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Ahead Of Christmas, Papier Mâché Artisans Receive Orders In Bulk

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: After witnessing few bookings from outside Kashmir for more than two years due to the Coronavirus pandemic, Papier Mache artisans are busy giving final touches to their Christmas artworks.

Mohammad Shafi Bhat, a papier mache artisan from the city's old city area said he is a trained professional and has learned the art in his childhood.

Shafi says more than locals, people from outside Kashmir especially western countries appreciate the art.

The art of papier mache in

itself is dependent on Christmas. All the decorative pieces we make are sold during the Christmas season. Shafi said.

"Balls, Bells, Eggs are all related to Christians and Westerners purchase these artworks as gifts and give it to their family and friends during the Holiday season.'

Shafi says Papier Mache artisans receive orders from New Delhi and other parts of India as well. However, he says, foreigners value this art more than Kashmiris.

"Trends show that people from western countries especially from the USA, UK,



Canada and Australia purchase "This is something which papier Mache items." remains there forever. A

Westerners purchase these artworks as gifts and give it to their family and friends during the Holiday season."

BALLS, BELLS, EGGS ARE ALL

RELATED to Christians and

decorative art work is there forever. We want to continue this

Shafi says due to high inflation, it is difficult to earn a livelihood out of this profession.

"We want the government to provide us with a subsidy so that we can purchase colors

HORROR IN ANANTNAG

Rampage, Kills

Mother, 2 Neighbours

GRIME SCENE DO NOT CROSS

GRIME SCENE DO NOT CROSS

Man Goes On

and paper at affordable prices." Mohammad Magbol Jan is another Papier Mache artisan who is busy in his work and can't afford to waste time at this crucial

time of the festive season. Maqbool says that he has been busy preparing Christmas orders. We have | More on P10

NIA Raids 14 Locations

Observer News Service

Srinagar: National Investigation Agency on Friday said that it conducted multiple raids across J&K in connection with a mili-

dia, an NIA spokesperson said that it conducted searches at 14 locations in J&K, including Kulgam, Pulwama, Anantnag, Sopore and Jammu in connection with a case registered on June 21, this year at NIA Police Station, Jammu.

commanders/handlers.

"They are involved in carrying out militant attacks by using cyber-space in J&K, targeting of

33 Booked Under PSA, 85 Cases

Kupwara: Jammu and Kashmir Police on Friday said that 33 people involved in narcotics smuggling have been detained and lodged in different jails under Public Safety act during the current year in the

As per a local news agency KNO, police said that during the ongoing year, 85 cases have been registered against 161 persons, who were involved in the

drug menace across the district.

A senior police officer said that anyone found involved in the drug menace will not be spared in the district. "Kupwara police have done a lot of operations against drug menace this year and will continue to do so

Meanwhile, the district police

5 Cops Among 17 Held For Running Drug Racket



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Five cops were among 17 persons arrested as a major narcotics smuggling module, originating from Pakistan, was busted in the Kupwara district, police said on Friday.

"In one of its biggest successes against drug smuggling and peddling in the district, Police has arrested 17 persons, including five policemen, a political activist, a contractor and a shopkeeper from different areas

of the districts of Kupwara and Baramulla, unearthing another narcotics smuggling module originating from Pakistan," a police spokesman said.

He said while working relentlessly to identify and act against the drug peddlers active in the north Kashmir district, police zeroed in on some drug peddlers active in Kupwara town and its adjoining areas.

"On a tip-off, one Mohammad Waseem Najar -- a poultry shop owner and a I N

Will Deal With Drug Menace, The Way We Dealt With Militancy: DGP

day after The Resistance Front (TRF) issued a threat to BJP office bearers in Kashmir, the Director General of Police (DGP) Dilbag Singh said on Friday that militants have "stopped very low" and have nothing to do apart from trying to damage the spirit of harmony and brotherhood among the people of the Union Territory. "Some people have stooped so low that they have nothing to do and now they are trying to damage the spirit of harmony and brotherhood of the people of J&K," Singh said, while speaking to reporters at Bakhshi Stadium here on Friday.

He was responding to a question about the threat issued by TRF, believed to be an offshoot of the Lashkar-e-Taiba, to BJP office bearers in Kashmir, The

SOME PEOPLE HAVE STOOPED SO LOW THAT THEY HAVE NOTHING to do and now

they are trying to damage the spirit of harmony and brotherhood of the people of J&K."



DGP, who was the chief quest Football Tournament, said that the militants and their masters cannot digest the peace and development said that stringent action has already been taken against all

at the inaugural function of the 18th Police Martyrs Memorial taking place in the Valley. In response to a question about the arrest of five cops allegedly involved in drug trade, the DGP

olved in H

early morning chores in the Ashmuqam, the officials said. Giving details Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Pahalgam, Sved Naseer said a mentally challenged person "went on a rampage" in the morning in Ashmuqam area, leaving three persons,

KO Web Desk

including his mother, dead and several others injured. He attacked his fam-

CRIME SCENE DO NOT CROSS

Srinagar: A "mentally challenged" man went ily members first in which on a rampage in a South his parents were injured Kashmir village on Friday and later came out and atkilling three people, intacked several passers-by cluding his mother, reports outside his house. reaching here said. The deceased have been

Javaid Hassan Rather reidentified as Ghulam Nabi portedly picked up a stick Khadim, his mother Hafiza and started hitting unsus-Bagum, and Mohammad pecting people, including his Ameen Shah—all residents mother, who were out for of Ashmugam. The injured are being treated at hospital, among them one critically injured has been shifted to SKIMS Soura.

One of the injured sons told police that several people tried to overpower the assailant but failed. "The attacker, | More on P10

Across J&K

tancy related case.

In a statement released to me-

The case, the premier investigative agency said, pertains to the criminal conspiracy for carrying out militant & subversive activities hatched by the cadres and OGWs of various proscribed organizations and their affiliates/off-shoots, operating under various pseudo names, at the behest of their Pakistani

minorities, security personnel and spreading | More on P10

DRUG MENACE

Filed In Kupwara

Agencies

frontier Kupwara district.

Police also said that 33 people involved in narcotics smuggling have been detained and lodged in different jails under PSA (PIT-NDPS Act).

in the future," he said.

appealed to | More on P10

I&K Fully Geared To Tackle Covid Situation: Experts Tell CS

Genome Sequencing Facilities Being Created In Both Cities

People Encouraged To **Go For Voluntary Testing** If Symptomatic

Observer News Service

Jammu: Amid a scare caused by the resurgence of deadly Coronavirus infection, the health experts of Jammu and Kashmir on Friday said that the new variants are not lethal but the spread might be faster, while suggesting people to take precautions to keep themselves safe as well as others.

In a meeting with Chief

Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta on Friday, the health experts, including Director SKIMS; Principals of Medical Colleges and Heads of Medicine and other experts from the Medical Colleges assured that there was no need to panic in view of rising Covid-19 cases in neighboring countries as no surge have been reported so far in the UT, an official spokesperson said.

Mehta, he said, enjoined upon all these health experts to take pre-emptive measures so that the administration is fully prepared to meet any contingency. He said that the Chief

Secretary also asked them to activate all the Covid testing facilities so that any | More on P10

KP, Dogra Employees Won't **Become Sacrificial Goats: BJP Chief**

Press Trust Of India

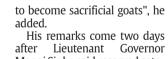
Jammu: The BJP on Friday expressed its "full support" to Kashmiri Pandit and Dogra employees to their demand for relocation to Jammu from Kashmir and said the party will not allow them to become "sacrificial goats".

The employees are on a strike here for the past over seven months in the wake of the targeted killings of their community members by militants in the Valley. They are demanding that they be relocated to Jammu and they will perform their duties from there. "I assure you that we will



not allow you to become scapegoats. You cannot perform duties in such a situation," Jammu and Kashmir BJP chief Ravinder Raina told protesting employees at the party office here.

"The party will not allow you



after Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said reserved category employees (Dogra) cannot be transferred to Jammu and those (KP employees) sitting at home will not get salaries.

J-K BJP chief Raina said the demand of the protesting em-

ployees was "justified". "We are with you regarding your demand for relocation (to Jammu). We support this demand and it should be fulfilled. There should be a transfer policy and they (employees) should be relocated," he said. These employees | More on P10

K E S

Slight Respite From Cold Conditions In Kashmir

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: There was a slight respite in cold conditions in the Kashmir Valley as the minimum temperature improved at most places, officials said on Friday. The meteorological depart-

ment said the weather is likely to remain mainly dry for the next two-three days. The minimum temperature

in Srinagar city, which recorded

so far its lowest of minus 5.5

degrees Celsius Wednesday night, settled at minus 4.8 degrees Celsius Thursday night, the officials said.

They said Pahalgam, which serves as one of the base camps for the annual Amarnath Yatra. recorded a low of minus 6.4 degrees Celsius, compared to minus 6.8 degrees Celsius Wednesday night.

The famous ski-resort of Gulmarg in north Kashmir's Baramulla district | More on P10

Fog Hits Air, Rail **Operation** In Jammu

ense fog and intense cold conditions threw normal life out of gear in Jammu, while air and rail operation also remained hit. As per meteorological department, dry, cold and foggy conditions will prevail for next | More on P10

Man Held 22 Yrs After Deadly Accident

man was arrested here on Friday, 22 years after causing a death by rash driving in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district, officials said. Based on specific information, a police team repeated raids and arrested Bopinder Singh, the accused, from Reasi.

Singh was in hiding since the commission of the crime in 2000 and therefore he could not be apprehended, they said. The accused evaded investigations by going underground and was continuously changing his hideouts, they said.

A warrant of arrest under Section 512 CrPC was issued against him by the court of Reasi.

2 Medical Shops Sealed At Kulgam

he drug control authorities on Friday sealed two medical shops in South Kashmir's Kulgam for not maintaining proper sale records of Scheduled H1 Drugs and absence of a registered pharmacist at their premises, an official spokesperson said. He said that the officers informed that from the last few months intensive drives are continuously going on under the guidance of Divisional and District administration across the length and breadth of the district and during inspections carried out in Katrasoo, Yaripora, D.H.Pora, Frisal and Quimoh, almost 12 other medicates found violating conditions of licenses and other rules | More on P10

KU Announces Winter Break From Jan 2

SHORT

he authorities at Kashmir University (KU) on Friday announced winter vacations for the students and the teaching departments of the varsity from January 2 to February 15 of 2023. "The teaching faculty of the main and satellite campuses shall observe winter vacation w.e.f 2 January, 2023 to 15th February, 2023," the KU notice stated. However, the Heads of the Departments have been instructed to ensure that the examinations and implementation of extraordinary funded research projects do not get "The remedial classes, if any, shall be

conducted in offline or online mode

during vacations," the notice read.

Lt Gen Sandeep Jain **Is GOC 16 Corps**

T A



ieutenant General Sandeep Jain has taken over the charge of new General Officer Commanding of 16 Corps, Officials said on Tuesday. Lt Gen Manjinder Singh, YSM, VSM relinquished the command of the elite White Knight Corps, today. The General laid wreath and paid tributes to the brave | More on P10

Pak Drone Shot Down By BSF

drone entering India from Pakistan through the International Border in Punjab was shot down by the Border Security Force (BSF) on Friday, a spokesperson of the force said. The unmanned aerial vehicle was detected at around 7:45 am near the Pulmoran border post in the Amritsar sector.

"BSF troops fired at the drone and brought it down. The drone has been seized. A search of the area is in progress to find out if it has dropped any consignment," the spokesperson said.

The drone, he said, is six feet in expanse and can carry a 25 kg payload.It also has | More on P10

Police Charges 4 OGWs In Rajouri

olice on Friday filed a charge sheet against four associates of Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) for their involvement in terror activities in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district, officials said. The charge sheet was filed against Talib Hussain. Mohd Shabir, Mohd Sadiq and Mohd Qasim alias Suleman in NIA court in Jammu under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act and Explosive Substances Act, they said. While three accused were arrested in June and July this year, Suleman is currently in Pakistan, the officials said. During the investigation, it was found that all of them were associated with the proscribed terror group and involved in | More on P10



Monday - Saturday (9am - 6pm) No 5- Dal Lake Boulevard Srinagar, 190001, Kashmir

KASHMIR OBSERVER[™] Srinagar | Saturday | 24-12-2022

'Atmospheric Carbon Might **Turn Lakes More Acidic'**



■he Great Lakes have endured a lot the past century, from supersized algae blobs to invasive mussels and bloodsucking sea lamprey that nearly wiped out fish populations.

Now, another danger: They and other big lakes around the world might be getting more acidic, which could make them less hospitable for some fish and plants.

Scientists are building a sensor network to spot Lake Huron water chemistry trends. It's a first step toward a hoped-for system that would track carbon dioxide and pH in all five Great Lakes over multiple years, said project co-leader Reagan Errera of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

If you change things chemically, you're going to change how things behave and work and that includes the food web, said Errera, a research ecologist with NOAA's Great Lakes **Environmental Research Laboratory**

in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Does that mean your favorite fish might not be around any more? We don't know that, but we know things will change. Maybe where and when they spawn, where

they're located, what they eat. Oceans are becoming more acidic as they absorb carbon dioxide that human activity pumps into the atmosphere the primary cause of climate change. Acidification endangers coral reefs and other marine life.

Studies based on computer models suggest the same thing may be happening in big freshwater systems. But few programs are conducting long-term monitoring to find out or to investigate the ecological ripple effects.

This doesn't mean the waters are going to be unsafe to swim in. It's not like we're making super acid battery liquid, said Galen McKinley, a Columbia University environmental sciences professor. We're talking about long-term change in the environment that to humans would be imperceptible.'

A 2018 study of four German reservoirs found their pH levels had declined moving closer to acidity three times faster in 35 years than in oceans since the Industrial Revolution.

Researchers say Great Lakes also could approach acidity around the same rate as in oceans by 2100. Data from the Lake Huron project will help determine if they're right.

Two sensors have been attached to a floating weather buoy at Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary near Alpena, Michigan. One measures carbon dioxide pressure in the water column and the other pH. Additionally, crews are collecting water samples at varying depths within the 4,300-squaremile (11,137-square-kilometer) area for chemical analysis.

Besides disrupting aquatic life and habitat, acidification could deteriorate hundreds of wooden shipwrecks believed resting on the bottom, said Stephanie Gandulla, the sanctuary's resource protection coordinator and a study co-leader.

Other monitoring stations and sampling sites are planned, Errera said. The goal is to take baseline measurements, then see how they change over time.

Data also is needed from lakes Erie, Michigan, Ontario and Superior, she said. All are part of the world's largest surface freshwater system but have distinct characteristics, including water chemistry, nutrients and other conditions needed for healthy biological communities.

Acidification from carbon dioxide overload in the atmosphere is different than acid rain caused by sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides from fossil fuel burning for electric power generation or manufacturing.

While more potent, acid rain covers relatively small areas and can be reduced with scrubbing equipment, as the U.S. Clean Air Act requires. But the effect of carbon-related acidification is worldwide and potentially more damaging because there's no easy or quick fix.

The only solution is a global solution," McKinley said. Everyone cuts their emissions.

Regardless of how well nations accomplish that, big lakes probably will continue acidifying as they absorb carbon dioxide already in the atmosphere, plus carbon-laden water runoff from land, she said.

Less certain are effects on ecosystems, although initial studies have raised concerns.

Based on laboratory tests, scientists who documented soaring acidity in the German reservoirs found it can imperil a type of water flea by hampering defense from predators. The tiny crustaceans are an important food for amphibians

Scientists in Taiwan experimented with Chinese mitten crabs, an Asian delicacy but an invasive species elsewhere. Increasing water acidity in lab tanks to projected 2100 levels more than tripled their mortality rates, according to a report

Other studies have found freshwater acidification harms development and growth of young pink salmon, also known as humpback salmon, an important commercial and sport fishing species in Alaska and the Pacific Northwest.

But it's unknown how big such problems will get, said Emily Stanley, a University of Wisconsin freshwater ecology professor.

I honestly don't see this as a thing that we as lake scientists should be freaking out about, Stanley said. There are so many other challenges facing lakes that are larger and more immediate, such as invasive species and harmful algae.

Many lakes emit more carbon dioxide than they take in, she said. But other scientists say even those could acidify because their outflow will slow as atmospheric concentrations surge.

Either way, tracking lakes' carbon dioxide levels is a good idea because the compound is fundamental to processes including photosynthesis that algae and other aquatic plants use to make food,

A crucial question is the effect of CO2-related acidification on microscopic plants called phytoplankton, said Beth Stauffer, a University of Louisiana at Lafayette biologist studying the situation around river mouths where fresh and ocean

Studies suggest some of the iest phytoplankton may thrive in acidic waters, while larger types more nutritious for fish fade.

It's like walking into a buffet and instead of having the salad bar and roast turkey, you have just Skittles, Stauffer said.

Of particular interest for the Great Lakes are quagga mussels, said Harvey Bootsma, a University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee lake scientist. The prolific invaders have elbowed aside other plankton eaters and fueled nuisance algae. Acidification could weaken quaggas' calcium carbonate shells, as it has with ocean mussels and clams.

But that's hardly a silver lining, Errera said. The same fate could befall native mussels that conservationists are struggling to protect.

The potential upheaval in freshwater ecosystems is one example among many of global warming's long reach, she said.

Those greenhouse gases we're putting into the atmosphere have to go somewhere, Errera said. The oceans and large freshwater bodies are where they're going, and acidification happens as a result.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my 9th certificate. Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Govt Higher Secondary School Kreeri within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Gh Hassan Reshi S/o Gh Hyder Reshi R/o Watergam DOB: 15-04-1964

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my Provisional Cum Character Certificate of class 12th bearing Regd. No: N15440130010 Roll No: 3111246 . Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Govt Boys Higher Secondary Shool Khore Sherabad Pattan within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained. Marvama Mukhtar D/o Mukhtar Ah Mir

bmg

Government of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir

DOB: 10-09-2001

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) Construction DIVISION No. ISt Srinagar

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDERS

7th FRESHNIT No: 106/CD-I/12870-86 DATED: 21-12-2022

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
ĺ.	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.iktenders.gov.in as per schedule of

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	21-12-2022
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 22-12-2022 03:00P.M
3	Bid submission Start Date	22-12-2022 from 03:30 PM
4	Bid Submission End Date	27-12-2022 upto 4:00 P.M
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	28-12-2022 at 11:00 A.M in the Office of Executive Engineer (R&B) Construction Division
		No. ISt 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. ISt Srinagar (tender inviting authority) as the cost of the tender

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. ISt 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 perfor-

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. ISt 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. The earnest money shall be forfeited, if: -

a. Any bidder/ tenderer withdraws bid/ tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid. b. Failure of Successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within three days from the date of intimation.

c. Failure of Successful bidder to execute the agreement within 15 days.

