only to test negative day after day. With cold and flu season just around the corner, that state of frustrating uncertainty is likely to strike most of us again.

Both COVID-19 and the flu are contagious respiratory illnesses that have similar symptoms, making it difficult to distinguish between the two viral infections without a lab test. Testing is the only way to know which virus is causing your symptoms. In fact, labs are working to create one test that can detect both COVID-19 and the flu.

As a nursing professor with experience in public health promotion, I am often asked about the differences between the flu and COVID-19. This year I am fielding many questions about the timing of getting the new COVID-19 booster and the flu shot and whether they can be given together.

PARSING THE SYMPTOMS

Symptoms of both COVID-19 and the flu can range from mild – or no noticeable symptoms at all – to severe. While flu infection does not typically affect one's ability to taste or smell, loss of taste or smell has been a common symptom associated with COVID-19 infection. Both infections can cause fevers, chills, body aches and fatigue. More severe symptoms of either infection include difficulty breathing and subsequent infections like pneumonia.

During the 2021-2022 flu season, the term "flurona" made its way into the COVID-19 vernacular. Flurona refers to a simultaneous infection with both the flu and COVID-19. While only a few cases of co-infections have been reported, it would not be surprising to see more of them this coming flu season. Vaccination for both the flu and

COVID-19 is your best protection against both.

TIMING THE SHOTS

With the newly formulated COVID-19 booster shot now available and flu season just around the corner, a natural question is whether there is an optimal timing for the two shots.

The answer to that question is to get both as soon as possible. It is important to consider that it takes approximately two weeks after vaccination for the body to develop antibodies from both the COVID-19 vaccines and the flu vaccine.

As long as you have completed your primary COVID-19 vaccine series and it has been at least eight weeks since your last COVID-19 booster, now is the time to get the updated COVID-19 vaccine that targets both the original strain of SARS-CoV-2 – the virus that causes COVID-19 – and the most recent omicron subvariants. The original COVID-19 vaccines and booster series have dramatically reduced the number of COVID-19 infection and death rates, as well as cases of severe COVID-19 that lead to hospitalization.

While everyone 6 months of age and older are recommended to receive both the COVID-19 and flu vaccines, certain populations have a higher risk for severe infection, such as pregnant women, and should be extra vigilant about getting vaccinated.

Further, among those vaccinated against COVID-19, symptoms during an infection tend to be milder. However, due in part to the quickly evolving nature of the virus, it's become clear that immune protection from COVID-19 vaccination or infection does not last forever. While studies show that the primary COVID-19 series maintains efficacy against severe disease and death six months after vaccination, protection against infection decreases by between 20% to 30% by six months after vaccination.

This decline in immune protec-



Timing is also important with the flu vaccine. Flu cases typically begin to rise in October and peak between December and February, but can last through May. Ideally, people should get vaccinated before flu begins to spread, making September or early October the ideal flu vaccination time

tion is exactly why booster shots are so critical. Without a large uptake of booster shots in the population, COVID-19 infection rates could surge again.

Timing is also important with the flu vaccine. Flu cases typically begin to rise in October and peak between December and February, but can last through May. Ideally, people should get vaccinated before flu begins to spread, making September or early October the ideal flu vaccination time.

A DIFFICULT FLU SEASON AHEAD

Due to lockdowns, reduced travel, school closures and mask mandates in the first and second years of the pandemic, both the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 flu seasons were estimated to have fewer hospitalizations and deaths from the flu compared to many of the pre-pandemic years.

In the fall of 2021, experts became concerned about the potential for a COVID-19 and flu "twinemic," especially as COVID-19 restric-

tions were lifting and masks were coming off. Fortunately, the worst didn't bear out – flu numbers in the 2021-2022 season did not return to pre-pandemic levels. However, the possibility of a "twinemic" is not out of the picture for the coming flu season.

Flu seasons are inherently difficult to predict. With most people traveling again, schools open, mask mandates lifted and workers headed back to the office, people are undoubtedly going to be exposed to germs that they have been more protected from for the last two and a half years.

To further compound this, flu vaccine rates have been lower during the pandemic, suggesting that Americans may be out of the habit of getting their annual flu shot.

PAIRING THE SHOTS

Many are also wondering whether they can or should get both the

updated COVID-19 booster and the flu shot at the same time. The good news is, yes, it is safe for both adults and children 12 years of age and up who are eligible for the updated COVID-19 booster to get these vaccines simultaneously.

A recent study found that common vaccine side effects such as pain at the injection site occurred at slightly higher rates when someone received the flu vaccine and a COVID-19 vaccine at the same time, as opposed to receiving only a COVID-19 booster. However, those reactions, including fatigue and headache, were mild and resolved within a day or two.

You don't need to make two separate vaccine visits as long as you are due for your next COVID-19 shot. However, I don't recommend waiting to get your flu shot if you are not yet due for a COVID-19 booster. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests everyone receive their flu vaccine by the end of October. But if you miss that deadline, it is absolutely better to get vaccinated later in the season than not at all.

COMMUNITY MATTERS TOO

Getting the flu and COVID-19 vaccines isn't just about your own health, it's about family and community health too. Communities with higher vaccination rates have fewer opportunities to spread the virus.

Keep in mind that many people cannot be vaccinated because they have weakened immune systems or are undergoing treatments. They depend on those around them for protection. While one person may experience mild symptoms if they contract the flu or COVID-19, they could spread the virus to others who could become severely ill. Because it's impossible to predict how people will react if they get sick, getting the flu and COVID-19 vaccines is the best prevention strategy.

By arrangements with The Conversation

How To Stand Your Ground And Be Frugal With ‘Sorry’



Asha Iyer Kumar

For the longest time now, my ambition has been to be remembered as a good human being when I am finally gone. In pursuit of this seemingly simple goal, I have acquired many habits and manners that have now become an intrinsic part of my quotidian dealings with people. It was probably towards this end that I infused the three magic words, 'Thank you', 'I am sorry' and 'Please' very early in my life, in the conviction that saying them automatically put me in the good books of people and made me a nice person in their eyes. At what point this practice became a flawed pattern, I don't know, but slowly I began to realise that I was overdoing it, especially the apology part, by adding the 'sorry' word as an appendage and a preamble to explain situations in my conversations and correspondences.

It was a stiff response from a friend who calls a spade a spade that knocked me back to my senses. 'Why are you sorry?' he once asked and I didn't know. Indeed, why? On another occasion, someone gave me an earful over something that had irked her and all I could do to defuse the situation was to apologise repeatedly, again without knowing why. Apparently, I had no idea what wrong I had done against her.

A couple of similar instances later, it began to occur to me that apologising was a positive trait, but when used beyond a limit and without plausible reason, it put me on the defen-

sive and exposed my vulnerability. It made me susceptible to wrongful accusation and undermined my self-esteem. It was time for me to review my apology policy for my own good, not because I had shifted my priority to be a nice person, but because it was robbing my confidence to confront people in a legitimate way. I suspected that it might even make people think less of me, if I indulged in saying 'sorry' where it wasn't even logically warranted.

Every time I feel an urge to change my habits that have been reigning for long, I first consider the reasons that makes me a slave to them. In this instance, I realized it was my absolute fear of antagonizing people that put me on the defensive. The last thing we want is to have our connections, which are already getting tenuous, to be snapped because of something we might have unwittingly said or done.

What I didn't comprehend was that instead of making me rise in the eyes of the other person, it actually gave them the power to treat me in a condescending way. I was shunning myself into an emotional corner by exposing my fear of offending them inadvertently. Subsequently, I also learned that this fear of offending people emerged from my habit of picking intentions and emotions in their words and actions, and therefore, to pre-empt any further flare-up, I used the sorry word profusely, sabotaging myself.

What do we lose if we apologise? Why let our ego play spoilsport in our relations? Nice people don't think twice before saying 'sorry' because it reflects on their basic virtues

and an appreciable level of humility. I slowly began to remove these sections from my charter of belief systems, convinced in the thought that my apologies have to be genuine and not just a casual utterance. If I am at fault, I must apologise and show remorse and even go an extra mile to make amends, but I must not say 'sorry' at the drop of the hat. I must not attach a 'sorry' when I turn down requests politely, because to say 'no' is my privilege. I must not say 'sorry' in the assumption that the other person might consider me aggressive and rude, when all I am doing is giving the right responses.

I must not take responsibility for things beyond my control and pretend that a certain eventuality was of my doing, unless I am certain about my conscious role in it. I shall not offer apologies anymore in anticipation of adverse reactions from the other side. It had already caused some serious dents to my social skills and I intended not to give it more clout.

Saying 'sorry' is a virtue when you know you are at fault. But to imagine that you are at fault at all times and making its utterance a superfluity can not only take away from its magic, but also reduce your brand value as a poised and positive person. Good people don't maintain relationships based on our capacity to yield, but based on our certitude and courage to be our authentic selves.

