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Take Precautions As Cardiac Arrest Cases Rise In Freezing Cold

Auqib Javeed

Srinagar: Amid intensifying chill across the valley, the hospitals in Kashmir are witnessing an increase in footfall of

cardiac arrest patients.

The health experts in the valley maintain that chill intensifies risk of heart attacks, stroke and other diseases and advised people to take more precautions.

They said not only elderly people, but young and healthy

individuals also come to hospitals with massive heart attacks and strokes

Dr. Irfan Ahmad Bhat, senior cardiologist at Shri Maharaja Hari Singh (SMHS) hospital told Kashmir Observer that they people need to understand that in order to keep the body warm during winters the work of the heart doubles.

"But this is not happening in the valley only, wherever you have harsher winters, the heart attacks are more," Dr. Irfan



told Kashmir Observer. He further said chill narrows

the blood vessels and arteries of the heart as a result the flood flow is less to the heart. "The Blood pressure also shoots-up during winters, which affects the heart," he

The patients who are prone to heart attack, according to doctors are-Diabetic, Blood pressure, smokers and people above the age of 60 years.

According to officials from SMHS, the territory care hospitals witness 16 to 20 cardiac arrest cases every day, same is the case with Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of

Medical Sciences (SKIMS). Dr. Hilal Ahmad Rather, HOD Cardiology SKIMS said that they usually witness more cases of heart failure and stroke during winters.

He, however argues that there is no such research done by anyone to know why more heart attacks in winters but maintains that cold is a risk factor for heart attacks and strokes.

"Sedentary lifestyle, peculiar Dietary habits during winters might be the More on P6

Forces Put On High Alert After

Police Says 4 Terrorists Gunned Down In Chance Encounter

Jammu Encounter



Observer news Service

Jammu: Security forces have been put on high alert across the Jammu region, particularly on the highway, after four heavily armed militants were gunned down on Wednesday, officials said.

The counter infiltration grid has been put on high alert and security has been tightened in the region's border areas.

Four terrorists, travelling in a truck to More on P6

Truck Had Fake Number Plate: ADGP

he truck which was carrying the four heavily armed terrorists, who were killed by security forces on Wednesday morning, had a fake registration plate and tampered engine and chassis numbers, Additional Director General of Police,

HM Reviews J&K Situation In New Delhi Meet

Press Trust of India

New Delhi: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Wednesday said the ecosystem in Jammu and Kashmir that aids, abets and sustains the terrorist-separatist campaign to the detriment of the well-being of common people requires to be dismantled.

At a meeting here, Shah reviewed the functioning of the security grid and various aspects related to security in Jammu and Kashmir and gave directions to officials to follow the policy of zero tolerance against terrorism.



"A terror ecosystem comprising elements that aid, abet and sustain the terrorist-separatist campaign to the More on P6

Situation Peaceful In J&K: Thakur

New Delhi: Does Rahul Gandhi want to vitiate the atmosphere in Kashmir, Union minister Anurag Thakur asked on Wednesday about the Congress' plans to unfurl the tricolour in the Valley and stressed that More on P6



A tourist couple taking selfie near a frozen water body in the famous hill station of Sonamarg on Tuesday. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

YEARENDER 2022

Year 2022 Saw Unprecedented Tourist Influx Amidst Political Uncertainty

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Political parties in Jammu and Kashmir, except the BJP, are disappointed as another year has passed by without the Centre living up to its promise of restoring statehood and holding assembly elections in the youngest union territory

of the country. As the delimitation process and revision of the electoral rolls were completed in Jammu and Kashmir, the political parties were hopeful that the Election Commission will take the next logical step of announcing the poll schedule to the assembly of

the union territory. However, this did not happen with 2022 coming to an end.

The biggest news of the year emanating from Kashmir, however, was the targeted killings of Kashmiri Pandits in the valley by terrorists, which led to hue and

cry across the country.
A large number of Kashmiri Pandits, who had returned to the valley under the PM's

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Employment Package nounced in 2007, fled to Jammu following the killing of Rahul Bhat by terrorists inside his office in Chadoora area of

Budgam district in May. The employees, supported by various KP organisations, have been on a relay sit-in at Jammu, demanding that they be transferred to Jammu till the situation improves in the valley.

This demand has found

resonance with the major political parties and their leaders including Farooq Abdullah, Mehbooba Mufti and Ghulam Nabi Azad - three former chief ministers of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir.

However, the LG administration has been adamant that the employees have to return to work in Kashmir and stopped the salaries of those abstaining from duties. More on P6

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Snowfall Likely At Isolated **Places Today**



Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Cold wave conditions intensified in Kashmir as the mercury fell across the Valley and settled several notches below the freezing point, even as there is a possibility of intermittent light to moderate snowfall at scattered places over two days from Thursday, officials said.

The intense cold led to water supply lines freezing in several areas. The interiors of Dal Lake and several other water bodies in the Kashmir Valley also froze, the officials said on Wednesday.

The minimum temperature in Srinagar settled at minus 5.6 degrees Celsius -- down from minus More on P6

SIT Files Charge-Sheet In Ex-DGP Lohia's Murder Case

Observer News Service

Investigation Team (SIT) of Crime Branch on Wednesday produced charge-sheet against a man in connection with the sensational murder of former DGP Prison H K Lohia here in this winter capital in October this year.

The charge-sheet was produced against Yassir Ahmed of Halla Dandrath Ramban in connection with a case FIR No. 345/2022 registered at the Police station Domana on October 3, this year, a police spokesperson said.

Nine days after the murder, he said, the investigation of the case was More on P6

Provide Security To KP Employees Or Shift Them: Cong

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Kashmiri Pandit employees should be provided security or shifted to Jammu until the situation in Kashmir Valley improves, a senior Congress leader said here on Wednesday.

"We cannot leave anyone to die. The jobs were given to them by the Congress (government). They lived here for 12 years and never said they want to return to Jammu. After the (recent) targeted killings, they have been on protest," Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) president Vikar Rasool Wani told reporters here.

The prime minister's special package employees have been on protest and demand that they be shifted to Jammu in view of

the attacks on their colleagues in following the killing of Rahul Bhat on May 12 this year.

Bhat, a clerk employed under the prime minister's package, was shot dead inside the tehsildar's office in Chadoora tehsil of Budgam district.

The Jammu and Kashmir Congress president said, "I think it is important to save people's lives, so their issues should be addressed.' He said the Kashmiri Pandit

employees should be provided security and "if need be, they should be shifted to Jammu".

"The Congress party stands with them and supports their demand," Rasool added.

Last week, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha More on P6

WE CANNOT LEAVE ANYONE TO DIE. The jobs were given to them by the Congress (government). They lived here for 12 years and never said they want to return to Jammu. After the (recent) targeted killings, they have been on protest."

Mother, 3 Children Die Of Asphyxiation



our members of a family died due to asphyxiation after inhaling smoke from a coal heater in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district on Wednesday, officials said. The incident took place in a remote village of Chak Narwah in Banihal tehsil. The deceased were identified as 35-year-old Noor Jahaan, wife of Abdul Rashid, her son Zaffar Ahmed (12) and daughters Shahiza Bano (8) and Asiya Bano (5).

Undertrial Dies In Kupwara Jail

75-year-old prisoner died on intervening Tuesday and Wednesday night in North Kashmir's Kupwara district, officials said. News agency GNS quoting officials reported that one Mohammad Maqbool Khan, son of Abdul Gaffar Khan, resident of Kakroosa Villgam, already on medication, took seriously ill and was moved to SDH Kupwara, where he died shortly after.

They said the individual was lodged in the district jail Kupwara since August 2022 in a case FIR number 61/2023, pertaining to Sections 306 and 109 of IPC. The official in the meantime said

that three sons of More on P6

Fire At Civil Secretariat in Jammu

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fire broke out in the main building of the Civil Secretariat here on Wednesday, but was immediately brought under control, officials said. The fire was reported from the retiring room of the vice chairperson of the Khadi and Village Industries Board Hina Shafi Bhat, they said. The fire started at the room on the top floor of the multi-floor building in the heart of the city around 1 pm, according to the officials.

