

'Smart Move': Rundown Heritage Sites Of Srinagar On Course Of Recovery

In the year 2003 around 349 heritage sites were listed in Srinagar and two decades later the number has come down to 307

Augjib Javeed

WAKING up to the alarm raised by a section of citizenry over the dilapidated condition of Srinagar's heritage sites, the government has commissioned a survey for the necessary structural protection.

Under the Srinagar Smart City Project, the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC)



engaged Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage

6 THERE'RE 16 PROTECTED PROPERTIES in Srinagar—12 of them are under Archeology Survey of India, while the rest is looked after by the J&K Archeology Department.

(INTACH) to carry out a survey and listing of properties including shrines, mosques, khanqahs, temples, churches, Gurdwara, tombs, bridges, ghats, cenotaphs, residential

houses, etc. These sites have been categorized and the properties have been re-listed with an aim to conserve and preserve the urban heritage landscape.

Hailed as a 'smart move', the survey was carried out when some civil society members are questioned the official inaction over the rundown state of many iconic heritage sites, like the crumbling condition of the Mughal wall—Kalai—in the old city.

"The idea behind the survey was to initiate a process to save the heritage in the city," Athar Aamir-ul-Shafi Khan, SMC Commissioner, | **More on P10**

India Slams Pak For Raking Up Kashmir At UN

Press Trust Of India

United Nations: India has strongly hit back at Pakistan for raking up the Kashmir issue in the UN Security Council, arguing that a country that hosted slain al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden and attacked a neighbouring Parliament does not have the credentials to "sermonise" before the powerful UN organ.

External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar's strong remarks came after Pakistan Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto raised the Kashmir issue while speaking in the Council open debate on reformed multilateralism on Wednesday.

Jaishankar said the credibility of the UN depends on its effective response to the key challenges of our times, be it pandemics, climate change, conflicts or terrorism.

"We are obviously focused today on the urgency of reforming multilateralism. We will naturally have our particular views, but there is a growing convergence at least that this cannot be delayed any further," said Jaishankar, who is chairing India's signature event on reformed multilateralism.

"While we search for the best solutions, what our discourse must never accept is the normalisation of such threats. The question of justifying what the world regards as unacceptable should not even arise. That certainly applies to state sponsorship of cross-border terrorism. Nor can hosting Osama bin Laden and attacking a neighbouring Parliament serve as credentials to sermonise before this Council," he said. | **More on P10**

LG Meets Power Minister, Urges Higher Allocation To J&K

Observer News Service

New Delhi: The Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Thursday held a meeting with the Union Minister of Power and New and Renewable Energy and requested higher power allocation to the Union Territory.

In the meeting held here, Power Secretary, Alok Kumar and other senior officials of the Ministry of Power and New & Renewable Energy were also present, an official spokesperson said Thursday.

He said various measures required to ensure uninterrupted power supply and improve power infrastructure in the Union Territory of J&K were discussed.

The LG, he said, urged higher power allocation to J&K, to which the Union Minister of Power assured to examine this



request and take early action. The spokesperson said that the LG also shared the efforts of the UT Government toward building up transmission and

distribution infrastructure and steps taken to reduce the AT&C losses and improving the quality and reliability of power supply to the people.

"Union Minister of Power assured that the ministry will extend all possible assistance to ensure adequate availability of resources," he added.

Transit Accommodations In Kashmir

MPs Panel Asks Centre To Set Timeline For Completion

Agencies

Srinagar: A parliamentary panel has recommended to the Union Home Ministry to set a timeline for the completion of construction of the remaining transit accommodations for migrants in Kashmir Valley and ensure that the deadlines are adhered to.

In its report tabled in the Parliament, the department-related parliamentary standing committee on Ministry of Home Affairs has said that it is disappointed to note that the precious time of four year has passed just in deciding the issue of constructing transit homes at private or government lands.

"The committee notes that only 1,025 units have been completed or substantially completed, while 1,488 units

are still at various stages of completion. However, the status of the construction of the remaining 3,487 units is unclear. The committee is disappointed to note that precious time of four year has passed just in deciding the issue of constructing transit homes at private or government lands. Now that the issue has been decided, the committee, therefore, recommends that the MHA should set a timeline for the completion of construction of the remaining transit accommodations and ensure that the deadlines are adhered to," reads the recommendations made by the panel after the government submitted an action taken report on its earlier observations.

Under the Prime Minister's Development Package, 2015 (PMDP-2015), | **More on P10**

India-China Standoff

IAF Carries Out Air Exercise In Northeastern Region



Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The Indian Air Force, bolstered by its full complement of Rafale combat jets, on Thursday launched a major exercise covering the Northeastern region amid a fresh spike of border tension with China along the Line of Actual Control in Arunachal Pradesh.

The two-day mega exercise is involving almost all its front-line fighter jets and other assets deployed in the region, people familiar with the drill said.

In a tweet, the IAF said the last of the 36 Rafale jets joined the force. The IAF inducted the Rafale aircraft into its 101 Squadron of the Eastern Air Command at the Hasimara in July last year.

The first Rafale squadron with around 18 jets is based in Ambala air base.

"FEET DRY! The Pack is Complete". The last of the 36 IAF Rafales landed in India after a quick enroute sip from a UAE Air Force tanker," the IAF said. Sources said | **More on P10**

Cold Wave Continues Unabated In Kashmir

Pahalgam Coldest Place In Valley At Minus 5.6°C

Agencies

Srinagar: Cold wave conditions tightened its grip over Kashmir with mercury plummeting to minus 5.6 degree Celsius in the famous tourist resort of Pahalgam in South Kashmir.

A meteorological department official said that Srinagar | **More on P10**

School Girl Held With Narcotics Along LoC

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Security agencies have busted a Pakistan ISI-run narcotics trafficking racket with the arrest of a school-going girl living along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir, official sources said Thursday.

The juvenile, a student of class ten, lives in a village ahead of the LoC fence in the Mendhar | **More on P10**

UNREGISTERED EMPLOYEES ON JKHRM PORTAL


Govt Seeks Explanation From DDOs Over Salary Release

Agencies

Srinagar: The Government on Thursday sought explanation within a week from Drawing and Disbursing Officers (DDOs) as to why a sizeable number of employees were paid salary for October despite them not registering them with the Jammu and Kashmir Human Resource Management System.

"In order to streamline the Human Resource Management System across various Departments of Jammu and Kashmir, the General Administration Department vide Circular No 35JK (GAD) of 2022 dated 12 October 2022 and Circular No 40-JK (GAD) of 2022 dated 28.10.2022 advised all the employees to register themselves on JKHRM portal and to forward the service details to the concerned DDOs for verification/updates," reads a circular.

"Further, it was also impressed upon all the DDOs that the salary for the month of October, 2022 shall be disbursed in favour of those employees only who have registered themselves/updated their service details on the designated portal and the concerned DDOs have verified the same," it said, adding, "However, it has been observed | **More on P10**





J&K Bank
Serving To Empower

ATTENTION CUSTOMERS

All the customers availing benefits under **Direct Benefits Transfer (DBT)** facility are advised to immediately get their accounts linked with Aadhaar as all Non-Aadhaar seeded DBT accounts will be put under debit-freeze from Monday i.e. 19th December, 2022.

Sd/
Dy. General Manager
(Govt. Business) DIPK-NB-5592/22 Dated: 15/12/2022

Caution: Bank does not ask for your password/OTP/ CVV/ PIN/ Card Number

ATTENTION

TB IS A NOTIFIABLE DISEASE

ALL PRIVATE PRACTITIONERS, PRIVATE HOSPITALS, PRIVATE CLINICS, PRIVATE NURSING HOMES, PRIVATE LABORATORIES & PRIVATE CHEMISTS

As per the order issued by Ministry of Health & Family Welfare Govt. of India vide no. Z-28015/2/2012-TB dated: 07-05-2012 followed by amendment vide D.O No. Z-28015/2/2012-TB 21-07-2015 and Gazette Notification issued by MOHFW GOI dated: 16-03-2018. It is Mandatory for all Health Establishments to Notify every Tuberculosis (TB) patient which they diagnose and/or Treat. The Clinical Establishments, Pharmacies, Chemists & Druggists, Private Practitioners, Private Clinics, Private Nursing Homes, Private Hospitals and Private Laboratories failing to notify a TB patient to the Nodal Officer may attract the provisions of section 269 and 270 of IPC as the case may be which are mentioned below:

<p>Section 269:</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">Negligent act like to spread infection of disease dangerous to life: Whoever unlawfully or negligently does any act which is, and which he knows or has reason to believe to be likely to spread the infection of any disease dangerous to life shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to six months/ fine or with both.</p>	<p>Section 270:</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">Malignant act likely to spread infection of disease dangerous to life -Whoever malignantly does any act which is, and which he knows or has reason to believe to be likely to spread the infection of any disease dangerous to life, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to two years / fine, or with both.</p>
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Failure to take the mandated steps may attract the Provisions of Sections 269 and 270 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).	Register directly on NI-KSHAY Website (https://www.nikshay.in/) or Use Android Mobile App.	For Notifying A TB Patient To Nodal Authority Private Facilities Will Get Rs. 500 As Notification Incentive And Additional Rs. 500 For Outcome Incentive For The Patients Already Notified By Them.
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GAZETTE ON TB NOTIFICATION
MANDATORY NOTIFICATIONS OF TB PATIENTS

• 7th May 2012 - First Order: Laboratories, Private Practitioner	• 21st July 2015 - First Amendment: Included Public Health Action	• 19th March 2018 - Second Amendment: Chemists
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ISSUED IN PUBLIC INTEREST BY:
STATE TB CELL - KASHMIR
DIRECTORATE OF HEALTH SERVICES, KASHMIR

DIPK-NB-5589/22 Dated: 15/12/2022



Study Finds Exercise, Mindfulness Don't Boost Cognitive Function In Older People

ANI

An extensive study that looked at whether mindfulness training and exercise could improve cognitive performance in older persons showed no such improvement after either intervention.

Researchers from the University of California, San Diego and Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis examined the cognitive benefits of exercise, mindfulness practise, or both in older adults who reported age-related memory changes but had not yet been identified as having dementia for up to 18 months.

The findings are published in JAMA.

"We know beyond any doubt that exercise is good for older adults, that it can lower risk for cardiac problems, strengthen bones, improve mood and have other beneficial effects -- and there has been some thought that it also might improve cognitive function," said the study's first author, Eric

J. Lenze, MD, the Wallace and Lucille Renard Professor and head of the Department of Psychiatry at Washington University. "Likewise, mindfulness training is beneficial because it reduces stress, and stress can be bad for your brain. Therefore, we hypothesized that if older adults exercised regularly, practiced mindfulness or did both there might be cognitive benefits -- but that's not what we found." Lenze and his colleagues still want to see whether there may be some cognitive effects over a longer time period, so they plan to continue studying this group of older adults to learn whether exercise and mindfulness might help prevent future cognitive declines. In this study, however, the practices did not boost cognitive function.

"So many older adults are concerned about memory," said senior author Julie Wetherell, PhD, a professor of psychiatry at UC San Diego. "It's important for studies like ours to develop and test behavioral interventions to try to provide them with neuroprotection



and stress reduction as well as general health benefits."

The researchers studied 585 adults ages 65 through 84. None had been diagnosed with dementia, but all had concerns about minor memory problems and other age-related cognitive declines.

"Minor memory problems often are considered a normal part of aging, but it's also normal for people to become concerned when they notice

ered cognitively normal for their ages. The researchers tested them when they enrolled in the study, measuring memory and other aspects of thinking. They also conducted brain-imaging scans.

The participants were randomly assigned to one of four groups: a group in which subjects worked with trained exercise instructors; a group supervised by trained experts in the practice of mindfulness; a group that participated in regular exercise and mindfulness training; and a group that did neither, but met for occasional sessions focused on general health education topics. The researchers conducted memory tests and follow-up brain scans after six months and again after 18 months.

At six months and again at 18 months, all of the groups looked similar. All four groups performed slightly better in testing, but the researchers believe that was due to practice effects as study subjects retook tests similar to what they had taken previously. Likewise, the brain scans revealed no differences between

the groups that would suggest a brain benefit of the training.

Lenze said the study's findings don't mean exercise or mindfulness training won't help improve cognitive function in any older adults, only that those practices don't appear to boost cognitive performance in healthy people without impairments.

"We aren't saying, 'Don't exercise' or, 'Don't practice mindfulness,'" Lenze explained. "But we had thought we might find a cognitive benefit in these older adults. We didn't. On the other hand, we didn't study whether exercise or mindfulness might benefit older adults who are impaired, due to dementia or to disorders such as depression. I don't think we can extrapolate from the data that these practices don't help improve cognitive function in anyone." Lenze said the researchers recently received funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) to continue following the group of adults who participated in this study.

The Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited
Estates Department
Zonal Office, Srinagar-190001

Extension of Time

With reference to the tender notice No. jkb/zokc-1/Est/22-Dt:-19-11-2022, issued by this office, regarding advertisement for premises for housing CDM at Jamia Chowk Nowgam, Srinagar the last date for receipt of the tenders is extended up to 28th of December 2022. The tender documents can be downloaded from the link www.jkbank.com. The parties who have already applied in response to the tender notice No. jkb/zokc-1/Est/22-Dt:-19-11-2022 need not apply again.

Other terms and conditions shall remain the same.

Dated: 14.12.2022 Sd/-
Ref No: No. jkb/zoSqr /Est/22- Zonal Head
Zonal Office Srinagar

Registered office : Corporate Headquarters, M.A.Road, Srinagar 190001, Kashmir, India
CIN: L65110JK1938SGC000048 ; T : +91 (0)194 2481 930-35 ; F : +91 (0)194 248 1928;
E : info@jkbank.com ; W : www.jkbank.com

DIPK-NB-5578/22 DATED:15-12-2022

NOTICE

I want to change the name of my son in his passport bearing No. N3338060 from FURAAT HUSSAIN QADRI to FURAAT ATHAR QADRI as per academic records. Anybody having any objection in this regard may contact Regional Passport Officer Srinagar within a week at the most.

Athar Hussain Qadri
F/o Furaat Athar Qadri
R/o Omer Colony A- Lal Bazar
Lane 10 H.NO 105

PUBLIC NOTICE

I sold my vehicle Mahindra Bolero Neo Reg No JK01AP 6304 to Himalayan Motors First Choice Tempora Bypass Srinagar on 01.08.2022.

I hereby declare through this public notice that I shall not be held responsible for any offences hereafter.

Wajahat Qazi
R/O Umerhair Buchpora
Srinagar 190020

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR,
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
JAL SHAKTI (PHE) DIVISION AWANTIPORA

NOTICE INVITING TENDER
e-NITNo. 58/PHAOF2022-23 Dated:13-12-2022

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of UT of J&K, Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Division Awantipora invites e-tenders from reputed and resourceful Bidders/Firms/Companies/ of different classes registered in JKPWD/CPWD/ Railways or any other state Government for below mentioned works at various Water Supply schemes of PHE Division Awantipora of Kashmir Province of UT of J&K, under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM).

The bidding process shall be completed online on www.jktenders.gov.in in two covers viz. Cover 1st consisting of General Terms and Conditions and Technical Specifications and Cover 2nd consisting of Financial Bid on overall percentage rate basis, in the prescribed BOQ.

Sr No	Particulars of the work	Estimated Cost (Lacs)	Tender fee (in Rs)	Earnest money Deposit	Bid Validity	Time of Completion of work (days)
1.	Laying & Fitting of Delivery and Distribution Mains consisting of GMS Tubes and Ductile Iron Pipes of different Nominal Bore along with pipe fittings and control valves	As per ANNEXURE-I to this bid document.	500/-	02% of the estimated cost	90 days	As per ANNEXURE-I to this bid document.
	Construction of Ground Service Reservoirs (GSRs), Slow Sand Filtration Plants					
	Execution of ancillary civil works like Spring Covers, Boundary walls, Protection Works etc.					
	at various Water Supply schemes of Division-Awantipora of Kashmir Province of UT of J&K, under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)					

Position of funds: Approved Under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)
The tender inviting authority is Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Division Awantipora
The awarding authority is District Jal Jeevan Mission (DJJM).

Critical Dates:

i.	Publish Date	15-12-2022 at 9:00 A.M
ii.	Document Download Start Date	15-12-2022 at 9:00 A.M
iii.	Bid submission Start date	15-12-2022 from 9:00 A.M
iv.	Bid submission End date	23-12-2022 at 4:00 P.M.
v.	Date of Bid opening	24-12-2022 at 2:00 P.M.

- Bid documents can be accessed and downloaded from the website www.jktenders.gov.in
- The whole bidding process shall be completed online on tender portal www.jktenders.gov.in. The intending bidders can download the bid document from the tender portal and can submit their bids by uploading them on the tender portal.
- The valid bids received shall be opened online in the office of the Executive Engineer PHE Division Awantipora. Bids must be accompanied by bid security and cost of Tender Document as specified in column 4 & 5 of the table and shall be payable at Srinagar.
- The cost of tender documents should be in form of DD/TR/e challan in favour of Executive Engineer PHE Division Awantipora.
- The hard copies of cost of tender document in shape of TR/e-challan, Earnest money in shape of CDR/FDR/BG and other relevant documents shall be obtained from the bidder who is declared as L1 after opening of financial cover.
- The bid shall remain valid for a period of 90 days from the last date of submission of bids. If any bidder withdraws his bid before the said period or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid, the same shall be considered to be in violation of bid security declaration and shall be dealt with accordingly and the bid shall be declared non-responsive.
- Other details can be seen in the bidding documents from the website www.jktenders.gov.in.
- Queries by email if any should be made at phedivisionawantipora@gmail.com

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Jal Shakti (PHE) Division Awantipora

No: PHA/AWP/5727-37
DIPK-15101/22 Date: 14.12.2022

Directorate of Information Technology & Support System
UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR
Hazratbal, Srinagar-190006, Kashmir, J&K (India)

GeM BID NOTICE

GeM Bids are invited from eligible agencies/bidders for the supply of All-in-One Desktops and Scanners to the University of Kashmir. Bid Document is also available on the official website of University of Kashmir i.e. www.kashmiruniversity.net. The interested bidders should upload duly filled compliance sheet along with scanned copies of all the relevant certificates, documents, etc. in support of their technical bids on the GEM portal within the stipulated / last date of BID.