*– Asha Iyer Kumar is a Dubai-based author, children's writing coach and youth motivational speaker
The article was originally published by Khaleej Times*

Life Expectancy Tool May Improve Quality Of Life For Dementia Patients

ANI

A mortality prediction model for dementia patients may aid clinicians in framing discussions with patients and families about end-of-life care options such as at-home care and nursing homes. Furthermore, the model may assist physicians in determining whether patients should continue with routine cancer screening or discontinue medications, such as insulin for Type 2 diabetes patients - interventions that may cause more harm than good.

Researchers led by UC San Francisco followed 4,267 participants with probable dementia who were not residents of nursing homes in their study, which was published in JAMA Internal Medicine on September 26, 2022, and found that 81% of them had died by the end of the follow-up period.

A prediction model was created based on a person's age, gender, BMI, chronic conditions, smoking status, and ability to walk several blocks and engage in vigorous activity. They also included the ability to perform daily living activities such as personal care, eating, and getting in and out of bed, as well as instrumental daily living activities such as meal preparation, grocery shopping, medication management, and money management. In approximately 75% of cases, the model correctly predicted who lived and who died over a 10-year period.

The participants, who were enrolled in the Health and Retirement Study, a nationally representative survey of adults over 50, had an average age of 82, 12% were Black, and 69% were female. A high accuracy algorithm determined their probable dementia diagnosis. The findings were validated in a separate group of people who took part in the National



Health and Aging Trends Study. Model May Prompt Conversations About Financial Resources, Treatment Preferences

According to the first author W. James Deardorff, MD, a geriatrician at UCSF and the San Francisco VA Health Care System, the prediction model can help guide discussions about what financial resources are required to support individuals with dementia.

"An estimate of an individual's prognosis can be an important factor in financial planning for families, especially as many people with dementia require increased support at home and are eventually admitted to nursing homes," he said, noting that previous studies have shown the average survival time from time of diagnosis to be between three and 12 years.

"Additionally, individuals with limited life expectancy may wish to focus on the quality of life and being comfortable, rather than trying

to live as long as possible. This may lead them to forego certain interventions, such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation in the event of a cardiac arrest. Information about an individual's prognosis can help inform conversations about certain medical treatment preferences," he said.

Among the factors linked with mortality are older age, male sex, body mass index below 18.5, former or current smoking status, chronic diseases, difficulties walking several blocks, and performing activities of daily living and instrumental activities of daily living.

Colonoscopies, Insulin May No Longer Make Sense

"An estimate of an individual's prognosis can be an important factor in financial planning for families, especially because many people with dementia require increased support at home and are eventually admitted to nursing homes," he said, noting that previous studies have shown the average survival time from time

of diagnosis to be between three and 12 years.

Patients with Type 2 diabetes may be advised to reduce or discontinue insulin, according to senior author Sei Lee, MD, UCSF professor of geriatrics and senior scholar for the San Francisco VA Quality Scholars fellowship. "Tight glycemic control in younger patients reduces the risk of vision loss and kidney failure 10 years later." However, in older patients, these benefits may not be realised, and the risks of low sugars caused by too much insulin can be severe."

In addition to the mortality prediction model, the researchers created an individualised mortality risk calculator for dementia patients, which is available online at ePrognosis.

Other mortality calculators and risk-versus-benefit cancer screening calculators are available, as are videos to help physicians talk with patients about life expectancy and treatment goals.

Stop Seeking Meaning And Purpose Via Smartphones: Researchers

IAN S

Those seeking satisfaction and meaning from their smartphones, it is time to shun this thinking. Researchers have found that those looking for meaning and purpose through their devices and social media could actually experience the opposite.

Researchers at Baylor and Campbell universities in the US found that smartphone attachment could "cause a breakdown in social values because of the unstructured and limitless options they provide for seeking meaning and purpose and inadvertently exacerbate feelings of despair while simultaneously promising to resolve them."

"Seeking itself becomes the only meaningful activity, which is the basis of anomie and addiction," said Christopher M. Pieper, senior lecturer of sociology at Baylor University.

The results, published in the journal Sociological Perspectives, provide a sociological link to the psychological studies that point to connections between digital devices and media use with feelings of loneliness, depression, unhappiness, suicidal ideation and other poor mental health outcomes.

Lead author Justin J. Nelson, assistant professor of sociology at Campbell University and Pieper also found a connection between this search for meaning and feelings of attachment to one's smartphone - a possible precursor to tech addiction.

"Our research finds that meaning-seeking is associated with increased smartphone attachment -- a feeling that you would panic if your phone stopped working," Nelson said.

Our research finds that meaning-seeking is associated with increased smartphone attachment -- a feeling that you would panic if your phone stopped working

"Social media use is also correlated with increased feelings of attachment."

The research found that individuals seeking solace or connection through their phones in shorter spurts might exacerbate attachment.

"What we have uncovered is a social mechanism that draws us into smartphone use, and that might keep us hooked, exacerbating feelings of attachment and anomie, and even disconnection, while they promise the opposite," Pieper said.

UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR

Office of the Executive Engineer, Construction Division

FRESH SHORT TERM TENDER NOTICE (1st Call)
NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

For and on behalf of the University of Kashmir, e-tenders (In single cover system) are invited on Percentage (%age) basis from approved and eligible Civil Contractors registered with J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/U.T/ Central Governments for the following works

S.No	Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc in shape of E-Challan (In Rs.)	Earnest Money in Rs.	Time and Date for Submission of E-Tender.	Date & Time of Opening of Bid	Class of Contractor
1.	Up gradation of Parking's near Examination Block at Main Campus.	20.58	800/-	41,160/-	26-09-2022 to 03-10-2022 (6.00 PM)	04-10-2022 (11.30 AM)	"BEE" & "CEE"
2.	Development of Parking near Examination Block and road toward New I.T Block.	40.00	1100/-	80,000/-	26-09-2022 to 03-10-2022 (6.00 PM)	04-10-2022 (11.30 AM)	"AAY" & "BEE"
3.	Construction of Parking at South Campus.	38.44	1100/-	76,880/-	26-09-2022 to 03-10-2022 (6.00 PM)	04-10-2022 (11.30 AM)	"AAY" & "BEE"
4.	Development of Parking near and on back side of Allama Iqbal Library Auditorium at main Campus.	34.20	1100/-	68,400/-	26-09-2022 to 03-10-2022 (6.00 PM)	04-10-2022 (11.30 AM)	"AAY" & "BEE"
5.	Upgradation of road leading to the Department of Clinical Biochemistry and Bio Resources including Parking at Main Campus.	25.35	1100/-	50,700/-	26-09-2022 to 03-10-2022 (6.00 PM)	04-10-2022 (11.30 AM)	"AAY" & "BEE"

The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the web site www.kashmiruniversity.net / www.jktenders.gov.in.

DIPK-NB-4099/22

Executive Engineer

NIT No: - F(Fresh) (E.Tend)(UCD)/KU/37/22
DATED: 26/09/22.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) SUB-DIVISION MAGAM

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

NIT No: 75/R&B of 2022-23

Dated: 24-09-2022

For and on behalf of the President of India, e-tenders are being invited on an item rate basis/percentage age basis (as applicable) from approved and eligible Contractors registered with the J&K Government, CPWD, Railways, and other State/Central Governments for the following works:

S.No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest money (In Rupees)	Time of completion	M.H of Ac-count	Class of Contractor
1.	Up-gradation of Narbal Tangmarg road by way of P/L 50mm thick bitumen macadam in patches / stretches, 25mm thick Semidense with 6mm seal coat (Tangmarg Gulmarg km 2nd and Km 3rd) P/L 50mm thick bitumen macadam in patches / stretches, 25mm thick Semidense with 6mm seal coat in full.	50.34	1600/-	100680/-	15 days	C&T (Additionality)	AAY with HMPO/ HMPO/AAY Class Civil with Registered MoU with HMPO

Position of AAA: Accorded
Position of funds Available

1. The bidding documents, which would include qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications/drawings, a bill of quantities (B.O.Q), a set of contract terms and conditions, and other details, can be viewed/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in on the dates listed below: -

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents
3.	Bid submission Start Date
4.	Bid Submission End Date
5.	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)

2. Bids must be accompanied by a Treasury Challan (dated between the bid submission start date and the Bid Submission End date) deposited in M.H. 0059 in the name of Executive Engineer R&B Sub-Division Magam (tender inviting authority) as the cost of the tender document.