6 Instruction to hidder execute.

Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process. Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website www.jktenders. gov.into acquaint bid submission process.

Scanned copy of GSTIN Registration with return clearance certificate (FormGST-3B) for the month of October-2022 or latest or

Scanned copy of Enlistment/Regd. Certificate with current Renewal Certificate.

(The contractors having registration card issued by PWD (R&B) Deptt. shall register online along with latest renewal on JKPWDOMS portal and for the contractors who's registration/ renewal issued by other department shall also register themselves online on JKPWDOMS portal.

Scanned copy of Verification Certificate from issuing Authority of Registration /Enlistment Card Or affidavit duly certified by a lst Class

Executive Magistrate.
10 Scanned control All bidders Scanned copy of PAN card.(as reflected in GST Regd./GST Form-3B).

All bidders shall upload Treasury Challan (Tender document cost) (dated between the bid submission start date and the Bid submission End date) by debit to M.H.0059 in favour of Executive Engineer (R&B) Construction Division No. ISt Srinagar (Tender inviting authority).

Scanned copy of Earnest money in shape of CDR/FDR/RG/ dated between the bid submission start date and the Scanned copy of Earnest money in shape of CDR/FDR/BG(dated between the bid submission start date and the Bid submission End date)

Pledged to in the Office of Executive Engineer (R&B) Construction Division No. ISt Srinagar (Tender receiving Authority).

cal bid. No document(s) that haven't been uploaded will be accepted in hard copy form. However, the bidders will be required to provide original documents in support of the soft copies upon request in the event of any clarification. Note: - Scan all the documents on 100 dpi with black and white option

All documents relating to the bid shall be in the English Language.

Bidders should be fully cognizant that, in the event that documents uploaded or submitted are discovered to be fraudulent or factually period of three years, in addition to the forfeiture of the performance security deposited for the relevant work.

Court's Jurisdiction: The disputes difference between the performance security deposited for the relevant work. incorrect, the contract would be cancelled, and the Contractor/bidder would be barred from further participation in this Division or Department for a

Court's Jurisdiction: The disputes/differences between contractor and Department within the jurisdiction Hon'ble High court of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. **15** The tende

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

No. 12870-86 Executive Engineer, DATED:-23-12-2022 DIPK-15477/22

Sd./ (R&B)Constr. Division No. ISt

Annexure-I

Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Construction Division No. 1st Srinagar								
STAGE EST-1 manual clearance winter season 2022-23								
Name of the roads	Total linear length (in Kms)	Stage No.	Concerned Sub-Division					
Nallahmar Baghwanpora road incl Shaheen Mohalla	1.75		(R&B) Estates Sub- Division					
Safakadal Gassi Mohalla upto NoorJahan Bridge	3.18							
		Est-1						
Total:-	4.93							
	STAGE EST-1 manual clear Name of the roads Nallahmar Baghwanpora road incl Shaheen Mohalla Safakadal Gassi Mohalla upto NoorJahan Bridge	STAGE EST-1 manual clearance winter season 2022-23 Name of the roads Total linear length (in Kms) Nallahmar Baghwanpora road incl Shaheen Mohalla 1.75 Safakadal Gassi Mohalla upto NoorJahan Bridge 3.18	STAGE EST-1 manual clearance winter season 2022-23 Name of the roads Total linear length (in Kms) Nallahmar Baghwanpora road incl Shaheen Mohalla 1.75 Safakadal Gassi Mohalla upto NoorJahan Bridge 3.18 Est-1					

	Ar	inexure -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		(R&B) Head Quarter Sub-			
			-	Division			
	Total:-	2.00					

Annexure-I

Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Construction Division No. 1st Srinagar

	STAGE HOSP-1 manual clearance win	ter season 2022-23	J	
S.No.	Name of the roads	Total linear length (in Kms)	Stage No.	Concerned Sub- Division
	2	3	4	5
	Inner roads of Bemina Boys Hostel	0.75	Hosp-1	R&B Hospital Sub-
2	Inner roads of Govt.SMHS Hospital	0.75		Divn.
}	Inner Roads and parking place at Kashmir Nursing Home at Gupkar	0.15		
1	Inner road of Govt.Medical College	1.40		
j	Inner roads of Super Speciality Hospital Shireen Bagh Srinagar.	0.50		
j	Inner roads of Govt. Dental College.	0.50		
	Total:-	4.05		

Annexure-I

			Engineer R&B Construction Division No. 1st Srinagar manual clearance winter season 2022-23		
l	S.No.	Name of the roads	Total linear length (in Kms)	Stage No.	Concerned Sub-Division
l	1.	Saidpora to Hadoora via S.E canal	6.00	-	(R&B) Hazratbal Sub-
l	2.	Inner links at Khimber	8.07	7	Division
l	3.	Interior links at Saidpora Bala	2.83	HBL-1	
l		Total:-	16.90		

چھٹی آمدہ ایس ڈی ایم صاحب زیر نیمری SDMP/DEP-38/2022-23 موريح5115-12-2022 موريخ لرنے ڈیدینڈنٹ سرٹفکیٹ تجق وارژ ان غلام حسن بٹ متو فی اشتهار بمرادآ گاہی ہرخاص وعام معامله بذيل كنسبت ريبورث بيواري طلب كى لئى مطابق ريبورث غلام حسن ٹ مورخہ 2022-11-26 کوفوت ہو چکا ہے اور متوفی محکمہ Health میں بحشیت mts کام کراہاتھااور دوارن ملازمت فوت ہو چکا ہے رنفکیٹ اجرا کرنے میں کوئی عذر یااعتراض ہوتو وہ سات دن کےاندرا ندرا پنااعتر ا^ض اِفتر ہازہ میں پیش کریں۔معیادگزرنے کے بعد کوئی بھی اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں · نائب تخصيلدا fko_r

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27 Surgeries Conducted At Super Specialty Hospital Daily

'600 patients visit hospital every day'

Agencies

Srinagar: A major caseload of patients is being managed at Super Speciality Hospital Shireen Bagh Srinagar where on average 27 major and minor surgeries are being conducted on a daily basis.

An average 600 patients visit the hospital per day with 13 major and 14 minor surgeries being conducted at the hospital, a health official said.

"In a rare achievement, a team of doctors at Super Specialty Hospital, Government Medical College Srinagar performed endoscopic ultrasonography-guided biliary drainage (EUS-BD) or Choledochoduodenostomy (CDD) recently for the first time in Jammu and

Kashmir. This procedure was the first of its kind in Kashmir as previously, these patients had to go to New Delhi for treatment which would cost them Rs 2 to 3 lakh," he said.

He added that 11 cardiac interventions, 81 GE procedures (UG/LGI/ERCP/F.S) and 12 renal intervention procedures are being conducted on a daily basis at the hospital.

An official from SMHS Hospital said that 79,870 patients visited SMHS OPD in November which means on average over 3,000 patients are visiting the hospital.

He said that 1,998 surgeries were conducted at SMHS in November which means on average 67 surgeries are conducted at the hospital on a daily basis—(KNO)

On Christmas Eve, Tourism Deptt Organizes Cake Competition

Observer News Service

Srinagar: As part of the year end festivities and on the eve of Christmas, the Directorate

Kashmir valley and the Department of Tourism is organizing interesting activities to make the festival more joyful for the tourists and locals in



of Tourism, organized a cake competition at Institute of Hotel Management, Raj Bagh, here on Friday.

The competition was based on two rounds-preliminary and final rounds which saw an encouraging participation from young enthusiasts from across the Kashmir valley. Many well-skilled entrepreneurs entered the final round.

With the start of the Christmas festival, different kinds of celebrations are going on in

Director, Tourism, Kashmir, Fazlul Hasseb was the chief guest on the occasion who distributed prizes among the winners of the competition.

In his address, the Director Tourism complimented the young boys and girls for participating in today's competition. He said while on one hand the Department is promoting the local tourist potential, on the other hand it is providing a platform to young and budding creative minds to hone their talent.



Dal Dwellers Deserve A Life Of Dignity: Altaf Bukhari

The era of exploitation and discrimination is over: Junaid Mattu

Observer News Service

Srinagar: President Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party, Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari on Friday said that the traditional political parties in the valley have neglected and deprived the Dal Lake dwellers of basic facilities for decades.

"For decades, our brothers and sister of Mir Behri and adjoining areas in Dal have been deprived of basic necessities like accessibility, clean drinking water, electricity infrastructure, good schools, healthcare and employment opportunities. Both traditional political parties have exploited the inhabitants of Dal Lake while intentionally subjecting them to a life of penury and misery. Successive MLAs and regimes hid behind numerous excuses to justify the ruthless discrimination meted out to the people of Dal" he said.

Bukhari was speaking during a public meeting in Mir Behri, Dal along with other senior leaders of the party, including the Mayor of Srinagar and the Party's Youth President, Junaid Azim Mattu who happens to be the elected Corporator from Bod Dal Ward of Mir Behri.

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psychologists.

Bukhari said that both traditional political parties have used the Dal dwellers for their political gains. "These exploiters snatched from your children their rights to be equal citizens of Srinagar but now I am proud to say that as your elected representative and our Mayor, Junaid Mattu has taken visible and unprecedented steps to address the enormous governance deficit in Mir Behri. Today's outpouring of love, affection and support is a heartening testimony to your unwavering faith in him" he said.

Bukhari said that both the National Conference and PDP have offered nothing but fake promises and lies to the inhabitants of Dal. "You are the crown of the Dal ecosystem and the lake is incomplete without you - its most prized and valuable human component that makes Dal Lake one of the most unique living and breathing human ecosystems in the entire world. You not only represent but also enchanted the beauty of Dal Lake but unfortunately, these areas were deprived of all the basic facilities and no one in the past bothered to transform these areas into tourist villages and model areas which would attract tourists and generate employment and economic impetus in the area," he stated. Mayor Srinagar and Apni Party Youth President, who is also the elected representative of Bod Dal, while addressing the public meeting said that he has made it a mission to change the destiny of the inhabitants of Dal and transform their lives out of the darkness of hopelessness - towards a future of hope and dignity. He said it is his utmost honour to represent the people of Dal as their elected representative and that he would leave no stone unturned to continue the mission of providing basic infrastructure and facilities to the people.

"When you elected me as your representative four years ago, I promised you that I would leave no stone unturned to fight against the mindset and administrative eco-system that has discriminated against you for decades - depriving you of your basic human rights. Today, while a lot remains to be achieved, I am proud to say that we have done what successive Chief Ministers, Governments and local MLAs from Hazratbal promised yet failed to deliver. I assure you that this journey will continue until the Dal dwellers are brought at par in rights and dignity to their fellow citizens in the rest of Srinagar" he said.

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QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

HIGHWAY STATUS



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



29 Jumad al-Awwal 1444

PRAYERS FAJR 6:03 **ZUHR** 12:28 3:49 **ASR** Magrib 5:30 ISHA 6:55

This Day In History

- 1476 400 Burgundian soldiers freeze to death during siege of Nancy
- 1715 Swedish troops occupy Norway
- 1798 Russia & Britain sign Second anti-French
- 1814 Treaty of Ghent signed, ending the War of 1812 between the United States, the United Kingdom and
- 1864 Battle of Gordonsville, Virginia
- 1877 Thomas Edison files a patents for the phonograph
- 1884 Austria-Hungary admits King Leopold II's Congo Free State 1889 - Daniel Stover & William Hance patent bicycle
- with back pedal brake 1900 -Foreign powers present the Chinese Empress
- with their list of 'irrevocable conditions' before their nations will withdraw troops from China 1914 - German plane drops bombs on Dover, England
- Albania becomes a republic (ex-premier Ahmed Zogoe's coup) 1936 - 1st radioactive isotope medicine administered
- in Berkeley, California 1939 - World War II: Pope Pius XII makes a Christmas
- Eve appeal for peace. 1942 - Red army occupies German airports at
- Tasjinskaja & Morozowsk 1943 - US President FDR appoints General Eisenhower
- Supreme Commander of the Allied forces 1946 - French Fourth Republic is founded
- 1948 Greek government disbands due to state of war, press censorship
- 1951 United Kingdom of Libya gains independence
- from Italy via UN 1954 - Laos gains its independence
- 1962 USSR performs nuclear test at Novaya Zemlya
- 1963 Greek & Turks riot in Cyprus
- 1966 Soviet spacecraft Luna 13 lands on Moon 1966 - USAF C144 military charter aircraft crashes
- near Binh Thai, Vietnam, killing 129
- 1967 China performs nuclear test at Lop Nor, PRC 1979 1st Ariane rocket launched1986 Iran offensive
- against Iraqi islands of Shatt al-Arab

From KO Archives

12 Bangladeshis Killed Near Jammu

OBSERVER NEWS SERVICE

RINAGAR: Twelve Bangladesh nationals were killed when Border Security Force (BSF) jawans opened fire at a group of people attempting to sneak into Jammu region from across the border today, official reports here said. The reports said BSF personnel noticed a group of persons attempting to sneak into Indian territory from Pakistan-controlled Kashmir (PcK) near Sangral village in R.S.Pura sector of Jammu in the wee hours today. They mistook the intruders for militants and opened fire at them when they tried to flee back after being asked to surrender, the re-ports said, adding the deceased were totally unarmed. In the past, a number of Bangladeshi nationals were either arrested or killed while making attempts to sneak into this side. However, a Jammu datelined PTI report, weaving a cock-and-bull story, said; "On being confronted by the BSF jawans and asked to surrender, the intruders started running back, they (official sources) said.

Meanwhile, Pakistani troops resorted to firing from across the border forcing BSF jawans to retaliate. In the exchange of fire, the intruders were killed, the sources said. "Senior BSF and police officers have rushed to the area and the bodies of the intruders are being handed over to police for further investigation', the sources said.

Elsewhere in Kashmir valley, militants shot dead a civilian, injured a surrendered militant and a BSF jawan and abducted a villager, while security forces repulsed a militant attack on a police station since last evening, an official spokes-Unidentified gunmen shot dead a farmer Abdul Aziz Dar

inside his house at Putshahi-Lalpora in frontier district of Kup¬wara early today, he said. Jammu and Kashmir police and CRPF jointly repulsed a militant attack on police station Lalpora in frontier district of Kupwara late last night, the spokesman said

A group of militants opened heavy fire and hurled grenades on the police station. However, the police and CRPF contingent stationed there retaliated and repulsed the attack. No casualty on either side was reported, he added

(KASHMIR OBSERVER, 24 DECEMBER, 2000)

Dissemination Workshop On Good Governance Held At DC Office FREE

Observer News Service

Srinagar: With a view to promote citizen centric Governance. Redressal of Public Grievances and Improving Service Delivery system, a District Level Dissemination workshop focusing on Good Governance practices/ initiatives in the District under the Nationwide campaign- 'Good Governance Week'(Sushashan Saptah)-Prashasan Gaon Ki Aur, 2022', was held at Meeting

Hall of DC Office Complex here on Friday.

Former Secretary GAD, Dr Farooq Ahmad Lone, who has served as /Ex Deputy Commissioner Srinagar was the Chief Guest on the Occasion.

While Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar. Dr Syed Haneef Balkhi, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Syed Shabir Ahmad, Chief Planning officer, Mohammad Yaseen Lone, besides all District/Sectoral and other concerned were present in the Workshop.

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-TENDER NOTICE

Sr.DEN-IV/FZR acting for and on behalf of The President of India invites open tenders (E-Tenders) against below titled tenders and available on www.ireps.gov.in with closing date 12.01.2023 up to 15:00 hrs. Bidders will be able to submit their original/revised bids up to closing date and time only. Manual offers are not allowed against this tenders, and any such manual offer received shall be ignored. Contractors are allowed to make payments against this tender towards tender document cost and earnest money only through online payment modes available on www.ireps.gov.in portal like net banking, debit card, credit card etc. Manual payments through Demand draft Banker Cheque, Deposit receipts, FDR etc. are not allowed. For more information logon to **www.ireps.gov.in**

	Tender Type	•	Open		Tendering Section	Works	Bidding System	Single Bid System	
	Date of Uploading tenders		20.12.2022		Bid Starting Date	29.12.2022	Bid Closing Date/Time	12.01.2023 15:00 hrs.	
	Sr. No.	Ten	der No		Details of Tender				
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	₹1,74,15,352.27		₹2,3	37,100/-	60 Days	12 m	onths		

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16 Army personnel killed in road accident in North Sikkim

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Sixteen Army personnel including three Junior Commissioned Officers (JCOs) were killed in a road accident at Zema in North Sikkim on Friday when their vehicle skidded off while negotiating a sharp turn, the Army said.

The truck was part of a threevehicle convoy that had moved from Chatten in the morning towards Thangu.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said he is "deeply pained" over the loss of lives of the personnel

"The nation is deeply grateful for their service and commitment. My condolences to the bereaved families. Praying for the speedy recovery of those who are injured," he said.

The Army said in its state-

ment, "In a tragic road accident, involving an Army truck on December 23 at Zema in North Sikkim, 16 bravehearts

It said the ill-fated vehicle was part of a three-vehicle convoy that had moved from Chatten in the morning towards Thangu.

of the Indian Army have lost

their lives.

"Enroute at Zema, the vehicle skidded down a steep slope while negotiating a sharp turn. A rescue mission was immediately launched, and four injured soldiers have been air evacuated," the Army said.

"Unfortunately, three Junior Commissioned Officers and 13 soldiers succumbed to the injuries sustained in the accident. Indian Army stands firm with the bereaved families, at this hour of loss." it said

Highway Authority Questioned For 'Double Toll Tax' On Cars Without FASTag

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court sought on Friday the response of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and the Centre to a plea challenging the rule making it compulsory for vehicles without FASTag to pay double the toll tax.

A bench of Chief Justice Satish Chandra Sharma and Justice Subramonium Prasad issued notices to the NHAI and the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRT&H) on the petition which contended that the rule was discriminatory, arbitrary and against public interest as it empowers the NHAI to collect toll at double the rate, if paid in cash.

The high court granted four weeks to the authorities to file their replies and listed the matter for further hearing on April 18.

Petitioner Ravinder Tvagi, represented by advocate Praveen Agrawal, has sought the quashing of a provision of the National Highway Fees (Determination of Rates and Collection) Amendment Rules. 2020 read with MoRT&H letters and NHAI circular due to which commuters without a FASTag on their vehicles are bound to pay double the toll tax.