Schedule of bid on GeM Portal

1	GeM Bid Number	GEM/2022/B/2852277
2	Date of Publish	13.12.2022
3	Bid End Date and Time	03.01.2023 07:00 P.M
4	Performance security	3%

No: F(AIO/Scanner-Bid)/IT&SS/KU/22
DIPK-NB-5566/22 Dated: 15-12-2022

Sd/-
Director

Government of Jammu and Kashmir
Office of the Assistant Labour Commissioner Pulwama
Telephone/Fax: 01933-295307 Mail: alcpulwama@gmail.com

General Public notice

This is for information of all active labour card holders of District Pulwama that Educational Assistance application forms for the financial year 2022-23 shall be received on online mode on official website jkbcw.gov.in. Therefore, all the Labour Card holders who want to avail the benefits under the scheme shall submit the completely filled application forms along with following documents before 15 of February 2023.

Essential Documents Required.

(A) Primary / Lower Education, Secondary & Higher Secondary Level:-
1. Result card/Pass certificate of the previous standard/ class, issued by the Head of the School/Institution.
2. Dependent Certificate (in case of student is brother or sister)
3. Bonofide Certificate.

(B) Higher/Professional Education : (BA, BSc, B com, BBA BCA) (Post Graduation /MA/MS/Bed/LLM/MCom/MLIB/MBA/MCA/LLB) (Three Year Diploma Courses & Professional/Technical Degree Courses: MBBS/BE/B Tech/BDS/BVSC/MS/MD or any Other technical or medical degree or PG Courses) >
1. Bonofide Certificate indicating Enrolment, Present Status, Mode of Education and Details Of Student, issued by Head of the institution/authorized officer with Name, Seal Signature, Mobile No./Dispatch No. and Date of issue of certificate.
2. Result Card/Pass certificate of the previous standard/ class, issued by the Head of the School /Institution.
3. Dependent Certificate (in case of student is brother or sister).
4. Institution submitted Fee Slip.

ALC/PUL/2022/ 417
DIPK-15158/22 Dated: - 15/12/22

Sd/-
Assistant Labour Commissioner
Pulwama

ANNEXURE I
SCHEME WISE LIST OF WORKS

S. No	Name of Water Supply Scheme	Description of work	Jal Shakti (PHE) Division	Estimated cost (in Lacs)	Time of completion (Days)	Class of Contractor
1.	Herbuchoo Sikhbasti	Construction of Pump House cum Operator Quarter for WSS Herbuchoo Sikhbasti under JJM	Awantipora	14.660	01 Month	B, C, D
2	Buchoo Old	Construction of Pump House cum Operator Quarter for WSS Buchoo Old under JJM	Awantipora	14.524	01 Month	B, C, D
3	Syedabad Seer	Construction of Pump House cum Operator Quarter for WSS Syedabad Seer under JJM	Awantipora	13.443	01 Month	B, C, D
4	Nunnag Rathsunu	Construction of Pump House cum Operator Quarter for WSS Nunnag Rathsunu under JJM	Awantipora	13.443	01 Month	B, C, D
5	Lariyar	Construction of Pump House cum Operator Quarter for WSS Lariyar at Well Site under JJM	Awantipora	13.443	01 Month	B, C, D
6	Khasipora Paribal	Construction of Pump House cum Operator Quarter for WSS Khasipora Paribal well site 2 nd under JJM	Awantipora	13.443	01 Month	B, C, D
7	Khasipora Paribal	Construction of Pump House cum Operator Quarter for WSS Khasipora Paribal well site 1 st under JJM	Awantipora	13.443	01 Month	B, C, D
8	Khangund Gujarbasti	Construction of Pump House cum Operator Quarter for WSS Khangund Gujarbasti under JJM	Awantipora	13.443	01 Month	B, C, D
9	Khanbasti Chukpora	Construction of Pump House cum Operator Quarter for WSS Khanbasti Chukpora at Panner under JJM	Awantipora	13.443	01 Month	B, C, D
10	Khanbasti Chukpora	Construction of Pump House cum Operator Quarter for WSS Khanbasti Chukpora at Mandoor OHT Site under JJM	Awantipora	13.443	01 Month	B, C, D
11	Aug Pinglish	Construction of Pump House cum Operator Quarter for WSS Augmentation Pinglish under JJM	Awantipora	13.443	01 Month	B, C, D
12	Alligund Chandrigam	Construction of Pump House cum Operator Quarter for WSS Alligund Chandrigam under JJM	Awantipora	13.443	01 Month	B, C, D

Action Plan For Removal Of Encroachments On City Roads Reviewed

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In order to ensure smooth ply of Traffic and pedestrian movement on roads of District, a meeting was held under the Chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (Chairman RTA) Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad on Thursday.

Besides, Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Syed Shabir Ahmad, the meeting among others was attended by Assistant Commissioner Revenue, SDM East, SDM West all Tehsildars and other concerned.

At the outset, the DC took a detailed review of the plan being implemented with regard to removal of encroachments on NHAI, BRO, PWD, PMGSY, SMC roads in Srinagar District.

The DC asked the officers to follow the concerted strategy to remove all roadside encroachments in order to ensure smooth movement of transport and pedestrian movement as well and avoid chance of road accidents.

The DC asked the Revenue authorities to work in close coordination with other line Departments in this regard.

The DC asked them to launch a massive anti encroachment drive across the District and adopt zero tolerance policy on encroachments of Government land as well.

The DC also passed directions for taking strict action under law against the unlawful occupants of the Government land.

He asked them to make local public representatives, general public and media part of the mass anti-encroachment operations to stop this trend in our society.

The DC asked the Tehsildars to monitor each chunk of land in their respective jurisdictions and activate their field staff to keep proper check and vigil on any kind of encroachments in respective jurisdiction.

Meanwhile, the meeting also discussed the status of digitisation of maps and reconstruction of Massavis (Latthas).

3 SKUAST Students Bag Fellowship At Kansas State University, USA

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Three students from Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir have been awarded research fellowships for postgraduate programmes at Kansas State University, Manhattan, USA.

Sabreena Ayoub from the Faculty of Horticulture, Midhat Zulafkar from the Faculty of Agriculture and Muazzama Mush-taq from the Faculty of Forestry will be heading to the USA in the summer of 2023 to join their masters' degrees at the first public land grant university of the world, KSU.

Sabreena and Midhat will be working under the mentorship of Prof PV Vara Prasad, Director of Sustainable Intensification Innovation Lab, KSU, and

Dr Ram Perumal, Professor of Plant Breeding on GWAS and Herbicide tolerance in Pearl millet, and Muazzama will be working under Nobel Laureate Dr Chuck Rice on soil carbon dynamics under climate change.

Vice Chancellor, SKUAST-K, Prof Nazir Ahmad Ganai, said this is an outcome of long-term engagement between SKUAST-K and KSU on the faculty and student exchange programme under NAHEP.

He congratulated the students for bringing laurels to the university and appreciated the efforts of SKUAST-K's Coordinator of International Programmes, Dr Parvaze Ahmad Sofi, for facilitating student exchange between SKUAST-K and KSU and helping students find better places for higher learning across the globe.

Uptown Residents Demand Establishment Of Fire Service Station

Agencies

Srinagar: The inhabitants of various localities from Srinagar uptown have appealed to authorities to set up a fire station between Raj Bagh and Jawahar Nagar so that massive losses taking place due to fire incidents could be minimized.

"In case of fire incident, people struggle to douse the fire," a social activist and trader Muhammad Altaf Dar said that scores of areas from Srinagar uptown are dependent on the service of the fire stations from Bataloo and Barbarshah which are based in congested areas.

"A fire broke out at the Zero

Bridge recently and a major loss was reported in the incident. A fire station is required in the Rajbagh or Jawahar Nagar area that will serve scores of areas including the Zero Bridge, Armwari, Kanilpora, Footbridge Rajbagh, Khujbagh, Iqbal Colony, Pathan Bagh, Kursoo, Rajbagh, Jawahar Nagar, Ikhrajpora, Wazir Bagh, Gogibagh, Solina Padshahibagh, Mehjoor Nagar, Soeitang and nearby areas," said the locals.

They said that many government offices and commercial buildings are present in these areas. The residents requested the Lt Governor Administration, and district administration to establish a fire station in Jawahar Nagar or Raj Bagh. [KNT]

LCMA Conducts Demolition Drive In City Areas

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Lake Conservation & Management Authority through its Enforcement Wing under the supervision of Enforcement Officers undertook a demolition drive today in the areas of Khimber, Lal Bazar, Pahlbo Brein, Botshah Mohalla Lal Bazar and Ashaibagh.

The team was accompanied by the Police Contingent from PCR, Srinagar.

During the drive, two tin wallings, and three single storey structures and 01 raft for plinth were demolished.

Moreover, illegally earth filling dumped in the area of Saida Kadal & Nigeen Club were

also removed during the drive. An officer of LCMA said that Legal action against the violator was initiated by the department.

Meanwhile, people in these areas have been warned not to



resort to any illegal construction & encroachments and were asked to get proper building permission from the competent Authority before taking any



Mushtaq Hussain, who sells Kehwa at Floating Waters of Dal Lake is an Internet sensation in Kashmir. KO Photo Abid Bhat

DC Inspects Construction Site For Migrant Transit Accommodation At Zewan

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Deputy Commissioner (DC), Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad Thursday undertook a visit to Zewan area in Pantha Chowk Tehsil of District for onsite inspection of the works being taken up for construction of Migrant Transit Accommodations.

Chief Planning Officer, Mohammad Yaseen Lone, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Raeis Ahmad, Tehsildar PanthaChowk, Rakib Ahmad, DYSSO, Balbir Singh and others concerned.

While inspecting the construction site for Migrant

Transit Accommodation at Zewan, the Deputy Commissioner took a detailed tour of the site where Migrant Transit Accommodations of 936 flats comprising 39 blocks are to be executed at an estimated cost of Rs 124 crore in the District.

On the occasion, the DC said that additional 20 kanals of land adjacent to 93 kanals of land already allotted for the Migrant Transit Accommodation Zewan has been allocated for development of parking spaces and other utilities.

The DC also directed the concerned executing agency to immediately start physical work on the project. The agency committed to start work

by/before December 20, 2022 positively.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner also asked the concerned revenue authorities to identify a suitable patch of land for development of a playground at Pandrethan.

While, for expansion of the Industrial Estate, Khonmoh and the DC asked the Tehsildar Panthachowk to furnish revenue papers for the identified 110 kanals of land to the Industries and Commerce Department.

Meanwhile, the DC accompanied by the Officers also visited the proposed site for IIM off campus at Athwajan.

5 Residential Houses Damaged, Minor Boy Injured In Bemina Blaze

Observer News Service

Srinagar: At least five residential houses were damaged, while a minor boy suffered burn injuries in a fire incident in Bemina area of Srinagar on Thursday.

Official sources said that

3 residential houses were completely damaged, while two were partially damaged in the fire incident in Mansoor Colony locality of Bemina.

They said in the incident, a minor boy identified as Mo-

hammad Asif Ahangar was also injured, who was subsequently rushed to SKIMS Soura for treatment.

Meanwhile, Police have taken cognizance of the incident and cause of fire was not known immediately.

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HIGHWAY STATUS

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

HIJRI CALENDAR

21 Jumad al-Awwal
1444

PRAYERS	
FAJR	5:58
ZUHR	12:25
ASR	3:46
Magrib	5:27
ISHA	6:52

This Day In History

- 1631 - Mount Vesuvius, Italy erupts, destroys 6 villages & kills 4,000.
- 1761 - Seven Years' War: After four-month siege, Russian army under Pyotr Rumyantsev takes Prussian fortress of Kolobrzeg (German: Kolberg).
- 1864 - Battle of Nashville ends after 4400 casualties.
- 1903 - The Taj Mahal Palace & Tower hotel opens its doors to guests for the first time.
- 1907 - As a gesture of the US's new presence as a world power, President Theodore Roosevelt sends the US Battle Fleet on a round-the-world cruise, visiting ports internationally.
- 1912 - Austria-Hungary engage in conflict with Serbia.
- 1912 - First Balkan War: The Ottoman Navy is defeated by the Royal Hellenic Navy at the Battle of Elli.
- 1914 - World War I: German battleships under Franz Von Hipper bombard the English ports of Hartlepool and Scarborough.
- 1918 - German troops evacuate Finland, give over Kiev in the Ukraine to revolutionary forces and pull back from Estonia as Bolshevik forces move in.
- 1920 - 8.5 earthquake rocks the Gansu province in China, killing an estimated 200,000.
- 1921 - The Anglo-Irish Treaty, agreed to by the British Parliament and Sinn Fein, is ratified.
- 1938 - Adolf Hitler institutes the state decoration and civil order of merit, Cross of Honour of the German Mother.
- 1942 - Hitler orders combat against partisans in Russia & Balkan.
- 1946 - Thailand joins the United Nations.
- 1950 - US President Harry Truman proclaims state of emergency against "Communist imperialism".
- 1962 - Nepal gets constitution/becomes Constitutional Hindu Monarchy
- 1965 - Gemini 6 returns to Earth
- 1965 - Pioneer 6 launched into solar orbit
- 1970 - 1st successful landing on Venus (USSR).
- 1971 - Bangladesh (East Pakistan) declares independence from Pakistan.
- 1971 - India's army occupies Dacca, West Pakistani troops surrenders.
- 1972 - Bangladesh Constitution goes into effect.
- 1978 - Ronald Reagan denounces President Jimmy Carter's recognition of China PR.
- 1979 - Libya raises crude oil prices, joining four other OPEC nations, which has a dramatic effect on the United States.
- 1986 - Revolt in Kazakhstan against Communist party, known as Zheltoksan, which becomes the first sign of ethnic strife during Gorbachev's tenure.
- 1987 - Roh Tae Woo elected president of South Korea.
- 1991 - UN reverses ruling that Zionism is racism by 111-25 (13 abstain) vote.
- 1991 - Independence of the Republic of Kazakhstan.
- 1995 - The official adoption of the name "Euro".
- 1998 - Iraq disarmament crisis: Operation Desert Fox - the United States and United Kingdom bomb targets in Iraq.
- 2012 - A gang rape of a woman on a bus in India that resulted in her death leads to national and international outrage.
- 2014 - An Army Public School in Pakistan is attacked by Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan militants who kill 145 people.

From KO Archives

Abduction Spree In Sumbal

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A series of ransom by pro-government gunmen in the Sumbal region of north Kashmir sparked off vehement protests to-day in the area. Thousands of residents demanding action against the gunmen staged a demonstration on the Sumbal Bridge, blocking traffic on the Srinagar-Bandipora highway this morning.

In the latest incident of the kind, gunmen had abducted a student, Ri-yaz Ahmad Rathar of Waskoora, Ganderbal yesterday and sent word to his father, a fruit vendor to pay Rs 2 lakh for his son's release.

Similarly, gunmen are gearing up to extract a hefty amount from the owners of the Showhole floor mill for setting free their employee, Ghulam Muhammad Gojri, kidnapped recently. Sumbal residents said that pro-government gunmen had abducted nearly a dozen traders who frequent the town to reclaim loans. (Kashmir Observer, 16 December, 2000)

Former Iraqi Pm Under US Protection, Faces Arrest For Soleimani Assassination: Report

Agencies

Iraqi lawmakers are considering arresting former Iraqi prime minister Mustafa Kadhimi for his alleged role in the assassination of Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis and Qassem Soleimani by the US in 2020.

During an interview with Iraqi news outlet Shafaq News on 12 December, a senior official in the State of Law Coalition, Fadel Mwat al-Zerigawi, revealed lawmakers are mulling over the decision. He also claimed Kadhimi is being sheltered inside the US embassy.

"The available information confirms that [Kadhimi] is in the capital, Baghdad, and has not left the country. He is inside the Green Zone, and is sheltering in the American embassy," Zerigawi said on Monday.

He then added: "The next stage will witness the issuance of arrest warrants and investigations against Kadhimi for his involvement in the [theft of the century] case and the assassination of Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis and Qassem Soleimani."

High-ranking military sources that spoke with Shafaq News on condition of anonymity revealed that Iraqi troops assigned to protect Kadhimi this week received orders to withdraw from his home in the Green Zone.

Back in 2020, Iran suggested it had discovered evidence suggesting Kadhimi - who at the time directed the Iraqi National Intelligence Service - was involved in the assassination of Soleimani and Muhandis.

Soleimani, the commander of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Quds Force, and Muhandis, the deputy chief of the Popular Mobilization Units (PMU), were killed in a US drone strike outside of Baghdad airport on 3 January, 2020.

Their assassination sent



shockwaves across West Asia, particularly in Iraq, prompting lawmakers to pass a resolution demanding the withdrawal of US military forces in response to Washington's violation of Iraqi sovereignty.

Despite Kadhimi's early promises to enforce this resolution and expel all foreign military forces from Iraq, the former premier did not expel any US troops, but rather, provided them with an opportunity to re-brand their occupation, as around 4,000 military personnel remain in the country in "advisory roles."

Once a little-known Iraqi journalist working for Radio Free Europe - a CIA front organization - and the US-based Al Monitor, Kadhimi was named the director of the Iraqi National Intelligence Service in 2016. Some Iraqis believe he received this sensitive posting because of US pressure on Iraq's then-prime minister, Haider Al-Abadi.

Since Abdul-Mahdi stepped down due to popular unrest, Iraq was economically and politically paralyzed. Almost two and a half years of Mustafa al-Kadhimi in office produced only more poverty and increased external meddling in Iraq.

In late October, the Iraqi parliament approved the new government led by Prime Minister Mohamed Shia al-Sudani, putting an end to a year of political paralysis since the parliamentary elections last year.