A fire tender of the fire and

emergency department, posted at

the secretariat, was immediately

by fire tenders rushed More on P6

pressed into service and was joined

SIU Raids In Shopian, Pulwama

Α

he Special Investigation Unit of Police conducted multiple Raids in South Kashmir's Shopian and Pulwama district on Wednesday. In a handout issued here, the police said that continuing efforts to dismantle the militancy ecosystem, the State Investigation Unit (SIU) Shopian on Tuesday conducted raids and carried out search at various locations in district Shopian and Pulwama in connection with investigation of militancy related FIR. In district Shopian, sleuths of SIU Shopian conducted raids and search at two suspected location at Zainpora and in district Pulwama,

raids and subsequent More on P6

LG Greets People On Sikh Guru's Jayanti

ieutenant Governor, Manoj

Sinha has greeted the people on the eve of auspicious occasion of Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji's Jayanti. In his message, the Lt Governor said that Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji's message of equality, righteousness, selfless service, universalism, inner purity, brotherhood and compassion for all, continues to guide humanity even today. "The revered Guru Gobind Singh Ji showed us the path of spiritual joy, selfless service, sacrifice and humanism. Let us, on this day, resolve to rededicate ourselves to his noble teachings and to work tirelessly for More on P6

PM's Mother Heeraben Hospitalised rime Minister Narendra

Modi's mother Hiraben (99)

was on Wednesday admitted to a super-specialty hospital here due to some health issues, and her condition is stable, hospital authorities said. Modi visited the hospital in the afternoon to meet his ailing mother. After reaching Ahmedabad, he drove to the hospital and remained there for over an hour. While leaving the hospital, Modi folded his hands in the 'namaste' pose to the crowd and waiting media persons. Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel also visited the hospital to inquire about the More on P6

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New Inexpensive Sensor Can Detect Toxic Chemicals In Food

Press Trust Of India

esearchers have developed a new costeffective sensor that can detect toxic chemicals such as formalin in food samples like preserved meat, fish and honey. The team at Shiv Nadar Institution of Eminence Delhi-NCR noted that the chemical sensor for monitoring environmental pollutants offers a cost-effective, easy synthesis and excellent water solubility.

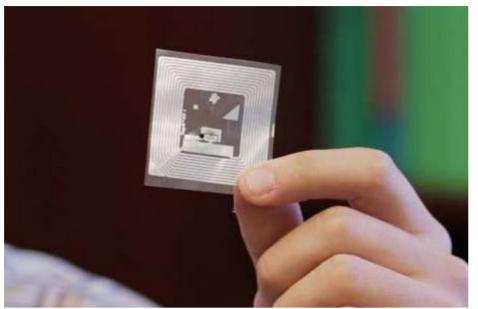
The chemosensor, described in the journal ChemComm, also provides good sensing ability to formaldehyde or formalin -- a naturally occurring organic compound -- upto 0.3 micro Moles (µM).

According to the Food Safety and Standards of India (FSSAI) regulation 2011, formalin is not permitted for use in food.

However, the chemical is often used as a preservative for fish and meat. It is also used as a disinfectant for treating external parasites and fungi in aquaculture.

The researchers noted that the sensor can discriminate the formaldehyde from other analogues spectroscopically in parts per million (ppm) concentrations. It also can be visually monitored at higher concentrations.

The detection method can monitor formaldehyde in real samples, including preserved fish and chicken. It can also quantify other analogues in honey such as methyl glyoxal (MGO).



"We have used a simple optical method, especially fluorescence, to detect formaldehyde,' Anumesh Samanta, Assistant Professor, Department of Chemistry, School of Natural Sciences,

Shiv Nadar Institution of Eminence "Low concentrations of formaldehyde can be detected by fluorimeter, and higher concentrations can be detected by the naked eye using a simple UV torch. This sensing method is easy and inexpensive for real sample analysis, including preserved fish and honey," Samanta

Current fluorescent-based small molecular sensors for formaldehyde are either partially or not soluble in an aqueous solution, limiting the real application in preserved food samples, the researchers said.

A few colorimetric chemosensors or test kits have been developed, but these are not sensitive like fluorescence techniques,

An alternative highly water soluble fluorescence-based small molecular chemosensor was urgently needed to develop, according to the researchers.

Samantha said from a chemistry point of view, the detection of reactive carbonyl species (RCSs) is solely dependent on the o-phenylenediamine (OPD) derivatives.

However, none of the current chemical sensors are effective for simultaneous detection and discrimination among formaldehyde and other analogues, such as methyl glyoxal (MGO). "Our design principle, its synthesis, and ap-

plication are unique compared to similar studies in this research field," said Samanta. "This research is a proof-of-concept and a practical demonstration of analysing toxic pol-

lutants in food samples," he added. The research team is trying to develop a test kit that can be detected by mobile onsite instead of using any spectrophotometer, Samanta added.

The researchers noted that the sensor can discriminate the formaldehyde from other analogues spectroscopically in parts per million (ppm) concentrations. It also can be visually monitored at higher concentrations.

IITs Partner With EU Universities To Build **Sensor For Checking Water Quality**

Press Trust Of India

ndian Institute of Technology (IIT) Guwahati and Bombay in collaboration with European universities are working towards building a low-cost technology to check the quality of potable and other water in India.

The LOTUS Indo-European project, an initia-

work done at Ecole Polytechnique, Paris, France. The sensor was further developed during the project by researchers at Universit Gustave Eiffel in collaboration with IIT Guwahati and the SME

According to S Senthilmurugan, Chairperson, Technology Incubation Centre, IIT Guwahati, LOTUS water quality sensor requirements were

Jal Jeevan Mission of the government of India and its Make-in-India initiative. EGM, Sophia Antipolis, France. "Even during COVID times, the LOTUS team from IIT Guwahati was able to continue the groundwater sample collection and sensor de-

established after collecting information from

Technology Private Limited, a start-up firm. The process of technology licensing between both companies and the LOTUS team (IIT Guwahati and Universit Gustave Eiffel) is in progress. The LOTUS sensor developed at IIT Guwa-

velopment work with minimal delay," he said.

for the Indian market, IIT Guwahati is collaborating

with Linxens India Private Limited and Hydroscope

For the commercial production of the sensor

drinking water supply solution to the Indian

citizens which is in line with the vision of the

hati is being designed to address sensing needs and quality control aspects across different use case scenarios encompassing safe drinking water, agricultural water and wastewater. The overall framework including the LOTUS sensor, and the quality monitoring and control

algorithms developed at IIT Bombay, would be developed and deployed on platforms to provide improved solutions to address major water quality control issues across the country," said Ravindra Gudi, Dean (Alumni and Corporate Relations), IIT Bombay. The core of the LOTUS sensor is a chip with

carbon nanotube-based sensing elements that are capable of measuring multiple quality parameters such as Total Dissolved Solids (TDS), Potential of Hydrogen (pH), chlorine, and arsenic. The components of the sensor system in-

clude a software that enables water quality monitoring and safe water supply in the piped water network and tanker supply systems.

A portable solar-operated disinfectant system integrated with a water quality controller and another software for the optimisation of the water supply in irrigation, are among the other components of LOTUS sensor.

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dian water industries.

A core element of the LOTUS project is a novel water quality sensor that builds on previous Indian water utility owners, operators, end users, and research and development experts and therefore LOTUS sensor is expected to satisfy In-

"Successful commercialisation of the LOTUS water quality sensor will provide a low-cost water quality monitoring and safe

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Will Continue Bone Marrow Stem Transplant Procedure At GMC: Dr Mir Sadaqat

Agencies

Srinagar: As the first ever successful Autologous Bone Marrow Stem Cell Transplant was performed at SMHS Srinagar a few days ago, the doctors at the hospital Wednesday said that they will continue to conduct such procedures for patients in need of such treatment.

Dr Mir Sadaqat, Assistant Professor Department of Medicine and Clinical Hematology at GMC who conducted the first ever autologous bone marrow transplant procedure a few days ago said that it was a historical achievement for GMC Srinagar as such a procedure was conducted for the first time at the hospital.

He said such a procedure was started at SKIMS Soura around a year or two ago, but now this procedure has been started at GMC also which will continue for other patients in need of such treatment.

He said that patients need not to go outside the valley for such a procedure now as it is a very costly one

"Conduct this kind of procedure was a challenge and after discussions with several doctors and patients along with the attendants, finally this procedure was started," the doctor said.

He said the patient on whom the procedure was conducted is fine and has been discharged as

such treatment will be given to other cancer patients who reauire it.