FASTag is a device that employs Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology for



making toll payments directly while the vehicle is in motion. FASTag (RFID Tag) is affixed on the windscreen of the vehicle and enables a customer to make the toll payments directly from the account which is linked to it.

The plea said these rules and the circular convert all the toll anes to 100 per cent lanes with the consequence that commuters not having a functional FASTag are compelled to pay double the toll amount.

The petitioner, a lawyer, claimed he was compelled to install a FASTag device in his car because of the compulsion of paying double the toll in cash.

He said before installing the FASTag he had paid toll tax at double the rate. He referred to the agony of the commuters that he saw during his visits from Delhi to Faridabad in Haryana.

Parliament Winter Session Ends Early Amid Demands For Discussion On India-China Clash



Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: The Winter session of Parliament concluded today, six days ahead of schedule, with opposition members forcing repeated adjournments in the final days over their demand for a discussion on the border issue with China.

In his valedictory address, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla said the productivity of the House was 97 per cent during the 13 sittings which saw passage of seven bills, including the supplementary demands for grants and the Maritime Anti-Piracy Bill.

The session began on December 7 and was originally scheduled to end on December 29. However, members requested the government and the presiding officers of both the House to end the proceedings early citing the festive season and New Year celebrations ahead.

In both the Houses, opposition members pressed for discussion on the border issue with China, which was turned

down by presiding officers. Indian and Chinese troops

Agencies

NEW YORK: The incremental in-

cursions across the LAC and sub-

sequent calls for talks suggest

a long-term strategy by China

with no clear endgame, accord-

The long-running border

dispute between India and

China is partly informed by

China's anxiety about politi-

cal instability in Xinjiang and Tibet where Beijing has spent

over a decade systemically

cracking down on religious

freedoms and sentiments of

self-determination," the re-

The repression has wors-

ened with technological ad-

vancement which gives access

to facial recognition software,

vast databases of biometric

data and enables widespread

Galwan Valley and Pan-

gong Lake in the west of the

LAC, have hosted flashpoints

in recent years. In the east in

Tawang, the site of the latest

stand-off, there are discus-

sions about Buddhist holy

sites whose control can have

surveillance.

ing to a report in Newsweek.

clashed along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the Tawang sector of Arunachal Pradesh on December 9 and the faceoff resulted in "minor injuries to a few personnel from both sides", according to the Indian Army Defence Minister Rajnath Singh made a statement in both Houses of Parliament on the attempts by China's Peoples' Liberation Army to unilaterally change the status quo at the Line of Actual Control in the Yangtse region of Arunachal Pradesh.

In Rajya Sabha, Chairman Jagdeep Dhankhar said the productivity of the House was 102 per cent. The House held 13 sittings totalling 64 hours 50 minutes.

This was Dhankhar's first session as chairman of the Rajya Sabha, after his election as vice president on August 10.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Congress Parliamentary Party Chairperson Sonia Gandhi, Leader of the Opposition in the Rajya Sabha Mallikarjun Kharge, Union Ministers Ra-jnath Singh and Piyush Goyal were among those present on the last day of the session.

China's Incursions Across LAC A Long-

Term Strategy With No Endgame: Report

implications for China's au-

thority over Tibet and its next

Vijay Gokhale, India's for-

mer foreign secretary in a

recent paper, argued that Bei-

jing's policy throughout the

from other great powers, first

the United States, then the So-

to reduce risk to its security by keeping India nonaligned and

to reduce India's threat to its

periphery," Vijay Gokhale wrote

in the report for Carnegie India,

the New Delhi-based center of

the Carnegie Endowment for

International Peace think tank,

Sana Hashmi, a postdoctoral

fellow at the Taiwan-Asia Ex-

Newsweek reported.

"It's now once again seeking

War was to detach India

spiritual leader.

viet Union.

During the session, Rajya Sabha passed The Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Bill, The Energy Conservation (Amendment) Bill, three bills relating to The Constitution (Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes) Orders (Amendment), The New Delhi International Arbitration Centre (Amendment) Bill, The Maritime Anti Piracy (Amendments) Bills.

Lok Sabha passed four bills relating to The Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Orders (Amendment) and the Maritime Anti-Piracy Bill.

The Rajya Sabha chairman also took a dim view of the disruptions by the opposition in the House, saying it led to loss of precious time of one hour and 46 minutes and exhibition of unacceptable conduct, which plagued the proceedings in some measure.

"Disruption as an expression mechanism is antithetical to grace, decorum and sublimity of this solemn platform. The fall out is invariably negative as it generates disillusionment, disappointment, helplessness and hopelessness in the people," Mr Dhankhar said.

change Foundation think tank

in Taipei said: "China used to

think that India was the only

country in the South Asian re-

gion that could contain China,

so it presented a two-front

ary dispute resolutions with

countries that were less

friendly than India. But with

India, it's in its interest to keep

the dispute alive," Sana Hash-

According to Sana Hashmi,

resolving the poorly demar-

cated border was "a matter

of intent". "I think this is one

realization that has changed

India's policy. Now India is

definitely sure of the fact that

China doesn't want to resolve

the dispute," she said.

threat to India."

"China has gone

mi told Newsweek.

Govt Coming Up With Excuses To Stop Bharat Jodo Yatra, Says Rahul Gandhi

Press Trust of India

NUH (HARYANA): Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Thursday said the government is coming up with "excuses" to stop the 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', days after Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya wrote to him to consider suspending the march if Covid protocols could not be followed.

The yatra, which started in Kanyakumari on September 7 and will conclude in Kashmir, cols could not be followed.

Targeting the BJP, which is in power at the Centre and in Haryana, Gandhi said it is scared of the truth.

"Hindustan ki shakti say, Hindustan ki Sachai say, yeh log dar gaye hai, yeh sachai hai (they have got scared of power and truth of the country. This is the truth)," the former Congress chief said, adding that "we do not want RSS (Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh) and (Prime Minister) Narendra Modi's hate



is in Haryana, after covering Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Telangana, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

"This yatra will go to Kashmir. Now, they have come out with a new idea. They wrote me a letter that Covid was spreading, stop the yatra," Gandhi said while addressing a gathering in Ghasera village in Haryana's Nuh district. The Bharat Jodo Yatra led by him entered the state through Nuh on Wednesday after its Rajasthan leg.

"Now, they are coming up with excuses to stop the yatra. Wear masks, stop the yatra, Covid is spreading, these are all excuses," he said.

Union Health Minister Mandaviya on Tuesday wrote to former Congress president Rahul Gandhi and Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot to consider suspending the yatra if Covid protofilled India".

The BJP government is also trying to suppress the (opposition) Congress' voice in Parliament and this is also a reason why this yatra was taken out, Gandhi said. The Winter Session of Parliament began on December 7 and will end on December 23. a week ahead of schedule.

"If we want to speak in Parliament or raise an issue such as the Rafale jet matter, demonetisation, GST (Goods and Services Tax) or regarding hatred spreading in the country, do you know what happens? The mic is switched off... keep on speaking, (but) no one will hear," he said.

"The TV camera's direction is changed and the (Lok Sabha) speaker's face is visible and the mic is switched off in Parliament," Gandhi said, and added that "this is why, we had to take out this yatra from Kanyaku-

Mumbai Court Refuses To Stop Release Of Web Series On Stamp Paper Scam Convict Telgi

Press Trust of India

MUMBAI: A civil court here on Friday rejected a plea seeking temporary relief against the release of a web series based on fake stamp paper scam convict late Abdul Karim Telgi.

Telgi's daughter Sana Irfan Talikoti had approached the city civil court against the makers of a web series 'Scam 2003 -The curious case of Abdul Karim Lala Telgi'.

She had sought an injunction on its release, claiming the producers had not obtained the family's consent before the project was green lighted.

Her plea seeking ad-interim relief was rejected by the court, though a detailed order has not been made available as yet, her lawyer said.

In her suit filed through ad-



likoti has alleged the series is based on a book that had factual discrepancies.

The web series was in violation of the family's right to privacy, dignity, and self-respect, the suit claimed.

Telgi, who was convicted in several cases in connection with the 2004 multi-crore fake stamp paper scam and sentenced to imprisonment of 30 years in total, died in Bengaluru in October 2017 while serving his jail term.

NEWS MAKERS

Serial Killer Charles Sobhraj's Wife Nihita Biswas On His Plans After Release

KATHMANDU: Nihita Biswas, wife of serial killer Charles Sobhraj, said on his release from jail that it has been long awaited and that they are elated. "The main thing is that I want him to get back safely. We have been waiting for him for all these years. We are going to receive him nicely, he is going to get a proper health check-up," said Nihita Biswas.

"We're trying to send him back to his family in France by evening for security reasons. After heart surgery, he had some issues. He might need another surgery," she added.

Health and family are priorities for him now, she said.

French serial killer Charles Sobhraj was released on Friday from the Central Jail in Nepal. On Wednesday, the Supreme Court of the Himalayan nation ordered the release of Sobhraj on the grounds of old age and deteriorating health

Since 2003, he has been serving his sentence in Nepali



jail on the charge of murdering two American tourists. The court concluded that the 78-year-old will be set free as he had already completed 95 per cent of his jail term.

In the verdict delivered on Wednesday evening, Supreme Court said, "The regulation on prison management envisions a waiver of up to 75 per cent of the jail term of the prisoners over 65 years of age and with good conduct."

Sobhraj's lawyers had long been demanding the court's intervention for clemency. In different petitions, they had demanded a waiver of his jail sentence, citing provisions of Clause 12 (1) of the Senior Citizens Act 2063. The court has now ordered the government to make arrangements for repatriating Sobhraj to his home country within 15 days. "Kept in prison here at

Central Jail for a long time, the French national Charles Sobhraj has been ordered to be released by the Supreme Court on 21st December. We checked the records of Kathmandu and Bhaktapur District Court and have requested clearance from them over the cases registered against him. We are now preparing to release him from prison and then we will hand him over to the Department of Immigration. We will take him to the department after they finish their preparations," Ishwori Prasad Pandey, the Jailer at Central Jail in Kathmandu told reporters before Sobhraj underwent medical checkups.

The notorious criminal has also appealed to Nepal authorities to let him stay in a hotel and undergo open heart surgery at the Gangalal Heart Hospital in Kathmandu. But the authorities are yet to decide on it.

Thieves Dig 10-Foot-Long Tunnel To SBI In Kanpur, Take 1.8 Kg Of Gold

Press Trust of India

KANPUR: Thieves broke open a chest at a bank in Uttar Pradesh's Kanpur and stole gold worth ₹1 crore. They entered the bank's vault through a 10-feet-long tunnel, the police said today.

They dug the four-feet-wide tunnel from an empty plot adjacent to the State Bank of India's Bhanuti branch, the police said.

Though the thieves managed to open the gold chest, they could not pry open the cash box, which had ₹32 lakh, police officer Vijay Dhull said.

Bank officials took hours to

provide an estimate of the stolen gold. They said it weighed over 1.8 kg and was worth about ₹1 crore, Mr Dhull added. "It could be an insider's job

who executed the crime with the help of expert criminals. We have found some leads, including fingerprints from the strongroom, which might help crack the heist," Mr Dhull told PTI.

The police suspect the thieves



must have observed the area and got familiar with the construction and architecture of the bank, including the vault area. Bank officials discovered the robbery this morning, police officer BP Jogdand said.

Bank officials found the tunnel through which the thieves came to the vault, the police officer said.

Senior police officials, forensic experts and a dog squad reached the bank and soon launched a probe. Several police teams headed by senior officials have been formed, Mr Jogdand said.

Imran Khan's Ex, Reham Khan, Marries US-Based Pakistani Actor

Press Trust of India

ISLAMABAD: Former Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan's ex-wife Reham Khan has tied the knot with a US-based Pakistani actor and satirist Mirza Bilal. The 49-year-old British-Pakistani journalist, who was married to Khan between 2014 and 2015, announced on Twitter her marriage to Bilal in a simple Nikah ceremony in the US city of Seattle.

"We had a lovely Nikkah ceremony performed in Seattle with the blessings of @MirzaBilal_ parents & my son as my Vakeel," Ms Reham said in a tweet.

She also shared pictures of her and Bilal from the nikkah ceremony on Twitter. The first image shows a picture of the couple holding hands, showing

their wedding rings.
This is the third marriage for both Reham and Bilal.

Bilal is a corporate professional. He is a former model and has also been part of "The 4 Men Show", "Dil Pey Mut Ley Yaar"



and "National Alien Broadcast", current.PK online portal report-

Ms Reham was first married to Ijaz Rehman, who is a psychiatrist. The couple got married in 1993 and were divorced in 2005. Her second marriage with

Imran Khan lasted for barely 10 months. The couple got married in 2014 and were divorced in 2015. Geo News reported.

Reham, after her divorce from Khan and his third marriage with Bushra Bibi, accused him of being "unfaithful".

Man Charged For Drawing Salaries From Two Govt Depts

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Economic Offence Wing of Crime Branch filed chargehseet against a Government employee for withdrawing salary from two departments simultaneously.

In a statement, the CBK said that its economic Offence Wing produced Challan in case FIR No. 43/2022 U/S 420 RPC of Police Station Crime Branch Kashmir (Now EOW) against Fayaz Ahmad Bhat S/O Abdul Gaffar Bhat R/O Hayan Palpora Kangan before the Court of Passenger Tax Srinagar. The instant case has been registered upon a receipt of written complaint, wherein the complainant alleged that Fayaz Ahmad Bhat is working as CPW in in Education department since year-1997 and is also working as casual labour in mechanical department of SKIMS from November-2005 and since then he has been drawing his salary from two departments simultaneously, thereby causing lose to government exchequer.

spokesperson further stated that, subsequently an enquiry was ordered to be conducted into the matter which culminated into registration of Case FIR No. 43/2022 of Police Station Economic Offence Wing of Crime Branch Kashmir and investigation set into the motion.

During the course of investigation, it got established that the accused Fayaz Ahmad Bhat has gained pecuniary advantage/wrongful gain for himself which he was not entitled to, thus committed offence as defined U/S 420 RPC. Thereby the accused cheated and caused the wrongful gain to himself and wrongful loss to the Government exchequer with the criminal intention by getting the salary from two Govt. departments simultaneously and accordingly Challan of the said case produced in the court of law for judicial determination, reads the statement.

AC Okays Double Carriage Way Road From Rajouri To BGSBU



Observer News Service

JAMMU: The Administrative Council (AC) which met here under the chairmanship of the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, approved the proposal for upgradation of 8 kms of Road from District Headquarters Rajouri to Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University (BGSBU).

Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to the Lieutenant Governor, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary, I&K attended the meeting.

The Road being a vital link to the University also provide

connectivity to a population of about 20000 souls residing in different pockets/ villages viz. Dhanore Jarallan, Dhanore Dhiandian, Chowdhary Nar and Rathal, suburbs of Rajouri Town.

Accordingly, AC approved the Construction of road from Rajouri to BGSBU of the Length of 8.00 Kms (7.00 Kms Flexible + 1.00 Kms Rigid pavement) at an estimated cost of Rs.31.52 Crore for widening of the existing 6.00 Meter to 10.00 meter width having carriage way of 7.00 Meter and corridor of

JCB Used In Theft Recovered Along With Stolen Property

Two Accused Arrested, Locals Appreciate Budgam Police



Observer News Service

BUDGAM: Budgam Police had solved a theft case wherein a JCB machine was used to loot some three shops in Chadoora town some days back.

Police have arrested two accused people who had committed the offence. In addition to it, stolen items were also recovered along with the JCB machine.

On December 18th Police Station Chadoora received an information that three shops belonging to Showkat Ahmed Sonu son of Ghulam Nabi Sonu resident of Chanapora Srinagar, Mohammad Shoeb Chinga son of Ali Mohammad Chinga resident of Natipora Srinagar and Muzamil Ahmed Dar son of Ghulam Nabi Dar resident of Rangar Chadoora had been looted during the intervening night near R&B office Chadoora. The burglars had broken the shutters using a JCB machine and several mobile phones were stolen along with electric items and other accessories.

Chadoora Police in this connection registered an FIR Number 203/2022 under relevant section of law and investigation was taken up accordingly. During the course of investigation, police team of Police Station Chadoora put strenuous efforts and working on some leads, two suspects were brought for questioning from Herpora Shopian. During questioning the suspects admitted their in-

volvement in the burglary. The accused were arrested

and upon their disclosure, stolen items which included three Mobile Phones, three Redmi Power Banks, three smart watches 03. one Realmi MP3, one torch was recovered. In addition to it the JCB Machine was also recovered from the arrested persons, which had also been looted from a local resident. The arrested persons have been identified as Mehraj Ahmad Sheikh son of Gulzar Ahmad Sheikh and Ikhlas Bhat son of Bashir Ahmad Bhat both residents of Dashnoo, Heerpora district Shopain.

Meanwhile, during the rigorous questioning, it surfaced that the JCB machine used for commission of crime belonged to one Basharat Ahmed Yatoo son of Haii Noor Mohammad Yatoo resident of Chadoora which was stolen by accused persons during intervening nights of 17 and 18 December 2022. During further investigation it surfaced that one of the accused namely Ikhkas Bhat was working as helper with the owner of the JCB machine and he had hidden a spare key of the JCB Machine and used the same to make the machine operational during the dead of night on 17-18 December and then the machine damaged the

nearby shops to loot them. Meanwhile local residents of Chadoora have appreciated the police action. "We appreciate the action of the police team under the supervision of SSP Budgam Tahir Saleem and SHO Chadoora Mehboob Banday " said Dr Raja Muzaffar social activist.



TWO MEN WARM THEIR HANDS inside a boat in the interiors of Dal Lake on a cold

Results Of 5th, Middle Class **Students To Be Made Mainly On Academic Performance**

'Uniform Question Papers To Be Prescribed By SCERT For Year-End Assessment'

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Authorities have decided to prepare results of 5th and 8th standard mainly on the basis of academic performance of the student throughout the year from next academic session 2023-24.

Besides, the governing authority has further decided that the uniform question papers will be prescribed by the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) for year-end assessment for Classes 5th and 8th.

According to a local news agency KNO, SCERT has said this in a notification pertaining to 'Student Assessment and Evaluation Scheme' upto Class 8th for government and government recognized Schools of Jammu and Kashmir.

Stating the framework and Standard Operating Procedures (SoPs) of the scheme, JKSCERT said that the Head of Schools or complex heads has to ensure that the result of classes 5th and 8th shall be prepared mainly on the basis of academic performance of the student throughout the year.

"Uniform question papers to be prescribed by SCERT for Year End Assessment for Classes 5th and 8th." it said.