Amid Tensions with China, India Tests Nuke Capable Agni V

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: India on Thursday successfully test-fired nuclear-capable ballistic missile Agni-V that can strike targets at ranges up to 5,000 km, marking a significant boost to the country's strategic deterrence, people familiar with the development said.

The test-firing of the missile from the APJ Abdul Kalam Island off Odisha coast came amid India's lingering border row with China.

The Agni-V project is aimed at boosting India's nuclear deterrence against China which is known to have missiles like Dongfeng-41 having ranges between 12,000-15,000 km.

Agni-V can bring almost the entire Asia including the northernmost part of China as well as some regions in Europe under its striking range. The Agni 1 to 4 missiles have ranges from 700 km to 3,500 km and they have already been deployed.

The Agni-V missile has been successfully test-fired, two people familiar with the matter said.

There is no official word on the night trials of the missile.

The people cited above said the test validated a number of critical aspects of the weapon.



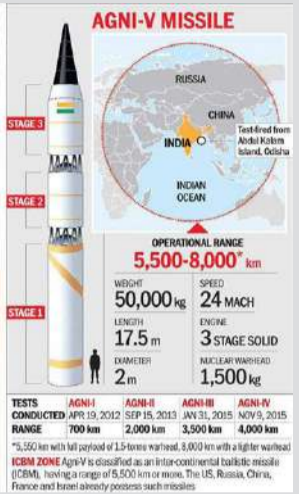
India carried out a similar test of the missile in October last year as well.

The successful test firing of the missile paves way for its induction into the Strategic Forces Command that takes care of India's strategic assets, the people cited above said.

The missile has a very high degree of accuracy to hit targets. It has a height of 17 metre and it is capable of carrying a 1.5-tonne warhead.

In June, India successfully carried out a night launch of the nuclear-capable Agni-4 ballistic missile, in a boost to India's military capabilities.

Following the test, the defence ministry had said that it reaffirmed India's policy of having a 'credible mini-



mum deterrence capability." India has been steadily enhancing its overall military might in the last couple of years.

It has carried out successful tests of a number of missiles during the period.

In May, the extended range version of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile was test-fired from a Sukhoi fighter jet.

It was the first launch of the extended range version of the BrahMos missile from a Su-30MKI aircraft.

An anti-submarine version of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile was successfully test-fired jointly by the Indian Navy and the Andaman and Nicobar Command in April. PTI

Direct Evidence Not Necessary To Convict Public Servants In Corruption Cases: SC

Press Trust of India

The Supreme Court on Thursday said a public servant can be convicted for illegal gratification in a corruption case on the basis of circumstantial evidence when there is no direct oral or documentary evidence against them.

A five-judge Constitution bench headed by Justice S A Nazeer said complainants as well as the prosecution should make sincere efforts so that corrupt public servants are brought to book and convicted so that the administration and governance become unpolluted and free from corruption.

"In the absence of evidence of complainant (direct or primary), it is permissible to draw an inferential deduction of culpability," the bench, also comprising justices B R Gavai, A S Bopanna, V Ramasubramanian and B V Nagarathna, said.

The top court said that even if direct evidence of the complainant is not available, owing to death or other reasons, there can be conviction of the public servant under the relevant provisions.

"In the event the complain-



ant turns hostile or has died or is unable to let in his evidence during the trial, the demand of illegal gratification can be proved by letting in the evidence of any other witness either orally or documentary evidence or the prosecution can prove the case by circumstantial evidence.

"The trial does not abate nor does it result in an order of acquittal of the public servant," the bench said.

The apex court's verdict came while examining the issue whether in the absence of direct or primary evidence of demand of bribe, inferential deduction of guilt of a public servant can be drawn based on other evidence.

"Why Do You Say Jai Sree Ram, Not Jai Siyaram"? Rahul Gandhi To RSS, BJP



Press Trust of India

JAIPUR: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has accused the RSS of "suppressing women" and claimed that that was the reason why the organisation has no female members.

Mr Gandhi, who is leading the Congress' Bharat Jodo Yatra, on Wednesday alleged that the "plan of the BJP and RSS is to spread fear" and his march was to stand against fear and hatred.

The 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', which started from Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu on September 7, is passing through Rajasthan. It will complete 100 days on Friday. The yatra resumed from the Bhadoti area of Sawai Madhopur on Wednesday and reached Badshapur.

The former Congress president also accused the BJP and RSS of "insulting" Goddess Sita by invoking 'Jai Shree Ram' instead of 'Jai Siyaram' which acknowledges both Lord Ram and Goddess Sita.

Addressing a street corner meeting at Bagdi village in Dausa district, Mr Gandhi said, "You will not find a woman in their organisation ... you will not find a woman in RSS... they suppress women, they do not allow women to enter their

organisation." The RSS has a women wing named Rashtra Sevika Samiti.

"I want to ask the RSS and BJP people, you say Jai Shri Ram but why do you not say Jai Siyaram? Why did you remove Sita Maa? Why do you insult her? Why do you insult the women of India?" he posed.

The Congress leader said the fear of unemployment is increasing.

"Only the BJP and the RSS benefit from this fear because they convert this fear into hatred. Their entire organisations do the same work.. they work to divide the country, and spread hatred and fear. That is why the most important goal of Bharat Jodo Yatra is to stand against the fear and hatred being spread in the country," he said.

He claimed that the 100 richest people in India hold an amount of wealth which is equal to that of 55 crore people in the country. "Half the wealth of India is with only 100 people and the country is run for them." "There are four or five such people whom you can call Maharajas of India... the entire government, the entire media and all bureaucrats work at their behest... Prime Minister Narendra Modi ji also works at their behest," he claimed.

CBSE Warns Students Against Fake Website, Asks Them Not To Make Payments On That Portal



Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The Central Board of Secondary Education on Thursday warned students and parents against a fake website of the board and asked them not to make any payments on the portal for downloading admit cards for class 10 and 12 exams.

"It has come to the notice of the board that certain unscrupulous elements have created a website resembling the official CBSE website www.cbse.gov.in.

"This fake website has been created with the address https://cbsegovt.com/ and is blatantly duping unsuspecting

students, schools and parents by sending messages to deposit money for creating and downloading the admit card for CBSE class 10 and 12, 2023 examinations," the board said in an advisory.

It asked the public and stakeholders to be "extremely careful and not respond to any such fake messages and websites".

The board does not take any fees directly from any students or parents for downloading admit cards, it added.

The class 10 and 12 board exams are slated to be held from February 15 next year. The board has, however, not announced the exam schedule yet.

"Threat From Northern Borders Rising": Ex-Army Chief Slams China Military

Agencies

NEW DELHI: Former chief of Indian Army General MM Naravane (retired), following the recent clash in Arunachal Pradesh, has hit out at the Chinese Army for descending to the level of "prehistoric times" by using "clubs and barbed wires" in the scuffle and said that the Indian Army in warfare would rather open fire than resort to such ridiculous tactics.

The former Army chief also said that based on assessments, the Indian Army felt that threat from India's northern borders is increasing but with situational analysis and inputs the Indian Army keeps evaluating threats and takes remedial measures.

In a podcast with Smita Prakash, Editor-in-Chief of ANI, Gen Naravane pointed out how the Chinese troops have been indulging in mobbing incidents but that India as a country showed to the world that it is possible to take on the "neighbourhood bullying".

"That is how an army fights by using the weapons at your disposal and not getting into fistcuffs. Are we hooligans or mafia? We are professional. Is that the level PLA has gone down to? Hooliganism and streetfighting? Or they are



a professional 21st-century army? On one side they try to show their technological prowess, on the other side they are coming with barbed wire clubs. It is ridiculous," the former Army Chief said.

The former Army chief also said that based on assessments, the Indian Army felt that threat from India's northern borders is increasing vis-a-vis the western border however, the Indian Army after situational analysis and inputs has plans of rebalancing troops where some personnel could go from the western front to the eastern front and vice versa.

"Based on those threats, what remedial measures or countermeasures we should take? And it is in that light that we felt the threat from our northern borders is increasing vis-a-vis that is of the western border. Therefore, we need to rebalance some forces. We have always had

plans in place where some troops could go from the western front to the eastern front or vice versa," Gen Naravane said.

"It is a question of where they should be initially deployed. They should be initially deployed more to the west and go to the east or north as a contingency or they should be on other adversary first and go to the west as a contingency. That is what rebalancing is. Rather than being more west-oriented, they become now more north-oriented. That does not mean they cannot come back to the west. There is a continuous threat. We keep on evaluating. In case something changes on the western front we revert to as it was earlier," the ex-Indian Army chief said.

During the podcast interview, Gen Naravane also referred to India's retaliation to the Chinese aggression in May 2020.

"Not only the PLA itself, it diminished the stature of China as a country in the global eyes. After this clash, we showed that it is possible to stand up to China who tries to bully its smaller neighbours."

The Army chief said that Indian soldiers countered them in the same manner in which they were being targeted by the PLA (People's Liberation

NEWS MAKERS

Man Kills Friend Over ₹ 10 In West Bengal's Siliguri

Press Trust of India

SILIGURI: A 20-year-old man was bludgeoned to death with a rock in northern West Bengal's Siliguri allegedly by his friend over ₹10, police said on Thursday.

The body of Ramprasad Saha was found in the Baikunthapur forest, they said.

During the investigation, it was found that Ramprasad Saha was an addict and used to visit the forest regularly to fulfil his need for substance abuse, police said.

He went to the forest on Monday with his friends Subrata Das, 22, and Ajay Roy, 24 -- all of whom are addicts, they said. After getting high, Ramprasad Saha found he was out of money and then asked Subrata Das for ₹ 10 to buy more drugs, they added.

Soon, a fight broke out and Subrata Das allegedly bludgeoned him to death with a stone, police said.

Officers of Ashghar outpost of Siliguri Metro Police arrested Subrata Das and Ajay on Wednesday night, following which the case was cracked, they said.

Police said they are examining the role of Ajay during the entire episode.

Filmmakers Anurag Kashyap, Vivek Agnihotri Spar On Twitter. Read Thread

MUMBAI: A war of words erupted between filmmakers Vivek Agnihotri and Anurag Kashyap on Twitter on Wednesday after the 'The Kashmir Files' director shared his disagreement over Mr Kashyap's statement on recent movies.

Taking to Twitter, Mr Agnihotri shared a screenshot of Anurag Kashyap's interview which read, "Films like Kantara and Pushpa are destroying the industry: Anurag Kashyap."

Sharing the post, Mr Agnihotri wrote, "I totally totally totally disagree with the views of Bollywood's one & only Milord. Do you agree?"

Replying to Mr Agnihotri's tweet, the 'Gangs of Wasseypur' director wrote, "Sir aapki galti nahin hai, aap ki film ki research bhi aisi hi hoti hai jaise aapki mere conversations pe tweet hai. Aapka aur aapki media ka bhi same haal hai. Koi nahin next time thoda serious research kar lena. (Sir, it's not your fault. The research of your films is same like your



tweets on my conversations. Your condition and that of your media is the same. Next time do some serious research.)"

Mr Agnihotri asked the 'Manmarziyaan' director to prove that the four-year research work on 'The Kashmir Files' was a lie and took an indirect jab at Anurag Kashyap's recently released film 'Dobaaraa'.

"Bholenath, aap lage haath sabit kar hi do ki #TheKashmirFiles ka 4 saal ka research sab jhooth tha. Girija Tikoo, BK Ganju, Airforce killing, Nadimarg sab

jhooth tha. 700 Panditon ke video sab jhooth the. Hindu kabhi mare hi nahin. Aap prove kar do, DOBAARA aisi galti nahin hogi (prove that the four-year research for 'The Kashmir Files' was all lies. Girija Tikoo, BK Ganju, Airforce killing, Nadimarg - all were false. The videos of 700 Pandits were all false. No Hindus died. Prove this so that I won't make this mistaken again," said Mr Agnihotri.

The Twitter war has divided social media into two. Some fans came in support of Mr Agnihotri, while some are standing along with Mr Kashyap.

Mr Agnihotri has started the shooting of his next film 'The Vaccine War', which is set to hit the theatres on the occasion of next Independence Day.

Mr Kashyap recently directed the suspense thriller 'Dobaaraa', which starred Taapsee Pannu and Pavai Gulati in the lead roles, but failed to impress the audience at the box office.

Gold Worth ₹14 Lakh Recovered From Passenger's Shoe At Jaipur Airport

Agencies

JAIPUR: The airport officials on Thursday recovered gold worth ₹14,19,860 from a passenger at the Jaipur International Airport. The gold weighed around 254 grams.

As per reports, the recovery was made from a passenger's shoe where the gold was kept concealed.

"Gold weighing 254.000 Grams valued at ₹14,19,860/- has been recovered from the passenger who arrived from Dubai to Jaipur via flight No. SG58 on 15/12/22. The gold was concealed in his shoe," said airport officials.

Govt Sets Up Panel To Frame Export Policy For Agri Products

Initiative To Enhance Annual Agricultural Exports From Rs 190 Cr To Rs 3000 Cr In Next 5 Years

Observer News Service

JAMMU: In its endeavors to boost agricultural export from the Union Territory, the Jammu and Kashmir government has constituted an expert committee to formulate a comprehensive Export Promotion Policy for identified potential exportable agricultural commodities.

The primary assignment of the committee would be to develop commodity specific export promotion recommendations which inter alia shall include strategic and operational aspects of the export. Besides, it shall provide all necessary technical inputs to Agriculture Production Department within a set timeline of one month for finalization and implementation on ground.

The main objective of the Export Promotion Policy would be to increase annual agricultural exports from current Rs190 crore to Rs 3000 crore over next 5 years. Besides, the policy would promote brand "J&K" for its pristine agro-climatic conditions, uniqueness and near organic quality. It would also diversify the UT export base and thereby empower farmers with adequate export opportunities. The policy would create an ambient ecosystem for export agricultural commodities from J&K.

The policy would lay emphasis on bringing a paradigm shift in the approach from mere harvesting and selling of produce at local level to a demand driven supply activity with focussed attention on GI tagging, processing, stringent quality control, international certifications, traceability, branding and marketing of the produce. The diverse agro climatic conditions

of J&K have resulted in development of niche crops offering adoption of holistic approach for promotion of agricultural exports. This shall help the growers in finding post-harvest solutions at better prices within or near the production belt.

Furthermore, the document inter alia shall also focus on market access initiative through assistance by Export Promotion Organizations, Trade Promotion Organizations, National Level Institutions, Research Institutions, Universities, Laboratories and Exporters etcetera for enhancement of exports by accessing new markets or by increasing the share in the existing markets. Besides, assistance shall also be extended in establishing quality control setup, national/international certifications, GI, transport and marketing assistance and all other prerequisite shall be duly taken care of for identified Agriculture Products like apple, basmati rice, walnut, almond, cherry, saffron, vegetables including red chilli & garlic, honey, wool, silk, pulses, lavender, aromatic plants etcetera. Likewise, services of Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEEDA) shall also be utilized in achieving the envisaged goals.

Implementation of Export Promotion Policy shall accelerate the pace of achieving a vibrant and commercially viable agriculture by harvesting the competitive advantage of J&K's geo-climatic diversity to the fullest. Besides, this will monetize agricultural produce through export promotion and shall add a new dimension to the agricultural economy of J&K.

India's Longest Escape Tunnel On Banihal-Katra Rail Link Ready



Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The 12.89 km tunnel, which is the longest escape tunnel of India, on the 111 km under-construction Banihal-Katra railway line in Jammu and Kashmir was completed on Thursday, officials said.

It is part of the prestigious Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Railway Line (USBRL) project.

This is the fourth tunnel on the Banihal-Katra route following the 12.75 km tunnel T-49 (longest tunnel of Indian Railways), which was completed in January this year.

According to officials, the escape tunnel "T-13" has been constructed to facilitate rescue work in case of an emergency.

On August 14, the world's highest rail bridge over the Chenab river in the Kouri area of Reasi district achieved a

milestone when the overarch deck of the bridge was completed with a golden joint.

The breakthrough was executed by conducting a blast and with it, the work on the escape tunnel was started.

"The construction work of escape tunnel (12.895 km) for the longest rail tunnel T-49 between Khari and Banihal stations of Katra under USBRL project was completed today after successfully negotiating major cavity formation," a senior official engaged in the work said.

"This is the longest escape tunnel of India and its line and level are precisely achieved," the official said.

He said that it is a modified horseshoe shape tunnel connecting the Sumbur station yard on the south side and tunnel T-50 after crossing bridge

number 4 over Khoda nullah on the north side at Khoda village.

The elevation of the south end at Sumbur is approximately 1400.5 metres and of the north end is 1558.84 metres.

Tunnel T-49 is a twin tube tunnel comprising the main tunnel (12.75 km) and escape tunnel (12.895 kms) connected with 33 cross-passages, the officials said.

Several challenges were encountered in the course of construction such as shear zone, perched aquifer, highly jointed rock mass, and heavy ingress of water, among others, they said.

Out of the total 272 kilometres of the USBRL project, 161 km has already been commissioned and operationalized.

The work of balancing 111 km between Katra and Banihal is under progress at a rapid pace, the officials said.

Encroachment Case

CBK Files Charges Against Six for Forging Revenue papers

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Crime Branch Kashmir on Thursday said that its Economic Offence Wing filed charge sheet against 6 persons in connection with producing fake revenue Documents.

In a statement, the CBK said that its Economic Offence Wing Produced a Charge-Sheet in Case FIR No. 04/2015 U/S 420, 467, 468, 120-B, 447-A RPC r/w 5(2) PC Act of P/S Crime Branch Kashmir (Now Economic Offence Wing) before the Hon'ble Court of Anti-Corruption Baramulla against Ghulam Haider Mir S/o Munshi Atta Mohammad Mir R/o Kanthbagh Baramulla then Patwari Heaven Sheeri Baramulla (Retired), Jaswant Singh S/o Ujagar Singh R/o Shrahwar Baramulla A/P Kunjwani Bandurakh Gangayal Jammu then Naib Tehsildar Baramulla Now retired ACR Udhampur), Abdul Rashid Khan S/O Hussau-din Khan R/o Gantmulla Bala Baramulla then Giridwar Circle Heaven (Deceased), Mohamed Ashraf Lone S/o Mohamed Yusuf Lone R/o Budden Saripora Rafiaband then Patwari Heaven Sheeri Baramulla (Deceased), Firdous Sultan Raina S/o Ghulam Hassan Raina R/o Usmanabad Kupwara (then Tehsildar Baramulla retired ACR Kupwara) (Deceased) and Mohamed S/o Ramzan R/o Jogiyar Sheeri Baramulla beneficiary (Deceased).