3.At the time of tendering, all bidders must upload earnest money/bid security equal to 2% of the Advertised Cost in the form of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to the tender receiving authority, i.e.Executive Engineer R&B Sub-Division Magam. The successful bidder will have to provide Performance Security @ 3% at the time of contract award, strictly in accordance with the Government's circular instructions from time to time. The earnest money/bid security of 2% will be released to the successful bidder only after the submission of a Performance Security of 3% of the total cost, which will be released after successful completion of the DLP/Maintenance Period.

4. The date and time of bid opening shall be notified on the Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and automatically communicated to bidders via an e-mail message sent to their e-mail address. Responsive bidders' bids will be opened online on the same Web Site in the Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Sub-Division Magam (tender receiving authority).

5. Bids for the work shall be valid for 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids.

6. Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.

1.1 Bidders are advised to download the bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as the "Bidders Manual Kit" option on the website www.jktenders.gov to familiarize themselves with the bid submission process.

1.2 In order to participate in the bidding process, bidders must obtain a 'Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)' under the Information Technology Act of 2000. Any approved Vendor can provide bidders with a digital certificate.

1.3 Bidders must submit their bids in electronic format with a digital signature online. No physical bids will be accepted.

1.4 Bids will be opened online in accordance with the time schedule specified in Para-1.

1.5 Bidders must upload online scanned copy of all required documents (within the document upload limits) with their technical bid.

- The location of the Hot mix plant of adequate capacity capable of yielding a mix of proper and uniform quality, from which bituminous macadam is to be transported to the site in clean, tarpaulin covered vehicles/Tipper, and shall be placed in such a way that the manufacturing laying/ spreading and rolling temperatures are kept within the specified limits.

No: R&B /Divn/5365-79
Dated: 24/09/2022

DIPK-10789/22

sd/-
Executive Engineer
R&B Sub-Division Magam.

Government of Jammu and Kashmir

Office Of The Principal Govt Boys Higher Secondary School Ganderbal

AUCTION NOTICE

Interested persons are hereby informed that the school is going to auction standing Poplars and Firewood in the premises of the institution on 6th Oct-2022 (Thursday) at 2 PM. The tender documetns / condition as laid down by the committee can be had fro the office of School on working days from 10am to 4 pm

No: GBHSS/GBL/Listt/Auct/Letter / 857
Dated 27-09-2022

DIPK-10843/22

Principal
Govt Boys Higher Secondary School
Ganderbal

GOVT. OF JAMMU & KASHMIR

SRINAGAR MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER LEFT RIVER WORKS DIVISION

CORRIGENDUM

Corrigendum to NleT No. 39 of 2022-23 DATED:-20-09-2022, for the work :Upgradation of Roads at Iram lane KAppreaing at S.No. 05 Issued under endorsement No.SMC/EELRWD/1959-69,Dated: 20-09-2022.

Please read the Earnest Money (CDR) Rs. 8840/- instead ofRs. 5540/- .

DIPK-NB-4066/22

Er. Sajad Ahmad Kawoosa,
Executive Engineer,
Left River Works Division,
Srinagar Municipal Corporation.

No./SMC/EELRWD/2021-26

Dated:-20-SEP-2022.

Global Recession Ahead, Warns World Trade Body Chief

Agencies

GENEVA: The World Trade Organization's chief said Tuesday she believes the world is heading towards a global recession due to multiple colliding crises, and called for radical policies to revive growth.

WTO Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala said Russia's war in Ukraine, the climate crisis, food price and energy shocks plus the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic were creating the conditions for a world recession.

"Now we have to weather what looks like an oncoming recession," she told the opening of the global trade body's annual public forum in Geneva.

"I think a global recession. That's what I think we are edging into. But at the same time, we have to start thinking of the recovery. We have to restore growth."

She noted that the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund had both downgraded global growth forecasts, while indicators on trade numbers were "not looking too good".

Okonjo-Iweala added: "We have security shocks, we have climate shocks, we have energy shocks, we have food price shocks, and all of this hitting countries at the same time, so we cannot afford to do business as usual."

The former Nigerian finance and foreign minister said central banks were in a tight spot, with little choice over the course ahead.



"Central banks don't really have too much of a choice but to tighten and increase interest rates — but the repercussions on emerging markets and developing countries is quite severe, because they too are tightening an increase in interest rates," she said.

"But what happens in the developed countries affects their debt burdens, affects what they have to pay to service debt, affects the flight of capital from their economies back into the developed countries."

"But right now, I think there's not much choice but for central banks to act because inflation really hits at the poor very badly."

She stressed the need for central banks to determine whether inflation was being caused by strong demand or whether the rise in prices was linked to structural problems on the supply side.

Okonjo-Iweala said her top concern was how to ensure food security, followed by access to energy.

"The spectre of not having enough food is one that worries me," she said. (AFP)

Millions Of Barrels Of Iranian Crude And Condensate Arrive In Venezuela



Agencies

CARACAS: Venezuela received a delivery of 1.22 million barrels of Iranian crude and 2 million barrels of condensate this month, and the cargo will soon be unloaded according to documents reviewed by Reuters.

The cargo is part of extensive co-operation agreements signed earlier this year between Caracas and Tehran. The shipping documents from Venezuela's state-owned oil giant PDVSA also show that, between July and August, Venezuela imported about 4.8 million barrels of Iranian crude and condensate.

Large quantities of Iranian crude are being refined in the Latin American nation to produce motor fuels. Caracas also heavily relies on diluents from Iran to convert its heavy oil to exportable grades.

Iran has played an instrumental role in helping revive Venezuela's stagnant oil industry, which was severely damaged by unilateral western sanctions and sabotage

attempts. As a result of the hybrid war waged on the country, Venezuela's oil output dropped from two million barrels per day in 2012 to just a few hundred thousand at the start of 2021.

Earlier this year, Iran's Naftiran Intertrade Co (NICO) signed a 110 million euro contract with PDVSA to modernize Venezuela's largest oil refinery, the Paraguana Refining Center (CRP).

The Islamic Republic also recently delivered the third supertanker to Venezuela, as part of a long-term contract signed in 2006 for four vessels. During a visit to Tehran this June, Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro signed a 20-year cooperation agreement with his Iranian counterpart, Ebrahim Raisi, focusing mainly on the areas of agriculture and food production.

As part of this agreement, Venezuela has provided Iran with at least one million hectares of agricultural land, allowing the water-starved Islamic Republic to provide food security for its population.

Return Of Cinema In Kashmir To Boost Local Economy, Promote Film Shootings: Govt



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The return of cinema three decades after militancy forced it to shutdown will help in boosting of economy in Kashmir besides encouraging the return of film shoots by big banners, a government spokesperson said on Tuesday.

The spokesperson said that a major Socio-economic revolution is sweeping through J&K in the last three years which is a reflection of new dawn of hope, dreams, confidence and aspirations of people.

The opening of multipurpose Cinema Halls in Shopian, Pulwama and the first-ever Multiplex Cinema Hall in Srinagar marks the revival of cinema culture in the Kashmir valley after three decades.

Culture is a way of life and Cinema being the powerful medium of sharing thoughts and ideas reflects societal values and change. Cinema brings people together. Apart from entertainment it gives hopes, dreams and inspiration to youth to pursue their dreams till they realise it.

The administration led by Manoj Sinha is providing opportunities and support to the Young generation of Kashmir who want to see a better society, to learn about other cultures, to become part of inter-dependent world.

The new cinema halls and on-going film shootings will renew the beautiful bond between Jammu Kashmir and the Indian Film Industry as it was once known as filmmakers turf.

Notably, the new Film Policy has been rolled out with special provisions and incentives for encouraging local youth to take up film as a career. Government has also identified the land for developing Film City in the UT and the facility will come-up in the UT soon.

"In the new film policy there are a lot of avenues for local youths and if they will make small films they will get a lot of incentives and get self employed," LG, Manoj Sinha said at the launch. He also said that Film Policy aims to facilitate the overall growth of the film industry in the region, includ-

ing setting up of a film development council and revival of closed cinema halls besides providing hands on access to website for talent pool and all shooting destinations.

Remarkably, the Film Policy also facilitates the development of shooting locales, infrastructure for film screening, revival of closed cinema halls, upgrading existing cinema halls, encouraging setting up of multiplexes and cinema halls, destination marketing, organising the J&K film festival, and restoration and preservation of films from the region.

Recently, the inauguration of INOX Multiplex marked a new beginning in the history of cinema in the Valley and it began with a Kashmiri message rolled out on the big screen, 'Myoun Cinema' (My Cinema). The first message also said: "The beginning of a new era and Kashmir's first multiplex. The trailers of films such as 'Vikram', 'Janwaar', 'Silsila' and 'Haider' were played on the screen as major portion of these blockbuster films were shot in Kashmir.

Net Direct Tax Mop Up Rises 23% To ₹7.04 Trn So Far In FY23: CBDT Chief

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The net direct tax collection has increased 23 per cent to Rs 7.04 lakh crore so far this fiscal, the income tax department said on Tuesday.

Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) Chairman Nitin Gupta said the income and corporate tax collections were at a record high of Rs 14.09 lakh crore in 2021-22.

"The momentum of the last fiscal continues in this fiscal with net direct tax collection of Rs 7.04 lakh crore so far, which is a growth of 23 per cent over the same period last fiscal," Gupta said.

At the Finance Minister's Award ceremony for CBDT officers, Gupta said the I-T e-



filing portal has stabilised and it has facilitated 5.83 crore tax return filing as of July 31. A record 72 lakh returns were filed on the portal on a single day.

July 31 was the last date for filing ITRs for salaried individuals for income earned in the 2021-22 fis-

cal. Gupta said I-T refunds worth Rs 1.41 lakh crore have been issued so far this fiscal, which is an increase of 83 per cent over the same period last year.

The CBDT chief said the department is using technology to increase tax collection.

FM Asks Taxmen To Focus On Faster Processing of ITRs, Grievance Redressal

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Tuesday asked income tax officers to focus on quick processing of ITRs, speedy refund issuance and grievance redressal. Addressing tax officers, the minister said that collections from direct taxes exceed indirect tax and that has brought in equity in mop up.

"That has brought in equity because taxation will have to be on those who can pay more and on the shoulders tax more and not on small items of daily use," Sitharaman said.

With the faceless assessment coming in and technology usage, the fear of tax authorities has reduced, she said, adding taxpayers now feel taxes are being collected in a non-discretionary way without any subjectivity.

She outlined three 'R's for the income tax department to follow -- quicker processing of return, speedier refund and redressal of grievance. "What is well within you and never going to change and never needs anything more are these three 'R's," she said, asking tax officers



to quickly assess and process returns 'systematically' and without any loss of time.

Even more efficient ways of refunds being processed will earn goodwill for the department, she said, while lauding the department's work in refund issuance. Regarding grievance redressal, Sitharaman asked the department to follow an approach of sending grievance-related cases, which are unique and complicated, to the court."

If necessary the CBDT will have to spend a week in a year where you sit and clean it up. So that people know you are willing to do it. You may still end up with not having done a few but at least for those few who got their grievance redressed it would be a great relief," she said.

Peas Cost Rs 250 Per Kg In Haryana, Punjab; Tomato Rs 60. Here's The Reason



Press Trust Of India

CHANDIGARH: Prices of vegetables like peas and cauliflower have surged sharply over the last one week in Haryana, Punjab and Chandigarh owing to a supply crunch caused by recent heavy rains in the region, traders said on Monday.

Retail prices of peas have risen sharply to nearly Rs 250 per kg from Rs 130-150 per kg, while that of tomatoes rose from Rs 40 per kg to Rs 60 per kg, they said.

The supply of many vegetables has been affected after heavy monsoon rains in the two states and some neighbouring states, including Himachal Pradesh.

Retail prices of other vegetables like beans and cucumber have also increased and their current prices hovering around Rs 100-110 per kg and Rs 50-60 per kg, respectively.

Cauliflower was selling at around Rs 100-120 per kg from

Rs 70-80 per kg earlier. Bitter gourd was selling in the range of Rs 80 per kg against Rs 60 per kg earlier.

Carrot prices have gone up from Rs 50 per kg to Rs 60-70 per kg, while bottle gourds have risen from Rs 40 per kg to Rs 50-60 per kg now.

Radish prices have gone up from around Rs 40 per kg earlier to Rs 60-80 per kg.

Lemon prices have also increased to Rs 40 per 250 grams from Rs 25-30 earlier.

Coriander prices have also increased from Rs 20 per 100 gram earlier to Rs 30, while prices of chillies have also gone up, traders said.

However, traders said there was not much change in the prices of onion, potato and fruits, such as apple, pear and banana.

The vegetable prices are likely to stabilise after a few days once the weather holds, a trader said.

SHORT TAKES

One-Day Job Fair Held In Pulwama

Observer News Service

PULWAMA: A day-long Job fair was Tuesday organised by District Employment & Counseling Centre (DE&CC) Pulwama for job seekers from the District which witnessed participation from reputed private employers from different sectors.

The event was attended by Director Employment, J&K, Nisar Ahmad Wani as Chief Guest.

On the occasion, Director Employment, J&K interacted with the jobseekers and job providers and expressed satisfaction and said that job fairs will be a regular feature of the Employment Department and more such fairs will be organized in the district in coming days.

Assistant Director, DE&CC Pulwama, Hafsa Qayoom impressed the employers and the job seekers to register on the Employment Portal of Govt. of Jammu & Kashmir www.jakemp.nic.in.

Around 29 employers from different sectors participated in the event which included companies like TCI Max, Olive Group, Premium Ply, Dolphin International School, Super Fresh Agri Products Lassipora, Lyceum International School, Mohammadia Nursing Home, AlnoorCold Store, Alpine Agro, Hotel Grand Lord Pahalgam, Himalayan Motors, K.Y Motors and others.

'Efforts Underway To Tap Tourism Potential In Kupwara'

Observer News Service

KUPWARA: The District Administration, Kupwara in collaboration with Lolab Bangus Drangyari Development Authority (LBDDA), Tourism Department and Army Tuesday organized number of activities to mark the celebration of World Tourism Day, at Tourist Reception Centre (TRC), here.

The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Doifode Sagar Dattatray was the Chief Guest at the Occasion.

Chief Executive Officer, LBDDA, Ghulam Nabi Bhat; CO 41 RR, Colonel M.S Navalgati; DDC Members, PRIs, Chairman H.N Wanchoo Trust, Dr. Amit Wanchoo; District Officers, students and other concerned were present at the occasion.

At the beginning of the event, the DC handed over one Ambulance to PHC Kralpora which was donated by H N Wanchoo Trust, SAKAL Relief Trust Fund and NGO SARHAD. The students of SARHAD School Dardpora Kupwara presented a prayer and motivational song. The DC interacted with these students and took pictures with them.

The DC inspected the stalls organized by various departments and received feedback regarding their activities.

Coordination Meeting Between J&K, Central GST Officers Held

Observer News Service

JAMMU: The first coordination meeting between UT and Central GST Officers was held the other day in the conference hall of Excise and Taxation Complex, Jammu. The meeting deliberated on different areas where State/UT and Central GST Officers could work together to augment revenue collections under GST and to counter tax evasions.

Dr. Rashmi Singh, Commissioner State Taxes, H.B Negi Commissioner CGST Commissionerate Jammu and other Senior Officers from the UT and Central GST Department attended the meeting.

The deliberations focused on developing a mechanism for information sharing and to curb tax evasion in the region. Many other serious concerns related to Jurisdiction, Audit, Enforcement, Intelligence inputs were thoroughly discussed.

Agreeing to the instructions by the Chair, the attending members agreed to the proposal of sharing of information pertaining to different areas of work on monthly intervals.

To sensitise the general public, it was further decided that a joint outreach/awareness program by the UT and Central CGST Officers would be held on a regular basis.

Sensex, Nifty End Lower On Selloff In Metal, Banking Stocks

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI: Key benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty closed lower for the fifth straight session on Tuesday in a volatile trade tracking losses in metal, banking and financial stocks.

Investors also remained concerned over persistent foreign fund outflows, traders said. After jumping nearly 560 points during the session, the 30-share BSE index ended 37.70 points or 0.07 per cent lower at 57,107.52. Similarly, the NSE Nifty shed 8.90 points or 0.05 per cent to close at 17,007.40.

Tata Steel was the top loser in the Sensex pack, shedding 2.25 per cent, followed by Titan, SBI, Kotak Bank, Tech Mahindra, ICICI Bank and HDFC twins.

On the other hand, PowerGrid, IndusInd Bank, Dr Reddy's, HCL Tech and Nestle India were among the gainers.

"In search of a safer dollar and elevated bond yields, foreign investors are withdrawing from Indian equities, resulting in the decline of the domestic market. In contrast to the recent trend of sector performance, banks and autos are exhibiting negative bias, while IT and pharma are showcasing resilience.

Rupee Rises 14 Paise To Close At 81.53 Against US Dollar

Press Trust Of India

Mumbai- The rupee consolidated in a narrow range and settled 14 paise higher at 81.53 against the US dollar on Tuesday as the American currency retreated from its elevated levels. At the interbank forex market, the local unit opened at 81.45 against the greenback. It witnessed an intra-day high of 81.30 and a low of 81.64 during the session.

It finally ended at 81.53, up 14 paise from its previous close. This is the first gain after four consequent sessions of losses for the rupee, during which it lost 193 paise against the American dollar.

On Monday, the rupee plunged 58 paise to close at an all-time low of 81.67 against the dollar.