SCERT also said that the students (Potential Learners) shall be identified on the basis of performance and competency in assessment.

"They shall be promoted to next class on provisional basis with arrangement for special teaching of 2-3 months during vacations or beginning of next session followed by re-assessment for grade appropriate competencies and in case of inability to meet the qualification criteria in such reassessment tool, the student shall be detained," it reads.

It also states that the 'Student Assessment and Evalu-Scheme' shall be implemented from next academic session 2023-24 across

J&K First To Launch Online Audit App For Its Line Departments

Observer News SERVICE

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta on Friday launched the online application for conducting statutory audit of accounts of its line departments.

The meeting was attended by the Principal Secretary, Jal Shakti; Principal Secretary, Commissioner Secre. tary, IT; DG Budget; DG Audit & Inspections and other concerned officers.

Dr Mehta commended the local Audit department for developing this facility. He observed that it will make the process easy and more focused. He advised the department to keep balance between post audit and concurrent audit of accounts.

The Chief Secretary remarked that the system should be made more reliable and productive in terms of outcome. He asked them to forward the new audit manual which includes e-audit to all the offices so that they are made aware about the new systems.

The Chief Secretary also enjoined upon them to link the same with e-office so that officers have insight about the relevant reports and pending audit paras. He maintained that this mechanism should ensure that the audit is more thorough and comprehensive even if the auditors do not visit the auditees physically. He told them to make it both efficient in terms of quality of audit and management of time.

It was given out that it is an integrated single platform tool for access of Financial Information of government departments that even provides access to and use of data from BEAMS/ PaySyS as an additional tool.

It was further revealed that this web based audit gives intelligible insights at all stages in an amenable and analytical manner. It aids in seamlessly mapping both Auditor and Auditee besides managing audit teams

and define audit schedule. Moreover it generates audit reports as per configurable report templates available in PDF that can be shared with users through email. Email based alerts on regular update(s) are also sent to auditees for their information and necessary compliance, as was informed on the occasion.

The online audit Platform facilitates audit as per the defined process. The software also acts as a repository of records related to audit and is a good financial audit tool that considerably improves transparency & accountability, the meeting was informed. All communications relating to audit shall be made through this system which shall bring in much needed accountability.

Pertinent to mention here that earlier during 2019-20 Government of India had launched the online audit used primarily to carryout financial audit of accounts at all the three levels of Panchavats viz District. Block and Village Panchayats, Urban Local Bodies (ULB) and Line department by Auditors and J&K is the first among States/UTs to launch the same to audit its financial accounts of all the line departments.

With Jan Bhagidari, E-Unnat Portals, Citizens Of J&K Partners In Development: Govt

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Government has made Jan Bhagidhari as main mantra towards making the dispensation more responsive, accountable and transparent besides ensuring rapid growth and development across the Union Territory.

The J&K administration is earnestly working from last two years to make the entire governance structure transparent and accessible to the public in a hassle free manner.

To ensure social audit of development projects by the people, the Finance Department recently directed all the Drawing and Disbursing Officers (DDOs) to immediately update details of works in rural and urban areas on its Janbhagidari (empowerment) e-portal.

It also asked all Deputy Commissioners and Accounts Officers to update these details in respect of works taken under

District Capex including that of DDC, BDC and PRI grants.

Empowerment/Janbhagidari drive is a web-based initiative to bring transparency in the execution of works by enabling citizens to overview works or projects being implemented in their areas and become a partner in the process of development has been launched by the J&K government.

It is a one stop interactive and user-friendly digital platform. It provides detailed insights to people into nature, status as well as number of developmental works that are being executed in their areas. Works can be searched with respect to their location in each block or municipality, villages and district.

The idea is to make the entire project planning and implementation process open to the general public who will be ultimate beneficiaries of the projects.

The information available on

this one-stop platform can be accessed through www.janbhagidari.jk.gov.in and can be utilized by the people for social audit and timely feedback or suggestions or registering their complaints for improving expenditure outcomes in spirit of togetherness.

Similarly J&K Government is empowering the citizens of J&K particularly youngsters to avail government services at the click of a button on e-portal which can be accessed by logging into eunnat.jk.gov.in.

Marking a remarkable achievement in the digital journey of Jammu and Kashmir, e-Unnat provides a window to the government to get feedback from citizens on any subject related to service delivery, its quality for further improvement.

The platform is integrated with Rapid Assessment System (RAS) that gives users an opportunity to give their feedback about their experience of using the service.

Don't Need People Who **Have Tainted Record: Azad**

Press Trust Of India

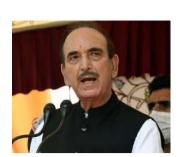
JAMMU: The Democratic Azad Party does not need people with tainted political records but fresh and energetic faces who can work for the people, party chairman Ghulam Nabi Azad said here on Friday.

Addressing the party workers in Jammu, he said the DAP will emerge strong political force in Jammu and Kashmir.

"I have started cleaning operation in the party," Azad told reporters here on the sidelines of a function Friday evening.

Stressing that in democracy Governor rule can't be prolonged at any cost, he called for early elections in Jammu and

"But here in Jammu Kashmir. we continue to live under the same and they probably want us to live on the mercy of bureaucracy," he said.



forum "open for all but only merit will prevail.

"Above all I am the citizen of India and anybody from any religious and social background can come and meet me," he said.

He stressed that he is not in the politics to "build business empires" and buy properties but as a politician his only job is to serve humanity.

On the occasion Congress leader Naveen Bali and Corporator Anu Bali along with hundreds of workers joined the DAP.

J&K's First SEC To Complete His Term In Feb-2023

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Jammu & Kashmir's first state election commissioner Kewal Kumar Sharma is completing his term in the first week of February 2023.

An official told a local news agency KNO that Sharma, who was appointed as state election commissioner in 2020, cannot hold the office beyond February 01, 2023 as law governing the appointment provides that SEC shall hold the office until he attains age of 65 years.

Born on February 2, 1958, Sharma would attain the age of 65 on February 2, 2023.

As per Jammu & Kashmir Panchayat Raj Act, 1989, the state election commissioner shall hold office as such for a term of five years from the date on which he enters upon his office or until he attains the age of sixty-five years, whichever is earlier.

The state election commissioner is appointed by LG on the recommendations of a committee consisting of the all elections to the Panchayats chief minister [chairperson], and Municipalities.

a senior minister to be nominated member by the chief minister, speaker of Legislative Assembly, minister incharge Panchayats and leader of opposition in legislative Assembly.

The law further provides that State Election Commissioner shall be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor of Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir when J&K is without an elected government and proclamation under section 73 of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019 is in force.

The State Election Commission was constituted by the Government of J&K under the J&K Panchayat Řaj Act for the first time on October 30, 2020. With the implementation of Part IX and IXA of the Constitutional provisions (Article 243K and Article 243-ZA) in UT of J&K, the state election commission has constitutional status with powers of superintendence, direction, control of preparation of electoral rolls and conduct of

Election Dept Holds Training For Newly Appointed MTS

Observer News Service

day organized one day training programme for the newly appointed Multi Tasking Staff (MTS) under the supervision of Anil Salgotra, Joint Chief Electoral Officer, who is also holding charge of Chief Electoral Officer J&K.

The program was aimed at to educate the participants about functioning of the department besides acquainting them with their responsibilities during elections and non-election period. They were briefed about de-

partmental hierarchy, duties and responsibilities, file main-JAMMU: The Election Depart- tenance, behavioral attitude, cleanliness handling of equipments, conduct of elections, preparation and maintenance of electoral rolls.

These Multi Tasking Staff (MTS) are being posted in different districts for their further

The training was imparted by Sandish Gupta, Additional Secretary, Akhter Hussain Nazi, Deputy Director Information, Rohit Kashyap, Assistant CEO and other officers of the Election Department.

IRCS Blood Bank To Be Made Functional By Jan 2023: Pole



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Divisional Commissioner (Div Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole on Friday convened a meeting of officers to review the readiness of infrastructure of Blood Bank established by Indian Red Cross Society, (IRCS) J&K in Srinagar.

The meeting was attended by ADC, Srinagar; General Secretary Indian Redcross Society, J&K; officers of JKPCC, GMC, Directorate of Health services of Kashmir, State Aids Control Society, PDD etc

The meeting discussed the completion of pending work of Blood Bank, release of payment, deputation of medical and paramedical staff for operation of the Blood Bank.

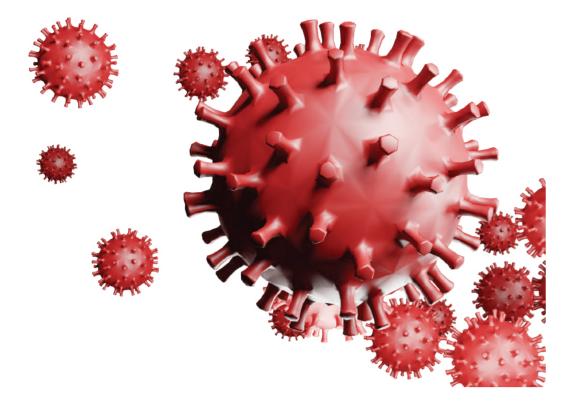
Addressing the meeting, Div Com directed JKPCC to complete entire pending work of Blood Bank infrastructure by

15th of January so that it could be made functional as soon as possible

The meeting was assured by concerned agency that the pending work of steel doors and glass work for window frames shall be completed on

Meanwhile, Div Com asked Srinagar Smart City to release an amount of Rs 1cr to JKPCC while rest of funds should be released after completion of pending work and operation of Blood Bank.

Regarding, the deputation of staff to strengthen manpower of the Blood Bank and to provide services, Div Com issued directions to Directorate of Health Services Kashmir to provide six staff members to Indian Red Cross Society, J&K, including Pathologist, Lab Technician, Lab Technologist,



Gagandeep Kang

At the moment, India is doing fine. We have few cases, we have had the XBB & BF.7 for a while and they have not driven an upsurge in India. In the absence of an even more highly infectious variant, I do not expect a surge. But will we be able to detect a new variant or a surge? We have ample sequencing capacity & if sequencing is done in real-time, absolutely we can

China may have to experience in weeks what the rest of the world saw over years. What does this mean for the rest of the world? New variants? Why not travel bans? What should we be doing?

o many calls about China, about what that means for India, about XBB, about 3rd waves, about new mandates, about travel bans, about vaccine boosters- thought best to get views out to summarise the current situation. Long thread, be warned

Let's start with China. China is opening up fast at a time when their population has low levels of exposure to natural infection. The current circulating variants are Omicron, which have evolved in vaccinated populations and are therefore very infectious.

This means that China will have lots and lots of infections. Remember India's 100s or 1000s of cases in April-May 2021 and Jan 2022? In the absence of significant mitigations, this will be similar. Lots of infections lead to lots of sick people.

Most of China's population has received 2 doses of vaccines. Most infections can be managed at home, but sheer numbers mean that even a small proportion getting severely ill, means that many people will have severe disease and that a proportion of those will die.

The risk factors for severity remain the same. Older age (& news from funeral homes in China indicate that the age related mortality pattern has not changed) & co-morbidities will continue to be drivers of severe disease & deaths. Lots being said about 'ineffective' vaccines.

Most of China has received 2 doses of inactivated vaccines with low levels of boosting (although the government is trying to boost boosters). AFAIK, the Sinopharm vaccine has been used mainly in China, but good data from the similar Sinovac/Coronavac vaccine from Lat Am.

The Chinese inactivated vaccines work well to prevent severe disease/death, but somewhat less well than the mRNA/vectored vaccines. A booster with these will help, but other platforms likely to be better. Hope we get effectiveness data from China, but probability low.

So the vaccines will prevent a proportion of severe disease/deaths, but numbers of people needing hospitals and dying will be higher than we have become used to in the past several months. But this will be higher than with slower open-

HINA IN COVID CLUT

Should INDIA Worry About China's Fresh Covid Wave?

When lots get sick, that includes healthcare workers. Understaffed, overloaded hospitals mean poorer care for patients. Also in winter, other viruses/infections result in more hospitalisations (the tripledemic in the rest of the world), making this bad time in hos-

Chinese govt pushing vaccinations, getting Paxlovid all good but with peak travel time coming up, this is a race against time. China may have to experience in weeks what the rest of the world saw over vears. What does this mean for the rest of the world? New variants? Why not travel bans? What should we

As far as we know, there are no new variants. China has the capacity to sequence, & we hope it will share data in real time. The variants now circulating in China have been in the rest of the world for months. The behaviour of the virus is not any different from expected.

In India as well, we already have XBB and BF.7 (the 2 being hyped as new monsters). They are, like all Omicron subvariants, very good at infecting people because they escape the immune response that prevents infection, but are not causing more severe disease than delta.

Omicron does result in severe disease in a proportion of infected, but not as severe as delta. It is not mild, but it does infect the upper respiratory tract more than lower. Each new subvariant thrives only if it is better at immune escape than the prior ones.

Therefore, greater infectiousness of new variants is a given & not news. Worry with China is not just the tragedy unfolding for them as they undergo what we have already experienced, but that high levels of replication mean increased opportunity for new vari-

For this, they & we should maintain variant & clinical surveillance to ensure that we detect signal in India. In the absence of an even more highly infectious variant, I do not expect a surge.

But will we be able to detect a new variant or a surge? We have ample sequencing capacity & if sequencing is done in real-time, absolutely we can. When hospitals begin to see severe cases, we will know. Need to & can understand & measure both the virus & the disease.

A signal maintained over a couple of weeks is a generally useful construct of the shape of the future. Look at where we are in India. There is no signal at the moment, & we are watchful.

So to vaccines. Who needs boosters? Booster doses on any platform are likely to have an incremental benefit in anyone, at least for a while. Among vaccines in India, all vaccines are fine, but order based on immune response will be protein, adenovirus vec-

Two doses of any vaccine protect against severe disease/deaths. We have no data from India that any Indian vaccine has a reduction in effectiveness over time, but from the rest of the world, the value of a booster in the elderly population is clear.

So if you have an elderly person in your family, please get them an additional dose, as a precautionary measure even without any Indian data. May help, unlikely to harm

For younger, healthier people, the value is likely to be less, but not zero. For public health programmes to be delivered by the government, this is a different situation where vaccinating everyone for marginal benefits means that other healthcare will be deprived of resources.

So without data and comparative analysis, I am unsure what the need & potential impact a booster vaccination for all will have as a public health programme. But the need for continued surveillance, I

Two doses of any vaccine protect against severe disease/ deaths. We have no data from India that any Indian vaccine has a reduction in effectiveness over time, but from the rest of the world, the value of a booster in the elderly population is clear. So if you have an elderly person in your family, please get them an additional dose, as a precautionary measure even without any Indian data

of any changes in the behaviour of the virus. This is a public health function where stable surveillance runs background & ramps up for emergin

What should stable surveillance be? All cause severe acute respiratory infection surveillance at all or sentinel hospitals (depending on resources), detection & investigation of clusters. Periodic serosurveys & environmental surveillance can be useful depending on pathogen.

Randomly increasing testing has little value. Testing incoming travellers needs a risk based framework, but X% sampling also means that you accept that every incoming case will not be detected. In other words, increasing testing needs a strategic approach.

Does all of the hype mean that the threat to India is high? Our population is vaccinated with the primary series and has had high rates of infection (90% estimated). Most infections were during Omicron, and

this gives us hybrid immunity. How long will it last and vaccines? At the moment, India is doing fine. We have cases, we have had the XBB & BF.7 for a

Now to other interventions. Masks? I think more important than mandate is an understanding of the se & setting for mask use

If you have any respiratory infection, stay home. If you need to go out, go masked. If you are vulnerable, stay masked in unfamiliar company or if someone around you is obviously ill. If there is a lot of infections/cases in the community, staying masked in crowds is good.

If you are healthy and there is little infection in the community, outdoors, how much value does masking have? (And really the best masks--not cloth. not the used for 5 days tatty masks). That depends on your individual risk perception, but to me, very little.

Next FAQ is- should we travel? Risk perception again, but no need to stop right now. There is very little infection in India. Travel, wear a mask if you are worried. Outside India, some places have more infections, wear a mask and go travel (not China at

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



BOOK REVIEW

TRANSLATING YUSUF'S FRAGRANCE

Badr-u-nissa Bhat

The Postmodern writer Italo Calvino once said to a reporter of New York Times,

"Without translation, I would be limited to the borders of my own country. The translator is my most important ally. He introduces me to the world."

"Yusuf's Fragrance" is a translation of Kashmir's preeminent nineteenth century poet Mahmud Gami's poetry. He is essentially considered the pioneer of Kashmiri Sufi poetry. Mahmood Gami was born in 1765 in a village called Advedar in (now known as Mahmoodabad), Shahabad. His eleven mathnavis, and hundreds of lyrical poems, represent a mystical style of Kashmiri poetry which almost all poets after him followed in terms of the metaphors, similes, allegories, melodies and rhythm, as well as the fundamental leitmotifs of Islamic mysticism. He was well-versed with Islamic thought, Persian poetry and religion, and, as such, Mahmood Gami experimented in a variety of ways to imbue Kashmiri poetry with a variety of expressions, wide range of themes, and intellectual depth, especially in his vatsun (a form of poetry exclusive to Kashmiri which can be understood as a love lyric though mystical in nature) and nazms (longish free verse poems); to the extent that he also introduced Persian genres of naat, gazal, masnavi and nazm in Kashmiri. Kashmiri poetry before him is scant and comprises mainly of lyrics passed down orally from one generation to another. Though the mystical and didactic poetry of Lal Ded and Shiekh ul Alam laid the foundation of Kashmiri poetry. Mahmud Gami is the first truly prolific poet trying his hand in mul-

The book includes a sixty-three page introduction to the life of the poet, Persian influence on his style of poetry, and various genres of poetry that Gami uses extensively and how he borrows themes

and subjects from the great Persian masters like Jami, Nizami, Attar and Rumi and how stunningly he makes them his own by portraying them in his Kashmiri style. A number of poems have been taken from the Kulliyat e Mahmud Gami (vatsuns and nazms) and also six of his narrative poems (mathnavis) have been translated. Around 2750 couplets have been translated. The book is the first ever English translation of Gami's poetry from his enormous oeuvre. And it has been published by Penguin Publishing House under its most prestigious imprint: the Penguin Black Classics.

The Translator here, Dr. Mufti Mudasir, who being a polyglot and a professor of English Literature, is well versed with the rich cultural and literary history of Kashmir and understands the nuances of both languages; Kashmiri as well as English; is familiar with the tones and shades of poetry is able to do justice to the original Kashmiri by producing it in English and it can be thoroughly relished even by a reader who has no knowledge of the original text and to some extent we can say that the work stands on its own.