The spokesman further stated that the instant case had been registered upon a written Communication received from the then State Vigilance Commission, wherein it was alleged

that erstwhile Government had notified/acquired land measuring 98.16 Kanals at Narwar Shareenabad Sheeri Baramulla for irrigation Department in the year 1968 and compensation thereof was paid to the beneficiaries. The instant land was encroached by local residents with the help of concerned revenue authorities, accordingly a Case FIR No. 04/2015 of P/S Crime Branch Kashmir (Now Economic Offence Wing) was registered and investigation set into the motion.

During the course of investigation, it established that the accused person mentioned above in connivance with each other have prepared false/ fabricated revenue documents in the name of various beneficiaries in the year 1982 and thereby illegally transferred the land in the name of said beneficiary by virtue of fake mutation U/S 4&8 of Agrarian Reforms Act. The evidence both oral as well as documentary collected has established that accused No. 01 to 05 have by abuse of their official position & in furtherance of a criminal conspiracy hatched between them with accused No. 06 have managed the illegal mutations in respect of land already notified/acquired and compensated by the government in the year 1968. The act omitted and committed have prima facie disclosed the commission of offence U/S 420, 467, 468, 120-B, 447-A RPC r/w 5(2) PC Act and accordingly Challan of the said case produced in the court of law for judicial determination, reads the statement.

Bukhari, Mir Take Up Issue Of Detainees With LG

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Apni Party President Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari and Senior Vice President Ghulam Hassan Mir on Thursday called on Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha at Raj Bhavan here to discuss the issues of the Kashmiri prisoners who are lodged in the jails in J&K and outside, a party spokesperson said.

Apni Party, he said, is pursuing the cases of the detainees for their release as the party has formed two committees —each headed by the provincial President

from Valley and Jammu—to collect the details of these prisoners.

"Apni Party President and Senior Vice President met LG at Raj Bhavan in Srinagar and formally submitted a list of detainees and requested him to take the required initiatives to look into their cases to consider their release," the spokesperson said.

"The leaders requested LG Sinha to look into these cases on humanitarian grounds so that these young people get an opportunity to start their normal and peaceful lives with their families." He added.

DC Anantnag Reviews Functioning Of KPDCCL



Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: Deputy Commissioner Anantnag Dr Basharat Qayoom Thursday held a detailed review of the functioning of KPDCCL Anantnag at DC Office Complex here.

Dr Basharat while reviewing the progress of works under various schemes directed the concerned officials to ensure completion of all pending works within a fortnight and added that physical and financial progress will be regularly monitored. He further directed the department to ensure strict supervision of execution and maintain high standards of quality.

Regarding the supply of electricity in the district, the Deputy Commissioner directed the Executive Engineers to adhere to the notified schedule. He discussed the availability of buffer stock and decentralisa-

tion of stock to reduce replacement time. He said that every effort has to be made to ensure that transformers are replaced within stipulated times, wherever required.

He also directed the department to carry out awareness drives and appealed to people to pay their electricity dues. He also appealed people to desist from using banned electrical equipment and encouraged judicious use of electricity. The department was directed to carry out IEC awareness through their field staff.

The Chair was informed that most of the works are nearing physical completion. The SE said that all the works taken up will be completed as per stipulated timelines.

The meeting was attended by ADDC, JD Planning, SE KPDCCL, Executive Engineers and other concerned officers.

New Land Policy Draconian, Inhuman: Bukhari

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Apni Party president Altaf Bukhari Thursday described Jammu and Kashmir government's new land policy as "draconian" and "totally inhuman", saying it will not be allowed to be implemented.

Recently, the J&K administration has notified that all the outgoing lessees, except in the case of subsisting/expired leases for residential purposes, shall immediately hand over the possession of the land taken on lease to the government, failing which the outgoing lessee shall be evicted.

On Wednesday, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has defended the new land lease laws, saying that necessary changes were being made in land laws to benefit the common man as earlier legislations were "very regressive".

"These land laws are draconian. No where in the world are people removed from possession," Bukhari told reporters here.

He said the lease holders mainly have commercial establishments and if their leases have expired and have not been extended, then it is not their mistake.

"These laws cannot be implemented, it cannot stand the scrutiny of law. It is totally inhuman The Apni Party will not allow these draconian laws to

New Land Policy Not Without Motives: Sajad Lone

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Peoples Conference chief Sajad Lone Thursday said the Jammu and Kashmir administration's new land policy is "not without motive" as it is an attempt at "othering" Kashmiris.

Lone's remarks came in the wake of land lease holders in Jammu and Kashmir being asked to return the possession to the government.

"The new Land policy is not at par with the rest of the country. It may well start the dark chapter of now blatantly othering the Kashmiris. Lease rules across the world and in India r fairly simple and on similar lines. But these r different and not without motives," Lone said in a tweet.

The National Conference (NC) and the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) have also criticised the government's move.

be implemented," he said. The former minister said his party did not want to politicise the issue and that is why had not said anything over it.

"But, because the politicians here are like vultures, they

need issues. They want to create storm in a tea cup. Had it been left to Altaf Bukhari and the Apni Party, we could have resolved it without making it an issue," he said.

Political parties including the National Conference (NC), the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and Peoples Conference have also criticised the government's move.

Meanwhile, Bukhari welcomed NC vice president Omar Abdullah's remarks that if his party was voted to power, it will revoke the Public Safety Act (PSA).

"It is very good if he (Abdullah) wants to do it. I will not go into this that his grandfather enacted it or why he did it, but, it is good if he wants to do it. Why should we criticise something good or someone who was wrong yesterday, but wants to take the right path today," he said.

Bukhari said if Abdullah was feeling remorse, then it is fine and the Apni Party welcomes it.

"I think no one should be pained over this, or say how many people were slapped with the PSA. We also have been a part of some governments. Why did these people not rake this up when they were a part of the government?" he said, apparently referring to Abdullah's criticism by Sajad Lone-led Peoples Conference.

CS Launches 'SWAGATAM' For Hassle Free Entry To Civil Secretariat Also Inaugurates GAD Website With Hindi/Urdu Interface

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta Thursday launched the online Visitor Management System called SWAGATAM at Srinagar Civil Secretariat in presence of Administrative Secretaries to ensure easy and hassle free entry of visitors to both Secretariats at Jammu and Srinagar.

The system shall enable a person to schedule a meeting in advance for redressal of his genuine grievances.

On the occasion, the Chief Secretary observed that the system was overdue and was one of several initiatives in furtherance of digital J&K. He complimented the whole team of GAD, for developing the management system in consultation with IT,



Estates and Police Departments. He underscored the need for maximizing the satisfaction level of visitors by ensuring quality outcome of their visits.

Dr Mehta also impressed upon the officers to evaluate the requests of applicants as per laid down norms for efficient use of time and resources. He enjoined upon them to give hearing to all the visitors who are provided online passes and devise a proper

mechanism regarding the same. He told them to look for places inside Secretariats where these visitors would be heard comfortably by one officer or other. He also advised them to look into making virtual visits possible so as to save time and energy.

The Administrative Secretary GAD, while throwing light on different aspects and objectives of the Management System, highlighted that it is easy and

shall enhance efficiency.

It was informed that the system is going to be linked with Pukaar Grievance Cell and Rapid Assessment System (RAS) for follow-up and evaluation. Moreover an SMS/e-mail alert would be sent to each applicant about the approval, rejection or rescheduling of his/her request and would cover all types of visitors coming to the Secretariat. It would give insights about frequent visitors and the offices visited frequently and the time spent by the visitor inside the premises.

The visitors can register on the portal jandksecretariat.swagatam.gov.in for registration and on approval can fetch their visitor passes from the portal or through email. The officers can reschedule, reject or forward the request to the

other concerned officer for better outcome of the visit, as was informed during the launch.

Later on the Chief Secretary inaugurated the multi-lingual website of GAD whose interface would now be available in both Hindi and Urdu languages. It was said to be the first official website of the UT to have the contents available in all the three languages of English, Hindi and Urdu.

For the purpose the translation cells have been established at J&K Academy of Art, Culture & Languages for translating the content. The translation of orders in Hindi have been completed till 10th of December, 2022 and in Urdu till 30th of November, 2022. It was also made out that the translation time would gradually be reduced to 24-hr window for future orders.

Newly Elected DDC Member Of Hajin-A Takes Oath



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: An oath ceremony of newly elected District Development Council Member for Hajin A, Naza Begum was held Thursday at mini secretariat Bandipora.

Deputy Commissioner Bandipora Dr. Owais Ahmed administered the oath to the newly elected District Development Council Member.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner congratulated the newly elected DDC member and hoped that the elected DDC member shall work for the betterment of society in coordination with other Council members.

He assured every possible assistance to the council and hoped that the council shall

work with extra zeal on the developmental front. He asked the elected representatives to work out for next year planning in advance to check the feasibility and other measures of developmental works.

Dr. Owais said together we can take the development scenario of the district to new heights to meet the expectations of the public.

While addressing the gathering, Chairman District Developmental Council Bandipora Ab Gani Bhat congratulated the newly elected DDC member and hoped that newly elected DDC member will work for development of her constituency in the best possible manner and will leave no stone unturned in serving masses.

KASHMIR OBSERVER

Friday | 16-12-2022

Easing Inflation

Inflation in India fell to an eleven-month low of 5.88 percent in November, mainly due to softening prices of food items. Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman has expressed confidence that the government will further bring down inflation. She told parliament that the government is keeping a watch on the price situation of essential commodities. Reduction of food prices is good news for people, especially, the lower middle classes and poor sections of society, who could barely manage to get by. Early this year, soon after Russia invaded Ukraine, the prices skyrocketed, depleted savings of a large majority of people across the world, including in India reversed the economic gains made in the wake of the recovery from Covid-19 pandemic.

The year has also been tough for Indian economy. Ukraine war triggered a deceleration in growth after some robust recovery following the abating of the pandemic. Global wheat prices rose to 15-year highs. Russia and Ukraine account for 60 percent of global wheat production. They also account for 28.9 percent of global wheat exports. War disrupted the exports. But thankfully due to the agreement to unblock Ukraine's Black Sea grain exports, the prices have since retreated to levels last seen before the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

India's growth has been projected to decline to 6.8 percent after registering a healthy increase of 8.7 percent in the last fiscal year. The recent past has also seen a reduction in inflation and Indian Rupee has strengthened somewhat against the other currencies. This would help stabilize the economy.

The war in Ukraine thus remains a danger, though. If it drags on, the global economy, and with it, the Indian economy, is likely to come under severe stress again. Therefore it is incumbent on the world to come together to resolve the crisis in Ukraine and find a solution that addresses the concerns of all the parties involved. Otherwise, as prophesied by leading economists, the world is heading inexorably toward recession.

However, as things stand, it looks unlikely that the Ukraine war will come to an end anytime soon. It has become an unremitting tug of war between Russia and NATO, where a defeat could drastically reduce the losing side's geopolitical influence. So, the best solution to the crisis has to be a win-win for both. But neither side has shown an appetite for it so far. One can only hope that in the coming weeks and months, efforts for peace will gather momentum.

OTHER OPINION

Be Political

One hundred days is an acceptable period to assess an endeavour. The Bharat Jodo Yatra being led by the Congress leader, Rahul Gandhi, will set foot on 100 days tomorrow. This long march, which aims to spread the message of unity across 12 states, has been met with an unexpected public response. The exuberance of the people has been remarkable even in states where the Congress is not in power. The intelligentsia, a far diminished force, is of the opinion that the yatra offers a ray of hope to a land that has witnessed an unprecedented assault on its democratic and pluralist traditions by an elected government. There is also a view that the march can varnish Mr Gandhi's public image that has been at the receiving end of much criticism — manufactured or bona fide. Mr Gandhi's involvement in the march and his commitment to its cause, combined with his ability to lend an ear to the ground, could, the argument goes, facilitate a transition of his credentials as a leader in the public eye.

Of course, India has been a land of long marches with different goals. M.K. Gandhi had energised a subjugated nation with his march to Dandi. Decades later, L.K. Advani's motorised yatra was instrumental in the resurgence of Hindutva as well as the concomitant stress on India's inclusive framework. More recently, aggrieved farmers marched against an indifferent Central government, forcing it to retreat on contentious agricultural legislations. But these initiatives and many others had one common characteristic: they were social as well as political exercises. Surprisingly, Mr Gandhi and his party have taken pains to ensure that the Bharat Jodo Yatra remains apolitical at its core. Consequently, in terms of strategy and rhetoric, it has remained conservative instead of being radical. There is no doubting that some of India's most cherished traditions and, cynics would add, institutions are under duress. Protecting and replenishing these cannot be an apolitical exercise. The same goes for the woes of the common people, many of which have been highlighted in the course of the march. It is the political responsibility of the Congress to mobilise electoral opinion on matters such as the unprecedented rise in prices or unemployment. The Congress's repeated electoral debacles may have forced Mr Gandhi to paint the Bharat Jodo Yatra in a decidedly idealistic shade. But meaningful transformation, the kind that the yatra is hoping to achieve, cannot be attained without a political agenda.

Telegraph India



Morocco's Exemplary FIFA Run

Morocco were beaten 2-0 by France on Wednesday and will go into a playoff for third place with Croatia, yet its historic stint runs beyond sports

Joseph Wiebe

When the French team travelled to Casablanca for the first time in 1937, French newspapers flaunted their superior skills and team spirit against the "submissive" Moroccans. After Morocco unexpectedly beat France 4-2, Vichy French General Charles Nogues forced a law requiring all Muslim teams to have at least three French citizen players

No matter how much you like soccer, or how much concern you have about the FIFA World Cup in Qatar 2022, it's undeniable that the historic run of Morocco's national team has captured global attention in unique ways. Whether or not you cheer for the first African nation to reach the semi-finals in the tournament's history, it's easy to see why pictures of players celebrating with their mothers or prostrating in an Islamic gesture of divine gratitude have proliferated. All this chatter also brings up important questions about the intersections of religion, politics, and public arenas like sports.

Morocco's successes have seemingly united both African and Arab fans under the red and green flag of their nation. The broader Muslim world has also shown affinity for Morocco, demonstrating solidarity for a team with notable religious and anti-colonial significance. Indeed, with Morocco ousting both Spain and Portugal from the tournament, online discussions and memes have framed this as "revenge" for the 1492 Reconquista, which saw the rise of the Spanish Catholic monarchy and the expulsion of Jews and Muslims to Morocco.

Winning soccer games represents a reclaiming of Al-Andalus or Islamic Iberia in graphics circulated amongst Muslims and Moroccan Jews. Opinion pieces are also arguing that these victories have been anti-colonial for contemporary Morocco, where Spain still holds power over Ceuta and Melilla in Morocco's north.

Anti-racist advocates see Morocco's victories as far greater than they are being given credit for in the face of inequitable socio-economic policies that have lasted for centuries. Wealth continues to travel out of Africa and into Europe, making things like financing national soccer teams and training players a lot easier for wealthy European nations and former colonizers.

Wednesday's match against France also conjured religious and anti-colonial sentiment because of both the historic racism of the French in Morocco and the Islamophobia and anti-migrant sentiment of militant French laicite. In fact, viewers might not even realize that the history of soccer in Morocco has always been racially and politically charged.

When the French team travelled to Casablanca for the first time in 1937, French newspapers flaunted their superior skills and team spirit against the "submissive" Moroccans. After Morocco unexpectedly beat France 4-2, Vichy French General Charles Nogues forced a law requiring all Muslim teams to have at least three French citizen players. Nogues wanted to make sure future European teams wouldn't be

do not view public events as playing out in inherently non-religious spaces. In fact, quite the opposite. For many folks, including Muslim players in Qatar, prayer and Allah's will are as much on the field as their own feet or the soccer ball.

If anyone cheering for Morocco was worried about jumping on the bandwagon, then take heart that it could be an example of standing with a people still living under colonialism's long shadow. Religious knowledge helps us see how. Only since the Ottoman Empire's fall and the rise of neo-colonialism in the Middle East-North Africa have Muslims been expected to think of themselves solely in national terms.

Fraternity, rather than nationalism, continues to be the unifying Islamic sensibility across the Ummah (the global Muslim community). In an in-

Fraternity, rather than nationalism, continues to be the unifying Islamic sensibility across the Ummah (the global Muslim community). In an increasingly divided world, it's quite remarkable that a soccer game can unite at least 1.8 billion people of the same religious background

embarrassingly beaten again by their country's colonial subjects.

Critics of fans who appeal to these social undercurrents as their reason for cheering on Morocco argue that religion and politics should stay out of sports. Others have asserted that if European nations were pitching their victories in terms of a Christian or secular hegemony, people would take offence. Why is it different if a Muslim nation wins and Muslims everywhere rejoice?

The answer comes from appreciating the extent to which sports are not played in a neutral public space. Arguments to the contrary tend to come from secular audiences that fail to understand how praxis-based religious communities like Muslim ones

creasingly divided world, it's quite remarkable that a soccer game can unite at least 1.8 billion people of the same religious background, let alone those who also cheer for the underdog Moroccan team from other backgrounds too.