"Rupee consolidated in a narrow range after falling to fresh lows in Monday's session. There are some reports suggesting that India's inclusion into the key government bond index could get pushed back to next year," Gaurang Somaiya, Forex & Bullion Analyst, Motilal Oswal Financial Services, said.

On the domestic front, the focus will be on the RBI policy statement due on Friday.

"Expectation is that the central bank could raise rates by 50 bps and maintain a hawkish stance. The pound plunged further after the Finance Minister sent the currency and its government bonds into freefall," Somaiya said.

Cong Issues Showcause Notices To 3 Gehlot Loyalists For Indiscipline; Sonia Ropes In Seniors To Resolve Crisis

Press Trust of India

New Delhi: The Congress on Tuesday night issued show-cause notices to three Ashok Gehlot loyalists - Rajasthan ministers Shanti Dhariwal and Mahesh Joshi, and Dharmendra Rathore - for their "grave indiscipline", as the party scamped to resolve the crisis that has cast a shadow on the party chief's election.

The party's disciplinary committee has asked the three to explain within 10 days why action should not be initiated against them after the observers for Rajasthan - Mallikarjun Kharge and Ajay Maken - in their report to party chief Sonia Gandhi charged them with "gross indiscipline" but did not seek any action against Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot.

The action came two days after 82 MLAs participated in a parallel meeting at Dhariwal's residence in Jaipur laying down conditions to the party and did not attend the official legislature party meeting convened for passing a resolution authorising the Congress chief to appoint a successor to Gehlot, who was to contest the Congress presidential election.

The disciplinary panel's member secretary Tariq Anwar in his notice to Dhariwal, Joshi and Rathore, said Maken in his report to the party chief has reported 'grave indiscipline' on their part.

"Prima facie, the above charges are an act of grave indiscipline. Therefore, this show cause notice is being issued seeking your reply within 10 days as to why disciplinary action not be taken against you as per the provisions of the constitution of the Indian National Congress," the notice to all the three leaders said.

Anwar said Dhariwal has committed grave indiscipline by hosting a parallel MLAs meeting at his residence "pressuring them not to attend the official meeting".

He also accused Joshi, the chief whip in assembly of "grave indiscipline" on two counts - of boycotting the official CLP meeting and by participating and convening parallel meeting of the MLAs.

Anwar said Rathore, who is chairman of Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation, "made all logistical arrangements and were behind the entire planning of the unofficial meeting of the MLAs, held parallel to the official Rajasthan CLP meeting" which is an act of "grave indiscipline".

With the Rajasthan episode posing a significant challenge before the party, Congress president Sonia Gandhi has initiated discussions with senior party leaders from across the country to resolve the crisis even as the fate of Gehlot who was considered frontrunner for the top party post remained uncertain.

Several names have cropped up for the probable presidential candidate including Kharge, A K Antony, Kamal Nath, Digvijaya Singh, Ambika Soni and Pawan Kumar Bansal, though most of them ruled themselves out of the race.

The name of Gehlot for the top party post is, however, not completely ruled out yet, according to informed sources.

Among various senior leaders, Gandhi is learnt to have called Congress veterans A K Antony and Sushilkumar Shinde for consultations here. There is also a likelihood that fresh observers may be sent to Rajasthan and Shinde may be one of them.

Gandhi is considering resolving the matter after consultations with top party leaders who are keeping their fingers crossed on the situation.

After the developments in Jaipur, sources said Gehlot has reached out to Sonia Gandhi and is learnt to have explained his position, while his arch-rival Sachin Pilot rushed to Delhi ahead of any decision on Rajasthan.

Foreign Tourist Arrivals In India Dipped By 44.5 Pc In 2021 Due To Covid Restrictions: Tourism Min Report



Press Trust of India

New Delhi: Due to restrictions related to COVID-19 pandemic, the number of foreign tourist arrivals in India during 2021 decreased to 1.52 million, an over 44 per cent fall from the corresponding figures in 2020, according to a report released by the Union Tourism Ministry on Tuesday.

As per the report titled 'India Tourism Statistics 2022' released by Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on World Tourism Day at an event here, Taj Mahal in Agra was among the 10 most popular centrally-protected ticketed monuments for domestic visitors in 2021-22, while Group of Monument at Mamallapuram in Tamil Nadu ranked on top among the 10 most popular centrally-protected ticketed monuments for domestic visitors for the same period.

India's ranking in the global Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) was 54th in 2021, it said.

Dhankhar also presented the main National Tourism Awards 2018-19 at Vigyan Bhawan here during the event. The annual award ceremony took place after a gap of two years due to the Covid outbreak in India in early 2020.

"Due to restriction related to COVID-19, the number of foreign tourist arrivals (FTAs) in

India during 2021 decreased to 1.52 million as compared to 2.74 million in 2020, registering a negative growth of 44.5 per cent," the report said.

The Vice President in his address said the last two years were "very tough" due the pandemic and the tourism sector was impacted heavily.

But, in retrospect, one can say that India knows the way, and the country is "out of the difficult period", he said.

The 'India Tourism Statistics 2022' report also said while FTAs experienced a "negative growth rate" in 2021, non-resident Indians (NRIs) and international tourist arrivals (ITAs) experienced "positive growth". Arrivals of NRIs increased by 52.6 per cent from 2020 to 2021. In comparison to 2020, there was a 10.6 per cent increase in yearly international tourist arrivals in India in 2021, it added.

International tourism included both inbound and outbound tourism. Also, in 2021, the top 15 source markets for FTAs in India were the US, Bangladesh, the UK, Canada, Nepal, Afghanistan, Australia, Germany, Portugal, France, the Maldives, Sri Lanka, Russia, Iraq, and the Netherlands. In 2021, the top 15 nations accounted for approximately 80.9 per cent of total FTAs in India, the report stated.

Tourism continues to play an important role as a foreign exchange earner for the country, it said.

In 2021, foreign exchange earnings (FEE) from tourism were USD 8.797 billion as compared to USD 6.959 billion in 2020, registering a positive growth of 26.4 per cent, the report said.

In 2021, tourism grew steadily on a global scale despite the COVID-19 prohibition, it said.

India received 677.63 million domestic tourist visits in 2021, an increase of 11.05 percent from 610.22 million in 2020, the report said.

The two states with the most domestic tourists visiting are Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh, with 140.65 million and 86.12 million, respectively. Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu have the highest numbers of foreign tourist visits, with 1.26 million and 1.23 million, respectively, the report said.

The Tourism Satellite Account (TSA), an accounting methodology used by the United Nations to quantify the goods and services related to tourism, is described in this publication, the ministry said.

Travel and tourism created 79.86 million (direct and indirect) jobs and 15.34 per cent of jobs in 2019 2020. In terms of GDP during 2019 2020, tourism contributed 5.19 percent (direct and indirect), the report said.

5250 Trucks Cleared In Two Days: Div Com

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Normal traffic has resumed on the strategic Srinagar-Jammu highway after the divisional authorities cleared over 5000 trucks through Banihal highway and the Mughal road during the last two days, a senior officer said Tuesday.

The Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole on Tuesday said that almost all Jammu bound trucks were cleared and normal traffic on National Highway has been restored, an official spokesperson said. He said that the Divisional administration put tremendous efforts to ensure that all the trucks stranded move towards Jammu.

"The Div Com informed that yesterday more than 4000 trucks were sent through NH 44 while today 1250 vehicles were sent through Mughal Road sent to Jammu side. He added that normal traffic on National Highway has been restored," he added.

As per the spokesperson, Pole said that government is promoting horticulture by all means and asserted that high density apple plantation is gaining momentum.

He said that the Div Com

while sharing information said that during the last 4 years over 10,000 kanal of land have been used for high density plantation.

"In this regard, with 50 % subsidy, 350 nurseries have been registered having capacity of growing 10 lacs saplings per year," Pole said.

The spokesperson said that in order to check quality of pesticides and fertilizer, Labs were established by Govt besides Soil testing lab at Shopian started to minimize production cost.

Moreover, he said that the Div Com also revealed that with subsidy grants from Central Govt, 2 Lac Ton capacity cold stores were created recently.

"Also, in order to give minimum assured prices to apple, procurement through NAFED was done for two years," Pole said.

The Div Com, the spokesperson said, also asserted that all these concrete supportive steps has resulted into increase in production of apple as a result this year Kashmir is posed to break all records of production which may touch 21 Lac Metric Ton.

"Ultimate objective is to ensure doubling of farmers' income," the Div Com said.

HDFC Bank Festive Treats 4.0 to 'Go BIG' with 10,000+ offers

Srinagar: HDFC Bank is set to make this festive season bigger, better and brighter with Festive Treats 4.0 - the fourth edition of its annual campaign of attractive offers on all its banking and lending products as well as discounts on shopping. After three highly successful campaigns, the theme for this year is "Go BIG this festive season". The Bank will enable customers to fulfill all their festive wishes through a host of offers across accounts, loans, cards and EMLs, ensuring that money is easily accessible and not a constraint.