The translator documents; Mahmood Gami was born in the times of upheaval in Kashmir and witnessed the brutality of three reigns of Kashmir history: the Afghan Rule, the Sikh Rule, and the initial ten years of the Dogra Rule, but borrowing from the impressionable past of mystical tradition and Gami himself being engrossed in the macrocosm of his own soul and also the dominant practice of the poet's time whereby the poets wrote mostly on love and metaphysical themes, there is not even a single reference to the political vicissitudes of his time.

As of today Gami is considered to be a romantic poet but the translator takes pains in explaining how for Gami, similar to many other Kashmiri and Middle Eastern Sufi poets, the metaphor of worldly love (Ishq e Majazi) is just a vehicle to achieve a communion and real love (Ishq e

Haqiqi). The translator writes:

"As this introduction has tried to demonstrate, an acute awareness of transcendental dimension of existence pervades Gami's verses even where he treats romantic and earthly love. He is not unique in possessing this profound spiritual consciousness as all pre-modern Kashmiri poetry bears this mark.

....even such a poetic theme as erotic love was invariably anchored in a religious or at least spiritual paradigm and could never have been conceived in secular terms."

To quote an example from the book, the translator has beautifully captured the essence and yearning of Sheikh San'an in the narrative poem (Mathnavi) 'Shiekh San'an' (which Gami borrowed from Faridudeen Attar's iconic book Mantiq ut Tair (Conference of the Birds)) when he sings a song in the rapture for the Hindu girl:

"The world is a mirage, how many have wasted away!

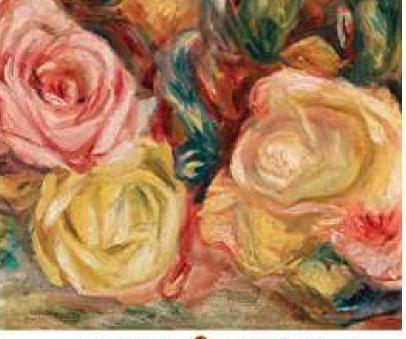
Heal my pain, be pleased with me, my love is very deep Don't put on airs, all lives will end on a

shriek of mourning
O Hindu girl, my bewitching love, give

O Hindu girl, my bewitching love, give ear to my wails"

There is a very famous vatsun of Gami which legendary Sufi singers have sung for over years, Chani bar tal raweym ha raetsi and every Kashmiri is in love with this beautiful lyric and the translator is able to infuse the same trance inducing experience and the realization of the cruelty of human transience with the translation which the original creates."

"Countless nights passed As I sat by your door, calling. Didn't my call reach you? Of crimson cups and yellow petals I am jasmine of Paradise. Long is the wait till Judgment Day



MAHMUD GAMI

Yusuf's Fragrance

Didn't my call reach you?"

The book also includes some of Gami's most famous nazms including Pompir Namah (the Moth's Tale) which captures the trepidations and anguish of a lover with the most famous trope there is in Sufi poetry of a moth and a candle. The translator also includes in the book the nazm: Tamsile-Adam (Parable of Adam) in which Gami shows that human life is akin to an air bubble on water which again touches the theme of impermanence of humans. The use of the motif of air bubble is also found in some great Sufi poetry, for example in the poem "Paani da Bulbula" by Bu Qalandar. This significantly shows the maturity and ripeness of Gami as a poet and as well as a Sufi.

Along with the narrative poem "Shiekh San'an", the book features six of Gami's major Mathnavis including "Yusuf Zuleykha" which is borrowed from Quran and many Sufi poets have exploited the theme earlier as well like Jami etc. The literary merit of Gami's this mathnavi made German orientalist Karl Burkhard translate it into German in 1875. Gami made the story significant in terms of poetic demands, like figurative expression, human passion, conflicts, and Zuleykha's role in society and families.

Dr. Mufti Mudasir's luminous translation brings the Kashmiri poet Mahmud Gami's timeless poetry to a new audience, giving it a new life in English by conveying the same

vibrancy of the original text while also sounding fresh. The introduction of the book also shows how phenomenal Gami was in using the same tropes, themes, metaphors which were used by Nizami, Attar, Rumi etc and making them richer and crisper in Kashmiri. This collection gives the reader an insight into the brilliance of Gami, regardless of whether she has ever read him in the original (source) language. It is an engaging read, encompassing the themes of spirituality, love, death etc. The poems are poignant and more importantly, eloquent in nature. There's plenty for the reader to gain from this book in terms of artistic value and knowledge. Although it is generally thought that translation cannot convey the richness of the original, this book, nonetheless, leaves the readers enthralled and amazed. It is particularly perfect for those who want to get drunk with the wine of Sufi poetry. It's a beautiful paperback, the cover being a picture of a painting of roses which adds to its charm.

"Yusuf's Fragrance: Poems of Mahmud Gami" Introduced and Translated by: Mufti Mudasir Farooqi.

Publisher: Penguin Random House Imprint: Black Classics Year: 2022

The reviewer is an artist and is pursuing Ph.D. in English Literature from University of Kashmir

The Rise of Kashmir's Self-Taught CALLIGRAPHER

abida Rashid is a self-taught Islamic calligrapher and medical student from Zainakote, HMT area of central Kashmir's district, Srinagar Jammu & Kashmir. Despite growing up in a community where certain professions are highly regarded while others are overlooked, Aabida has always been drawn to Islamic calligraphy. She began her journey as a calligrapher during the pandemic, using the extra time to improve her skills and turn her passion into a lifelong pursuit.

Aabida has always excelled in her art, winning numerous local competitions during her school days. She is now working hard to become proficient in Islamic calligraphy, which she sees as more than just a hobby. She finds peace and calm in the practice, and believes it is an effective way to communicate and pass on messages in a beautiful way.

In addition to her calligraphy, Aabida

also enjoys drawing and painting, which bring her joy and peace. She sees calligraphy as a therapeutic art that helps her focus and forget about her problems and stresses.

Aabida has received a lot of positive feedback and appreciation for her work from her family, friends, and anyone who sees it. She has even been recognized for her talent on a larger scale, winning the 1000 Women of Asia Awards. This award is a testament to Aabida's dedication to her craft and her exceptional talent as an artist

Aabida's message for other artists and beginners is to follow their hearts and do what brings them happiness and peace. She encourages them to stay motivated and not let circumstances hold them back. She also advises them not to hide their talent, but to come forward and show the world what they can do.



Rotating Molecule Of Europium Could Lead To New Tech For Quantum Computing, Find Scientists

Press Trust Of India

cientists at the US Department of Energy's (DOE) Argonne National Laboratory report they can precisely rotate a single molecule that could lead to new technologies for microelectronics, quantum computing and more, according to a study.

The key ingredient is a single atom of europium, a rare earth element. It rests at the centre of a complex of different atoms and gives the molecule many potential applications, it said.

"Our primary mission is to understand at the level of atoms the properties of rare earths, which are critical materials to US industry," said Saw Wai Hla, physicist at the Center for Nanoscale Materials (CNM), a DOE Office of Science user facility at Argonne, and a physics professor at Ohio University.

The term "rare earth" is deceptive. The rare earth elements are not exactly rare but are critical materials used in many electronic devices, such as cellular phones, computer hard drives, solar panels and flat screen monitors.

"We are able to rotate this europium complex by 60 or 120 degrees to the right or left," said Hla. "The ability to control

the motion of a rare earth complex such as this could impact a wide spectrum of technologies." The capability to rotate this europium molecule on demand could expand their applications into next generation microelectronics that run with relatively low power, quantum computers and more, according to the study.

Rare earths readily combine with other elements in the Earth's crust. It is thus difficult and costly to produce pure rare earths for devices. It is also expensive to harvest them from rare earth containing waste. The team's europium complex would reduce the amount of rare earth needed for a particular device and would be much less expensive to manufacture in mass quantities, the study said.

Key components in the complex are a single europium atom with positive charge and two small molecules with negative charge. The europium atom sits at the centre of the complex, while one of the small molecules is on the side and the other at the bottom, the study said.

According to the study, because opposites attract, these negative and positive charges keep these components together without the need for a chemical bond. And the small molecule at the bottom anchors the complex to a sheet of gold. This sheet acts like a table to hold the whole complex



in one place, just as you need a flat solid surface to spin a bottle.

"Normally, if you attach a complex like ours with positive and negative charges to a metal sheet, the charges dissipate," said Hla. "So, we were thrilled when that did not happen here. Our calculations indicated that the atoms in the complex surrounding

the europium atom act as an insulator that prevents the charges from dissipating to the gold sheet." The two negatively charged molecules in the complex work together to act as a control unit. To spark the rotation. the team applied electrical energy to a specific point on the complex through the tip of an instrument called a scanning tunnelling

We are able to rotate this europium complex by 60 or 120 degrees to the right or left, The ability to control the motion of a rare earth complex such as this could impact a wide spectrum of technologies

microscope. This probe not only controls the rotation but also can visualize the complex for study, the study said.

At a temperature of 100 Kelvin (minus 208 Fahrenheit), the team's complex rotates constantly. That rotation stops when they decrease the temperature to an ultracold 5 K. Applying the electric energy starts the desired rotation of 60 or 120 degrees, clockwise or counterclockwise depending on where the electric field is directed.

"Developing, fabricating and testing this nanoscale complex would not have been possible without the one-of-a-kind instruments in CNM," Hla noted.

Protein Found In Brain May Be New Drug Target For Schizophrenia: Study

Press Trust Of India

cientists have identified a protein in the brain of patients with schizophrenia which can be targeted by drugs to treat the neurodegenerative disease.

To identify effective drugs, Francesca Rapino, Lee Rubin, and colleagues from Harvard University, US have developed an efficient method to make large numbers of C4-secreting human astrocytes from stem cells.

In a paper recently published in Stem Cell Reports, the researchers followed-up with a screen of 464 drugs and identified a small group of about 20 that reduced C4 secretion from astrocytes. These drugs were effective in both healthy astrocytes and in astrocytes made from Schizophrenia patients' stem cells.

Brain cells called astrocytes regulate the immune response and inflammatory environment in the brain by secreting immune proteins such as C4. ry target for C4-lowering therapies.

Therapies lowering C4 levels in the brain and reducing inflammation may benefit Schizophrenia patients but are currently not available.

In Schizophrenia, increased levels of the immune protein C4 have been measured in patients' brains and increasing C4 levels due to variations in copy number are associated with an increased risk for developing Schizo-

Inflammation and overactivation of the immune system in the brain can cause loss of synapses and the death of neurons, leading to neurodegenerative and psychiatric diseases.

This research opens up new avenues for studying inflammatory responses and their regulation in human astrocytes and serves as a platform to identify therapeutic drugs in large-scale screening approaches.

'Glassfrogs Turn Transparent By Concealing Red Blood Cells In Liver'

Press Trust Of India

Scientists have finally unravelled the mystery behind a glassfrog's ability to turn transparent while they rest, according to a new study.

According to the study, a team of biologists and biomedical engineers has shown that glassfrogs achieve transparency while resting by taking red blood cells from circulation and concealing them in their livers. The findings have been published in the journal Science.

It is easy to miss a glassfrog in its natural environment. The northern glassfrog, Hyalinobatrachium chmanni measures no more than a few centimeters, and they are most active at night, when their green skin helps them blend in with the surrounding leaves and foliage.

But these amphibians become true masters of camouflage during the day when

they're asleep. "When glassfrogs are resting, their muscles and skin become transparent, and their bones, eves and internal organs are all that's visible," said Carlos Taboada, co-first author of the paper.

"These frogs sleep on the bottoms of large leaves, they're when transparent, they can perfectly match the colours of the vegetation, s a i d

Glassfrogs are some of

the only land-based vertebrates that can achieve transparency, which has made them a target for study. One reason transparency is so difficult to achieve is because of red blood cells in the circulatory system, the study said.

Red blood cells are adept at absorbing green light, which is the colour of light usually reflected by plants and other vegetation. In return, these oxygen-rich cells reflect red light, making blood - and by extension the circulatory system - highly visible, especially against a bright green leaf, the study said.

Taboada's team served that red blood cells seemed to be disappearing from the circulating blood

whenever the frogs became transparent. They conducted additional imaging tests on the animals, proving via optical models that the animals were able to achieve transparency because they were pushing red blood cells out of their vessels.

Taboada suspected that the cells were being stored in one of the frog's inner organs which are packaged in a reflective membrane, the study said.

"If these frogs are awake, stressed or under anaesthesia their circulatory system is full of red blood cells and they are opaque," explained Jesse Delia, co-author of the study.

'The only way to study transparency is if these animals are happily asleep, which is difficult to achieve in a research lab," said De-

But

Taboada

had learned

about an imag-

ing technology

called photoacoustic

microscopy, or PAM, when

he was studying biliverdin,

the compound that gives

certain species of frogs their

a safe laser beam of light

into tissue, which is then

absorbed by molecules and

converted into ultrasonic

waves. These sound waves

are then used to make de-

tailed biomedical images of

the molecules.

PAM involves shooting

signature green colour.

Office Of The Executive Engineer **R&B Division Shopian**

Fax No/Tel No: 01933-260226 Email: rnbdivisionshopian@Gmail.com

INVITATION OF PUBLIC COMMENT

Subject:- Permission for laying of OFC/providence of Right of Wav at District, Shopian.

The authorized signatory District Coordinator Jio Digital Fibre Pvt Limited vide Letter No. RJOF/OFC/SPN/2022-23 Dated: 14/12/2022 has submitted a proposal in this office for seeking of permission for Right of Way/ for the purpose of laying of fibre utility on road side. After joint visit the details of RoW is as under:

S. No	Name of Road	Chainage		Length In Mtrs	Width of Trench	Estimated amount for
		From KM	To KM	100000000000000000000000000000000000000	In Mtrs	restoration In lacs
1	Daramdora to Nawpora Bala road	lst	2nd	1360	0.50	17.45
2	Alamgang to Hermain Reshipora road	lst	2nd	1450	1.00	1.45
3	Melhora to Loktypora road	lst	2nd	1113	1.00	1.09
4	Kutpora to Nadigam road	1st	2nd	1256	1.00	1.27
5	Qongonah to Darazpora road	1st	2nd	1188	1.00	1.09
6	Moshwara Nasarpora road	2nd	3rd	92	0.50	1.79
7	D.K Pora Nildoora road &	lst	2nd	3800	1.00	4.52
•	Nildoora Hermain road	1st	2nd	3800	1.00	4.32

The above proposal for seeking of permission for laying of fibre utility on above roads is published for public comments within seven days in the interest of

In view of above the comments of public are invited on captioned proposal on mbdivisionshopian@gmail.com or below mentioned address

Office of Executive Engineer

R&B Division Shopian near Old Bus Stand.

DIPK-15497/22 dated: 23-12-2022

Executive Engineer R&B Division Shopian



The Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited Kulgam (Main), 192231 J & K, India T+91 (0)1931 260218; 9906963768,9906024477 E kulgam@jkbmail.com W www.jkbank.com

POSSESSION NOTICE

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

Whereas Mr. Iftikhar Abdullah Sofi as the Authorized Officer of the Jammu & Kashmir Bank Limited under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest (SARFAESI) Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers under section 13(2) of the said Act read with Rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules 2002, issued Demand Notice dated 13.01.2022 thereby calling upon the Borrower namely Mr. Habibullah Dar S/O Ab Gani Dar R/O Begam Kulgam and other comfort providers to repay an amount of Rs.21,19,540.39/- (Rupees Twenty One Lacs Nineteen Thousands Five Hundred Forty & Thirty Nine Paise Only) being the balance outstanding as on 31.12.2021 in the accounts of the Borrower, within 60 days from the date of the said notice together with the future interest and other charges thereon.

The said borrower/s having failed to repay the said amount, notice is hereby given to the said borrower/s in particular and the public in general that the undersigned being authority rized officer of the J & K Bank Ltd. has taken possession of the mortgage property described herein below, in exercise of the powers conferred on me under section 13 (4) of the said Act read with Rule 8 of the said Rules, on this the 20th day of December of the The said borrower in particular and the public in general are hereby cautioned against

dealing with the said property in any manner whatsoever and any dealings with the said property will be subject to the charge of the J&K Bank Limited for the amount in aggregat to Rs. 18,24,513.39 (Rupees Eighteen Lacs Twenty Four Thousands Five Hundred Thirteen and Thirty Nine Paise Only) together with future interest thereon from 30.11.2022 and other charges incurred or to be incurred.

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

Description of the Immovable Property

(As per the schedule provided in mortgage deed/latest particulars including any accreditations) Residential House along with land underneath appurtenant thereto measuring O4 Marlas O6 Sirsai falling under Khasra No 557, Khata No 298, Khewat No 173 situated at Estate Mouza Begam Kulgam and Land measuring O2 Marlas O3 Sirsai falling under Khasra No 557 Khata No 298, Khewat No 173 Situated at Estate Mouza Begam Kulgam.

Dated: 20-12-2022 Place : Begam Kulgam Mohammad Shafi Bhat **Authorized Officer**

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@jkbmail.com ; W : www.jkbank.cor

DIPK-NB-5716/22 DATED 23-12-2022

Researchers Reveal What **Keeps Bones In Good Function**

ANI

What enables bones to self-regulate and maintain health? Researchers from Charite Berlin have uncovered information about the essential role of non-collagen protein molecules and how they support the response of bone cells to external loads. To clarify discrepancies in microstructures and the incorporation of water, the researchers employed fish models to investigate bone samples with and without bone cells. They were able to accurately measure the water diffusion across bone material for the first time using 3D neutron tomography at the Berlin research reac-

tor BER II, with a startling outcome. Around 500 million years ago, early vertebrates in the seas became fish, adopting an inner skeleton and a flexible spine based on a nanocmposite of fibers and mineral, known as bone material. This "invention" of evolution was so successful that the basic structure was also adopted for later vertebrates that lived on land. However, while the bones of all terrestrial vertebrates are basically equipped with bone cells (osteocytes), certain fish species continued to evolve and finally managed to create a more energy efficient material: bone lacking bone cells, found today for example in fish such as salmon, medaka or tilapia. Samples with and without bone cells

"We asked ourselves how bone samples with and without bone cells actually differ in their microstructures and properties," saif Prof. Paul Zaslansky, who heads a research group at Charite Berlin and specializes in mineralized biomaterials including teeth and bones. Together with PhD student Andreia Silvera and international partners, they have now compared bone samples from zebrafish and medaka. Both fish species are of similar size and live in similar conditions, so their skeletons must withstand similar stresses. However, while zebrafish have

bone cells, the skeleton of medaka do not. "The background to the question is that the function of bone cells in bone and how they change with age is of great interest to the aging population," Silvera explains. Bone cells can respond to physical stress by sending biochemical signals that lead to the formation or resorption of bone tissue, adapting to load. But with age or in diseases such as osteoporosis, this mechanism no longer seems to work. "With our basic research, we want to find out how bones with and without bone cells differ and cope with the challenges of external stress," Zaslansky said.