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

Joseph Wiebe is associate professor of Religion and Ecology at the University of Alberta Augustana, and the interim director of the Chester Ronning Centre for the Study of Religion and Public Life



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

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Mercurial Messy

At 35, Lionel Messi has been in the form of his life in the FIFA 2022 world cup. The Argentine superstar has made a huge impact in this world cup by scoring goals and providing assists in every game so far. The semi-final between Argentina and Croatia was expected to be a hard-fought and a contest of eveners. But

Messi, the magician, made it a lopsided one for Argentina with a scoreline of 3-0. The third goal, in particular, was sensational. Although the goal was scored by the Manchester City forward Julian Alvarez, it was the mercurial Messi who set it up nicely with his astonishing dribbling skills through a 40-metre sprint on the right wing that totally

stumped and confounded the young defender Josko Gvardiol of Croatia. It seems Messi has been scientifically destined to be the greatest dribbler of a football! I watched the video of this dribble at least a dozen times, and I still couldn't satiate my hunger of watching it more. Can Messi replicate his thaumaturgy skills against France in the finals

and lift the world cup for Argentina after 36 years? The entire world, especially fans in India, who are utterly mad of Messi, are waiting with bated breath for this extraordinary moment to transpire.

Ranganathan Sivakumar

Mindful Fridays

NEUROPLASTICITY

THE SCIENCE OF LIBERATION FROM IMPACT OF GENES AND EARLY ENVIRONMENT

Wasim Kakroo

The cells in our brain called neurons exchange chemicals with each other in order to communicate. These chemicals, known as neurotransmitters, move between neurons at locations known as synapses. When a child grows, learns, or responds to their environment, it leads to the development of new connections between neurons. This network of neurons contains everything including our knowledge, skills, memories, habits, and more.

The ability of the brain to modify the organization of its neural network is known as neuroplasticity. It has the capacity to grow new neurons, connect them to existing ones, and move or remove others. Since new alteration of previous neural connections and formation of new neural connections can lead to change in the behavior of a person, thus, the capacity for change in a person is known as NEUROPLASTICITY.

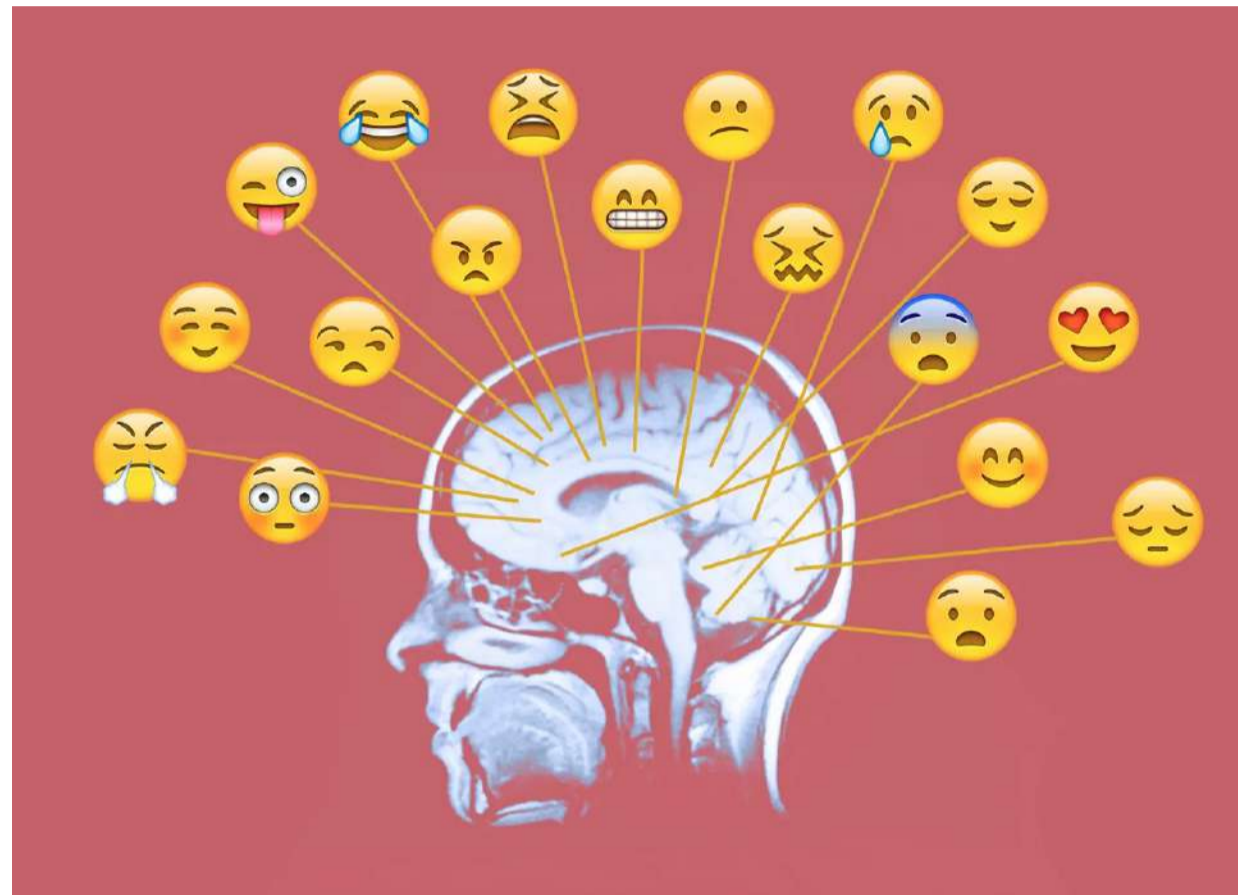
THE MECHANISMS OF NEUROPLASTICITY:

The brains of newborns are continually developing new neurons. As they develop, these cells form a huge number of connections. By the time a person reaches toddlerhood, they will have around twice as many neuronal connections as an adult will require.

The environment of the growing child will stimulate the brain, strengthening some connections. For instance, the neurons in charge of fine motor control will form connections when a youngster is taught how to sketch. The neurological connections for sketching will get denser and more established as a child practices it.

The brain removes neuronal connections it is no longer using during adolescence. The term "pruning" refers to this procedure. When inactive synapses are eliminated, the brain can concentrate its energy on creating new synapses for critical functions that are frequently used.

Because the neural pathways are easier to form at a younger age, synaptic pruning helps to explain why some things (like learning a second language) are easier to learn. However, the brain keeps changing and evolving over the course of a person's life. At any age, new experiences have the power to fundamentally alter the way the brain is wired and functions. However, an individual's overall level of brain plasticity will decline as they age. Brain changes could occur more gradually and with less



impact. Elderly brains can still learn and grow, but it will happen more slowly than for younger brains.

HOW NEUROPLASTICITY CAN LEAD TO HEALING AND ADAPTATION?

Some brains can't perform all of the functions that other brains can. A child who is born blind may already have some disabilities. After a stroke or a brain damage, a person may also lose their ability to function properly.

Neuroplasticity can help the brain overcome problems when a section of it is injured or impaired. Here are few strategies the brain can employ:

1) Relocate brain functions to an adjacent compatible region:

The brain can "shift" functions of a damaged area of a person's brain to another area that functions similarly if the

damage occurred during infancy. Take a child who suffered damage to their right parietal lobe, which helps in understanding one's position in space. This ability might be moved to the corresponding left parietal lobe by the brain. This will enable the child, who has brain injury, to physically navigate their environment.

However, this strategy may have a serious disadvantage. The brain architecture for other skills may be crowded out by re-assigning tasks. Usually, the left parietal lobe governs mathematical understanding (among other things). The child can have problems comprehending specific math concepts if the child's neural connections for math have been overwritten during reassignment of functions.

2) Find a different way to do the task

Sometimes it's impossible to move a brain function to some other area in the brain. The lost brain function can be made up for by re-

arrangement of neurons. A person "masks" the loss of a specific function by applying various skills to tackle a problem.

For instance, someone who has problems distinguishing between different faces could find it difficult to identify relatives and family. The problem might be resolved if their brain learns to recognize different voices, enabling them to recognize loved ones as soon as they speak.

3) Reconstruct Sensory Input

The brain's sensory cortices are where senses like sight and touch are processed. These cortices use a similar "language" for processing data. The brain may provide information from other senses to a cortex when it does not get information from the sense that corresponds to it.

For instance, a person who is born blind won't receive any sensory information from their eyes. The brain can "translate" information by using touch rather

than letting the visual cortex go wasted. So a blind person can read Braille or traverse a room using touch rather than using light to process and understand their environment.

The longer a cortex has gone without input, the better the brain will typically be at translating sensory data. An adult who just suffered ear damage in an accident may have a harder time rerouting sensory signals than someone who has been deaf their entire life.

NEUROPLASTICITY AND PSYCHOLOGY

Counseling for mental health includes neuroplasticity as a crucial component. People in treatment are actually creating the new neural connections that promote resilience as they acquire new coping skills. The older neural connections that led to unhealthy behaviors and cognitive distortions will be replaced by new neural connections as people develop new ways of thinking, emoting and behaving through psychotherapy.

Neuroplasticity can also be enhanced by some psychotropic medications. Neuroplasticity is typically decreased in depressed people. In many cases, antidepressants can promote neuroplasticity and even repair the harm caused by a depressive episode.

Thus treating mental illness basically involves enhancing neuroplasticity. E.g., Neuroplasticity is frequently used by the brain to make up for cognitive impairment in the early stages of dementia. The total neuroplasticity of the brain can be enhanced by aerobic exercise and mentally demanding activities. According to research, these activities can help dementia sufferers slow the onset of their symptoms. When implemented early enough, psychotherapies can aid in initiating neuroplasticity and help the person deal with the bad influence of their genes as well as the influence of adverse childhood experiences and hence they may not live the rest of their life being their victim.

In the next article, I will write in detail about the neuroplasticity and epigenetics of psychotherapy. Stay tuned!

The author is a licensed clinical psychologist (alumni of Govt. Medical College Srinagar) and works as a consultant clinical psychologist at Centre for Mental Health Services (CMHS) at Rambagh Srinagar. He can be reached at 8825067196

Can More Physical Activity Prolong Life?

Jo Adetunji

Most of us know that regular exercise is important for our health and longevity. But with our busy schedules, many of us struggle to find the time to fit in a workout. Data from our latest study has shown that you don't need a lengthy workout to get health benefits from exercise.

The research revealed that as little as three or four minutes of short, vigorous activity bursts throughout the day were associated with a substantially lower risk of premature death from all causes compared with people who did none.

To conduct our study, we recruited 25,241 participants from the UK Biobank study who reported they did not do any leisure physical activity or recreational walking more than once a week. Around 56% of participants were female, with an average age of around 62 years.

To ensure we were getting an accurate picture of their activity levels, we gave participants wearable fitness trackers – similar to smartwatches – which they wore on their wrist for a week. This allowed us to accurately monitor their activity levels throughout the day – something that most people struggle to recall.

We then linked the data collected at the start of the study with the participants' clinical records for an average of nearly seven years afterwards. This allowed us to check whether any of the participants had died, and the



cause of their death.

We were careful to statistically control our analysis for factors that might otherwise explain the results – such as a person's diet or whether they smoked. We also excluded any participants who were already diagnosed with cancer and heart disease

at the start of the study, as well as participants who died in the first two years of the follow-up period. This allowed us to ensure the results were more scientifically robust.

Surprisingly, even though participants had not reported doing any structured exercise, about 89% did

record what's known as vigorous intermittent lifestyle physical activity on the tracker. This is physical activity that typically lasts for less than a minute, and usually happens are part of our everyday life. Some examples of this type of physical activity include playing with children and pets,

carrying shopping, climbing briskly upstairs, walking uphill or running to catch a train.

On average, participants recorded eight short bursts of activity each day, totalling just under four-and-a-half minutes. We found that just three to four short bursts of activity everyday was associated with up to a 40% reduction in premature death from any cause, as well as death from cancer. It was also associated with up to a 49% lower risk of death from cardiovascular disease.

The benefits tended to level off the more short bursts of activity a person got. The steepest gains were seen when comparing those with around four to five bouts per day to those who did none.

These results are striking but seem to align with what other research has shown. Small-scale trials have shown that very small doses of vigorous intermittent activity can improve cardiorespiratory fitness, a vital predictor of longevity.

High-intensity exercise training (short workouts between ten and 30 minutes, where short bursts of intense exercise are followed by periods of rest) has also been shown to have favourable effects on blood sugar control, cholesterol, blood pressure and obesity, which may lower risk of both cancer and cardiovascular disease.

But our study is the first to show a link between non-structured physical activity with positive health benefits. Everyday activity

A large proportion of adults don't meet current physical activity recommendations. One in four people in England do less than 30 minutes of physical activity a week.

Many cite time restraints as a reason. By showing in our study the health benefits that everyday activity can have, it may be easier to motivate people who don't regularly work out to include at least a few short bursts of activity into their day.

Existing physical activity guidelines across the world are based on studies which have looked at the benefits of structured bouts of continuous activity – often in the form of sports, gym workouts, or a daily run. But our study shows that future public health guidance on physical activity may want to consider specific recommendations on short bursts of activity that can easily be incorporated into daily living.

While the wearable trackers we used in our study didn't provide information on where these short bursts of activity happened, many simple, everyday tasks can be considered vigorous intermittent lifestyle physical activity.

So if you're someone who may struggle to fit in a workout or may feel daunted by the task, there are probably many things you could do in your daily life to help you stay healthy – alongside many opportunities to increase the amount and intensity of the exercise you do.

-By arrangements with The Conversation

'Cluster Headache Sufferers More Likely To Have Other Illnesses'

ANI

Cluster headache sufferers maybe three times more likely to have other medical illnesses such as heart disease, mental disorders, and other neurologic diseases.

According to a study published in the December 14, 2022, online issue of Neurology(r), the medical journal of the American Academy of Neurology, cluster headaches are short but extremely painful headaches that can occur many days, or even weeks, in a row. The headaches can last anywhere from 15 minutes to three hours.

"Around the world, headaches have an incredibly negative impact on people's quality of life, both economically and socially," said study author Caroline Ran, PhD, of the Karolinska Institute in Stockholm, Sweden.

"Our results show that people with cluster headaches not only have an increased risk of other illnesses, those with at least one additional illness missed four times as many days of work due to sickness and disability than those with just cluster headaches. They also have a higher chance of a long-term absence from work," said Ran.

The study involved 3,240 people with



cluster headaches from age 16-64 in Sweden who were compared to 16,200 people who were similar in age, sex and other factors. The majority were men, which is common with cluster headache.

Researchers looked at work records and disability benefits to determine how many days during a year people were absent from work due to sickness and disability.

Among those with cluster headaches, 92 per cent, or 2,977 people, had at least one additional illness. Of those without cluster headaches, 78 per cent, or 12,575 people, had two or more illnesses.

Of those with cluster headaches, more

women had additional illnesses than men, 96 per cent and 90 per cent respectively.

The average number of days a person was absent due to sickness and disability was nearly twice as high among people with cluster headaches with 63 days compared to those without cluster headaches with 34 days.

People with cluster headaches and at least one additional illness had four times as many absence days compared to people with cluster headaches who did not have an additional illness.

"This information can help us as we make decisions on treatments, prevention and prognoses," said Ran.

Common Workplace Fumes, Dusts May Heighten Rheumatoid Arthritis Risk

ANI

According to research published online in the Annals of the Rheumatic Diseases, breathing in everyday occupational dust and fumes from substances including vapours, gases, and solvents may increase the chance of developing rheumatoid arthritis.

The results also suggest that they may increase the harmful effects of smoking and genetic illness vulnerability.

Rheumatoid arthritis (RA) is a chronic autoimmune inflammatory joint disease marked by excruciating pain and functional impairment. Up to 1 per cent of people worldwide are impacted.

It is well known that smoking increases a person's risk of developing rheumatoid arthritis, but it is unknown what effect inhaling dust and fumes from the workplace may have.

In a bid to find out, the researchers drew on data from the Swedish Epidemiological Investigation of RA. This comprises 4,033 people newly diagnosed between 1996 and 2017 and 6,485 others matched for age and sex, but free of the disease (comparison group).

Personal job histories were provided and used to estimate the amount of individual exposure to 32 airborne workplace agents, using a validated technique.

Each participant was assigned a Genetic Risk Score (GRS), according to whether they carried genes that could increase their chances of developing rheumatoid arthritis.

Rheumatoid arthritis is characterised by the presence or absence of anti-citrullinated protein antibodies or ACPA for short. ACPA positivity denotes a worse prognosis with higher rates of erosive joint damage.

Nearly three-quarters of those with rheumatoid arthritis testing positive (73 per cent) and negative (72 per cent) for ACPA had been exposed to at least one work-



place dust or fume compared with around two-thirds (67 per cent) of people in the comparison group.

Analysis of the data showed that exposure to workplace agents was not only associated with a heightened risk of developing rheumatoid arthritis, but also seemed to boost that risk further by interacting with smoking and genetic susceptibility.

Exposure to any workplace agent was associated with a 25 per cent heightened risk of developing ACPA-positive rheumatoid arthritis, overall. And this risk increased to 40 per cent in men.

Specifically, 17 out of 32 agents, including quartz, asbestos, diesel fumes, gasoline fumes, carbon monoxide, and fungicides, were strongly associated with an increased risk of developing ACPA-positive disease. Only a few agents—quartz dust (silica), asbestos, and detergents—were strongly associated with ACPA-negative disease.

The risk increased in tandem with the number of agents and duration of exposure, with the strongest associations seen for exposures lasting around 8-15 years. Men tended to have been exposed to more agents, and for longer than women.

"Triple exposure" to a workplace agent, plus smoking, plus a

high GRS, was associated with a very high risk of ACPA-positive disease, ranging from 16 to 68 times higher, compared with 'triple non-exposure'.

In particular, the risk of developing ACPA-positive rheumatoid arthritis for the triple exposed was 45 times higher for gasoline engine exhaust fumes, 28 times for diesel exhaust, 68 times higher for insecticides and 32 times higher for quartz dust (silica). The corresponding range for ACPA-negative disease wasn't significant.

This is an observational study, and as such, can't establish cause. The researchers also acknowledge several limitations to their findings: the study relied on personal recall; and while the exposure estimates were derived using a validated method, the results can be relatively crude.

And given that there are often several workplace agents in the air at any one time, it is difficult to pinpoint which ones might be the potential triggers.

Nevertheless, the researchers conclude: "Occupational inhalable agents could act as important environmental triggers in RA development and interact with smoking and RA-risk genes, leading to an excessive risk for ACPA-positive RA."