"There are different types of cancers coming to fore during evaluation as the number of cancer patients is increasing in Kashmir", he said, adding that with the help of a number of ex-

To Conduct this kind of procedure was a challenge and after discussions with several doctors and patients along with the attendants, finally this procedure was started

perts, doctors, oncologists and hematologists, patients are being evaluated at their door steps.

He said that multiple myeloma and leukemia is common in Kashmir and success rate of Autologous Bone Marrow Stem transactions is very high and can have complications as well. "But such procedures are carried out in all developed countries," he said.

Notably, an autologous stem cell transplant uses healthy blood stem cells from one's own body to replace diseased or damaged bone marrow. An autologous stem cell transplant is also called an autologous bone marrow transplant—(KNO)

KU To Have 'Alumni Club' As Dedicated Space For Former Students: VC

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Department of Environmental Science, University of Kashmir, held its alumni meet on Wednesday.

Vice-Chancellor Nilofer Khan chaired the opening session of the alumni meet, which was attended by scores of alumni of the department established in 2000.

Remarking that the department has made significant contributions in areas of teaching and research, Prof Nilofer, who was the chief guest on the occasion, said the contributions and expertise of the university's alumni are very important to take the institution forward.

"It is a moment of great satisfaction that our alumni are serving beyond the education sector—in civil services, corporate world, medical science etc.—on important positions. It is our desire to develop a strong and sustained connection with our alumni whose association with our University can help us develop and progress further," the Vice-Chancellor said, adding that the University will explore the possibility of establishing a dedicated facility like Alumni Club for its former students.

She said the Department of Environmental Sciences must further align its academic and research programmes to the current and future requirements of the society. "It is our constant endeavor to connect

the institution with the societal requirements in all our domains like teaching, research, extension education and outprogrammes," Nilofer said.

Registrar Dr Nisar A Mir, who was a guest of honour, said the institution's alumni hold a strong sense of belonging to the institution and are always desirous to see the institution grow and prosper.

He said the strength of the alumni association has a direct bearing on the University's visibility and ranking. "It is in this context that the Vice-Chancellor conceptualized the idea of having the department-wise alumni meetings before a centralized alumni meet is held,"

Dr Mir said. The alumni meet, among others, was attended by former KU academicians including Prof A R Yousuf (former Dean Academic Affairs), Prof M Z Chisti (former professor, Department of Zoology), Prof G A Bhat (former Professor, CORD) and Prof Azra Nahid Kamili (former Dean, School of Biological Sciences), besides Director North Campus Prof B A Ganai and Director CORD Prof Niamat Ali.

Dean School of Earth and Environmental Sciences Prof Shamim A Shah also shared his views on the occasion.

Dr Mohammad Muslim delivered the vote of thanks at the inaugural session, which was followed by sharing of views by the department's alumni.

SWC Zoonimar Lauds DC For Combating Drug Menace

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A special meeting of Social Welfare Committee Zoonimar Srinagar was held on Wednesday under the chairmanship of Firdous Ahmad Bhat where the steps taken by Deputy Commissioner Srinagar respected Ajaz Asad Sahib to combat drug menace were hailed.

"Deputy Commissioner Srinagar has been very kind to address ticklish issues related to the general public, preferably to Youth and young generation. The decisions taken in the meeting to gear up the men and machinery to make Srinagar

drug free are really appreciable." the members said.

Social Welfare Committee Zoonimar has all along been alert and taken steps to make the area drug free. A number of meetings have also been held to motivate the youth to shun the path.

"The steps initiated by the Deputy Commissioner are going to boost our morale and he has encouraged us to stand with District Administration. We assure the administration that we are firm and ready to extend our warm hands for any sort of assistance to eradicate the drug menace and other immoral practices." The members of the SWC Zoonimar added.



SKIMS Conducts 3rd Annual Research Day

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Department of Clinical Research SKIMS inaugurated '3rd Annual Research Day' on Wednesday. During the event 18 research papers selected out of 40 of faculty members representing different specialties were presented in a scientific session and reviewed by panelists.

In the inaugural ceremony Prof. Nazir Ahmed Ganai, Vice Chancellor SKUAST who was the chief guest on the occasion felicitated the SKIMS administration on bringing forth the research done at SKIMS and appreciated medical practitioners for their services. He further said technology advancement has revolutionized the world and many diseases have been eradicated but leaves no room for complacency and urged to contribute to the generation of knowledge to serve society. He also stressed on interlinking of students with various institutions for quality research purposes.

Prof. Parvaiz A. Koul Director SKIMS/EOSG in his address appreciated Ashraf Ganai for organizing research day which is now held annually is an important event with long term implications. He said we must develop credible research and underlined that the research must be novel, focused and community oriented. He further said that research is one of the major focused areas of SKIMS and evolution in the patient care comes because of the research eventually benefitting patient care which is the primary objective of the research. He thanked all guests and participants in the event.

Guest of honor Professor Mohd. Afzal Wani Former Dean & HOD Neurosurgery SKIMS lauded the administration for organizing this event and said SKIMS is flourishing under the leadership of Prof. Parvaiz A. Koul. Dean

Medical Faculty SKIMS Prof. Bashir Ahmed Laway also spoke on the occasion and in his address he advised students to get their work published and said SKIMS has shown growth in patient care and teaching and research is also main focused area of the institution and expressed hope the Annual Research Day will make students more aware about research.

Prof. Ashraf Ganie, Organizing Chairman highlighted the essence of conducting the Research Day. He thanked the administration for constant support for development of research and appreciated former directors for the approval of Annual Research Day at SKIMS where faculty showcase their research work, he added.

The event was attended by eminent scientists and Ex-Directors of the Institution besides students and faculty. Dr. Reshma Roshan Department of Clinical Haematology presented vote of thanks.

DC Holds Public Grievance Redressal Camp At Panzinara

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In its endeavour to bring administration at the door steps of the people as a part of Public Outreach Programme, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad Wednesday conducted an extensive tour of Panzinara area in the outskirts of Srinagar District and presided over a Public Grievance Redressal cum Awareness Camp under Weekly Block Diwas initiative.

FREE

The Public Grievance Redressal camp witnessed large participation of people from Panzinara-A, Panzinara-B, Mujgund and other adjoining areas of Shalteng Tehsil of Srinagar District during which local DDC members, PRI representatives, public delegations and scores of individuals projected various issues and demands before the DC particularly the long pending issue arising out of jurisdictional dispute with Baramulla and Bandipora Districts.

Besides, they also demanded for macadamization of inner roads, augmentation of health centre, water and power supply infrastructure, provision of bank ATM facility and playground for local youth and other issues related to old age pension, Revenue documents.

After giving patient hearng to the grievances and demands of the public, the DC sought on the spot response from the concerned District Officers present during the Grievance Redressal Camp.

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- BIJBHERA: 01932-228243 PAMPORE: 01933-294132
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HIGHWAY STATUS



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



1444

PRAYERS FAJR 6:07 **ZUHR** 12:32 **ASR** 3:51 Magrib 5:33 ISHA 6:58

This Day In History

- 1170 Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury is assassinated inside Canterbury Cathedral by followers of King Henry II; subsequently martryed.
- 1503 Battle of Garigliano: Spanish army under General Cordoba defeats French forces
- 1539 St Jacob's Church burns after being hit by lightning
- 1541 = Isabella of Poland and King Ferdinand of Austria sign Treaty of Gyalu
- 1558 = Charles V, King of Spain and Holy Roman Emperor, buried in El Escorial, San Lorenzo de El Escorial, Spain
- 1653 Dutch painter Jan Vermeer becomes a member of the Guild of Saint Luke for painters in Delft
- 1705 Prosper Jolyot's "Idomenée," premieres in
- 1708 Great Alliance occupies Gent. 1778 - British troops occupy Savannah, Georgia.
- 1786 French Revolution: The Assembly of Notables is convoked 1806 - Thomas Dibdin's pantomime "Harlequin and
- Mother Goose" starring Joseph Grimaldi, in his most famous clown performance, opens at the Covent Garden Theatre, London
- 1812 The USS Constitution under the command of

From KO Archives

NC Closes Ranks In Fear Of Gul Shah's Raid

Farooq, party brass hold lengthy meetings

Observer News Service

ammu- The recent convention by -National Conference adversary, the Awami National Conference led by G. M. Shah in Srinagar has sent alarm bells ringing in the ruling party with the NC president, Faroog Abdullah other top functionaries in the party for a meeting to review the political situation in the state.