Strength and elasticity Bones have a complex structure: they comprise nanofibers of collagen and nanoparticles of mineral but also other minor ingredients. Certain protein compounds, so called Proteoglycans (PGs), are embedded in a tissue of collagen fibers and nanocrystals and play important roles in tissue formation and maintenance. "PGs may be compared to salt in the soup.

IMF Projects 6.8 % Growth In Current Fiscal For India

Says country navigating 'very difficult' external environment

Press Trust Of India

WASHINGTON: Projecting a growth rate of 6.8 per cent and 6.1 per cent in the current and the next fiscal respectively, the International Monetary Fund on Friday said that India is navigating a "very difficult" external environment.

Choueiri Nada, the IMF's India Mission Chief, in her virtual interaction with reporters reiterated that India continues to be the bright spot in an otherwise gloomy global economic

"We are seeing the economy continue to grow pretty robust-ly this fiscal year," Nada said as the international financial body released the report of its annual consultations with India.

According to the report, growth is expected to moderate, reflecting the less favorable outlook and tighter financial

The real GDP is projected to grow at 6.8 per cent and 6.1 per cent in FY2022/23 and FY2023/24 respectively, said the IMF's report on India.

These projections are much better than they have been projecting earlier, Nada said.

'In fact, in our projections, India is contributing half a per cent to global growth this year and next," she said.

"But, of course, there are important risks and to have asked



risks are mostly on the downside and mostly coming from external factors. Perhaps the most important risk is sharper than anticipated global slowdown," she said.

"We are seeing the global economy slowing down next year. But there are downside risks to the speed of the slowdown, and it could be much sharper than what we expected in the report. This will affect India through trade and financial channels," Nada said.

She said the IMF also continues to see the war in Ukraine unresolved and could intensify and have an effect on trade and on prices of commodities.

"You've only seen one inflation and so the advances in inflation could be reversed and this is an important risk as well," she noted.

According to the IMF, over the medium term, reduced international cooperation can further disrupt trade and increase financial markets

about those, we see that the **Investors' Wealth Erode By** Rs 15.77 Lakh Cr In Four Days



Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Equity investors have become poorer by Rs 15.77 lakh crore in four consecutive days of market rout where the benchmark Sensex has tumbled over 3 per cent.

According to market analysts, investors remained cautious due to rising Covid cases around the globe sparking fears of another global outbreak of the virus.

"Besides spurt in Covid cases in China and Japan, the betterthan-expected US Q3 GDP numbers further raised concerns that the Fed will go for more rate hikes to tame inflation, which further accentuated selling pressure in the markets," said Amol Athawale, Deputy Vice President - Technical Research at Kotak Securities Ltd. The 30-share BSE Sensex tanked 980.93 points or 1.61 per cent to settle at 59,845.29 on Friday. During the day, it tumbled 1,060.66 points

or 1.74 per cent to 59,765.56. In four days, the benchmark index lost 3.40 per cent.

has slumped 1,960.9 points or 3.17 per cent.

continuous in equity markets eroded Rs 15,77,850.03 crore from investors wealth as the market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms now stands at Rs 2,72,12,860.03 crore.

"Globally markets were losing their grip post the Fed announcement which hinted on further rate hike in upcoming meeting Robust US economic data points such as better-than-expected Q3 GDP, higher consumer confidence along with a healthier jobless claims fuelled the worries

flaming the volatility.

"Additionally, the spike in Covid cases across China dampened the appetite for risk as it instilled fears of another global Covid outbreak," Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services, said.

On Friday, the broader market took a heavy beating, as the BSE smallcap gauge tumbled 4.11 per cent and the midcap

Govt To Provide Free Ration To Poor People For One Year Under Food Law

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: In a major decision, the government on Friday decided to provide free ration to 81.35 crore poor people under the National Food Security Act (NFSA) for one year.

Under NFSA, also called the food law, the government currently provides 5 kilogram of food grains per person per month at Rs 2-3 per kg. The families covered under Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) get 35 kg of food grains per month.

Rice is given to poor persons under NFSA at Rs 3 per kg and wheat at Rs 2 per kg.

Briefing reporters about the decision taken by the Union Cabinet, Food Minister Piyush Goyal said the Centre will bear the entire burden of providing free food grains under NFSA. The annual cost to the exche-

quer is estimated at Rs 2 lakh crore. Meanwhile, the government decided not to extend the free ration scheme Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana

(PMGKAY), which ends on December 31.

Under PMGKAY, five kilogram of food grains per person per month is provided free to 81.35 crore beneficiaries covered under NFSA.

This is over and above the monthly distribution of highly subsidised food grains under

Government officials de-

scribed the latest Cabinet decision as a "new year gift for the country's poor", saying that over 80 crore people will now get free food grains under

The beneficiaries will not have to pay a single rupee to get food grains. The Centre will now spend around Rs 2 lakh crore per year on this scheme, they added. PI LUX MJH NKD CS

Soon, Air Passengers Will Get **Compensation For Involuntary Downgrade Of Booked Tickets**

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Passengers will soon be compensated for any involuntary downgrade of their tickets for a particular class by an airline, with aviation regulator DGCA preparing to put in place new norms. Once the norms come into

force, the airline concerned will have to refund the full value of such tickets, including taxes, and also the affected passenger will be flown free of cost in the next available class, according to DGCA.

Against the backdrop of complaints from air travellers about their tickets booked for a particular class being downgraded by air-lines, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is now in the process of amending the existing regulations to address passenger

"The amendment will allow the passenger, who is downgraded involuntarily from his booked class of ticket, to receive the full value of ticket, including taxes, as refund from the airline and the airline will carry the passenger free of cost in the next available class," it said in a statement on Friday.

After stakeholder consultations, final regulations will due to denied boarding, be issued by the watchdog.

A senior DGCA official said



come into force in February next year.

The watchdog said that in view of rapid expansion of air services and the increase in passenger traffic volumes, it has been noticed that sometimes airlines downgrade passengers' tickets.

"For example when a passenger who has booked his ticket on first class, business downgraded to a lower class at the time of check-in due to various reasons like unserviceable seats, change of aircraft, overbooking, etc," the to deal with such a situation,

the norms will be amended. DGCA is in the process of amending its Civil Aviation Requirement (CAR) pertaining to 'facilities to be provided to passengers by airlines nal departure, a passenger due to denied boarding, has to be paid 200 per cent cancellation of flights and delays in flights' to protect charge, with the amount

affected by downgrading of their ticket, it added.

Currently, there are provisions for providing compensation to air passengers in case of denied boarding and flight cancellation. For denied boarding, a

passenger is entitled to various compensation depending on the situation.

If the airline has done class or premium economy is overbooking, then it can ask for volunteers in exchange for benefits. In case an airline has denied boarding to a passenger against confirmed booking, then there will be statement said, adding that no compensation provided the airline concerned arranges an alternate flight within one hour of the origi-

nal scheduled departure. If the alternate flight is within 24 hours of the origiof one way fare and fuel the new norms are likely to the rights of air travellers capped at Rs 10,000.



Secy Reviews Functioning Of Mining Department In Kashmir

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Amit Sharma, Secretary Mining,Friday visited and inspected a few mineral extraction sites of Kashmir division followed by an exhaustive review meeting on multiple departmental issues here today.

Secretary was accompanied by Joint Director, Mining Kashmir, Nisar Ahmad, Manager J&K Minerals Limited, Pramod Khajuria and District Mineral Officers of respective districts.

Secretary directed the concerned officers for conducting random on-spot inspection of all mining sites through flying squads at all vulnerable points in collaboration with respective police teams and district administrations under the supervision of both Joint Directors of Geology and Mining. Later, Secretary chaired a detailed review meeting of the Mining Department at Civil Secretariat, Srinagar.

Director Geology and Mining, O P Bhagat, Managing Director, J&K Minerals Corporation, Vikram K Gupta, both Joint Directors and DMOs of all the districts participated in the meeting in person and online.

The major focus of the meeting was to keep up the tempo towards legitimate mining practices in all districts of the Union Territory during the upcoming year 2023 and taking all necessary measures to ensure presence of the department through usage of e-Challan and e-Marketplace.

Secretary had a district-wise review of functioning of the department. He issued specific directions to both the Head of Departments to sort out all issues raised and discussed during the meeting at the earliest.

Secretary laid special emphasis towards making winter months exemplary in terms of best practices and keeping Mining activities alive and vibrant all across the valley so that ongoing projects of National importance like Ring Road, National Highways, Railway projects don't suffer.

Secretary emphasised collective efforts towards making J&K Minerals Corporation a model entity through successful completion of its ongoing projects like Jammu Sapphire extraction in Padder area of Kishtwar, Coal Extraction in Kalakote area of Rajouri district and Gypsum extraction in Parlanka area of Ramban district.

Agriculture Department Celebrates 'National Farmers Day'

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Agriculture Production & Farmer's Welfare Department Kashmir Friday celebrated Kissan Diwas across all the districts of Kashmir with a main function held at Agriculture Directorate Lalmandi, here.

On the occasion, an interactive session between the officers and farmers was organized in which different initiatives, interventions schemes, collab-

more aware of the different programmes (Centrally Sponsored schemes, Flagship programs) of the department.

Director said that the UT government has approved 29 projects under holistic development of agriculture and allied sectors, and implementation of these projects would not only energize the agriculture sector but will also change the economic fortune of the farming community of the region.



orative efforts were discussed threadbare, feedback from the farmers was taken and different strategies were discussed.

The Director Agriculture Kashmir, Chowdhury Mohammad Iqbal addressing the event highlighted the importance of coordination between the farmers and officers of the department.

He said the best way to celebrate Kissan Diwas is to increase the frequency of visits hury and a large number of to farmer's fields and make the progressive farmers among farmers community more and others attended the event.

He sought cooperation of farmers in the implementation of different projects and programmes and said that it is the cooperation between the farmers and the officers/officials of the department that decides the successful implementation of a project.

Joint Director Agriculture Extension Mohammad Syeed Peer, Deputy Director Planning Mohammad Younis Chowd-

SHORT TAKES

NDTV Founders To Sell Most Of Their Stake To Adani Group

NEW DELHI: NDTV founders Prannoy Roy and his wife Radhika Roy on Friday said they will sell 27.26 per cent out of their remaining 32.26 per cent shareholding in the news broadcaster to Adani Group.

This follows Adani Group becoming the single largest shareholder in New Delhi Television Ltd (NDTV) after first buying out a company backed by the founders and then acquiring more shares from the open market.

"Consequently, with mutual agreement we have decided to divest most of our shares in NDTV to (Adani Group firm) AMG Media Network," the founders said in a statement to stock exchanges.

The two together hold 32.26 per cent stake in NDTV while Adani Group now holds 37.44 per cent shareholding in the company.

Of the 32.26 per cent stake, the couple will sell 27.26 per cent while retaining a minority 5 per cent shareholding in the company.

"Since the open offer (by Adani Group) was launched, our discussions with Gautam Adani have been constructive; all the suggestions we made were accepted by him positively and with openness," they said in the statement. PTI

'20% Ethanol-Blended Petrol To Debut Within Days'

NEW DELHI: After achieving the target to sell petrol doped with 10 per cent ethanol, India will in the next couple of days start experimental supplies of 20 per biofuel mixed petrol, oil minister Hardeep Singh Puri said

Speaking at the 'Dance to Decarbonise' the first public awareness event in the runup to India Energy Week 2023, he said India achieved 10 per cent ethanol blended petrol (petrol 90 per cent, ethanol 10 per cent) in June, well ahead of the deadline of Novem-

"E20 (petrol mixed with 20 per cent ethanol) will come in select markets on a pilot basis in a day or two," he said.

Ethanol extracted from sugarcane as well as agri waste is being mixed with petrol to cut India's dependence on imported oil for meeting its energy needs. Also, ethanol has a lower carbon footprint than fossil fuels, helping the nation meet its climate targets.

E20 is being rolled out in 11 states/UTs of Delhi, Bihar, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Punjab, Daman Diu and Dadra

& Nagar Haveli. "The initial target for E20 was April 1, 2023, but we have advanced it," he said. Fifteen cities will be covered under phase 1. PTI

ESIC Scheme Adds 11.82 Lakh New Members In Oct

NEW DELHI: Around 11.82 lakh new members joined the ESIC-run social security scheme in October 2022, according to official data released on Friday.

The data is part of a report -- Payroll Reporting in India: An Employment Perspective - October 2022 -- released by the National Statistical Office (NSO). It showed that the gross new enrolments

with the Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) rose to 1.49 crore in 2021-22, from 1.15 crore in 2020-21. It was 1.51 crore in 2019-20 and 1.49 crore in 2018-19. From September 2017 to March 2018,

around 83.35 lakh new subscribers joined

the ESIC scheme. The report said gross new enrolments with ESIC from September 2017 to October 2022 were 7.49 crore. The NSO report is based on the payroll data of new subscribers of various social security schemes run by ESIC, the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) and the

Authority (PFRDA). According to the report, net new enrolments with retirement fund body EPFO stood at 12.94 lakh in October 2022

Pension Fund Regulatory and Development

It showed that from September 2017 to October 2022, around 5.99 crore (gross) new subscribers joined the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) scheme. PTI

'Retail Industry Sees 19% Rise In Sales During Apr-Nov'

NEW DELHI- India's retail industry saw a 19 per cent rise in sales over pre-pandemic levels during the April-November 2022 period riding on the back of strong performance of segments such as quick service restaurant and footwear, Retailers Association of India (RAI) said on Friday.

Region wise, the eastern part clocked the highest growth at 21 per cent as compared to the same period in 2019, RAI said in a

North India followed with a 19 per cent growth while both western and southern parts witnessed an 18 per cent rise each, it added. "The industries that did particularly well during this period were the QSR (quick service restaurant) and the footwear industries, with a 30 per cent growth compared to 2019," RAI said.

However, the beauty, wellness and personal care industry only saw a 7 per cent growth as against the same period in 2019, it added.

"Consumers are back to shopping in stores, and it's something they enjoy even as they continue to buy online," RAI CEO Kumar Rajagopalan said.

RAI Chairman Bijou Kurien said in the last two years witnessed dramatic changes in the Indian retail industry and adoption of technology by offline retailers saw a quantum jump. PTI

'Over 10 Lakh E-Shram **Registrants Have** Registered For Jobs'

NEW DELHI- Over 10 lakh e-Shram registrants have registered on the National Career Service (NCS) portal and are getting jobs accordingly, an official statement said on Friday.

The portal of the Ministry of Labour and Employment was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on July 20, 2015.

"So far, more than 10 lakh e-Shram registrants have registered on NCS portal and eShram workers are getting decent jobs through NCS," according to a presentation at the Meeting of the Parliamentary Consultative Committee of the Members of Parliament for the Ministry of Labour and

Employment. The portal is also integrated with 27 states and many private portals like Monster India, Naukri.com, Freshersworld, Merajob etc, the ministry said. The government has also approved 370 Model Career Centres for providing various career related services at the district level, it added.

The government launched the e-SHRAM portal in August 2021 with the objective to create a national database of unorganised sector workers. The meeting was held under the chairmanship of Union Minister for Labour and Employment Bhupender Yadav. PTI

Allahabad HC Reserves Verdict In Gyanvapi Case

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Prayagraj: The Allahabad High Court on Friday reserved its judgement on a civil revision petition filed by the Gyanvapi mosque committee challenging a Varanasi court order turning down its objections to the maintainability of a plea seeking permission to offer regular prayers to idols of deities in the mosque compound.

Justice J J Munir reserved its order after hearing the counsel of both sides at length.

On Friday, the counsel for the petitioner, Senior Advocate SFA Naqvi, contended before the court that the claim of the Hindu side that the devotees were restrained from worshipping Shringar Gauri and other deities on the outer wall of Gyanvapi in the year 1993 is an artificial claim and an example of clever drafting.

According to him, no order was passed by the then state government in writing in 1993.

According to him, the afore-

According to him, the aforesaid claim has been made only to avoid the application of the Places of Worship Act, 1991, which bars filing of a suit for conversion of any religious place as existed on August 15, 1947.

The present suit is barred by the Act of 1991, Limitation Act

and Waqf Act, Naqvi submitted.
He pointed out that even if
the claim of Hindu side is accepted, why they did not file
suit in 1993 when they were
so restrained or thereafter.
Hence, this suit filed before the
Varanasi court is barred under
the Limitation Act, which bars

Earlier, at one stage the counsels representing the Hindu side had taken the plea that old maps showed the existence of Hindu deities on Gyanvapi mosque and the Hindu devotees were regularly worshipping Shringar Gauri and other deities on the outer wall of Gyanvapi since long and it was only in the year 1993, the then government restrained regular worship.

filing of suit for declaration af-

ter three years of incident.

Hence, the Act of 1991 is not applicable to them. Further, they claim that the place in dispute is not a Waqf property. Earlier, the petitioner,

Anjuman Intejamia Masajid, which manages the Gyanvapi mosque, had opposed the claim of the Hindu side on the plea that the suit before the court below is barred under the Places of Worship Act, 1991, which provides that no suit can be filed seeking conversion of any religious place as existed on August 15, 1947.

NHRC Notice To UP Govt Over 'Tantrik' Being Called To Treat 15 Girl Students In Mahoba School

Press Trust of India

New Delhi: The National Human Rights Commission has issued a notice to the Uttar Pradesh government over reports that the administration of a staterun school in Mahoba district called a 'tantrik' to treat 15 girl students, who fell ill after consuming mid-day meal, officials said on Friday.

The Commission has observed that the contents of the media reports, if true, amount to human rights violations of the victim students, who instead of being taken to a hospital for treatment by the school authorities, were reportedly subjected to superstitious practices at a government-run school

The NHRC has taken suo motu cognisance of the media reports that the administration of the school called a 'tantrik' to treat 15 girl students, who fell ill after consuming mid-day meal. Reportedly, they were taken to hospital after police intervention, it said in a statement.

Accordingly, it has issued a notice to the chief Secretary of



Uttar Pradesh seeking a detailed report within four weeks. It is expected to include the steps taken or to be taken to ensure that this type of incident should not recur in the future in the state, it said.