Picky Eater? Research Shows It Could Be In Your DNA

The Conversation

In the last 40 years obesity has been constantly rising. This has happened despite the popularity of all kind of diets ranging from low carb, paleo or even ice cream based.

Many scientists believe this is because cheap junk food has filled supermarket shelves and fast food takeaways. This food is high in calories and other not so healthy ingredients such as saturated fats, simple sugars, and salt. But it's designed to taste delicious. Taste is a dealbreaker when it comes to deciding what to eat, diet plans or not. Yet our understanding of what makes food taste good is limited.

My team's research explored how genes and biological processes influence which foods we find irresistible. We partnered with UK biobank to ask the participants in our study how much they liked 139 foods, rating them from one to nine on a questionnaire, with nine being the most delicious. UK biobank is a collection of almost 500,000 UK volunteers, who agreed to provide their personal information for scientific purposes. They were aged from 50 to 70 at the time of our study.

We sent the questionnaire by email and received close to 189,000 responses. The first step in our

study was to analyse links between food people said they liked. For example if someone likes pears, can we expect them to also like apples and strawberries. We mapped the relationships between different foods.

Good taste We found food can be categorised in three groups: highly palatable foods which include meat, junk food and desserts; low calorie foods, mostly fruit and salad vegetables, but also oatmeal and honey; and acquired taste foods which are strong tasting foods children generally dislike but learn to enjoy such as coffee, alcohol and spices.

The map revealed some surprises. Foods didn't group by flavour type (such as sweet v savoury) but by how likeable they were. For example, a taste for fruit juices correlated more with preference for desserts rather than fruit. So fruit juice went in the highly palatable category rather than low calorie. Foods people think of as vegetables do not cluster together.

The mild tasting ones such as tomatoes or courgette are in the low calorie group while the strong tasting ones, like bell peppers or onions, were in the acquired taste group. Also sweet drinks like sodas clustered closer to meat and deep fried foods despite their sweet flavour.

We then looked at which differences in people's DNA could be linked to the types of food they relish. We identified 325 different genes, mostly in the brain, implicated in determining what we like to eat. When we looked at how much the three categories of foods correlated genetically between each other we found that the highly palatable foods had no correlation with the other two categories of foods. This suggests there are two biological processes. One regulates a weakness for highly pleasurable foods while another regulates the rest.

What's next Twin studies suggest food preference is 50% genes and 50% personal experience. The family environment plays a role in children's food preferences but not in those of adults. The shift happens around adolescence. It is still not clear how a liking for different food matures in children as no one has carried out largescale longitudinal studies. My team would like to try and fill this gap in research next.

For our study we also used MRI brain scans to look in more detail at which areas of the brain correlated with the three food groups. We once again found that enjoyment of highly palatable foods was associated with a larger volume of brain areas involved in perceiving pleasure in food.

Government of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir
Office Of The Executive Engineer
(R&B) Construction Division No. 1st Srinagar

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDERS
6th FRESHNIT No: 105_/CD-I/12541-55 DATED: 14-12-2022

E-tenders (In single cover system) from qualified contractors registered with the J&K UT Government, CPWD, Railways, and other State/Central Governments are invited for Snow Clearance (Stage-wise) on a Percentage Rate basis for a contract period of one year that may be extended to three years depending on the performance of the successful bidder.

S.No	Stage Name	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest Money (In Rs.)	M.H of Account	Class of Contractor
1	2	3	4	5	6
1.	Estates (Est-1)	200/-	5000/-	3054 Snow	DEE
2.	Head-Quarter (HQ-1)	200/-	5000/-	3054 Snow	DEE
3.	Hospital (Hosp-1)	200/-	5000/-	3054 Snow	DEE
4.	Hazratbal (Hbl-1)	200/-	5000/-	3054 Snow	DEE

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

Table 1:

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	14-12-2022
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 15-12-2022 10:00 A.M
3.	Bid submission Start Date	15-12-2022 from 10:30 AM
4.	Bid Submission End Date	20-12-2022 upto 4:00 P.M
5.	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	21-12-2022 at 11:00 A.M in the Office of Executive Engineer (R&B) Construction Division No. 1st Srinagar. (to be notified after bid evaluation is completed).

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 Construction Division No. 1st Srinagar (tender inviting authority) as the cost of the tender document.

3 All bidders are required to submit bid security or earnest money for an amount of Rs.5000/= at the time of tendering in the form of CDRs, FDRs, or BGs pledged to the authority responsible for receiving bids, in the Office of Executive Engineer (R&B) Construction Division No. 1st Srinagar. In strict accordance with the Government's circular and other instructions as required, the successful bidder will be required to provide performance security in the amount of Rs.10,000/= at the time of contract award. Following the fixing of the contract in favour of the successful bidder, the unsuccessful bidders will receive the earnest money/bid security. The successful bidder's performance security will be released only after completed successfully performance of the Contract.

The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the in the Office of Executive Engineer (R&B) Construction Division No. 1st Srinagar (tender receiving authority).

The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 30 days from the date of opening of technical bids.

Laws Governing the Contract: -The contract shall be governed by Laws of the land.

Court's Jurisdiction: The disputes/differences between contractor and Department within the jurisdiction Hon'ble High court of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh.

The tender / bid is liable to rejection if it does not fulfill the requirements as laid down in NIT.

Sd./
Executive Engineer,
(R&B) Constr. Division No. 1st
Srinagar

No. 12541-55
DIPK-15112/22 DATED :-15-12-2022

Annexure -I

Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Construction Division No. 1st Srinagar
STAGE EST-1 manual clearance winter season 2022-23

S.No.	Name of the roads	Total linear length (in Kms)	Stage No.	Concerned Sub-Division
1.	Nallahmar Baghwanpora road incl Shaheen Mohalla	1.75	Est-1	(R&B) Estates Sub- Division
2.	Safakadal Gassi Mohalla upto NoorJahan Bridge	3.18		
	Total:-	4.93		

Sd./
Executive Engineer,
R&B Constr. Divn. 1st Srinagar

Annexure-I

Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Construction Division No. 1st Srinagar
STAGE HOSP-1 manual clearance winter season 2022-23

S.No.	Name of the roads	Total linear length (in Kms)	Stage No.	Concerned Sub-Division
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Inner roads of Bemina Boys Hostel	0.75	Hosp-1	R&B Hospital Sub-Divn.
2.	Inner roads of Govt. SMHS Hospital	0.75		
3.	Inner Roads and parking place at Kashmir Nursing Home at Gupkar	0.15		
4.	Inner road of Govt. Medical College	1.40		
5.	Inner roads of Super Speciality Hospital Shireen Bagh Srinagar.	0.50		
6.	Inner roads of Govt. Dental College.	0.50		
	Total:-	4.05		

Sd./
Executive Engineer,
R&B Constr. Divn. 1st Srinagar

Annexure -I

Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Construction Division No. 1st Srinagar
STAGE HBL-1 manual clearance winter season 2022-23

S.No.	Name of the roads	Total linear length (in Kms)	Stage No.	Concerned Sub-Division
1.	Saidpora to Hadoora via S.E canal	6.00		(R&B) Hazratbal Sub-Division
2.	Inner links at Khimber	8.07		
3.	Interior links at Saidpora Bala	2.83	HBL-1	
	Total:-	16.90		

Sd./
Executive Engineer,
R&B Constr. Divn. 1st Srinagar

Annexure -I

Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Construction Division No. 1st Srinagar
STAGE HQ-1 manual clearance winter season 2022-23

S.No.	Name of the roads	Total linear length (in Kms)	Stage No.	Concerned Sub-Division
1.	Daggapora Anchar road	2.00	HQ-1	(R&B) Head Quarter Sub- Division
	Total:-	2.00		

Sd./
Executive Engineer,
R&B Constr. Divn. 1st Srinagar

J&K Bank Board Appoints GM Sudhir Gupta As Executive Director For 3 Years

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In a significant development, J&K Bank's Board has appointed General Manager Sudhir Gupta as Executive Director (ED) for a period of three years. The Bank's board announced the decision in their meeting held yesterday soon after receiving the approval from Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Commenting upon the development, MD & CEO Baldev Prakash said, "I welcome the decision and congratulate Gupta on joining the Bank's board. While augmenting the presence of Bank's management in the board with his knowledge and experience, I think his induction will surely strengthen the relationship between the board and the management."

Expressing gratitude to MD & CEO, Baldev Prakash for his kind words on the occasion, Sudhir Gupta said, "While feeling happy for the honour, I feel equally humbled by the trust that Bank's board, leadership and other important stakeholders have placed upon me. And I assure all the stakeholders of Bank that I will try to meet their expectations to the best of my abilities while discharging my duties with due diligence, integrity and professionalism."

After joining the Bank as Probationary Officer in 1989, Executive



Director Sudhir Gupta has been serving the Bank for over three decades across operational geographies in different leadership positions ranging from leading the branches to heading three different Zones of Bank. Having made his way through diverse domains of business operations to top management positions, he was presently heading an important vertical of the Bank comprising of Business Support Division along with Currency Management and Corporate Communications & Marketing departments.

Pertinently, ED Sudhir Gupta was also previously posted as Chairman J&K Gramen Bank for a period of two years. During his stint as Chairman J&K Gramen Bank, he has demonstrated ample leadership skills by accomplishing the strategic objectives within the defined timelines.

His areas of expertise include Credit, Finance, Corporate & Retail Banking, Customer Service, Trade Finance, Business Continuity Planning etc.

Secy Mining Directs For Strict Action Against Defaulters During Site Visits In Kashmir



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In order to oversee ongoing mining operations across various districts of Kashmir valley, Secretary Mining, Amit Sharma, Thursday conducted an extensive tour of Baramulla, Budgam, Srinagar and Bandipora districts.

He was accompanied with concerned District Mineral Officers, Revenue and Police officers during these site visits.

Secretary visited sites from where complaints keep pouring-in regarding illegal mining from time to time. He took first hand account as well as an overview of ongoing mining activities in these districts besides assessing progress achieved by respective District Mining Officers especially with respect to enforcement and seizures of machinery related to alleged illegal mining.

Secretary directed that heavy penalties should be imposed upon the defaulters including lessees, crusher holders and other stakeholders who conduct this willful act of extracting excessive material in an illegal manner which result into environmental degradation as well.

Secretary also interacted with local inhabitants of the respective districts to understand their concerns which were noted down by the visiting team.

Secretary assured prompt action on all the legitimate issues raised by the public in this behalf.

During the tour, Secretary emphasized total synchronisation between Mining, Revenue and Police Departments while conducting joint inspections in all the vulnerable areas of Kashmir valley so that the impact becomes visible to the illegitimate operators.

Amit Sharma further directed that surprise inspection squads led by Joint Director Mining of both Jammu and Kashmir divisions should make serious effort to check illegal mining. He said that there should be 100% usage of technology in this sector, especially after the introduction of e-Challan, e-Marketplace and e-Payment gateways in the Mining Department which is being availed through website of the Department "jkgeologymining.jk.gov.in" which has been receiving an overwhelming response since its launch few months back in the Union Territory of J&K.

The National Centre for Natural and Organic Farming in its meeting of the National Executive Committee

Filling Skill Gap Requirements Of Latest Trends In Industry Need Of Hour: CS Mehta

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Thursday remarked that filling the skill gap requirements of latest trends in the industry is need of the hour as it will create lot of employability avenues for the youth.

Chief Secretary made these remarks while addressing a one day workshop on Skilling of youth at Food Craft Institute (FCI) here.

Addressing the participants virtually, Dr. Mehta observed that giving impetus to the soft skills in the Tourism sector is crucially significant as the sector has huge potential of generating employment avenues for youth keeping in view the tourist influx to the UT of J&K.

Chief Secretary also put forth a point of digital transformation keeping in view the latest requirements of the industry and GI tagging of various products so as to enhance their product value for better marketability of the products of the UT.

In his inaugural address, Principal Secretary, Skill Development Department, Dr Asgar Hassan Samoon, laid thrust on the industry requirements with the matching skill trainings so



as to fill the skilled manpower requirements for the industry. He stressed upon the department of Industries and Commerce to initiate the trainings in respect of already identified areas during the recently concluded back to village programme for which a data bank has been worked out by the department of Planning and Development J&K.

Director IIT Jammu, in his speech, emphasized on the skill trainings keeping in view the latest requirements of the industry so as to give the trained manpower as per the industry requirements. He also suggested to stress upon producing more

entrepreneurs for which Principal Secretary Skill Development suggested to have a joint tie up with IIT and IIM Jammu.

Professor Jabir Ali from IIM Jammu, suggested to bring out a joint curriculum for such inputs so as to produce better industry professionals/skilled manpower for their better employability.

During the workshop, a presentation was given by a UNICEF and PwC teams which showcased the skill requirements in various sectors as per the study conducted by them in J&K. The presentation was followed by an in-depth deliberations.

Pertinently, the workshop was organised with an aim to augment the manpower requirement of various sectors and initiating the skill development programmes in the respective departments.

Among others, Director Skill Development, Sudershan Kumar; Mission Director, JKRLM, Indu Chib; Mission Director, Skill Development Mission, Leena Padha; Special Secretary, Skill Development Department, M.A.Bhat; Joint Director Industries & Commerce, Meenakshi Vaid and other officers from various departments also attended the workshop.

Directorate of Agriculture Kashmir authorized as Regional Council for PGS India Program

'Process of Organic Certification of Agricultural Produce made easier for Valley s' farmers'

SRINAGAR: Directorate of Agriculture, Kashmir, has been authorized as the Regional Council for PGS India Program which will help the farmers to get their organic produce certified ensuring their good marketing opportunities outside Jammu and Kashmir.

Speaking about this authorization, Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Agriculture Production Department, Atal Dulloo, said that this is a welcome development and its interventions would pave the way for Organic Certification of Agricultural Produce of the farmers. This would play a key role in effective implementation of projects related to organic certification enabling holistic development of Agriculture sector in J&K.

The National Centre for Natural and Organic Farming in its meeting of the National Executive Committee



of PGS India has authorized the Directorate of Agriculture, Kashmir as the Regional Council for PGS India Program.

Pertinent to mention, Regional Council (RC) is ideally floated by State agencies, existing NGOs, Organic Certifica-

tion service providers of Central and State Governments or any other agency (producers, consumers, retailers, traders and Societies / Gram panchayats/ farmer etc.,).

Regional Council is an agency authorized by PGS-NAC to coordinate, monitor and approve certification decisions of Local Group under PGS-India organic Guarantee programme.

Regional Council will impart necessary training and support to existing and new local groups in procedures and paper work necessary for each farmer organic guarantee. It would also translate and print PGS paper work in local language. It would also register local groups and issue user ID and password for data uploading on PGS India website. Facilitation of local groups in data uploading on PGS website.

The Regional Council would confirm that the Local Group Summary Worksheet, listing all the farms that are to be Certified Organic, is complete and was conscientiously maintained by the group.

Dulloo Reviews Implementation Of PM KISAN In J&K

Also reviews implementation of PM Gati Shakti-National Master Plan in UT



Observer News Service

JAMMU: Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Agriculture Production Department (APD), Atal Dulloo Thursday chaired a meeting to review the implementation of PM Kisan in Jammu and Kashmir in view of the disbursement of 13th installment under PM KISAN.

Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Secretary in APD, Special Secretary APD, several District Development Commissioners (district level chairman PM KISAN), Regional Director Survey & Land records Jammu (Nodal Officer), District Nodal Officers, Director Agriculture Kashmir/Jammu, Assistant Commissioners Revenue, Chief Agriculture Officers, representatives of J&K Bank Ltd and other concerned attended the meeting. Kashmir based officers, DDCs, ADDCs, ACRs, CAOs, & district users of PM KISAN attended the meeting through video conferencing.

The ACS in detail discussed the targets, achievements, pendency and recoveries, seeding of bank accounts with Aadhaar of the beneficiaries, their linking with revenue records and e-KYC from every district with regard to PM KISAN. The meeting was also informed about the targets, achievements and pendency in both Record of Rights (RoR) and e-KYC uploadings etc.

The meeting also discussed the weeding out of ineligible beneficiaries, income tax payees, and government employees wherein PM-KISAN installments have been disbursed.

The meeting also discussed the bulk uploading of revenue records of PM-KISAN, e-KYC pendency and to be cleared in a mission mode.

He directed the lead bank to saturate bank accounts of PM-KISAN beneficiaries with their Aadhaar and NPCI (for DBT) and asked for breakup of pendency from each district.

'With RKVY Support, Fish Farming Emerging As Lucrative Means Of Livelihood For Youth'

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Fish farming is emerging as a lucrative means of livelihood for young entrepreneurs across Jammu and Kashmir with the support of Central Government's Rashtriya Kissan Vikas Yojna (RKVY).

The department of fisheries is propagating fish culture to give job opportunities to educated youth, besides the development of recreational fisheries as a method of income for those interested in pursuing aquarium fishing as a profession.

In Anantnag, three brothers have started fish farming business after getting help from Department of Fisheries. Ashiq Hussain, owner of a trout fish farm said that they received a lot of help from the department in terms of construction, feed and equipment. "My brothers and I completed our studies but were still unable to find jobs. We approached the department of fisheries and they taught us how to cultivate fish. We received subsidies under the Centre's Rashtriya Kissan Vikas Yojna (RKVY) for construction, feed, and equipment", Ashiq said whose unit employs six workers besides generating indirect employment for several others as well.

The avenue is particularly useful for those who already have a good water supply and a small piece of land for the farm. The department has started this initiative to help people prosper in this industry and scheme



is most useful for people who have good water supply and feasibility.

Jammu & Kashmir Government is also promoting fisheries culture by using modern technologies of fish farming such as composite fish culture of Indian major carps and exotic carps.

Many national schemes for promotion of the fishing trade are National Welfare Scheme for Fishermen, PM's Package for creation of employment opportunities, Fisheries Training and extension, Construction of low-cost houses, Group Accident Insurance scheme for active Fishermen, RKVY for houseless fishermen, among others.

The administration is also promoting the sector by filling the natural cold-water streams with trout seeds to endorse sports fisheries across the Union territory.