The NC President, Farooq Abdullah this afternoon held a detailed discussion with his senior party colleagues at his private office to take stock of the political situation in the state. The meeting, sources said, went into the evening hours also.

The meeting assumes significance in the wake of open threat by CM's brother-in-law, G. M. Shah that he would go all out in removing Farooq Abdullah from the seat of the power in the state, Sources said that there are fears among the NC

top brass that Shah like in 1984 may engineer defections in the ruling party as there was growing dissension among some of the ministers. They are reportedly unhappy over Dr. Farooq Abdullah's move of cutting them to size in the last reshuffle. They include Ghulam Mohi-ud-Din Shah and Abdul Rahim Rather.

The Chief Minister, sources said, who is under tremendous pressure to drop at least six ministers for their reported poor performance has dropped the idea of a fresh cabinet re-shuffle in view of the latest threat by G. M. Shah. The CM had earlier made-up his mind in consultation with his senior colleagues to drop some ministers, including Ifthikar Hussain Ansari for his alleged tax-evasion, Bashir Ahmad Kitchloo for his son's alleged involvement in timbersmuggling and Ajat Shatru for his reported illegal construction in green belt.

"Nothing will be done that annoys anyone in the party for the time being," a source, close to those who attended the meeting this evening said. The meeting also discussed possible changes in the state administration on large scale.

The police is also to witness large scale reshuffle by the state cabinet. The changes will affect almost all the senior police officers of the rank of IGPs in the state, besides shifting of all the district police chiefs. Three IGPs, sources said are being promoted as additional director generals of police, while three senior officers are being sent to Centre on deputation.

(KASHMIR OBSERVER, 29 DECEMBER, 1998)

KASHMIR OBSERVER

Thursday | 29-12-2022

Valley Of Cars

new survey has found that Jammu and Kashmir is one of the regions in India with a substantially higher ownership of cars. Others are Kerala, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Goa, including union territory of Ladakh and a few other North Eastern states. The data which has been made available by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare presents a huge disparity in car ownership across the country. It shows that fewer than 8 percent of households have a car.

There are two dimensions to this finding: one, the per capita ownership of the vehicles at the national level is surprisingly low. And this brings up the question: why do we encounter traffic gridlocks on the roads if fewer people own cars.

Another is about the states and the UTs with a higher per-capita car ownership: The question is whether the figure means that the people in these regions are more prosperous than those in others? It doesn't necessarily. Maharashtra, India's richest state, has just 8.7 percent per capita car ownership. Gujarat, also one of the richest states, has just 10.9 percent.

The takeaway from this is that it is not necessarily the prosperity that makes people buy cars but something more than this. And this 'something' can be a separate research subject. May be it has something to do with more per capita ownership of houses. Or may be it is a result of a less efficient public transport in some places. Or has something to do with the culture of a place. Nothing can be said conclusively.

Closer home, it has come as a surprise that the Valley is one of the places with the largest per capita ownership of cars. The trend of owning vehicles began in the Valley at the turn of the millienium and still continues. And one of its fallouts is visible on our roads. The peak traffic hours remain a horror across Srinagar. It takes hours to travel a distance of a few kilometers to work. A chaotic spectacle plays out on the streets every day. The reason is well-known: the city's road length is not commensurate with the exponential growth in traffic volume.

The expansion of the city's roads is desperately needed, not only with an eye to fix today's problems but also to handle the future traffic of an ever-expanding city. Also contributing to this state of affairs is the inadequate public transport system. Higher per capita car ownership is both a good and a bad thing. It reflects growing prosperity among people but it also leads to traffic congestion on the roads and consequent pollution.

Free Gains, Welcome Step

MGKY absorbed the shock of the pandemic for the extremely poor and also brought in political dividends for the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party in many States that had elections this year, including Uttar Pradesh in particular. While discontinuing the scheme, the Government has said that it will bear the expenses of food grains under the NFSA for 2023 and ensure free ration under the Act for the estimated 81.35 crore beneficiaries for that year. In other words, ration card holders can now avail 5 kg of wheat or rice per month for free rather than at a subsidised rate, while Antyodaya Anna Yojana cardholders will receive 35 kg of free foodgrains.

As the estimated number of 81.35 crore beneficiaries is still based on Census 2011 numbers and Public Distribution System entitlements have been limited to ration card holders and quotas framed by the Union Government, some States have gone on to expand benefits to others through the NFSA and other schemes. By taking on the burden of the expenditure for this distribution, the Union government, which has estimated an additional amount of 2 lakh crore for the scheme, has provided limited but welcome relief in monetary terms for States.

While the expenditure numbers on food distribution and subsidy provisions seem fiscally expensive, the schemes have provided distress relief to the most needy, helped the Government control its food buffer stocks better, and also reduced wastage of procured food grains at a time when procurement figures for rice and wheat by the Food Corporation of India remain high. The PDS and the PMGKY have not only enabled basic food security but have also acted as income transfers for the poor by allowing them to buy other commodities that they could not have afforded if not for the benefits. There is, of course, the question of whether targeted distribution, including the identification of priority households and the "poorest of the poor", has really helped the benefits reaching the deserving with concerns about diversion of foodgrains. But as rights activists have argued, the more robust solution could be a universalisation of the PDS, which has already worked well in a few States such as Tamil Nadu, as the scheme would be availed by anyone in need instead of a flawed targeting system.

The Hindu

Hundred Days of Yatra

The yatra is a desperate measure for a desperate situation. Will it change anything for the better for Congress? Its true gauge will be the party's future electoral performance



RIYAZ WANI

More so, in its ideological agenda: Hindutva has now widest acceptance across the country. No other party's ideology comes even close, least of all that of Congress whose secular credentials now carry little conviction even within the party itself

ongress leader Rahul Gandhi has completed hundreds days of yatra. On December 24 he entered Delhi where he addressed the rally at Red Fort which garnered some reasonable attention on social media. A video snippet of his speech where he accuses media of spreading hatred and harping on "Hindu-Muslim" issues went viral. Gandhi rightly lamented that the yatra was largely ignored by the media. This despite the fact that it has generated an unexpected groundswell and made visible a constituency that no longer seemed to exist.

Contrary to this, the Delhicentered Anna-Hazare-led India Against Corruption campaign in 2013 had received a 24x7 coverage. It turned out to be a watershed development that became a major factor in bringing the BJP to power. However, for all the distance covered by Gandhi's yatra and the massive participation by the people, it hasn't generated the level of mass engagement which could pose an electoral threat to the BJP. Or so it appears. One can always blame the lack of media coverage, the inherent inadequacies of the yatra or its message Reverse could also be true: it could very well be that the yatra might have re-invigorated the Congress base or seeded a new politics that might in near future challenge the BJP.

Politics can be both a drawn process and a dramatic event. And yatra, in a sense, can be both. As far as the yatra's value as an event, it doesn't seem to have made the desired impact. But as a process, the yatra may have succeeded in changing the atmospherics a bit, albeit not conspicuously so. For now, however, the yatra seems to have breathed some fresh life into an otherwise dying party. It has been drawing reasonably good crowds. But mobilization of crowds doesn't guarantee a good electoral performance.

Another apparent shortcoming of the yatra so far has been its messaging. There is no powerful idea, a resonant slogan or an alternative political vision that has come to the fore. Gandhi, so far in his political career, has left his political articulation generally vague. It seems his commitment to secularism is more of an everyday talking point than backed by conviction like the Hindutva movement.

But Gandhi himself seems to

have come some way. There is definitely a makeover in progress and it is not just about his appear-His speeches now carry more conviction. He has paid more attention to the framing of his arguments enabling him to generate a bigger ideological contestation than he did earlier - albeit, he has still a long way to go to match prime minister Narendra Modi's overarching persona. But Gandhi is certainly becoming more visible and grabbing more public attention because of yatra. He is, no doubt, attracting crowds

AAP has still a long way to go before it could be seen as a credible rival to the BJP, the party seems to offer a sort of new politics that has been effective against that of the BJP. And in Kejriwal, the party has a leader who is shaping up to be a match for PM Modi's extraordinary rhetorical skills.