Issuing the notice, the Commission has also observed that apparently, a sub-standard mid-day meal was served to the students leading to their illness, which is indicative of the apathy of the authorities concerned. Besides, the school teachers are expected to educate students and not to make them believe in

such superstitious malpractices, the statement said.

According to the media reports, carried on December 21, a video purportedly showing the girls being subjected to sorcery by a 'tantrik' came to the notice of the police, who chased him away before taking the ill students to the local community health centre for treatment. Most of them are in the age group of 9 -13 years.

Reportedly, the villagers had blamed ghosts in the school for the illness of their children, it said.

Plan Afoot For Single Window Clearance For Infra Projects Within 100 Km From LAC

Press trust of India

New Delhi: The Indian Army has identified 130 villages in border areas in Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim for boosting infrastructure, Eastern Army Commander Lt Gen Rana Pratap Kalita said on Friday against the backdrop of increasing concerns over China's expansion of civilian settlements close to the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

Lt Gen Kalita, addressing an event, also said efforts are underway to have some sort of a "single window system" for according approvals for development of any infrastructure within 100 km from the LAC as time taken for obtaining various regulatory clearances results in delays in implementation of key projects.

The Commander said many areas along the LAC in Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim fall under ecologically sensitive zones, wildlife protected regions and reserved forests and obtaining various approvals for projects become challenging at times.

"We are trying to evolve a methodology of some sort of a single window clearance for any infrastructure coming up within 100 km from the LAC," he said, adding the move is aimed at ensuring faster pace of implementation of various projects.

At the same time, the Commander of the Eastern Command that takes care of the LAC in the Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim sectors, said a lot of work is going on to develop road and telecommunication networks in key areas bordering China.

On the development of the model villages along the LAC, Gen Kalita said the aim of the scheme is to ensure reverse migration and stop people from leaving the areas for better prospects.

The Commander said while 28 out of 130 villages identified by the Army are in Sikkim, rest are in Arunachal Pradesh.

In her budget speech in February, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman touched upon the scheme to boost infrastructure in villages along the border with China. Besides the centrally-sponsored scheme, the Arunachal government is also developing model villages.

The identification of the villages to be developed under the scheme is being done under a consultative process involving the concerned states and central ministries including the home ministry.

Govt Approves Revision Of Pension Of Armed Forces Personnel From July 2019

Press Trust of India

New Delhi: The government on Friday approved revision of pension of armed forces personnel under 'One Rank One Pension' scheme with retrospective effect from July 1, 2019 and the decision will benefit around 25 lakh pensioners.

The decision taken at a meeting of the Union Cabinet presided over by Prime Minister Narendra Modi will result in an additional annual expenditure

of Rs 8,450 crore, according to the defence ministry.

It said Rs 23,638 crore will be paid as arrears to the pensioners from July 2019 to June 2022.

"The Union Cabinet, headed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved revision of pension of armed forces pensioners/family pensioners under One Rank One Pension (OROP) with effect from July 1, 2019," the ministry said in a statement.

It said the pension of the past

pensioners would be re-fixed on the basis of average of minimum and maximum pension of defence forces retirees of calendar year 2018 in the same rank with the same length of service.

The armed forces personnel retired up to June 30, 2019 (excluding those retired pre-maturly (PMR) with effect from July 1, 2014 will be covered under this revision, according to the ministry.

More than 25.13 lakh (including over 4.52 lakh new

beneficiaries) pensioners and family pensioners will be benefitted from the decision, it said.

The government had issued notifications in 2015 announcing the implementation of the OROP scheme. It had a provision for reviewing the pensions every five years.

The ex-servicemen have been demanding a revision of the pension.

"The additional pension to defence personnel and family pensioners will entail an additional annual expenditure of Rs 8450 crore," Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur told reporters at a briefing.

The ministry said pension for those drawing above the average shall be protected. The benefit would also be extended to family pensioners, including war widows and disabled pensioners, according to the

It said arrears will be paid in four half-yearly instalments.

"However, all the family pensioners, including those in receipt of special/liberalised family pension and Gallantry award winners, shall be paid arrears in one instalment," the ministry

The defence ministry said the estimated annual expenditure for the implementation of the revision has been calculated at approximately Rs 8,450 crore considering 31 per cent dearness allowance.

It said the arrears from July

1, 2019 to December 31, 2021 have been calculated as over Rs 19,316 crore based on dearness allowance of 17 per cent for the period from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2021 and 31 per cent DA for the period from July 1, 2021 to December 31, 2021.

Arrears from July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2022 have been calculated at Rs 23,638 crore as per the applicable dearness relief.

This expenditure is over and above the ongoing expenditure on account of OROP.

CONTD. FROM **FRONT PAGE**

Ahead Of Christmas

received orders from New Delhi and abroad for Christmas. We are busy preparing balls, bells and eggs.

"The birth anniversary of Prophet Jesus comes as a good omen for us artisans. We keep waiting for this day all year. By virtue of Prophet Jesus' birthday, we feed our families and educate our children." Maqbool said.

NIA Raids

communal disharmony," the spokesperson

During the searches conducted today, he said, various incriminating materials such as digital devices, SIM cards and digital storage devices etc. have been seized from the searched premises.

"Further investigation in the case continues," the spokesperson added.

Drug Menace:

people to desist from indulging in such activities otherwise strict action under law will be taken against the involved persons

5 Cops Among

resident of Darzipura, Kupwara, was arrested with some quantity of narcotics from his residential house," the spokesman said.

After preliminary investigations, Najar admitted to be a part of a big group of drug peddlers and disclosed names of some of his associates belonging to the district as well as from the Uri area of district Baramulla involved in this illegal trade, the spokesman said.

"Subsequent raids were conducted at various places across the district and 16 more persons were arrested," he added.

The spokesman said among the arrested were 5 policemen as well who were identified as special police officers (SPOs) Haroon Rasheed Bhat, Irshad Ahmed Khan, Sajad Ahmad Bhat, Zahid Maqbool Dar and Constable Abdul Majeed Bhat.

A political activist Ishfaq Habib Khan was also among the arrested persons.

Others who were arrested include Tahir Ahmed Malik, a resident of Rigipora, Khursheed Ahmed Khan, a dry fruits shopkeeper and his son Imtiyaz Khan, Tamheed Ahmed Khan, a Pakistan-based terrorist handler, Roman Mushtaq Bhat, a resident of Uri in Baramulla, and Asif Rashid Hajam, a resident of Batergam in Kupwara, the spokesman said.

He said Abid Ali Bhat, a resident of Bohipora Kupwara, Tanveer Ahmad Wani, a contractor, Nadeem Javed of Uri Baramulla and Tahir Ahmad Khan, a resident of Boniyar in Baramulla were also arrested by different teams of Police Station Kupwara.

The busting of this module has yet again exposed the direct involvement of Pakistan-based terrorist handlers in pumping narcotics into Kashmir Valley, aiming to destroy the Kashmiri youth, the spokesman said.

In this particular case, one Shakir Ali Khan, a Pakistan-based terrorist handler originally hailing from Keran has surfaced to be the main supplier of narcotics to his son Tahmeed Khan

on this side of the Line of Control (LoC). On Tahmeed Khan's confession and disclosure, two packets of Heroin-like substance weighing nearly 2 kg have also been recovered from his house.

Khan used to transport it to Kupwara to sell it to his now-arrested associates to earn money. His father Shakir Ali Khan first crossed LoC in the early 1990s to join terrorist ranks, the spokesman said.

After obtaining training in illegal arms and ammunition, he infiltrated back and remained one of the top active terrorists of Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) for quite some time in Keran, he added.

Feeling the heat from security forces, Khan

again crossed over the LoC and exfiltrated to Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK) and is now a top terrorist handler, who is also involved in pushing arms, ammunition and narcotics into the valley, the spokesman added. The police said during investigations it has

also surfaced that about 5 kg narcotics valued at Rs 5 crore in the market has been smuggled in from Pakistan by the head of this module Tahmeed Khan during the last three months. Out of this, about 2 kg has been recovered in

Out of this, about 2 kg has been recovered in the instant case, about a kg has been peddled among drug peddlers and addicts and about 2 kg remains to be traced, he added.

During the current year, 85 cases have been registered against 161 persons in the district. 33 people involved in narcotics smuggling have been detained and lodged in different jails under PSA (PIT-NDPS Act), the spokesman added.

Will Deal With

drug trade for the greater good of the society. The challenge of drugs will be faced as strongly as the challenge of terrorism is being faced," Singh said, adding that people of J&K have to continue their support against the drug menace.

The Football Tournament, the DGP said, was being organised to pay tributes to the policemen killed in the line of duty

"Jammu and Kashmir Police is organizing a number of tournaments and events throughout the year in order to provide platforms to the youth of J&K. These programmes bridge the gap between the department, youth & people and also spreads message of peace in the society," he added.

Later in the day, the DGP chaired an officers meeting at Police Control Room (PCR) Kashmir to review the security scenario of Valley.

"The officers briefed the DGP J&K regarding the security scenario and measures taken in their respective jurisdictions," a police spokesperson said

Man Goes On

said to be an alcoholic, was arrested immediately and an FIR registered while further investigation was going on," a police official said.

Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner Anantnag Dr Basharat Qayoom visited the bereaved families and expressed sympathies. The DC said that all teams were mobilised including health, police and administration when information reached of the incident. "Immediate financial assistance from Red Cross has been given to families," he said—With inputs from PTI, KNO

J&K Fully Geared

person desiring to test finds the facility

"He impressed upon them to create ample

awareness among public so that no unnecessary scare is created among them," the spokesperson said. The Chief Secretary, he said, also emphasized on assessing all the facilities afresh so that their

operational readiness is checked. Mehta, he said, asked them to take stock of medicines and other paraphernalia in advance so that people are served better, if need arises.

"He asked the department to give booster doses to the vulnerable groups like elderly.

He also directed them for encouraging people to observe the Covid appropriate behavior for safety of one and all," the spokesperson said. He said that the Secretary Health informed the meeting that currently there is no bed occupancy related to Covid in the health facilities

of the UT. He made out that the testing capacity of J&K has been augmented by many folds.
"The new three COBAS 6800 machines are also being procured for enhancing the facilities

further," Secretary Health added.

In the meeting, the spokesperson said, it was also revealed that every sample of a positive person is sent for its genome analysis as per the GoI guidelines. He said it was further apprised that the genome sequencing labs at both the cities of Jammu and Srinagar are being established shortly for better monitoring

and evaluation here.

"The international travelers are also being monitored and tested randomly besides observing the advisories issued by the Health Ministry, AIIMS and Indian Medical Association, as was divulged in the meeting," the spokesperson said.

Moreover, he said, the health experts also gave their suggestions regarding the current scenario and preparedness of J&K UT.

"They informed that the virus is not so lethal this time although the spread may be faster. They advised people to only take precautions so that they keep themselves safe as well as others," the spokesperson said.

He said it was revealed that J&K has around 20000 isolation beds available including 717 ICU, 1320 Ventilators and 5468 oxygen supported beds. It has a capacity to generate 1,14,366 LPM of oxygen from its 154 plants.

"The UT also has 4 CBNAAT, 15 TRUENAT labs in its hospitals to generate tests more accurately and quickly," he added.

KP, Dogra Employees

were serving in Kashmir for the past 15 years and did not lag behind in performing their duties honestly and with dedication, but the "current situation is such that even a single bullet fired in Kashmir portrays us in a bad picture," Raina said.

Taking a dig at the Lt Governor administration for "turning a blind eye" towards the protesting employees, he said, "I appeal to the Lieutenant Governor to pay attention to the grievances and demands of these employees. He should announce a relocation policy for KP employees."

The J-K BJP chief also said he has raised the

matter with the party leadership in Delhi and two "national general secretaries are coming to meet you and get a briefing over the issue".

"We will fight the situation. They have performed their jobs in the best way. But we will not allow them to get killed in their chairs (in their offices by terrorists in Kashmir)," Raina said.

He said Kashmir was in a state of war in 1990 and Kashmiri Pandits, though they were forced out of their homes, kept the Indian flag flying high.

Angered over Lieutenant Governor Sinha's

remarks about stopping their salaries, Dogra and Kashmiri Pandit employees gathered at the BJP headquarters here and staged a sit-in to press for their demands. "Let them stop salaries. Unless our demand for framing a transfer policy is met, we won't

join (our duties). Salaries are not more important than life," one of the protesters said. Slight Respite recorded a low of minus 5.5 degrees Celsius. The minimum temperature in frontier

The minimum temperature in frontier Kupwara district settled at minus 5.1 degrees Celsius, while Qazigund, the gateway town to the valley, recorded minus 4.6 degrees Celsius, the officials said.

Kokernag recorded a low of minus 2.8 degrees Celsius.

The MeT Office has forecast mostly dry weather in Jammu and Kashmir till December

Afterwards, the weather is likely to remain generally cloudy between December 26-27 and December 29-30 in the UT with a possibility of light to moderate snowfall over higher reaches, it said.

Kashmir is currently under the grip of 'Chilla-i-Kalan' — the 40-day harshest winter period when a cold wave grips the region and the temperature drops considerably leading to the freezing of water bodies as well as the water supply lines in several parts of the

The chances of snowfall are the most frequent and maximum during this period. Most areas, especially in the higher reaches, receive heavy snowfall.

'Chillai-Kalan' begins on December 21 and ends on January 30. The cold wave continues even after that with a 20-day-long 'Chillai-Khurd' (small cold) and a 10-day-long 'Chillai-Bachha' (baby cold) following it.

Fog Hits

few days.
"Due to fog, two flights were cancelled on Thursday night and will take off this morning once the visibility is better," a Jammu Airport official said

He added that no flight took off on Friday due to poor visibility. Meanwhile a railway official said that the trains are arriving 2 to 5 hours late from their scheduled time.

"The trains operation has hit from last night while the departure and arrival of trains is affected badly," he said.

In wake of foggy weather conditions, Station Director Jammu Uchit Singhal organized a counselling cum safety awareness session was at Jammu Tawi Railway Station for all the staff,

responsible for running trains.
Singla counselled the railway operations staff to take various safety related precautions during the prevailing weather conditions. The staff were also directed to follows laid down SOP's and keep in mind the weak points during

train operations in foggy weather
Earlier, in view of prevailing harsh cold
conditions, the administration has declared
winter vacations from schools and colleges
from December 24 and December 27 (Kashmir
Zone) and January 1 (Jammu Zone) respectively. The weatherman however, said that mainly
dry weather till December 25 and shallow fog
may develop at during morning hours in plains
of lammu.

From December 26-30, generally Cloudy Sky with intermittent Light to Moderate Snow at scattered places of Kashmir, higher reaches of Jammu and light rain in plains of Jammu is predicted.

Vehicles moved at snail's pace on the road with headlights on to avoid any untoward like incident due to fog.

Tourists including the Vaishno Devi pilgrims coming from across the country, face hardships at the platforms in view of delayed trains and immense cold.

The winter capital witnessed minimum temperature 6.3 degree celsius last night and the maximum was 17.1 Degree Celsius—(KNO)

2 Medical Shops

were either showcaused or licenses were also suspended.

"There is a strict message from Drug regulatory authorities to observe the conditions and rules of Drugs and Cosmetics Act wrt safe dispensing practices and maintenance of sale/purchase records of Scheduled and habit forming drugs," the spokesperson added.

Lt Gen Sandeep

hearts at Ashwamedh Shaurya Sthal in Nagrota Military Station.

Lt Gen Sandeep Jain, SM takes over the command of the elite White Knight Corps from Lt Gen Manjinder Singh, YSM, VSM—(KNO)

Pak Drone

a release mechanism for dropping a consign-

This is the third straight day that the borderguarding force has shot down a drone in Punjab. On December 21, the troops shot at a drone near the Daoke post in Amritsar but it crashed on the other side and the BSF said the Pakistan Rangers had lifted it.

A similar drone was brought down by the force in Tarn Taran district on Thursday.

Police Charges

terror-related activities, they said.
Suleman crossed the border illegally in 2002 and is instrumental in spreading terror activities in the Pir Panjal and Chenab Valley by creating nexus with Local inhabitants through drone droppings, and carrying consignments of illegal arms and ammunition across the border, they said.

The investigation exposed the terror network in Pir Panjal areas and Chenab valley, they said.

Ladakh Plays A 2-2 Draw **In Santosh Trophy Opener**

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Ladakh senior men's team created history on Friday after becoming the first side from the region to play in a Senior National Football Championship.

opening match of the 76th edition of Santosh Trophy was played between Ladakh Uttarakhand at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi. The match ended in a

2-2 draw, with the Ladakh side earning accolades for their determined performance at such a huge stage.

Ladakh raced to a 2-0 lead in the first 10 minutes of the match, as striker Chinba Thar-

chin scored back to back goals in the 4th and 9th minute of the opening half.

However, Ladakh's lead did not last for long, as the Uttarakhand boys used all their experience to level the

> ten minutes of the match. Uttarkhand striker Sucharu Dabral scored two goals in the 18th and 19th minute to bring his team on par with their rookie

score in the next

opponents. Ladakh's coaching team includes head coach Ajaz Ahmed Bhat, the Srinagar native is an AFC licensed coach. Ladakh next plays Delhi on December 25. The match will

start at 12:30 pm.

Police Martyrs Football Tourney Begins At Bakshi Stadium



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The 18th Police Martyrs Football Tournament started on Friday at Bakshi Stadium. Dilbag Singh DGP J&K Ppolice who was the Chief Guest on the occasion and inaugurated the tournament in which around 41 teams from various parts of J&K are participating.

The opening day of the tournament saw four matches played which were witnessed by thousands of spectators.

the Sports Office of J&K Police

for their successful organisation of the famous tournament once again. This tournament has created massive interest among the youth as we have been receiving many phone calls for participation from all over J&K especially from women's teams. We would like to take this opportunity to request J&K Police to create separate tournaments for our women's teams also so that they can showcase their talent," the DFA Srinagar said in a statement.

The DGP distributed kits in-"We express our thanks to cluding 200 footballs on the

3 Bandipora Players Leave For National Yogasana C'ship



Observer News Service

BANDIPORA: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Dr. Owais Ahmed on Friday flagged-off three players of the district for the 3rd Sub Junior and Junior National Yogasana Sports Championship to be held at Dharav Global School Sangamner District Ahmednagar Maharashtra from December 27 to 30.

While interacting with the players, Dr. Owais extended best

wishes to players and asked them to show fearless energy and bring laurels to the district.

Dr. Owais said district administration is committed to develop sports infrastructure in the district and to provide every kind of sport to players to showcase their talent in various kinds of sports.