Notably, Kashmir offers some of the greatest spring-fed and snow-fed trout fishing in the world, along with a number of freshwater lakes as well as pollution-free streams, and rivers with snow-capped peaks.

SHORT TAKES

'Home Prices Set For Steep 6-10% Jump This Fiscal'

MUMBAI: Home prices across the top six cities are set to jump 6-10 per cent this fiscal and 3-5 per cent in the next financial year because of a steep rise in raw material, labour and land costs, and relatively favourable demand-supply dynamics, a report said on Thursday.

The report by Crisil also said large residential realtors are on course to log a robust 25 per cent sales growth in 2022-23 and 10-15 per cent in the next fiscal.

The unsold inventory level is down to 2.5 years from four years pre-pandemic, and this has credit profile of the large realtors strengthening, the report said.

The agency expects residential prices to rise 6-10 per cent this fiscal and a further 3-5 per cent in the next across the top six cities due to the steep increase in raw material, labour and land costs. This, however, has not impacted demand for residences adversely, given a strong preference for larger homes as the hybrid working model continues in many sectors, it added.

The top six realty markets are the Mumbai Metropolitan Region (MMR), the National Capital Region (NCR), Bengaluru, Pune, Hyderabad, and Kolkata. The companies covered by the report are Brigade Enterprises, DLF, Godrej Properties, Kolte-Patil Developers, Macrotech Developers, Mahindra Lifespace Developers, Oberoi Realty, Prestige Estates Projects, Puravankara, Sobha and Sunteck Realty. **PTI**

Workshop On Promotion Of PM-FME Held

GANDERBAL: A day long workshop cum awareness camp was organized Thursday on the promotion of Prime Minister's Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PM-FME), One District One Product (ODOP) walnut in District Ganderbal at KVK SKUAST (K) Shuhama.

Vice Chancellor SKUAST (K), Dr. Syed Nazir Ahmad Ganie and District Development Commissioner (DDC), Ganderbal Shyambir presided over the camp.

The workshop was attended by Scientists from different Departments, Officers and Staff from Developmental Departments, Farmers from Walnut industry and Students.

At the outset, Dr. Salman Rauoof Chalkoo, Assistant Director Fisheries and District Nodal Officer, PM-FME welcomed all the participants and briefed the audience about the scheme guidelines.

Vice Chancellor, SKUAST Kashmir, Dr. Nazir Ahmad Ganie emphasized the need for cluster based approach between the Departments and University to achieve much needed success in the field of walnut industry. He stressed for multiplication of exotic varieties of walnut to further increase productivity.

DDC while speaking on the occasion stressed on the need of labelling all value added products for its acceptability at national and international markets and urged the committee framed to facilitate the growers. **ONS**

Dir Agri Inaugurates 3 Semi Hi-Tech Polyhouses

SRINAGAR: The Director Agriculture Kashmir Choudhury Mohammad Iqbal Thursday inaugurated three semi hi-tech polyhouses worth Rs 1.66 Lakh under Capex budget at Takanwaripora, zone Qamarwari district Srinagar wherein Rs. 1 lakh subsidy was provided to the beneficiaries.

The Semi Hi-tech Polyhouses would benefit the farmers of zone Qamarwari and other areas of Srinagar district.

Speaking on the occasion, Choudhary said that the department is working robustly not only to fulfill the local demands for fresh vegetables during the winter season but also to cater to the requirements of the Jammu region as well.

He said the department is increasing the number of Hi-tech polyhouses in all the districts of Kashmir division aiming to provide fresh vegetables during the winter months.

He said the cropping intensity in Kashmir division is already 250 and efforts are on to raise it up to 300. He said the vegetable farmers who under open conditions raise three crops in a year, with the help of hi-tech polyhouses are able to produce five crops in a year.

With the result not only the cropping intensity, production and productivity is increased but the income of the farmers also gets significantly increased, he said and added that this also helps to generate employment opportunities as well. **ONS**

Jio 5G Now Compatible With Iphone 12, Newer Models

NEW DELHI: Reliance Jio 5G services are now accessible on Apple iPhone 12 and newer models after consumers install the latest iOS update version 16.2.

The company has started sending notifications to customers who are using iPhone to upgrade their device to access the 5G service.

"Your iPhone will require a software upgrade, which will directly get pushed to your device from Apple. Please ensure you install iOS 16.2 or later to make your phone 5G-ready," the source added.

After installing the update, customers will need to select 5G Auto or 'turn on 5G Standalone' from their mobile data section in the settings.

"Jio Welcome Offer will be provided to the subscriber automatically as soon as his location has Jio True 5G. We will communicate to the subscriber once he has been provided the Jio Welcome Offer," the source said. **PTI**

RBI To Issue Next Tranche Of Sovereign Gold Bonds From Dec 19-23

NEW DELHI: The Reserve Bank will issue two tranches of Sovereign Gold Bonds, which will open for public subscription in December and March.

Sovereign Gold Bonds (SGBs) 2022-23-Series III will open for subscription during the December 19-December 23 period and the 2022-23-Series IV during March 06-10, 2023, the Finance Ministry said in a statement on Thursday.

These bonds are issued by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on behalf of the government.

The SGBs will be sold through Scheduled Commercial banks (except Small Finance Banks, Payment Banks and Regional Rural Banks), Stock Holding Corporation of India Limited (SHCIL), Clearing Corporation of India Limited (CCIL), designated post offices, and stock exchanges -- NSE and BSE.

The tenor of the SGB will be for a period of eight years with an option of premature redemption after the fifth year to be exercised on the date on which interest is payable, the Ministry said.

"The investors will be compensated at a fixed rate of 2.5% per annum payable semi-annually on the nominal value," it said. **PTI**

SC To Hear Pleas Challenging Electoral Bond Scheme In Last Week Of January



Press Trust of India

New Delhi: The Supreme Court said on Thursday it will hear in the last week of January 2023, a batch of PILs challenging laws permitting funding of political parties through the electoral bond scheme.

Electoral bonds have been pitched as an alternative to cash donations made to political parties as part of efforts to bring in transparency in political funding. A bench of Justices B R Gavai and Vikram Nath said the matter requires to be heard.

"This is a 2015 matter. You can't have such an emergency just before the penultimate day of the vacation... There is no election as of now. We will hear it in the last week of January, 2023," the bench said.

Lawyer Prashant Bhushan, appearing for PIL petitioner NGO 'Association for Democratic Reforms', said there are several constitutional questions involved in the petitions which have a bearing on sanctity of the electoral process.

He said the issue of whether it should be referred to a Constitution bench can be looked at first.

The apex court said that this will also require hearing.

The top court was hearing PILs by NGO Association for Democratic Reforms, The Communist Party of India (Marxist) and other petitioners.

Earlier, Bhushan had sought urgent listing of the PIL by the apex court seeking a direction to the Centre not to open any further window for sale of electoral bonds during the pendency of a case pertaining to funding of political parties and alleged lack of transparency in their bank accounts.

The NGO, which had filed the PIL on the issue of alleged corruption and subversion of democracy through illicit and foreign funding of political parties and lack of transparency in the bank accounts of all political

parties, had moved an interim application in March 2021 before the assembly polls in West Bengal and Assam seeking that the window for sale of electoral bonds be not reopened.

The NGO, in its fresh application filed in the pending petition, had claimed there was a serious apprehension that any further sale of electoral bonds before the upcoming assembly elections, including in West Bengal and Assam, will further increase illegal and illicit funding of political parties through shell companies.

On January 20, 2020, the apex court had refused to grant interim stay on the 2018 Electoral Bonds Scheme and sought responses of the Centre and the Election Commission to an interim application by the NGO seeking a stay on the scheme.

The government notified the Electoral Bond Scheme on January 2, 2018.

According to the provisions of the scheme, electoral bonds may be purchased by a person who is a citizen of India or incorporated or established in India. An individual can buy electoral bonds, either singly or jointly with other individuals.

Only political parties registered under Section 29A of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 and which secured not less than one per cent of votes polled in the last general election to the House of the People (Lok Sabha) or the Legislative Assembly of the state are eligible to receive electoral bonds.

According to the notification, electoral bonds shall be encashed by an eligible political party only through an account with an authorised bank. The apex court had in April 2019 declined to stay the Centre's Electoral Bond Scheme 2018 and made it clear that it will accord an in-depth hearing on the pleas as the Centre and the EC have raised "weighty issues" having "tremendous bearing on the sanctity of the electoral process in the country".

1991 Pilibhit Fake Encounter

HC Commutes Life Sentence Of 43 Cops To 7-Year Rigorous Imprisonment

Press Trust of India

Lucknow: The Allahabad High Court on Thursday commuted life imprisonment awarded to 43 policemen in the 1991 Pilibhit fake encounter case, in which 10 Sikhs were killed after being branded terrorists, to seven-year rigorous imprisonment.

The court set aside the conviction of the police personnel by a trial court under Section 302 (murder) of the Indian Penal Code, saying the case falls under Exception 3 to Section 303 of the IPC which provides that culpable homicide is not murder if the offender, being a public servant or aiding a public servant, causes death by an act which he thinks is lawful.

The Lucknow bench directed that the convicts serve their sentence in jail and also imposed a fine of Rs 10,000 each on them.

The bench held all 43 policemen guilty under Section 304 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder) of the IPC.

Undoubtedly, the bench of Justices Ramesh Sinha and Saroj Yadav said, the police

have to arrest accused persons and make them stand trial.

"It is not the duty of the police officers to kill the accused merely because he is a dreaded criminal," it said.

"In the present case, there was no ill will between the appellants -- police personnel and the deceased persons. The appellants were public servants and their object was the advancement of public justice.

"No doubt, the appellants exceeded the powers given to them by law, and they caused the death of the deceased by doing an act which they, in good faith, believed to be lawful and necessary for the due discharge of their duty. In such circumstances, the offence that was committed by the appellants, was culpable homicide not amounting to murder," the bench said.

"The case of the appellants is covered under Exception 3 to the section 303 of IPC which provides that culpable homicide is not murder if the offender, being a public servant, or aiding a public servant acting for the advancement

of public justice, exceeds the powers given to him by law, and causes death by doing an act which he, in good faith, thinks to be lawful and necessary for the due discharge of his duty as a public servant without ill will towards the person whose death he has caused," it said.

On July 12, 1991, the convicted policemen stopped a luxury bus carrying Sikh pilgrims and forced 10 passengers to get off. A charge sheet filed in the case said the passengers were divided into groups, taken to different areas in a jungle and killed in "cold blood".

The policemen claimed the next day that 10 Khalistani terrorists had been killed. They claimed that some of the Sikhs in the bus were facing criminal cases and were armed.

The trial court had on April 4, 2016 found 47 policemen guilty of killing the Sikh men in fake encounters and sentenced them to life imprisonment.

The policemen filed appeals against their conviction. During the pendency of appeals, four of them died.

Maximise Earnings With Piaggio Vehicles' All New Apé FX Max Range Of Commercial3 Wheeler Electric Vehicles

New Delhi: Piaggio Vehicles Pvt Ltd (PVPL), a 100 % subsidiary of the Italian Piaggio Group and India's leading manufacturer of small commercial vehicles as well as pioneers in 3-wheeler electric mobility launched two new electric 3-wheelers: Apé E-City FX Max in the passenger segment and Apé E-Extra FX Max in the cargo segment. The new vehicles were unveiled by His Excellency, Mr. Vincenzo de Luca, Ambassador of Italy to India in the presence of Mr. Diego Graffi, Chairman & MD, Piaggio Vehicles Pvt Ltd, and Mr. Sudhanshu Agrawal, EVP and Business Head, Electric Vehicles and Exports, Piaggio Vehicles Pvt Ltd along with invited Govt. of India dignitaries. Besides the launch of the new range, Piaggio Vehicles Pvt Ltd also signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) with key industry partners to ensure continued strides

in building a robust EV infrastructure in India.

The new variants, Apé E-City FX Max and Apé E-ExtraFX Max have a superior driving range, 12" tyre size offering better ground clearance, and improved grade ability among other advancements. This EV range is fully assembled by an all-women team at Piaggio's Baramati factory. Available as a fixed battery solution, Apé E-City FX Max and Apé E-ExtraFX Max boast of superior Italian design legacy with a new and attractive bezel and eye-catching graphics. A swappable battery solution for the new FX Max will also be available soon.

The new Apé FX Max range comes with advanced battery performance resulting in a longer run, enhanced earnings, and effective cost of ownership. The vehicles also have a reserve range of up to 5

kms, to combat range anxiety. Bigger tyres of 12" give drivers a better ride & handling experience, and control over rough, uneven road conditions making the journey safer as well as accessible to remote destinations. To provide better visibility and control while driving, the vehicle's seat height has also been adjusted. Advanced telematics 2.0 gives drivers better navigation and allows fleet owners to



track and manage the fleet with utmost efficiency.

The launch event also saw Piaggio Vehicles Pvt Ltd sign a strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) with key EV players like SUN Mobility, Three Wheels United, Zyngo, City Link, Amplus Solar, Magenta Mobility, MoEving, and MBSI to deliver 24,000 commercial EVs in a phased manner across India in 2023. Of these, over 10,000 will be deployed in partnership with SUN mobility for both cargo and passenger segments in more than 14 cities in India. Piaggio India is also partnering with Three Wheels United with their aggressive retail finance scheme for both Passenger and Cargo vehicles.

Speaking at the launch, Mr. Diego Graffi, Chairman & MD, Piaggio Vehicles Pvt. Ltd. said, "I thank His Excellency, Mr. Vincenzo de Luca, Ambassador

of Italy to India for his valuable time to unveil our new vehicles. As pioneers in light cargo electric mobility in India, we are delighted to add Apé E-City FX Max and Apé E-ExtraFX Max to our portfolio. Our talented team of engineers and R&D has designed the new Apé FX Max range to ensure optimum value for customers through better range, grade ability, and load-carrying capacity, as well as providing a competitive total cost of ownership. We feel the new range is an entrepreneur's best bet to reap maximum benefits. With our vision fixed on the future of mobility, Piaggio Vehicles will continue its stride to move India forward in its mission to adapt alternate fuels."

He further added, "The MoUs we have signed today also cement our commitment to building India's EV infrastructure with competent and reliable partners."

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

'Smart Move': Rundown

told Kashmir Observer. Khan, who's also the chief executive officer of Srinagar Smart City Limited, said the government is keen to develop these heritage sites.

"It was important to list and categorise these sites," the commissioner said, "so that the government decides to put some conservation restriction, this will become the basis of that strategy."

The survey was carried out when the city is getting a makeover under Rs. 980 crore worth Srinagar Smart City Project. Over 39 developmental tasks have been completed so far under the project, while 34 remain a work in progress, with 64 being executed in near future.

The INTACH survey has revealed that 51 per cent of the heritage properties in the city are in bad shape.

"In year 2021, we found that 49 per cent of the properties are in good condition while 33 per cent showing signs of deterioration," said Imran Ali, an official at INTACH.

"Three per cent properties are in advanced state of decay, while 3 per cent are in extreme dilapidation condition."

Also, Ali said, 12 per cent of the properties, mostly residential, have been completely destroyed by 2014 floods or dismantled by owners. "But many properties under Waqf board and constructed by the Mughals are in the good state."

Notably, there're 16 protected properties in Srinagar—12 of them are under Archeology Survey of India, while the rest is looked after by the J&K Archeology Department.

Previously, such structural survey was carried out in the year 2003, when around 349 heritage sites were listed.

Two decades later, Srinagar has reportedly lost 42 sites, leaving only 307 sites as the subject material for the new survey.

"These sites should've been protected under the law which is there but hasn't been implemented," Saleem Beg, convener INTACH, J&K Chapter, said.

In 2010, Beg said, the Jammu and Kashmir Assembly passed a bill—"Jammu and Kashmir Heritage Conservation and Preservation Act"—with an aim to provide conservation and preservation of both tangible (any material or physical heritage like buildings, structures, artifacts, etc.) and intangible (any non-material cultural aspects like music, dance, drama,

poetry) properties.

"As the law never saw the light of the day," Beg said, "the heritage residences are being converted into commercial buildings by the owners. The government should've taken steps to stop it."

But now, the SMC commissioner said, all the concerned departments are on the same page to conserve and preserve the heritage sites of Srinagar.

MPs Panel Asks

6000 transit accommodations have been approved to provide accommodation to Kashmiri migrant employees in the Valley.

In its action taken report, the government informed the committee that in the initial phase, the private land was to be acquired for the construction of these transit accommodations.

"However, due to cost escalation and delay in the land acquisition process, the government of Jammu and Kashmir had decided in 2019 to provide government land in order to speed up the construction work. Land required for construction of transit accommodations is now available with the concerned department," the government submitted to the committee—(KNO)

India Slams

Jaishankar arrived here on Tuesday to preside over two signature events on counter-terrorism and reformed multilateralism being held under India's current Presidency of the UN Security Council, before the curtains come down this month on the country's two-year tenure as an elected member of the powerful 15-nation.

He presided over the UN Security Council Open Debate on Maintenance of International Peace and Security: New Orientation for Reformed Multilateralism, a signature event held under India's Presidency of the 15-nation Council.

Among the over 60 speakers listed for the debate was Bhutto, who in his remarks to the Council, raised the Kashmir issue. India's Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Ruchira Kamboj was chairing the debate when Bhutto spoke in the Council.

Later, as Jaishankar presided over the debate, he gave a strong response to Bhutto's comments.

He referred to the mastermind behind the September 11 attacks in the US bin Laden, who

was living in Pakistan's Abbottabad city and was killed in a raid at his hideout in May 2011 by US Navy seals.

Terrorists of the Pakistan-based Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and the Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) had attacked the Indian Parliament complex in 2001, killing nine people.

Tensions between India and Pakistan have spiked since New Delhi abrogated Article 370 of the Constitution to revoke the special status of Jammu and Kashmir on August 5, 2019. India's decision evoked strong reactions from Pakistan, which downgraded diplomatic ties and expelled the Indian envoy.

India has categorically told the international community that the scrapping of Article 370 was its internal matter. It also advised Pakistan to accept the reality and stop all anti-India propaganda.