Politics, of course, is not only about great rhetorical skills. It has to have substance too: For example, a party's social, economic and ideological agenda and its credibility to execute these on the ground make all the difference. And the BJF is strongest on all these fronts. More so, in its ideological agenda: Hindutva has now widest acceptance across the country. No other party's ideology comes even close, least of all that of

Another apparent shortcoming of the yatra so far has been its messaging. There is n o powerful idea, a resonant slogan or an alternative political vision that has come to the fore. Gandhi, so far in his political career, has left his political articulation generally vague

but he is not yet in a position to whip up a political wave, in part, due to lack of media support.

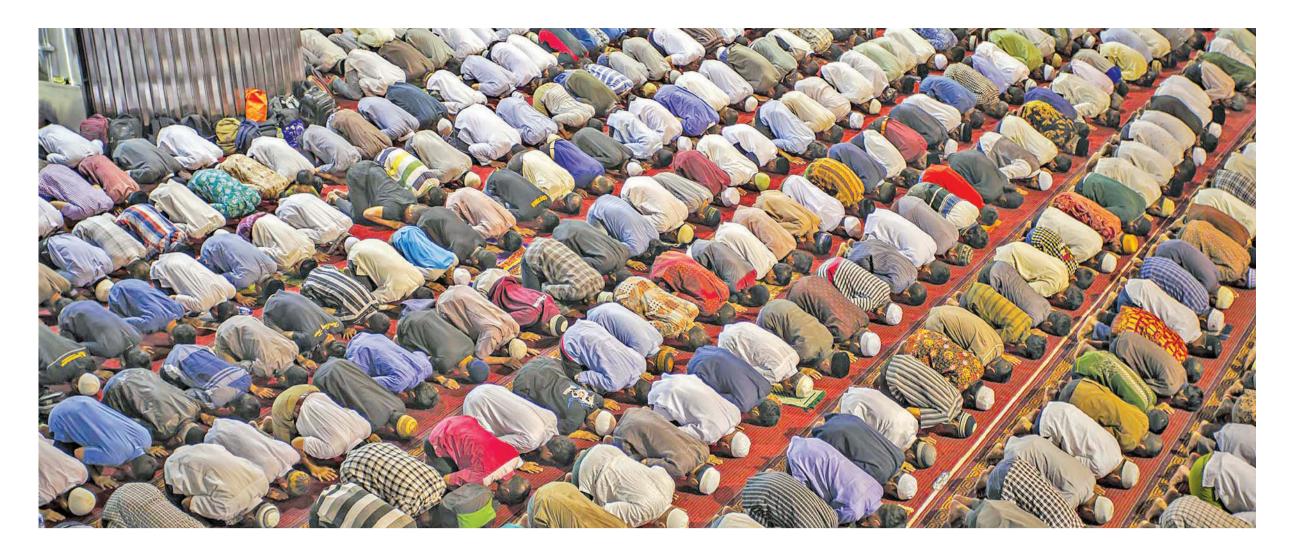
Is there a chance in the near to medium future that Gandhi will truly arrive on the political scene? He might very well do. Congress needs this to happen sooner. The party is in need of a deep surgery. It can only survive if it has a charismatic new leader who can not only corner the ruling party on day to day governance but also aggressively peddle a credible alternative vision of India on a sustainable basis. As things stand, it doesn't appear probable. And given the current state of Congress, it may not happen at all. So, a Congress-mukt Bharat seems a distinct possibility as has been the BJP goal. More so, at a time when the AAP is fast stepping into the breach left be-

hind by the retreating Congress. Arvind Kejriwal's party has emerged as a major political force in the country with its landslide triumph in Punjab. Though the Congress whose secular credentials now carry little conviction even within the party itself.

The AAP has left this area conspicuously ambivalent. But as apparent from the actions of Kejriwal in recent years, the party has made not so subtle nods to Hindu religion and majoritarianism to protect and expand its base. And it has succeeded in this, even making now inroads into Gujarat.

This has created a do or die situation for Congress. The yatra is a desperate measure for a desperate situation. Will it change anything for the better for the beleaguered party? Its true gauge will be the party's future electoral performance.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer The author is the Political Editor at Kashmir Observer



Islam and Community Development

M Ahmad

ommunity development practice has been need of almost all nations and is practiced in various ways through governmental or non-governmental efforts. Main theme includes service provision and problem solution at grassroots level with maximum participation of community people without any discrimination. Community development is the result of joint efforts of local community people for promoting their collective welfare and improving their lives. It means a philanthrophical gesture orinitiative that is made with a view to bringing a change for the betterment of the life of community. Community development focuses on solution of community problems and bringing positive changes. All initiatives of community development bring social changes and Islam also believes in it. Community development improves quality of life and Zakat is an ideal example of it in Islam. Religion Islam guides its followers to help the

needy through various services and community development also emphasizes on service provision. Islam and community development encompass principles of self-help and social justice and bring stability and solidarity in the community. Community development practitioners need to get guidance from Islamic practices for better working in local communities. Islam brought real and practical changes in all walks of life i.e., social, economic, moral and political transformation. Islam guided for changes in the social set up to build a changed society overall. Islam gives very clear and comprehensive concepts to improve quality of life. Muslims are guided for hardworking to survive and fulfil their needs which could improve their daily lives. Islam makes its followers responsible for themselves and for society too.

The tools for equitable distribution of wealth in Islamic economic system for over all development of the Society can be divided into two categories i.e. obligatory institu-

Waqf also plays a vital role for enhancement of quality of life of poor communities. It is an important socioeconomic institution in the Islamic state and is a powerful institution for community facilitation which provides social, medical and educational initiatives in the community

tions and non- obligatory institutions, contents of former are Zakat, whereas the latter consists of Waqf, Sadaqas, and Infaq, etc., Quran and Hadith both have given emphasis on it. Zakat is a religious institution to tackle poverty and promote welfare in the Society irrespective of religion. It is a social pillar encouraging Muslims for bringing social justice and equity in communities. It improves quality of life of various types of community members. It is a beautiful and workable system of fair distribution of wealth among community members. Waqf also

plays a vital role for enhancement of quality of life of poor communities. It is an important socioeconomic institution in the Islamic state and is a powerful institution for community facilitation which provides social, medical and educational initiatives in the community. Nevertheless, Islam remains as a clear outline of how those key concepts and principles should be implemented. Participation from all members of the community is necessary. Man must do something good for the community and prevents any negative elements that might affect the com-

munity. In other way, it means that Islam generalizes the purpose of each concept, including the form of behavior which ultimately able to develop their communities by placing them as the best among other people

Meanwhile, Sadaqas (charity) has no fixed percentage and one is free to pay it as many times as one can afford or feel inclined to it. Infaq is basically pious spending in the way of Allah. It has a significant importance in Islamic economic principles, with reference to redistribution of wealth and elimination of poverty for the development of Society. Khums refers to the required religious obliga-tion of any Muslims to pay one-fifth of their acquired wealth from certain sources toward specified causes

Islam is against injustice, inequality and discrimination. Social relationship among Muslims is based on the concept of sacrifice where they share some amount of their finances for virtue and they gain community consciousness feelings. The Holy Quran says "Righteousness is not

that you turn your faces toward the east or the west, but righteousness is one who believes in Allah , the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets and gives wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask for help and free slaves, establishes prayer and gives zakah; fulfill their promise when they promise; and patients in poverty and hardship and during battle. Those are the ones who have been true, and it is those who are the righteous." (Surat Al-Baqarah, 2:177)

Prophet Muhammad (SAW), said: "Charity does not in any way decrease the wealth and the servant who forgives, Allah adds to his respect; and the one who shows humility, Allah elevates him in the estimation (of the people)." (Muslim)

MAhmad, Former In chargeAbhedananada Home-Higher Secondary Institution for Inclusive Education, Solina, Srinagar, J&K and can be reached at specialachivers78@gmail.com

omen's Heart Attacks Are Different



During a heart attack, women are more likely to present without pain, or with uncharacteristic symptoms. **Treatment** guidelines, however, are based on data collected primarily from men. Sexism in cardiovascular research means that not only are heart attacks often missed in women, but women are also less likely to receive recommended

therapies,

interventions and

rehabilitation

opportunities

Glen Pyle

ne evening, you tune in to your favourite medical drama. As the scene opens, the calm of the hospital is shattered when a patient grabs their chest and collapses to the floor. The impossibly good-looking medical team rush in and work feverishly to save the heart In your mind did you picture a man

or a woman having the heart attack? Most people associate heart attacks with men. But cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death globally for both sexes, and women are more likely than men to die of a heart attack.