He urged youth to stay away from drugs and get involved in sports activities to showcase their potential and talent.

Inter-District TT Competitions Begin In Shopian



Observer News Service

SHOPIAN: District Youth Services & Sports Shopian on Friday organised the Provincial Level Inter-District Competitions of Table Tennis for Under-14 Boys and Girls, at Bismillah Hotel Shirmal, here.

In the competition, all the 10 districts of Kashmir participated which included 60 student players comprising 32 Boys and

The inaugural function was attended by the District Youth Services & Sports Officer Shopian, Syed Noor Ul Haq and other staff of DYSSO.

The competition was deopen by the District clared Youth Services & Sports Officer Shopian. He has also highlighted the ill effects of drug abuse and insisted the student players to participate in the sports and remain away from the drug

He laid emphasis on the role of sports in daily life and insisted the students to participate in the games at all levels.

IPL Auction: Sam Curran Becomes Most Expensive Player Ever



Press Trust of India

KOCHI: England all-rounder Sam Curran on Friday became the most expensive player in the history of IPL auctions after fetching a whopping Rs 18.5 crore bid from Punjab Kings

An intense bidding followed for Curran with Mumbai Indians, Royal Challengers Bangalore, Rajasthan Royals, Chennai Super Kings, Lucknow Super Giants and Punjab Kings raising their paddles frenetically to secure the services of T20 World Cup player-of-the tournament.

In the end, it was Punjab Kings that broke the bank to get Curran, who drew highest-ever bid that bettered the previous best buy of Rs 16.25 crore that Rajasthan Royals had shelled out to grab South African all-rounder Chris Morris in 2021.

"I didn't sleep much last night, was a bit excited, also nervous about how the auction was going to go. But yeah, absolutely overwhelmed and incredibly humbled that I managed to get what I did. I never had any expectations to receive that," Curran said on Star Sports show 'Cricket Live Auction Special'.

Curran is going back to the franchise where he started his IPL journey. Back in 2019, then Kings XI Punjab (now Punjab Kings) made him an IPL millionaire before he moved to Chennai Super Kings.

Australia all-rounder Cameroon Green was secondhighest earner, fetching Rs 17.5 crore bid from Mumbai Indians.

England Test skipper Ben Stokes was the third-highest gainer, fetching Rs 16.25 crore from CSK who pipped Kolkata Knight Riders in another intense bidding war.

England players were in demand as batter Harry Brook earned a Rs 13.25 crore winning from Sunrisers Hyderabad.

India international Mayank Agarwal was also bought by Sunrisers Hyderabad for Rs 8.25 crore. His base price was set at Rs 1 crore.

New Zealand stalwart Kane Williamson was sold at his base price at Rs 2 crore to Gujarat Titans.

Out-of-favour India batter Ajinkya Rahane was sold at his base price of Rs 50 lakh to Chennai Supper Kings, the only bidder for the player.

South Africa batter Rilee Rossouw and Bangladesh al-rounder Shakib-Al-Hasan went unsold.

West Indies all-rounder Jason Holder was sold to Rajasthan Royals for Rs 5.75 crore.

Jammu All-Rounder Fetches Rs 2.6 Crore, Joins Umran & Samad At SRH

Agencies

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir's young cricketer Vivrant Sharma is all set to make his presence felt in the biggest domestic T20 league of the world Indian Premier League after being bought by SunRisers Hyderabad.

Vivrant Sharma from Jammu city was bought by SunRisers Hyderabad in the players' auction on Friday for a price of INR 2.6 Crore and is will join his friends Abdul Samad and Umran Malik who will play for same franchise as they were also retained.

Talking to KNO, Vivrant said that he feels happy after get-ting selected in IPL and will try to perform well in all three departments.

"I was interested in cricket since my childhood and support from my family was too good as I started playing while watching my brother Vikrant He said that since then he

has played at various levels including Vijay Hazare Trophy, Ranji Trophy and other stages "I and my family besides

coaches and relatives are very happy to see me in the IPL and there is a festive environment at my home," he said, while thanking his family, relatives and coaches including Randhir

Singh and others. Sharma further said: "If I get an opportunity in playing 11, I will try to prove my mettle and will try to perform in all three departments be it bowling,

batting or fielding."

Since years he has been practising in MA Stadium Jammu along with Samad, Umran Malik and others, and this year he played very well wherever he got opportunity and will try to continue that in the coming IPL, he said, adding "Yuvraj Singh is my ideal cricketer.

He said that his message to the youth of Jammu and Kashmir will be whatever sport they are choosing, choose it fully and dedicate themselves completely to get their dreams

Pertinently, Sharma is the 7th J&K player sold by an IPL franchise so far.

Before him Abdul Samad, Parvaiz Rasool, Rasikh Salam, Mohammad Mudhasir, Yudvir Singh and Manzoor Pandav were picked up by teams, however, few of them didn't get any matches to play.

Pertinently, as many as 21 cricketers from Jammu & Kashmir were included in the Indian Premier League 2023 Player Auction, which was held in Kochi on Friday. (KNO)

2ND TEST: Magnificent Pant, Steady Iyer Put India In Command

Press Trust of India

MIRPUR: Rishabh Pant enhanced his reputation as the team's biggest game-changer with a scintillating 93, putting India in a commanding position to complete a series clean sweep against Bangladesh on the second day of the second Test here on Friday.

Pant, who got out in the 90's for the sixth time in his Test career, again brought his 'A' game to the fore with a counter-attacking knock that formed the corner of India's first innings score of 314. Between lunch and tea, the match which seemed to be hanging in balance was singlehandedly changed by Pant, whose 104ball innings had seven fours and five huge sixes -- a few of them being one handed lofts.

Shreyas Iyer, who has been



very consistent since his Test debut last year, also batted with a lot of intent but missed his Trailing by 87 runs, Bangla-

second hundred of the series, getting out for 87 off 105 balls. Riding on the 159-run fifth wicket stand between Pant and Iyer, India, who were left tottering at 94 for 4, will fancy their chances for a fourth-day finish and consol-

idate their position in the World Test Championship table.

desh were seven for no loss at stumps on Day 2 but batting will only get difficult on the third day and playing Ravichandran Ashwin and Axar Patel on this track will be a Herculean job.

PCB Overhaul: Chief Selector Wasim's Contract Terminated

akistan chief selector Mohammad Wasim's contract has been terminated by the new PCB management committee, which is led by Najam Sethi. All committees es-

tablished by the nowdefunct 2019 constitution have also been dismantled. The new chairman made this choice as his first action after taking over on Thursday.

Wasim, a former Pakistani batter, was appointed chief selector in December 2020, and it was anticipated that this system would continue through the ODI World Cup in 2023. He was fired over email on Friday. Wasim's final selection was for the New Zealand series test team at home.

Pakistan played 16 tests during his presidency, winning eight of them and losing six of them, including two home series against Australia (1-0) and England (3-0). In the 2021 and 2022 editions of the men's T20 World Cup, Pakistan reached the final. Pakistan played 55 T20Is during Wasim's tenure, winning 34 and losing 18. Pakistan also won ten and lost five of the 15 ODIs.

"We are going to disband all committees today because they were constituted under the 2019 constitution that has been revoked and shall reconstitute them under the new SRO," said

Sethi as quoted by ESPNcricinfo. Sana Mir, the previous captain of the Pakistani women's team. has chosen not to serve on the

new management committee

in order to concentrate on her work with FICA and as a broadcaster. Shahid Afridi has also declined the invitation to join the committee in order to focus on his foundation.

Ramiz Raja and his Board were recently ousted by the Pakistani government after the PCB's 2019 constitution was revoked and a 14-member committee chaired by Sethi was given full executive authority to work on restoring the department structure, which had been eliminated in 2019 after Imran Khan was elected as the nation's prime minister (the PM of Pakistan is automatically the PCB's patron-in-chief). The new committee will have 120 days to amend the PCB constitution, replacing the 2019 version with the 2014 version. According to the 2014 constitution, the committee will be in charge of choosing a chairman and creating a board of governors.

Pakistan was whitewashed for the first time at home after England managed to clean sweep the three-match test series 3-0. (ANI)



FIFA Investigating How Celebrity Chef Got Onto World Cup Final Pitch

■FA has launched an investigation into how individuals gained "undue access" als gained "undue access" to the pitch following the World Cup final after images and videos of Turkish celebrity chef Nusret Gokce celebrating with Argentina's players went viral on social media Cokce who owns a chain of restaurants and is known as 'Salt Bae' for his theatrical style of sprinkling salt on his steaks, posted videos and photos on his Instagram page of himself with Argentina's players after their win over France in the final.

He was also photographed holding the World Cup trophy. According to FIFA's website, the trophy can only be touched by a "very select group of people," including former winners and heads of state. Videos circulating on social media also showed Gokce gripping Lionel Messi's arm in an attempt to draw the Argentina captain's attention. "Following a review, FIFA

has been establishing how individuals gained undue access to the pitch after the closing ceremony at Lusail Stadium on 18 December," world soccer's governing body said in a statement. "The appropriate internal action will be taken."

Gokce went viral in ter posting videos of himself salting meat with a cobra-like manoeuvre. He has nearly 50 million Instagram followers and has helped launch Nusr-Et restaurants, which charge several hundred dollars for some cuts of meat, in a number of locations across the world.

The restaurateur has been pictured with several footballers and other celebrities at his restaurants, including Robert Lewandowski and Kylian Mbappe. He posted a video of a previous meeting with Messi to his Instagram earlier this week.

Australian Football Club Sanctioned After Pitch Invasion

Agencies

MELBOURNE: The Melbourne Victory football club has been prevented from selling tickets to home games and fans cannot attend away matches under Football Australia's preliminary sanctions for a violent pitch invasion.

The Victory were put on notice after 150 spectators stormed the AAMI Park pitch in last Saturday's A-League match against Melbourne City, forcing the match to be abandoned.

City goalkeeper Tom Glover sustained a concussion and facial lacerations when he was hit with a metal bucket wielded by a pitch invader. Referee Alex King, a television cameraman and two security guards were also injured.

Football Australia has not fully

determined final sanctions but has put Friday's temporary measures in place until Jan. 15.

During that time, Victory fans are barred from attending their away men's Monday match with Western United at AAMI Park. Only United members and fans who had bought a ticket before 11 a.m. Friday can attend, with other tickets to be refunded.

Victory fans also cannot attend away men's games against Central Coast on New Year's Eve or Adelaide United on Jan. 14.

Victoria Police confirmed 29 persons have been arrested or charged over the pitch invasion, with 24 – including 11 men aged between 18 and 38 dealt with on Friday — so far facing charges. A total of 36 people have so far been identified by police.





Agenceis

athmandu: French serial killer Charles Sobhraj, responsible for multiple murders in the 1970s across Asia, said he felt "great" after being released from prison in Nepal where he served almost 20 years.

"I feel great... I have a lot to do. I have to sue a lot of people. Including the state of Nepal," Sobhraj told AFP on board a plane for his deportation to France.

Asked if he thought he had been wrongly described as a serial killer, the 78-year-old said: "Yes, yes."

Nepal's top court ruled on Wednesday that he should be freed on health grounds and deported to France within 15 days.

On Friday, he was released and put on a flight at Kathmandu airport to take him via Doha to Paris, where he was due to land early on Saturday.

'Bikini killer'

Sobhraj's life was chronicled in the series "The Serpent" coproduced by Netflix and the BBC. Born in Saigon to an Indian father and a Vietnamese mother who later married a Frenchman, Sobhraj embarked on an inter-

national life of crime and ended

up in Thailand in 1975.

Posing as a gem trader, he would befriend his victims, many of them Western backpackers on the 1970s hippie trail, before drugging, robbing and murdering them.

Suave and sophisticated, he was implicated in the murder of a young American woman whose body was found on a beach wearing a bikini in 1975.

Nicknamed the "bikini killer", he was eventually linked to more than 20 murders.

He was arrested in India in 1976 and ultimately spent 21 years in jail there, with a brief break in 1986 when he drugged prison guards and escaped. He was recaptured in the Indian coastal state of Goa.

Released in 1997, Sobhraj lived in Paris, giving paid interviews to journalists, but went back to Nepal in 2003.

The 'Karma' question

He was spotted in a casino playing baccarat by journalist Joseph Nathan, one of the founders of the Himalayan Times newspaper, and arrested.

"He looked harmless... It was sheer luck that I recognised him," Nathan told AFP on Thursday. "I think it was karma."

A court in Nepal handed Sobhraj a life sentence the following year for killing US tourist Connie Jo Bronzich in 1975. A decade later, he was also found guilty of killing Bronzich's Canadian companion.

Behind bars, Sobhraj maintained he was innocent of both murders and claimed he had never been to Nepal before the trip that resulted in his arrest.

"I really didn't do it, and I think I will be out," he told AFP in 2007 during an interview at Kathmandu's Central Jail.

Covid: UK Researchers Call For Nasal Spray Vaccine To Fortify Protection



Agenceis

Antibodies produced in the nose decline nine months after COVID-19 infection, while antibodies found in the blood last at least a year, a new study has found.

Antibodies in the nasal fluid, known as immunoglobulin A, or IgA, provide first-line defence against COVID-19 by blocking SARS-CoV-2 virus when it first enters the respiratory tract. These antibodies are very effective in preventing the virus from entering cells and causing infection.

However, the investigators found that the nasal antibodies were only present in those recently infected and were particularly short-lived against the Omicron variant, compared to earlier variants.

The research was led by teams from Imperial College London and the University of Liverpool.

Based on the study, the researchers have called for the next generation of vaccines to include nasal spray or inhaled vaccines that target these antibodies more effectively, which could potentially reduce infection and transmission.

These new findings, published in the journal eBioMedi-

cine, may explain why people who have recovered from CO-VID are at risk of reinfection especially with Omicron and its sub variants.

The study also found that vaccination is very effective in creating and boosting antibodies in the blood, which prevent severe disease, but had very little effect on nasal IgA levels.

"Before our study, it was unclear how long these important nasal antibodies lasted. Our study found durable immune responses after infection and vaccination, but these key nasal antibodies were shorter-lived than those in the blood.

"While blood antibodies help to protect against disease, nasal antibodies can prevent infection altogether. This might be an important factor behind repeat infections with the SARS-CoV-2 virus and its new variants," said Dr Felicity Liew, first author of the study.

The researchers note that more studies that directly analyse these nasal antibodies and reinfections are needed to confirm their results.

The research studied almost 450 people who had been admitted to hospitals with CO-VID-19 between February 2020 and March 2021, before the emergence of the Omicron vari-

ant and prior to vaccine rollout.

"Our results highlight a need for nasal spray vaccines that can boost these local antibodies in the nose and lungs. Such vaccines might be able to prevent people from getting infected with the SARS-CoV-2 virus and reduce transmission of the virus between people.

"This could help us to better control the pandemic and stop new variants emerging," said Peter Openshaw, co-senior author of the study.

"Our current vaccines are designed to reduce severe disease and death and are dramatically effective in this aim. It's now essential to also develop nasal spray vaccines that can provide better protection against infection." said Openshaw

tion," said Openshaw.

The study analysed antibodies of the participants to understand how long nasal antibodies lasted, compared with antibodies found in the blood. They also studied the effect of subsequent COVID-19 vaccines on antibodies in the nose and blood.

They also found that blood antibodies from participants continued to bind the original SARS-CoV-2 virus, and the Delta and Omicron variants a year after infection, but found that booster vaccines are needed to maintain this immunity.

"Does Saffron Belong To Hindus...": Farooq Abdullah Amid 'Pathaan' Row

Agenceis

fter several BJP leaders raised objections to Deepika Padukone wearing saffron-coloured clothes in Shah Rukh Khan's new film 'Pathaan', former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Farooq Abdullah has come out in support of the film and slammed elements for creating division by linking 'saffron colour' to Hindus and 'green' to Muslims.

"A controversy erupted over wearing saffron-coloured clothes in Shah Rukh Khan's new film (Pathaan). Does it mean that saffron belongs to Hindus and green belongs to Muslims? What is this? Cow belongs to Hindus and ox belongs to Muslims? Abdullah said.

Abdullah also issued a piece of advice, saying that it is imperative that people of all religions should practice brotherhood so that the country can survive.

"It's true that hatred has increased in India but leaving the country is not a solution. We've to stay united & finish it (hatred). If this country has to survive, people of all religions should practice brotherhood," Abdullah said on RJD leader AB Siddiqui's statement.

Notably, RJD leader Abdul Bari Siddiqui said that he asked his son and daughter to get jobs abroad, and if possible, get citizenship there as well.

Recently, a seer from Ayodhya has threatened to "burn Shah Rukh Khan alive," in the wake of the controversy triggered by the recently released "Besharam Rang" song, a dance sequence from the superstar's upcoming movie "Pathan" which features Deepika Padukone and Khan.

Talking to reporters, Jagadguru Paramhans Acharya of Tapasvi Chhawani also said that he would defend in court anybody who will "burn" the actor.

The seer also called for a ban on the film in theatres and added that if the film is screened in any cinema hall, then that cinema hall will be burned down."

They have insulted our Bhagwa rang (saffron colour). Such films should be boycotted...Shah Rukh Khan has made no web series against the Prophet because he has no guts... He only insults Sanatan Dharma. Insulting Sanatan Dharma has been made a means of earning money. If Sanatan Dharma is insulted, then a death sentence will be given. I will burn Shah Rukh alive if I see him," Paramhans Acharya said.

Shah Rukh Khan and Deepika Padukone's song titled 'Besharam Rang' depicting a dance sequence has triggered controversy since its release.

The song is facing severe criticism with several BJP leaders also raising objections. Madhya Pradesh Home Minister Narottam Mishra said earlier talking to reporters, "The costumes in the song at first glance are objectionable. It is clearly visible that the song of the film 'Pathaan' has been shot with a dirty mindset."

Mishra's statement came two days after the song was released.

"I don't think this is right, and I will tell the director and makers of the film to fix it. Earlier also Deepika Padukone came in support of 'Tukde Tukde Gang' at INU and that's why her mentality has come in front of everyone before. And that is why I believe that the name of this song 'Besharam Rang' is also objectionable in itself and the way saffron and green have been worn, the song's colours, the lyrics and the title of the film are not peaceful. It needs improvement. If it is not done, then we will consider whether its telecast should be allowed in Madhya Pradesh. Now let's see, so far all those who have been asked have improved. If it's not done then we will consider it," he added.

The song is a dance sequence composed by Vishal-Sheykhar with lyrics by Kumaar.

Helmed by Siddharth Anand, 'Pathaan' is scheduled to hit theatres on January 25, 2023.