India has told Pakistan that it desires normal neighbourly relations with Islamabad in an environment free of terror, hostility and violence.

IAF Carries Out

the French-manufactured jet joined the second Rafale squadron in Hasimara that increased its strength to 18 aircraft.

They said the second squadron of Rafale jets was to be part of the mega air exercise along with other key assets such as Sukhoi-30MKI aircraft under the Eastern Air Command.

An IAF official said the exercise was planned well in advance and it is not associated with recent developments in the Tawang sector.

On Monday, the Indian Army said troops from the two sides clashed along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Tawang sector and the face-off led to "minor injuries" to a few personnel from both sides.

The face-off took place amid the over 30-month border standoff between the two sides in eastern Ladakh.

All frontline air bases and some key Advanced Landing Grounds in the Northeast are set to be involved in the exercise, said a source.

The Army and IAF have been maintaining a high state of operational readiness along the LAC in the Arunachal Pradesh and the Sikkim sector for over two years following the eastern Ladakh row.

The IAF scrambled fighter jets last week following China's increasing air activities on its side of the LAC in the Tawang sector of Arunachal Pradesh.

The deployment of some aerial platforms

including drones by China in the region preceded the Chinese attempts on December 9 to unilaterally change the status quo in the Yangtze area of the Tawang sector, the sources said.

They said a number of Chinese drones flew close to the LAC prompting the IAF to scramble the jets and increase the overall combat readiness.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday told Parliament that the Indian troops bravely thwarted the attempt by Chinese PLA from "unilaterally" changing the status in Yangtze area of the Tawang sector and there were no fatalities or serious casualties to the Indian troops in the scuffle.

"On December 9, PLA troops tried to transgress the LAC in Yangtze area of Tawang Sector and unilaterally change the status quo. The Chinese attempt was contested by our troops in a firm and resolute manner," Singh said.

"The ensuing face off led to a physical scuffle in which the Indian Army bravely prevented the PLA from transgressing into our territory and compelled them to return to their posts," he said.

Cold Wave Continues

recorded a low of minus 3.2°C against the previous night's minus 3.2°C, while the mercury was around 2.4°C below normal during this time of the year, the official said. It was two notches above the lowest temperature recorded this season on December 5 and 14.

Qazigund recorded a low of minus 3.6°C against minus 3.0°C on the previous night while Pahalgam recorded a low of minus 5.6°C against minus 5.3°C on previous night and it was 1.8°C below normal for the famous tourist resort in south Kashmir's Anantnag district.

Kokernag recorded a low of minus 1.3°C against minus 0.3°C as on the previous night and it was 0.2°C below normal for the place, he said.

Gulmarg recorded a low of minus 3.0°C against minus 4.0°C on the previous night, the official said. It was 1.2°C above normal for the world famous skiing resort in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, the official said.

In Kupwara town, the mercury settled at minus 3.2°C against minus 2.8°C on the previous night, the official said. It was 1.5°C below normal for the north Kashmir place, he said.

Jammu recorded a low of 7.1°C against 6.4°C

SC Grants Bail To Convict In Godhra Train Coach Burning Case

Press Trust of India

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Thursday granted bail to a convict serving life imprisonment in the 2002 Godhra train coach burning case, noting that he has been in jail for the last 17 years.

A bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justice P S Narasimha took note of the submission of a lawyer, appearing for one of the convicts Faruk, that he be granted bail considering the period undergone till now.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Gujarat government, termed the offence as the "most heinous" in which 59 people, including women and children were burnt alive and sought hearing of the appeals of the convicts at the earliest.

The top law officer opposed the bail plea and said usually stone pelting is an offence of minor nature, however, in the instant case, the train coach was bolted and stones were pelted to ensure that passengers cannot come out.

Moreover, stones were thrown at fire tenders also, he added.

"He (the convict seeking bail) instigated others and pelted stones and injured the passengers. Under normal circumstances, pelting of stones may

be a lesser offence... But this is different," he said.

"In the facts of the case, the application of bail made by Faruk... is granted. The applicant was convicted of offences punishable under Section 302 (murder) of the IPC and sentenced to suffer imprisonment for life.

"The High Court had dismissed his appeal on October 9, 2017. The applicant has sought bail on the ground that he has been in custody since 2004 and has undergone imprisonment for about 17 years. In view of the facts and circumstances of the case and the role attributed to the applicant, we direct the applicant to be granted bail subject to such terms and conditions as may be imposed by the sessions (trial) court," the bench said in its order.

The appeals against the conviction of several convicts are pending adjudication in the apex court.

Mehta said the appeals were ripe for the final hearing and now they can be listed.

The CJJ then suggested the law officer to provide the details such as that of the cases to be heard and assured that he will examine the details.

Faruk along with several others was convicted for pelting stones at the coach of the Sabarmati Express.



J&K Bank Beat LoneStar To Enter Gold Cup Finals

Observer News Service

JAMMU: An Akif Reshi hat trick helped J&K Bank football team defeat LoneStar Kashmir FC 4-0 on Thursday to seal their spot in the Christmas Gold Cup finals.

The semi final match was played at GGM Science College Ground in Jammu.

J&K Bank got off to a flying start as Uneeb scored the first goal of the game in just the 5th minute. After that, it was the Akif Reshi show, as the Anantnag lad scored three goals in the 7th, 53rd, and 71st minute to complete J&K Bank's rout of the

LoneStar boys.

Mayor JMC Rajinder Sharma was the Chief Guest on the occasion, while a large number of contractors, office bearers, and senior footballers watched the match.

The other semi final of the tournament will be played today, Friday, between Shaheen FC and City Udampur FC. The match will kick off at 2:00 PM, and the winner will face J&K Bank in the Christmas Gold Cup finals.

The tournament is organised by All J&K Sports & Cultural Welfare Association under the aegis of DFA Jammu.

JKFA Resume Office At Bakshi Stadium After 2 Decades



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu & Kashmir Football Association (JKFA) resumed its offices at Bakshi Stadium on Wednesday after two decades.

"JKFA with the support of Secretary JKSC Nuzhat Gul resumed the office at famous Bakshi Stadium. Waseem Aslam Chairman JKFA along with Prof Bashir Gen Secretary and many prominent faces took over the space for official purposes of JKFA after the approval from Secretary JKSC," a statement from the association said.

"It is a big day for JKFA where

the space for the official purpose has been returned back to the JKFA after a long time. All the official correspondence and affairs of JKFA will now run through this office and it will now be the official address of JKFA," Aslam said.

"This is nothing less than a new year gift from Secretary Sports Council to entire football fraternity. I, on behalf of JKFA and every stakeholder, would like to thank her for whatever she has done or can do for the development of football in entire UT of J&K," Aslam added.

JKFA used to have its offices at Bakshi Stadium till late 1990s.

Srinagar Athletic Championship 2022 Concludes



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The two days District Srinagar Athletic Championship 2022, which was held from 14 to 15 December, concluded on Thursday at the historic Bakshshi Stadium, Srinagar. More than 230 athletes participated in the championship. Indumet Singh (most senior athletic player) and Manager Bakshshi Stadium Altaf Ahmad declared the championship open.

Secretary Sports Council Nuzhat Gul was the chief guest while as Muzaffar Ahmad, Asif Iqbal, Ravinder Kaur, Madam Rehna, Tahir Ahmad were the guest of honours on the occasion.

While speaking on the occa-

sion President Tufail Ramzan and Secretary Tajinder Singh of Distt. Srinagar Athletic Association said the association will organise more and more athletic events in the coming time.

A total of 14 Field & Track events were held over the two days. The medallists in the championship will now take part in the upcoming J&K UT Athletic Championship, scheduled to be held at Jammu in the month of January 2023.

The championship was organised by District Srinagar Athletic Association under the aegis of J&K Amateur Athletic Association in collaboration with J&K Sports Council and was sponsored by Amigos and Cavins.

IUST Football Team Leaves For Inter-University Tournament



Observer News Service

AWANTIPORA: Prof Shakil Ahmad Romshoo, Vice Chancellor IUST, on Thursday flagged off University Football Team (Men) for their participation in the upcoming Inter-University Football Championship.

The competition will begin on Friday, December 16, at the GNA University, Phagwara, Punjab. The sixteen-member squad shall take part in the tournament in which 79 University teams from all across the country are participating. The championship will culminate on December 24.

The Vice Chancellor wished the team the best and urged the players to play the game in great spirit and be the best am-

bassadors of the University. He said that the University is committed towards further developing Sports infrastructure and encouraging students to participate in sports events held at the National and International levels. He emphasized that such opportunities allow the participants to learn from each other and encourage sportsmanship and fraternity.

The visiting team shall be accompanied by the officials of the Directorate of Physical Education, IUST.

The tournament's knockout matches will be held till December 21, after which quarterfinals, semi-finals and finals will begin. The winning team will participate in the inter-zonal match.

World Cup History Beckons For France, Mbappé, Deschamps



Agencies

DOHA: World Cup history is beckoning for France, star player Kylian Mbappé and coach Didier Deschamps.

When France walks on the field Sunday for the tournament final against Argentina and Lionel Messi, soccer lore is waiting to be written for the team.

Les Bleus could be the first winner of back-to-back titles for 60 years since Brazil did it 1958 and 1962.

The 23-year-old Mbappé would become the youngest player with two World Cup wins since Pelé accomplished that feat at age 21.

Deschamps would be the first

man to coach two world champion teams since Vittorio Pozzo did it with Italy in 1934 and 1938.

"As for me, I'm not the most important person. It's the French team," said Deschamps, who is worthy of his own chapter in World Cup history.

He lifted the trophy in Paris as the team's captain when France first won the World Cup in 1998. He won it as coach in 2018, and now he is on the brink of getting a third.

"Obviously, I'm proud. I know, everyone knows, we have the chance to win another title," Deschamps said Thursday after beating Morocco in the semifinals.

France is playing in a fourth

final in a span of seven tournaments — including the 2006 final lost to Italy in a penalty shootout after Zinedine Zidane was sent off. It's a dynastic era not seen since Brazil's two decades at the top through 1970.

That team typified by Pelé's brilliance won all three finals it reached starting in 1958, and also played in the decisive last match of the 1950 tournament, which was lost against Uruguay in Rio de Janeiro.

All six goals for a 17-year-old Pelé in 1958 in Sweden were scored after the group stage, including a semifinals hat-trick to help eliminate France as he wore the No. 10 jersey that he has made iconic.

Morocco Looks To The Future After World Cup Dream Ends

Agencies

DOHA: Morocco made history, but couldn't make it past Kylian Mbappé and France.

The first African country to reach the semifinals of the World Cup was eventually beaten by defending champions France, losing 2-0 at Al Bayt Stadium on Wednesday.

There is still the chance to win the third place match against Croatia on Saturday, but the dream of becoming the first team from outside of Europe or South America to go all the way to a final is over.

Morocco coach Walid Regragui and his players became the unlikely story of the World Cup and even in defeat, pushed France all the way.

"My players gave everything. They've gone as far as they could," said Regragui. "They wanted to rewrite the history books, but you can't win a World Cup with miracles, you have to do it with hard work and that's what we are going to do, keep working."

No one could have expected Morocco to break new boundaries for African soccer by making it to the semifinals.

And it did so on merit - topping a group that contained 2018 finalist Croatia and second-ranked Belgium, before progressing past favourites



Spain and Portugal in the knockout stages.

But perhaps Morocco's best performance came against France when it had to contend with injuries to key players and conceding a goal inside five minutes. In the face of those challenges it still managed to pressure France for long periods until Randal Kolo Muani's 79th minute strike sealed the win for Les Bleus.

The performance typified Morocco's spirit at this tournament and the quality of its players.

Regragui has won plenty of admirers for his tactical acumen against some of the giants

of international soccer.

It will be interesting to see if any offers come his way from leading club teams in Europe - and whether he would be tempted to take up a new challenge.

He says he is committed to leading Morocco at the 2023 African Cup of Nations, which will come as a relief to the country's fans.

First of all Morocco wants to round off an unforgettable World Cup by winning its third place match against Croatia.

Focus will then turn to the African Cup of Nations and Regragui is comfortable with the added expectation after the success in Qatar.



Kuldeep Yadav's Comeback Puts Bangladesh On Mat

Press Trust of India

CHATTOGRAM: Kuldeep Yadav sizzled with an all-round show while Mohammed Siraj ran through the Bangladesh top order as the duo put India firmly in the driver's seat on day two of the opening Test here on Thursday.

Playing his first Test after more than 22 months, Kuldeep continued his 'birthday' party a day after turning 28, in his sensational run with the bat and the ball. Kuldeep first came up with a career-best 40 from 114 balls in a 92-run eighth wicket partnership with veteran Ravichandran Ashwin (58) to push India to 404 in their first inning from an overnight score of 278/6.

At stumps on day two, Bangladesh were 133 for eight, trailing India by 271 runs. With two wickets in hand, the hosts still need 72 runs to avoid a follow-on.

Introduced into the attack

in the 25th over, the left-arm wrist spinner struck on his second ball as he flummoxed the Bangladesh batters with his wrong ones to end the day with figures of 10-3-33-4, a performance that is certain to boost his confidence.

However, it was Siraj who began the proceedings with a wicket off the very first ball of the innings, when he induced an edge from Najmul Hossain Shanto (1) with an away going delivery. Stumper Rishabh Pant dived on his left to grab the edge.

The Indian quick, who was on a song, rattled the Bangladesh top-order and later dismissed Zakir Hasan (20) and Litton Das (24) to end the day with impressive figures of 9-1-14-3.

The stage was perfect for Kuldeep to make inroads and the Indian did just that, dismissing rival skipper Shakib Al Hasan when he played against the spin.

MP Thrash J&K By Innings & 17 Runs In Ranji Trophy

Press Trust of India

JAMMU: Madhya Pradesh bowlers, led by Avesh Khan, produced yet another impressive performance to notch up a massive innings and 17-run win over Jammu and Kashmir with a day to spare in their Group D Ranji Trophy match here on Thursday.

Khan took three wickets for 53 runs to help MP bowl out J&K for 193 in 60.5 overs in their second innings on the third day after following on. J&K were all out for just 98 in their first essay on Wednesday in reply to MP's 308.

Khan, who has played five ODIs and 15 T20Is for India, was the wrecker-in-chief, helping MP bundle out J&K for 98 in their first innings with figures of 5/33.

J&K were reduced to 45 for 7 in the 22nd over of their second

innings but lower order batters Yuthvir Singh (30), Sahil Lotra

(66) and Auqib Nabi (44) delayed the inevitable for a while.

For MP, Saransh Jain, Kumar Kartikeya and Anubhav Agarwal also took two wickets apiece.

MP got seven points from the win. Outright-winning team gets six points while a victory an innings or 10-wicket fetches seven points.

Brief Scores

Madhya Pradesh: 308 beat J&K 98 and 193 all out in 60.5 overs (Sahil Lotra 66, Avesh Khan 3/53) by an innings and 17 runs. MP: 7 points



Sodhi, Phillips Return To NZ Squad For Pakistan Tests



Agencies

WELLINGTON: Leg-spinner Ish Sodhi has been recalled to the New Zealand Test squad for the upcoming tour to Pakistan, four years after his last international outing in whites. The 30-year-old Sodhi's been included alongside one-time Test player Glenn Phillips and the uncapped Blair Tuckner, as part of a 15-player squad for the two-Test series, which starts in Karachi on December 26 and concludes in Multan on January 3.

The tour will be Tim Southee's first test as captain after Kane Williamson announced he was stepping down as skipper in the longest format. Sodhi's played 125 white-ball games for New Zealand and has been a mainstay in the T20 side - recently becoming just the fifth male player in the world to claim 100 T20I wickets.

Despite not being able to play a lot of red-ball cricket of late, Sodhi has a strong first-class record featuring 279 wickets at an average of 33, with 16 five-wicket bags and two ten-wicket hauls. Phillips played his only Test against Australia at the SCG in January 2020, scoring a half-

century in the first innings.

Like Sodhi, the 26-year-old Phillips has made his name in the T20I format, racking up 56 international caps and a current ICC T20I batting ranking of seven. Tickner featured in the New Zealand Test squads for the series against South Africa at the end of the home summer and away to England in the winter, but is yet to debut, after playing 20 white-ball internationals.

Trent Boult made himself unavailable for the tour, while Kyle Jamieson remains unavailable for selection as he continues his recovery from a back injury. Coach Gary Stead said the squad was looking forward to the prospect of playing Test cricket in Pakistan for the first time since 2003.

New Zealand one-day squads for Pakistan and India will be named on Monday, December 19.

New Zealand Test squad for Pakistan: Tim Southee (c), Michael Bracewell, Tom Blundell (wk), Devon Conway, Matt Henry, Tom Latham, Daryl Mitchell, Henry Nicholls, Ajaz Patel, Glenn Phillips, Ish Sodhi, Blair Tuckner, Neil Wagner, Kane Williamson and Will Young. (ANI)

Real Madrid Announce Signing Of 16-Year-Old Wonderkid Endrick

Agencies

MADRID: Real Madrid has reached a deal to sign young Brazilian sensation Endrick from Palmeiras.

The 16-year-old forward will join Madrid when he turns 18, the club said in a statement on Thursday. He will continue with Brazilian club Palmeiras until then.

Financial details were not immediately released, but Brazilian media said the deal was worth nearly 60 million euros (\$64 million).

It's a similar agreement Madrid reached with Flamengo for Vinicius Junior and Santos for Rodrygo. Madrid paid the Brazilian teams some 45 million euros for each.

Palmeiras is the club from which Gabriel Jesus moved to Manchester City a few years ago.

Endrick is Brazil's most promising star. He turned pro-



fessional after turning 16 and played a few matches for Palmeiras as a starter. Palmeiras

the club with the most titles in Brazil, won the Brazilian league this year. (AP)



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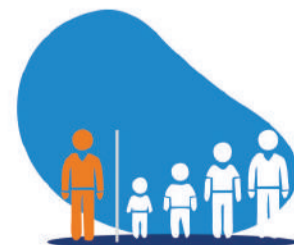
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