During a heart attack, women are more likely to present without pain, or with uncharacteristic symptoms. Treatment guidelines, however, are based on data collected primarily from men.

Sexism in cardiovascular research means that not only are heart attacks often missed in women, but women are also less likely to receive recommended therapies, interventions and rehabilitation opportunities.

MORE WOMEN ARE DYING

One of the most common cardiovascular conditions is ischemic heart disease, which can lead to heart attacks. Heart attacks occur when blood vessels serving the heart are blocked, causing heart muscle to die. In most cases the blockage is due to atherosclerosis: the build-up of fatty plaques in the coronary arteries.

However, more than 50 per cent of women with ischemic heart disease don't have blocked coronary arteries. The Women's Ischemia Syndrome Evaluation (WISE) study found ischemic heart disease in women often occurs when smaller blood vessels of the heart known as the "microcirculation" become damaged, causing them to close.

Despite advances which have



decreased heart attack mortality, women have higher rates of death compared to men.

Why does the same condition kill more women than men?

HEART ATTACKS WITHOUT PAIN

Most heart attacks aren't sudden, painful events that cause victims to collapse to the ground. Pain may be gradual and mistaken for indigestion or a muscle ache.

Although chest pain is the most common symptom for both sexes, women are more likely to present without pain or have uncharacteristic symptoms including fatigue or discomfort in the neck, jaw and back. The failure to quickly recognize atypical symptoms can delay treatment and cause more heart damage.

A long-standing concern is that women delay seeking medical care and suffer greater damage by not

acting quickly. A review of research from 1960 to 2008 cites 11 studies which found women took longer to seek care and seven which found no sex differences. Whilst most studies find that women who have heart attacks take longer than men to obtain medical care, these differences are relatively small

Clinical guidelines set checkpoints for tests and treatments that are often missed in women. The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada found that women were less likely than men to receive an electrocardiogram — a test to detect heart attacks — within the recommended 10 minutes after arriving in the emergency department.

MOST ACCURATE DIAGNOSTICS NOT USED

Troponins in the blood (proteins released when the heart muscle has been damaged) are the gold standard biomarker for diagnosing heart attacks. But the criteria for troponin testing were created using data collected primarily in men. Men have up to 2.4 times the circulating levels of troponins as women.

This means increased troponins in female heart attack patients may not exceed the diagnostic threshold. Up to 20 per cent of heart attacks are missed in women when using the male threshold for identifying heart attacks.

Angiography identifies blocked coronary arteries in a heart attack, but it does not detect blockages in the microcirculation that often occur

Imaging tests like PET and SPECT are more accurate diagnostic tools for women with heart attacks. Unfortunately, these imaging tools are not routinely used, causing women to go under-diagnosed.

FEWER WOMEN GET CARDIAC REHAB

Women who have a heart attack are less likely to receive recommended therapies.

Interventions like cardiac catheterization and bypass surgery are less common in women.

At discharge, women are less likely to receive prescriptions despite evidence that mortality is reduced when drug guidelines are followed.

Long-term treatment for heart attack patients includes cardiac rehabilitation. These services are underused in general, but by women in particular.

Women are less likely to be referred to cardiac rehabilitation by their physician. Even when referred, women are less likely to adhere to the program and more likely to withdraw before completion.

SEXISM IN HEART RESEARCH

Treatment guidelines are based on data collected primarily from men. A 2016 statement from the American Heart Association notes that recommended heart attack treatments benefit women, but definitive data on sex differences in treatment efficacy are lacking.

Investment in basic research that identifies sex-differences in health and disease are a prerequisite for devising more effective, sex-specific therapies, as is the inclusion of more women in clinical trials.

Research agencies have guidelines to increase the inclusion of women in clinical trials and promote research into sex differences in cardiovascular disease. However, these recommendations must be enforced to have an impact on women's health.

The bottom line is until the glass ceiling of sexism in cardiovascular research is broken, women will continue to suffer the consequences.

By arrangements with The

China To Resume Issuing Passports, Visas As Virus Curbs Ease

Press Trust of India

Beijing: China says it will resume issuing passports for tourism in another big step away from antivirus controls that isolated the country for almost three years, setting up a potential flood of Chinese going abroad for next month's Lunar New Year holiday.

The announcement on Tuesday adds to abrupt changes that are rolling back some of the world's strictest antivirus controls as President Xi Jinping's government tries to reverse an economic slump.

Rules that confined millions of people to their homes kept China's infection rate low but fuelled public frustration and crushed economic growth.

The latest decision could send free-spending Chinese tourists to revenue-starved destinations in Asia and Europe for Lunar New Year, which begins on January 22 and usually is the country's busiest travel season. But it also presents a danger they might spread

COVID-19 as infections surge

Japan, India, South Korea and Taiwan have responded to the wave of infections by requiring virus tests for visitors from China.

China stopped issuing visas to foreigners and passports to its own people at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020.

The National Immigration Administration of China said it will start taking applications from January 8 for passports for tourists to go abroad.

The agency said it will take applications to extend, renew or reissue visas but gave no indication when they might be issued to first-time applicants. China will "gradually re-

sume" admitting foreign visitors, the agency said. It gave no indication when tourist travel from abroad might resume.

The changes will "create better conditions for orderly crossborder travel" and "bring more benefits to global economic development," said a foreign ministry spokesman, Wang Wenbin.

China will "work with all countries" to "restore safety and stability to global, industrial and supply chains and promote world economic recovery", Wang said.

Health experts and economists expect the ruling Communist Party to keep limits on travel into China until at least mid-2023 while it carries out a campaign to vaccinate millions of elderly people. Experts say that is necessary to prevent a public health crisis.

During the pandemic, Chinese with family emergencies or work travel deemed important could obtain passports, but some students and businesspeople with visas to go to foreign countries were blocked by border guards from leaving.

The handful of foreign businesspeople and others who were allowed into China were quarantined for up to one

Before the pandemic, China was the biggest source of foreign tourists for most of its Asian neighbours and an important market for Europe and the United States.

government dropped or eased most quarantine, testing and other restrictions within China, joining the United States, Japan and other governments in trying to live with the virus instead of stamping out transmission.

Japan and India have begun requiring virus tests for travellers from China. South Korea tests all visitors with elevated temperatures. South Korea says anyone who tests positive will be quarantined at home or in a hotel for a week.

South Korean officials said possible additional measures for arrivals from China will be announced on Friday.

US officials, speaking on condition of anonymity to relate internal discussions, said Washington is considering taking similar steps.

Cong writes to Amit Shah for ensuring security of Rahul Gandhi, others during Bharat Jodo Yatra

Wednesday wrote to Home Minister Amit Shah for ensuring security of Rahul Gandhi and others during the Bharat Jodo Yatra.

In a letter to Shah, AICC general secretary K C Venugopal said there have been several incidents of multiple breaches in security during the Bharat Jodo Yatra when it entered Delhi.

"miscreants" entering the Yatra camp site illegally and alleged that they were Haryana's intelligence security personnel trying to swoop on the yatris and have been interrogating people who took part in the yatra.

"The security of yatra was compromised on multiple occasions following its entry into Delhi on Saturday," Venugopal said in his letter.

He alleged that Delhi Police completely failed to control the surging crowds and maintain a

perimeter around Rahul Gandhi, who has "Z+ Security".

"The situation was so severe that Congress workers and Bharat Yatris walking with Rahul Gandhi had to form a security perimeter. However, Delhi Police remained mute spectators," he claimed.

"Bharat Jodo Yatra is a padyatra to bring peace and harmony to the country. The government should not indulge in vindictive politics and ensure the safety and security of the Congress leaders," Venugopal said, adding

that the Congress has lost its former prime ministers Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi for the country's unity.

He sought improved security for the yatra as it is set to enter the sensitive states of Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir.

"Moving forward, Bharat Jodo Yatra is slated to enter the sensitive state of Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir in the next phase starting from January 3, 2022. In this regard, I request you to take immediate steps to ensure the safety and security of Shri Rahul Gandhi, a Z+ protectee, and of all the Bharat Yatris and leaders joining the Bharat Jodo Yatra," Venugopal told Shah in his letter.

Venugopal has already held consultations with the Congress units in Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab regarding the yatra preparations. He has also met with Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha earlier this week and has sought his cooperation and security.