To make the experience even more seamless the Bank has leveraged its digital channels to

make several customer journeys available completely online.

The theme "Go BIG this festive season" marks the time to celebrate and make big purchases. The Bank has tied up with pan-India merchants to provide over 10,000 omni-channel offers across customer segments.

Festive Treats offers will be available across online, offline, national, regional, and at hyperlocal merchants covering the widest range of categories including electronics, jewelry, travel, home décor, apparel, grocery, loans to fulfill personal & business needs and commercial vehicles.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

On Cusp Of Retirement

The Higher Education Department, Dr. Yousuf said, is claiming that there are no posts vacant to adjust these contractuals.

"The fact is, out of 5500 faculty members needed in the Higher Education Department, only 3500 posts have been created in which only 2700 posts have been filled so far," Dr. Yousuf said.

"These vacancies are only for the already existing colleges and in the last few years more than 50 more colleges were created in J&K."

Shift after August 2019

After the abrogation of Article 370, Kashmir-based contractual teachers were shown the door for a year.

"We were told that our service is no longer needed," Dr. Yousuf said. "But our Jammu colleagues attended their duties and got paid for the whole year."

After a year of hardship, the contractual lecturers were again hired in 2020 by the department. "Some of us were hoping that our services might be regularized after the pandemic," Yousuf said. "But we are still waiting for some miracle."

Back on 15 February 2021, Director Education in a verbal statement decided to take services from permanent staff on rotational basis.

"But in many Kashmir colleges," Yousuf said, "students are suffering as there is no permanent faculty available."

The disparity is not only confined to services, but also to salaries of these contractual teachers.

"After the abrogation of 370 and the formation of two successive Union Territories, the government should have fixed the basic salary for contractual lecturers as per the central law," Dr. Yousuf said.

"Ladakh fixed Rs. 57600 as a basic salary for contractual staff, however the J&K administration failed in doing so and kept giving excuses of insufficient funds. When Ladakh can have funds to provide basic salary, how come it is possible that J&K doesn't have funds?"

Constant Struggle to Survive

A doctoral scholar teaching Philosophy in the Higher Education Department for the last seven years on contractual basis lately got fed up with the "harsh behavior" of the department and decided to work in farms.

"Even after having a PhD," he said, "I'm being forced to work as a daily-wage worker."

Kashmir Observer contacted different movers and shakers of the Higher Education Department for their take on the story. As and when they respond, this story will be updated.

"It's not only the government who is showing step-motherly behavior," the scholar said, "even the permanent faculty looks down upon them. The room for the contractual lecturers' remains poorly furnished. I've served in Aligarh Muslim University as a guest faculty lecturer, but I never have been treated so badly. We're being treated like a use and throw product."

Plan In Place

in raids across seven states on Tuesday, five days after a similar pan India crackdown against the group.

HM Shah's J&K

state funeral of former Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Shah has to stay at the national capital and cannot attend any function outside it," Raina, who is currently on a tour of Rajouri to supervise arrangements for the rally, said.

Earlier in the day, the police chief, accompanied by Additional Director General of Police, Jammu, Mukesh Singh visited Rajouri and chaired a high-level meeting to review the arrangements in connection with the VVIP's visit.

He visited Baramulla in north Kashmir the previous day.

"All required security arrangements are being made (for the visit of the Union home minister," the police chief told reporters in Jammu.

"We are keeping a close watch and looking at the security requirements on a day-to-day basis," he said, adding, "Whatever inputs we have, we are acting on that and the counter-insurgency operations will continue."

Pole Reviews

of the VVIP visit, an official spokesperson said Tuesday.

Pole, he said, chaired a meeting at the Conference Hall, Dak Banglow where arrangements including traffic plan and media management plan were discussed.

On the occasion, he said, the DC apprised the chair about various measures taken ahead of the VVIP visit.

While discussing the seating and allied arrangements for the upcoming VVIP visit, the spokesperson said that the Div Com directed that R&B department will be the Nodal agency for stage set up and seating plan at the venue.

"The Div Com instructed that ambulances, fire tender vehicles and water

tankers may be kept available at the venue," he said.

"On the occasion a record note was also prepared to ensure that elaborate arrangements are put in place ahead of the visit of VVIP to UT of Jammu and Kashmir," he added.

Government Orders

passed by the Chief Secretary Dr Arun Kumar Mehta on Tuesday in a meeting held to take stock of the traffic movement on the strategic highway, an official spokesperson said.

Mehta, he said, directed the Traffic Department to issue a daily information bulletin for stakeholders mentioning travel time taken by HMVs from Qazigund to Jakhani, loss of time due to shooting stones at Cafeteria Morh- Mehar and number of vehicles waiting to leave for Jammu.

The meeting was attended by the senior officers from Divisional and District administration, Traffic department, police and those from NHAI.

Mehta, the spokesperson said, also stressed on putting in place the robust communication and information mechanism by Traffic Police so as to regulate HMVs traffic at critical points like Qazigund- Banihal, Banihal market, Sherbibi, Panthayal, Mehar etc.

"The traffic management authorities were asked to augment manpower requirements from all sources to regulate traffic in optimal manner, besides enforcing lane discipline in the critical stretches between Ramban and Banihal," he added.

For seasonal migration, the spokesperson said, Tribal Affairs Department and Deputy Commissioners were directed to ensure that no "Dera" is allowed to move on highway especially between Qazigund and Ramban and they are provided with suitable conveyance to carry their cattle and family members.

He said that the concerned DCs were asked to ensure that unattended cattle do not wander on the highway.

"In order to ensure hassle-free movement, it was decided that the down convoy of HMVs may be permitted from 11 A.M in the morning from Qazigund up till 9.00 P.M on alternate days," the spokesperson said.

"It was said that the Drivers should appropriately be made aware for not leaving their place of unloading and parking their vehicles anywhere on the highway," he added.

Moreover, the spokesperson said that the District Administration Ramban was instructed to ensure deployment of adequate manpower and traffic management team at Banihal market to ensure no roadside parking

of vehicles and occupation of carriage-way by the 'Rehadiwallas'.

"It was said that the public transporters should also be persuaded not to park their vehicles on the NH for getting boarding of passengers but to use earmarked places only for this purpose," he said.

During the meeting, he said, the Divisional administration Kashmir was asked to encourage HMVs to use Mughal Road and ADG, Jammu was simultaneously asked to ensure better management of Poshana checkpoint to expedite checking of vehicles at the spot.

"Further the NHAI was directed to follow timelines given during the last meeting for clearance of muck from CafeteriaMorh and Mehar, blacktopping of potholed portion on NH between Banihal and Ramban, completion of T-5 Tunnel and widening of Ramscoo-Rampari-Sherbibi stretch of the road," the spokesperson said.

He further said that the meeting also decided that suitable recommendations of joint study team of CBRI, Roorkee and IIT, Jammu be taken for measures to be undertaken for stabilizing Cafeteria-Mehar section of NH-44.

"It was said that the same be implemented by NHAI in a speedy manner so that the travel time on the highway gets reduced considerably," the spokesperson added.

Earlier on Tuesday the officials from IGP Traffic's office said, "After three continuous days of down HMV movement, all the stranded trucks at Qazigund were cleared yesterday."

They said as per the data collected by NHAI at the Qazigund toll plaza, since 1st September, 48,845 trucks including 30,786 apple laden trucks moved from Qazigund to other parts of the country via Jammu-Srinagar national highway.

"Because of the constraints of NH-44, which is a single lane for 12-14 stretches between Nashri and Banihal, the movement of HMVS happens on alternate days."

Further the movement of traffic on the NH is also subject to stoppage due to the frequent falling of "Shooting stones" at various locations like, Cafeteria More, Mahar, Sherbibi etc around Ramban town, officials said. "In particular, the Mahar pass, which became active on 18th July 2022, leads to the stoppage of the traffic several times during the day on account of shooting stones which makes it dangerous for traffic to pass."

They said since 24th Sept 2022, the NHAI has also initiated urgent repair works at these single stretches of the

NH, requiring the stoppage of traffic for a part of the day.

"Overall, in the last 4 days, over 34 hours of travel time has been lost on the NH 44 on account of the shooting stones at Mahar Passi and the repair work by NHAI," they added.

Fruit Growers

month and it will take years to overcome the losses.

He said that when a truck is loaded here and then it remains stuck in Qazigund for days together, the fruit gets spoiled due to heat and pure fruit isn't then reaching the market due to which it fetches low rates.