CONTD. FROM **FRONT PAGE**

Take Precautions

reason for the surge in heart blocks—the winter is the risk factor," Dr. Rather added.

Dr. Rather added that people should take care of their diet and keep a tab on their weight. Notably, the Kashmir Valley is currently going through the hardest winter period of 40 days famously known as 'Chilla-Kalan'. The minimum temperature of Kashmir is still below freezing point and has just risen some

The summer capital—-Srinagar recorded -3.5 degrees Celsius last night.

The surge in heart attacks and other diseases amid the dip in temperature increase in number of deaths.

The people across the valley are suffering from different ailments including pneumonia, chest infection, hypertension and diabetes.

The medical experts maintain that 40-days of extreme cold in the Valley is crucial for such patients and people should take extra care of their patients.

Dr. Upendra Kaul, Kashmir's top cardiologist, told Kashmir Observer that reason for the increase in heart attacks and other ailments can be attributed to multiple factors including less physical activity during winters, excessive food.

"Because of this the weight goes high which raises the cholesterol level among the people. People have to realise that whether it's summer or winter, they shouldn't skip exercise. The people of Kashmir should make it a habit. They need to burn their calories every day," Dr. Kaul

He said people should eat more veggies and

"If you don't change your diet and lifestyle, learned everything but couldn't adopt a healthy lifestyle," Dr. Koul added.

Dr. Irfan Ahmad Bhat however said that people should change the timings of exercise and walking.

"If you were doing it in the morning, avoid that rather do it in day or evening time," Dr. Irfan said, adding that patients should take their medicines on time and don't take the symptoms lightly.

The Doctors also maintained that amid the possible another Covid-19 wave, the people should take necessary precautions as the COVID has increased the risk factor rate of heart attacks.

Snowfall Likely

4.8 degrees Celsius on Tuesday night, the officials said.

Pahalgam, which serves as a base camp for the annual Amarnath Yatra, recorded a low of minus 7.4 degrees Celsius, down from minus 6.7 degrees Celsius.

The tourist destination was the coldest recorded place in J-K and last night was the coldest night of the season so far there.

The minimum temperature in the skiing destination of Gulmarg in north Kashmir's Baramulla district was minus 6 degrees Celsius.

In the frontier Kupwara district, the minimum temperature settled at minus 5.5 degrees Celsius, while Qazigund, the gateway town to the Valley, recorded 5 degrees Celsius, the officials said. Kokernag recorded a low of minus 3.4 degrees Celsius.

Although there was brief snowfall in Pahalgam and adjoining areas in south Kashmir, the Valley is going through a dry spell with no major precipitation forecast till the end of December.

Meteorological (MeT) However, the Department office has said there is a possibility (with a 70 per cent chance) of intermittent light to moderate snowfall at scattered places from Thursday (evening) to Friday.

There is no forecast of any major snowfall till January 5, it added.

Kashmir is currently in the grip of 'Chillai-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 water supply lines in several parts of the Valley.

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.

SIT Files Charge-

transferred to the Crime Branch by Police Headquarters and a Special Investigation Team (SIT) was constituted by Crime Headquarters, J&K for further investigation of the case.

"During investigation, all cogent evidence(s) (Oral, Documentary, Circumstantial, Expert & Technical) were collected by the SIT. Besides, Narco Analysis test of accused was also conducted at DFSL Gandhi Nagar Gujarat," the spokesperson said.

On the basis of evidence, he said, offences u/s 302, 201 IPC 4/25 Arms Act stand established against the accused Yassir Ahmed who has committed murder of the then DGP Prisons.

'The charge sheet stands thus produced in the Court of Law for judicial determination," the spokesperson added.

Forces Put On

Kashmir after infiltrating from Pakistan, were killed in a "chance encounter" with security forces here early on Wednesday morning.

Additional Director General of Police, Jammu zone, Mukesh Singh said the encounter took place around 7.30 am amid intense fog near Tawi Bridge in the Sidhra bypass area along the Jammu-Srinagar national highway.

Singh, who was flanked by General Officer Commanding of Army's Tiger division Maj Gen Gaurav Gautam, told reporters at the scene that bodies of four militants have been recovered

"Seven AK assault rifles, one M4 rifle, three pistols and a large quantity of ammunition were recovered from the slain terrorists." he

"A suspicious movement of a truck, that was moving towards Kashmir, was observed. It was followed and stopped near Sidhra check point, but its driver escaped on the pretext of attending the call of nature," the ADGP said.

Getting suspicious, Singh said, police started searching the truck but came under heavy fire

An encounter ensued during which the truck caught fire, he said, adding the militants were

killed. The ADGP said the militants were heavily

armed and were on their way to Kashmir when they were intercepted. He said efforts are on to nab the driver of the truck, who has fled.

"The identity and group affiliation of the terrorists is awaited," the ADGP said.

Earlier, talking to PTI, Director General of Police (DGP) Dilbag Singh said so far three militants have been killed. "The number could be more," he added.

Asked whether the militants came from across the border and were picked by the truck driver to ferry them to Kashmir, he said it is matter of investigation.

Officials said the intense firing between the two sides lasted for over 45 minutes, during which several explosions apparently caused by hurling of grenades were heard.

Smoke was seen blowing from the truck, loaded with husk, and was completely damaged in the gunfight. Meanwhile tight security arrangements

have been put in place and vehicles are being checked to ensure fool-proof security in Jammu, they said.

Security checkpoints on the Jammu-Pathankot National Highway have increased vigilance and vehicles, particularly trucks, are being checked, they said.

All entry points to Jammu from the border areas have been put on vigil and vehicles entering the city are being thoroughly checked.

Truck Had Fake

with husk was intercepted near Sidhra's Tawi bridge checking point along Jammu-Srinagar national highway this morning, while the vehicle was on its way to Kashmir.

"The number plate of the truck has been found to be fake. The engine and chassis number has also been tampered and help of forensic teams will be sought in this regard," the Jammu police chief said.

A huge quantity of arms and ammunition, including seven AK-47 rifles, one M4 rifle, three pistols, 14 grenades and around 50,000 were recovered from the possession of the slain terrorists whose identity and group affiliation are not known immediately.

"The truck driver fled the scene taking advantage of foggy conditions and the gunfight. Efforts are on to nab him and also identify the truck owner," the ADGP said.

He said a search is being conducted at bus stands, railway stations and marketplaces, while all checkpoints have also been alerted.

"Other scientific and electronic evidence is being collected to identify the terror group behind the transportation of the terrorists and to identify the Over Ground Workers (OGW) support structure of the terrorists (in Jammu region)," he said.

An FIR has also been registered in connection with the encounter, the officer said.

HM Reviews

detriment of the well-being of common people requires to be dismantled," Shah was quoted as saying in an official statement.

At the meeting, Shah also reviewed various developmental works being implemented in Jammu and Kashmir and emphasised on timely completion of projects.

He also directed officials to strive to achieve 100 percent saturation of beneficiaries under various schemes and ensure the benefits of development reach every section of society. Lieutenant Governor of Jammu and Kashmir

Manoj Sinha, senior officials of the home ministry, intelligence agencies, paramilitary forces and officers from Jammu and Kashmir attended the meeting. The pre-scheduled meeting was held on a day four heavily-armed terrorists, who came

from Pakistan, were killed in a "chance encoun-Early this month, there were reports that people from the Kashmiri Pandit community working in the valley were in a state of panic

after a terrorist group released a "hit list" of 56 employees from among them. A blog linked to The Resistance Front (TRF). an offshoot of the Lashkar-e-Taiba, published the list of 56 Kashmiri Pandit employees who were recruited under the Prime Minister's

Rehabilitation Package (PMRP), and warned of mounting attacks on them. In the aftermath of targeted killings by terrorists, several Kashmiri Pandits employed in the valley under the PMRP have shifted to Jammu and are on a protest for over 200 days

demanding their relocation. The government had informed Parliament that as many as 118 civilians, including five Kashmiri Pandits and 16 other Hindus and Sikhs, were killed in Jammu and Kashmir since the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019 till July

The killings of Kashmiri Pandits had triggered protests by members of the community and they demanded enhanced security and the transfer of government employees to safer

In May, four Hindu pilgrims were killed and at least 20 injured when their bus caught fire

near Katra in Jammu. Police suspect a "sticky bomb" might have been used to trigger the fire.