Despite bumper crop this year, growers are suffering losses as rates of fertilizers, pesticides, labours, packing boxes and other things have increased by 20-30 percent but on the other hand rates of Apple are down by 30 percent due to which growers have suffered losses, he said.

He said that it will take years for growers to overcome losses and if such a situation continues, the apple industry is going to collapse.

Since last two days, authorities have ensured the hassle free movement of Apple trucks on national highway and we are hopeful that it will continue in whole season, he said--(KNO)

Kidnapped Infant

which they obtained from CCTV footage. They had also announced a reward of Rs 10,000 for those helping them in tracing the child.

Kishtwar Senior Superintendent of Police Shafqat Hussain Bhat said the baby was rescued from Kishtwar itself and he thanked the people and the media for the support. The accused has been taken into custody and she is being investigated, the SSP said.

The locals raised pro-police slogans for rescuing the baby within hours.

Officials To Face

called for planning in terms of power procurement and management in view of the upcoming winter season to ensure quality power supply to the consumers and suggested hiring consultants in this regard as well.

"Dr Mehta directed that feeders with the highest power losses must be identified and the officials responsible must be held accountable," the spokesperson said, adding "He advised to follow a schedule for maintenance of transformers to minimise their breakdowns and to bring down the damage rate to below 10 percent."

According to the spokesperson, the CS also underlined that payment of

IND vs SA 1st T20: India To Address Death Bowling Concerns Ahead Of T20 WC

Press Trust of India

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: India will be looking to round off their T20 World Cup preparation with a marked improvement in their death bowling besides providing crucial game time to its untested players in the three-match series against South Africa, beginning here on Wednesday.

India skipper Rohit Sharma, expectedly, singled out death bowling as an area that requires improvement following the series win over Australia.

The hosts will be without two of their key bowlers, Hardik Pandya and Bhuvneshwar Kumar, who have been rested ahead of the ICC event next month.

Mohammad Shami, who is one of the World Cup reserves, is yet to recover from COVID-19 and will be missing the three games against the Proteas after being unavailable the rubber against Australia.

Harshal Patel did not have the best of times in his comeback series against Australia but he will be expected to get back to his best in the final three games before the World Cup.

Deepak Chahar, who is also on standby for the World Cup, did not get a game in the previous series.



Arshdeep Singh will return to bolster the team's resources in the slog overs, making an effective combination alongside Jasprit Bumrah.

In the series decider against Australia, Yuzvendra Chahal showed what he can do if the ball is gripping and turning after looking flat in the first two games.

As Rohit spoke about the importance of

giving all the players game time ahead of the World Cup, R Ashwin could get a look in.

In the batting department, K L Rahul would like to make the most of these three games after missing out in the last two games against Australia.

With Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma are looking in good touch, it is important that Rahul too is in full flow before the team

travels to Australia.

Dinesh Karthik got to play all of eight balls against Australia and Rohit has already said the designated finisher in the squad needs more time in the middle.

World Cup bound Deepak Hooda will end up missing all the six games before the mega event as he has been ruled out of the South Africa T20s with a back injury.

Shreyas Iyer is expected to take Hooda's place in the squad.

Over the next week, India will be competing against a team they are yet to beat at home in a bilateral series. South Africa and India will face each other in a group game in Australia and though conditions are totally different here, both teams can pick out areas to target in the coming three games.

All eyes will also be on the young Tristian Stubbs who has made the World Cup squad on the back of his good show in franchise cricket.

Squads:

South Africa: Temba Bavuma (captain), Quinton de Kock, Bjorn Fortuin, Reeza Hendricks, Heinrich Klaasen, Marco Jansen, Keshav Maharaj, Aiden Markram, David Miller, Lungi Ngidi, Anrich Nortje, Wayne Parnell, Andile Phehlukwayo, Dwaine Pretorius, Kagiso Rabada, Rilee Rossouw, Tabraiz Shamsi, Tristan Stubbs.

India: Rohit Sharma (captain), KL Rahul, Virat Kohli, Suryakumar Yadav, Rishabh Pant (wicket-keeper), Dinesh Karthik (wicket-keeper), R. Ashwin, Yuzvendra Chahal, Axar Patel, Arshdeep Singh, Harshal Patel, Deepak Chahar, Jasprit Bumrah. Match starts 7 PM IST.

Anantnag Athletic Meet Begins At Sports Stadium



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Department of Youth Services and Sports Anantnag kick started its District Level Inter Zonal Annual Athletic Meet at Sports Stadium Anantnag on Tuesday.

On the first day, 210 athletes drawn from 12 zones of the district took part in the different jumping, Throwing and Running events.

In 100 meters, Sakib Nisar of Zone Srigufwara bagged Gold, Owais Mushtaq of Zone Shangus bagged Silver, while as Muhammad Adnan Dar of Zone Verinag bagged Bronze.

In 200 meters, event Burhan Bashir of Zone Anantnag bagged Gold, Ahsan Mushtaq of Zone Srigufwara Bronze and Faizan Fayaz of Zone Mattan won Bronze.

In 400 meters, Event Muham-

mad Hasib of Zone Anantnag bagged Gold, Raja Mohsin of Zone Shangus bagged Silver and Naseeb ur Rasool of Zone Vailloo bagged 3rd place.

In 600 meters, event Kifayat Nabi of Zone Achabal bagged Gold, Junaid Sheikh of Zone Ashmuqam bagged Silver and Said Showkat of Zone Qazigund won Bronze.

In 4x100 meters Relay Race, Zone Srigufwara bagged Gold, Zone Shangus Silver and Zone Mattan bagged Bronze.

In High-Jump, Munef Hussain Dar of Zone Doru bagged Gold, Zeeshan Ahmad Dar of Zone Srigufwara bagged Silver and Muhammad Ashraf Bhat won Bronze.

In Long-Jump, Hazim Bilal of Zone Antantnag bagged Gold, Aarif Shabir of Zone Bijbehara bagged Silver and Bilal Ahmed of Zone Ashmuqam bagged Silver Medal.

Kohli's Power Game Is Coming Back At Right Time: Manjrekar



Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Virat Kohli has got back his "power game" and things have started falling in place for him ahead of the T20 World Cup, feels former India Test cricketer Sanjay Manjrekar.

Kohli had endured a lean patch for nearly three years before he decided to take a month-long mental health break while reinventing himself during last month's Asia Cup.

He finished as India's highest run-getter and since then continued his good form in the just-concluded T20s

against Australia, where his half-century in the series decider gave glimpses of vintage Kohli that the fans have been yearning to see.

"...right from the Asia Cup every match that he (Kohli) got runs, not just the runs, there was some improvement coming. I think the power game is back. He is trusting his power game," Manjrekar told in Sports 18's 'Sports Over The Top' show.

"There was a time when he was getting runs but his power game was not coming at his beck and call. That is starting to happen," Manjrekar said.

The fact that he is being able to hit good balls for boundaries is a welcome sign, said Manjrekar.

"He is dispatching good balls for big boundaries and sixes. It's all about confidence. This is a guy who's damn self-confident and drives himself to excellence but for long-time runs weren't coming and his confidence was tender.

Kohli was the second highest overall run getter in the Asia Cup, scoring 276 in five innings at an average of 92.00, a strike rate of 147.59 with two half-centuries and a ton.

World Chess Champion Carlsen Accuses Niemann Of Cheating

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Chess World Champion Magnus Carlsen has accused fellow Grandmaster Hans Niemann of cheating "more and more" than what he has already admitted, saying that he will not play against any rival indulging in such wrongdoing.

Carlsen put out a statement late Monday night, a week after he withdrew against the American after just one move at the Julius Baer Generation Cup.

Earlier, the 31-year-old Norwegian had quit the Sinquefeld Cup in Saint Louis following his surprise defeat against Niemann.

"I believe that Niemann has cheated more and more recently - than he has publicly admitted," Carlsen wrote.

"His over the board progress has been unusual and throughout our game in the Sinquefeld Cup I had the impression that he wasn't tense or even fully concentrating on the game in critical positions, while outplaying me as black in a way think only a handful of players



can do.

"This game contributed to changing my perspective," he explained.

Niemann has previously admitted to having cheated twice online on Chess.com, when he was 12 and then later as a 16-year-old. However, he has denied ever cheating over the board.

"We must do something about cheating, and for my part going forward, I don't want to play against people that have cheat-

ed repeatedly in the past, because don't know what they are capable of doing in the future."

Carlsen, however, didn't offer any evidence of how the 19-year-old could have cheated over the board, which is played face to face.

"There is more that I would like to say. Unfortunately, at this time I am limited in what I can say without explicit permission from Niemann to speak openly."

Qatar Conscripts Civilians For World Cup Security



Reuters

DOHA: Qatar has called up hundreds of civilians, including diplomats summoned back from overseas, for mandatory military service operating security checkpoints at World Cup stadiums, according to a source and documents seen by Reuters.

The deployment of conscripts, some of whom would normally defer national service because their work is considered vital, highlights the logistical challenge faced by the tiny Gulf Arab state hosting one of the world's biggest sports tournaments.

The conscripts are training to manage stadium security queues, frisk fans and detect contraband like alcohol, drugs or weapons concealed in ponytails, jacket linings or even false bel-

lies, according to training materials seen by Reuters.

Qatar has a population of 2.8 million - of which barely 380,000 are Qatari nationals - and expects an unprecedented influx of 1.2 million visitors for the tournament. It already has an agreement with Turkey which is supplying 3,000 riot police.

Some volunteers are also training alongside the conscripted force, according to the source, who has direct knowledge of the plan and the training.

Since 2014, Qatari men aged between 18 and 35 have trained with the military for at least four months as part of mandatory national service introduced by the emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani. Dodging the duty can incur a year in prison and a fine of 50,000 Qatari rials (\$13,700).

Italy Clinch Spot In UEFA Nations League Finals



Reuters

BUDAPEST: Italy claimed a place in the Nations League final four with a 2-0 win away to Hungary thanks to goals by Giacomo Raspadori and Federico Dimarco in their last League A-Group 3 game on Monday.

European champions Italy, who missed out on a place at the World Cup in Qatar, finished top on 11 points from six games, one point above second-placed Hungary who needed to avoid defeat to secure a place in their first Nations League semi-finals.

Raspadori took advantage of a mistake by the defence in the 27th minute to convert a rebound from the edge of the box.

Midfielder Federico Dimarco made it 2-0 for the visitors in the 52nd minute when he blasted

the ball into the roof of the net from close range.

"We were excellent for 70 minutes. The last 20 I didn't like too much," Italy coach Roberto Mancini said.

"It's important to have reached the Nations League final four for the second time, but the previous results unfortunately remain.

"Let's say that we were good at restarting and setting up a group that has values on which you can work.

"The goal? It's bypassing the month of December," he added, with his team sidelined for the World Cup which runs from Nov. 20-Dec. 18.

Italy join Croatia and the Netherlands in next year's finals tournament, while Spain and Portugal will play in Braga on Tuesday for the last spot available.

50 Bandipora Students On Gurez Trekking Expedition



Observer News Service

BANDIPORA: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Dr. Owais Ahmed on Tuesday flagged-off a group of trekkers from mini Secretariat, here to Gurez for a five-day trekking expedition.

About 50 students from different education zones are participating in this expedition.

Officials informed that 10 students from every zone under the age group of 14 and 17 along with 06 officials of Youth Services and Sports department are participating in the event.

ADC Bandipora, Waseem Raja and Joint Director Planning, Intiyaz Ahmad were also present at the flag-off ceremony.

Speaking on the occasion, the

DC said that trekking over the hills of Gurez will be a great experience for students. He also urged them to observe flora and fauna of the places they will be visiting for knowledge and reference.

He said that while achieving the objectives of trekking, all trekkers shall reap its benefits and inculcate best human values in them to become a good citizen.

All the arrangements of transportation, boarding and lodging have been made by the Department of Youth Services and Sports (DYSS).

The DC appreciated the organizers and urged them to provide enough guidance and ensure availability of all facilities to the trekkers during the camp.

Male-Female Character Ratio In Books 4:1, Says Study

Agenceis

Representation of male characters in books is four times more than female ones, claims a new AI-aided study that examined more than 3,000 English-language works published from 1800 to 1950.

Researchers at the USC Viterbi School of Engineering used artificial intelligence to scan the books ranging from science fiction and adventure, to mystery and romance - across short stories, poetry and novels.

The study outlined several methods for defining female prevalence in literature. The researchers utilised named entity recognition, a prominent natural language processing method used to extract gender-specific characters.

"One of the ways we define this is through looking at how many female pronouns are in a book compared to male pronouns," said Mayank Kejriwal, a research lead at USC's Information Sciences Institute. The other technique is to quantify how many female characters are the main characters in it.

In the study, the differences between male and female characters prevalence were defined and measured using three robust measures of prevalence, on a corpus of copyright-expired literary



texts from the Project Gutenberg English-language corpus.

Using computationally replicable methodologies relying on modern natural language processing tools, it was found that female character prevalence is significantly lower than that of male character prevalence, although the difference declines (while still being significant) when controlling for the gender of the author.

It was also found that male character ratios have not varied much over time in the sample.

Akarsh Nagaraj, co-author of the study, noted the importance of how their methods and the study's findings imparted them with a greater understanding of biases in society and its implications.

There was a 4:1 ratio of male versus female main characters, the study found.

There were also more negative terms used in connection to the female characters such as 'weak' and 'stupid' compared to 'strong' and 'power' for men.

Indian Scientists Complete Genome Sequencing For Pomegranate

Agenceis

In a breakthrough, a team of scientists at ICAR's National Research Centre on Pomegranate has completed the genome sequencing for pomegranate that will help in increasing its yield and production.

The ICAR-National Research Centre on Pomegranate (ICAR-NRCP), Solapur (Maharashtra), was established on June 16, 2005 by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research as a step to strengthen research and development infrastructure for pomegranate crop.

"In a path-breaking development for genome research and horticultural science in India, a team of scientists has completed the genome sequencing for pomegranate, known as a wonder fruit to many," ICAR-NRCP said in a statement.

For the first time anywhere in India, the ICAR-NRCP team has been able to identify all the bases of DNA material in perfect sequence. This led to unlocking of several genetic mysteries such as identifying particular genes responsible for sweetness, seed softness or colour of the fruit, those responsible for disease and pest resistance, and those for the enlargement of the fruit size,



among others.

The fruit used has been cv. Bhagawa, an Indian pomegranate.

The ICAR-NRCP announced the release of Reference Quality Genome Assembly of Indian pomegranate cv. Bhagawa last week on its 18th foundation day.

The team involved in this landmark research comprised Dr N V Singh, Dr P Roopa Sowjanya, Dr Shilpa Parashuram, Dr P G Patil and Dr R A Marathe, all at ICAR-NRCP, Solapur.

It took six years in accomplishing full genomic sequencing of this Indian pomegranate.

The reference-quality genome assembly of the 'Bhagawa' developed by ICAR-NRCP is a huge reservoir of publicly accessible genomic resources for pomegranate researchers across the globe and will provide a great impetus to the pomegranate im-

provement programme in India, the statement said.

"These genomic resources will assist the pomegranate genetic improvement programmes of different research organisations, including ICAR-NRCP through genomics assisted trait mapping, breeding and genome editing applications to develop improved varieties with resistance/tolerance to biotic and abiotic stresses," the ICAR-NRCP said.

The genome sequencing experiment was executed at Nucleome Informatics, a Hyderabad-based genomics lab.

India has increased production in recent years and has been a world leader in pomegranate production with a 50 per cent contribution to global production. Still, India's domestic capacity as well as export potential has still remained largely unrealised.

Saudi Arabia Launches 'Nusuk' Platform To Facilitate Holy Experience For Pilgrims

Agenceis

Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Hajj and Umrah has launched a new platform that aims to facilitate the holy experience for pilgrims wishing to visit Mecca and Medina.

The new unified governmental platform Nusuk was launched on Monday and comes in line with the Kingdom's Vision 2030 which includes strategies to enhance the country's tourism and travel sector.

The platform is set to be the gateway to Mecca and Medina, allowing visitors to create their own Umrah itinerary with the variety of services it offers.

"With Nusuk, travelers from all over the world can easily organize their entire visit, from applying for an eVisa to booking hotels and flights," the website says.

The website includes various details and information that pilgrims need to make their visit smooth. For example, it offers different options for accommodation, landmarks and holy sites that visitors would want to add to their list.

It also points out to visitors the different means of transport that they can use to commute to the cities, in addition to interactive maps to facilitate the booking

process. "Nusuk provides information and wide range of services for pilgrims and visitors, enabling them to perform the Umrah rituals with ease and comfort," according to a statement on the platform's official Twitter account.

The platform is launched in cooperation and partnership with the Saudi Tourism Authority, the statement said, where "nusuk.sa is linked to the services provided on the 'Visit Saudi Arabia' [section] to enrich the journey of the pilgrims and facilitate reservation and communication procedures to provide various packages and programs to improve the experience of the visitors heading to Mecca and Medina."

Nusuk, the statement added, is an initiative of the Vision 2030 Pilgrim Experience Program, which aims to provide pilgrims with the fullest experience with the best services.

Minister of Hajj and Umrah and Chairman of the committee for the Pilgrim Experience Program, Dr. Tawfiq bin Fawzan al-Rabiah, said that the Nusuk platform comes as a continuation of efforts exerted to improve the quality of services provided to pilgrims through using the latest means of technology.

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