Article 370, which gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir, was abrogated on August , 2019 and the state was divided into two Union Territories -- Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

In a separate meeting, the home minister also reviewed the development initiatives being carried out in Ladakh.

Situation Peaceful

the situation in Jammu and Kashmir has improved significantly under the Modi government.

An estimated 1.6 crore tourists have visited Jammu and Kashmir in one year, which is a record in itself, the minister told reporters.

"Now tourists can visit every corner of Jammu and Kashmir. This shows that the situation has improved in Jammu and Kashmir. There are no stone pelting incidents. Does Rahul Gandhi want to go there to spoil the atmosphere?"

"Today, anyone can unfurl the tricolour in any part of Jammu and Kashmir because the Narendra Modi government has ended Article 370 and Article 35A in J&K," he added. Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra, which started

in Kanyakumari in September, is scheduled to

end in Kashmir next month.

Thakur reminded him of the Ekta Yatra undertaken in 1992 by then BJP president Murli Manohar Joshi and Narendra Modi, who had unfurled the national tricolour at Lal Chowk in Srinagar.

"There was a lot of opposition back then to the yatra. There were terrorist attacks, firing incidents. This was because there was a Congress government," he said.

The BIP leader also recalled the Tiranga Yatra undertaken by him as president of the Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha in 2011.

"The then leaders of opposition in the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha Sushma Swaraj and Arun Jaitley -- and myself were jailed as the Congress-National Conference government had opposed the Tiranga Yatra," Thakur said.

"Things were difficult back then when Article 370 and 35A were still in force," he said, adding that the situation in the Kashmir Valley had improved significantly under the Modi government.

Year 2022 Saw

Several non-Kashmiri labourers - coming from various parts of the country to earn a livelihood here - were also targeted during the

On the political front, National Conference the oldest political party in Jammu and Kashmir - said the political emancipation in Jammu and Kashmir was at its lowest as the union territory was being administered by those not elected

"Many things have been promised to the people of J&K like the restoration of democratic institutions. Unfortunately, that did not happen. We were told as soon as the delimitation process would get concluded, the election commission of India would announce assembly elections but

they didn't take place as yet. "If we look from the prism of political emancipation and power of democracy, we are at the lowest in the past few decades," NC spokesman Imran Nahi told PTI

He said the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir was evident as targeted killings in the valley have risen in the past few months despite heavy security that has fuelled a wave of fear among minorities and non-locals.

"Number of killings has increased, targeted attacks on minorities and non-local people is shocking. People from minority communities who have been living here for more than 30 years are migrating which is depressing," he

added. Mohit Bhan, spokesman of the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) said the year was a disappointment as the ground situation remained uncertain and no steps were being taken to restore the confidence of the people in the democracy.

"The government is claiming that the situation has improved. If that is the case, then democracy in its real sense should be restored here. It is not only about elections as elections are just one part of democracy. However, on ground, that is not the case. Laws are being changed unilaterally.

"So, before elections, the confidence of the people in democracy has to be restored. We don't see any steps being taken in that direction." Bhan said.

He said political activity in true sense was not taking place in Jammu and Kashmir as a level playing field for all political parties was missing. "Whatever is happening is one sided at the behest of Delhi. There is no level playing field where one could say that serious political activity is taking place. A few handpicked politicians are allowed to go about, while others are being restricted," he claimed.

Bhan said the aspirations of the people, which are reflected by the older regional political parties, are not taken into account.

"Objections were filed to the way delimitation was done, the voters' lists were prepared but none were considered. So, they are following the rule of 'my way or highway'," he added. Apni Party leader Ghulam Hassan Mir, while giving credit to the BJP government for holding panchayat and DDC elections in Jammu

and Kashmir, said it was time to restore other democratic institutions as well. "BJP government has made panchayats on the ground level, have also formed DDC and BDC which the previous governments had not

allowed to happen. For this, the credit goes to the BJP government.

"2022 was the year of expectations for the people of Jammu & Kashmir but not holding elections has left the people here highly disappointed. Though law and order is maintained, in a democracy elections should have taken place," Mir, who was a minister in the PDP-Congress coalition between 2002 and 2008,

BJP's Tarun Chugh, the national general secretary incharge of Jammu and Kashmir, listed development and return of tourism boom as

the major highlights of the year. "This year has been great for tourism and development under the rule of the Modi government. Kashmir is flooded with tourists, which has left no hotel with a single unoccupied room. People are enjoying and have come out in large numbers to support this change,' he said.

On the elections not being held in Jammu and Kashmir even three years after the landmark move in 2019, Chugh said "election announcement is the prerogative of Election

As the revision of electoral rolls has been completed in Jammu and Kashmir, Chugh said he expected that the polls in J&K "will be an-

nounced soon". **Provide Security**

warned that salary would not be paid to those employees "sitting at their homes".

"We have cleared their (protesting employees') salaries till August 31, but it cannot be done that they will be paid their salaries while they sit at their homes. This is a loud and clear message to them and they should listen and understand it," Sinha said in Jammu.

Undertrial Dies

the deceased elderly man are also under custody in the particular case.

Fire At Civil

from six other stations in the vicinity of the building, the officials said. They said the fire was brought under control

tent of damage was awaited. However, there was no casualty in the fire, the officials said. When contacted, Bhat said she noticed the

but a report about the cause of fire and the ex-

fire in her retiring room after sensing the smell of burning wires and alerted the staff. "The fire service was informed, and we also tried to douse the flames using the fire extinguishers," she said, indicating that the fire was

apparently caused by a short circuit. SIU Raids In

search was carried out at suspected location in Naina Bhatpora village. Search warrants were obtained from the concerned court of law.

The spokesman further said that during search sleuths of SIU collected and seized incriminating material & important documents including digital devices. Proper SOPs were followed while carrying out the search in the

suspected locations. It is pertinent to mention that the raids were conducted in connection with investigation of Case FIR No 83/2022 registered U/s 18,23 UAP, 7/25 Arms act in Police station Kellar. Two accused arrested in the instant case are presently under judicial custody. More recoveries and arrests are expected during further investigation,

reads the statement. **LG Greets People**

the upliftment of the poor and downtrodden", Sinha said.

PM's Mother

health of Hiraben. The PM also spoke to doctors at the hospital. BJP MP Jugalji Thakor said Hiraben's condi-

tion is stable and she might be discharged in a Hiraben, also called Hiraba, was admitted to U N Mehta Institute of Cardiology and Research

Centre, a government-funded autonomous

hospital situated in the campus of the civil hos-

pital, in the morning. "Prime Minister's mother is admitted to U N Mehta Institute of Cardiology and Research Centre, Ahmedabad, and her condition is sta-

ble" said the hospital in a statement.

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA New Delhi: The Congress on He also cited instances of

Jammu Mayor Announces Panel Over Revenue Of Parking Slots; **Experts Say Violation Of JMC Act**

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Jammu Municipal Corporation (JMC) Mayor Rajinder Sharma on Wednesday announced formation of a committee to look into the revenue generated by parking slots, a move drawing criticism from the members of the standing committee who see it as a "violation of the JMC Act and an attempt to disempower them."

Sharma, a senior member of BJP, was elected Mayor of the IMC in October following the resignation of his predecessor Chander Mohan Gupta.

"A committee has been set up to probe revenue generation of parking slots Out of 33 parking slots under smart city project, only five are fully operational and one partially. The contractor has generated Rs 25 lakh, while the corporation got only Rs 1 lakh which is a big loss to the exchequer," the mayor said.

Sharma said the issue was dis-

cussed in the general house meeting recently and it was decided that "every penny will be accounted for".

"The committee, composed of a technical expert and a retired chief accounts officer besides councilors, will submit its report within two weeks and subsequently appropriate action will be taken," he said, stressing the need for transparency and accountability in the functioning of the corporation.

The members of the standing committee, however, raised concern over the formation of the committee by the JMC. "It is a clear violation of the JMC Act 2000, which does not allow setting up of any extra panel outside standing committees," one of the members said.

"This has been done to encroach upon the powers of the standing committees. If this is allowed, it will hamper the working of the standing committees," reasoned the member requesting anonymity.

Farooq Cautions People Against Forces Inimical To J&K's Unique Identity

Says Unity In Diversity Must Be A Creed To Last For All Times And Under All Circumstances

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference President Dr Farooq Abdullah on Wednesday asked people to thwart the attempts of those forces who are inimical to the unique political identity of Jammu and Kashmir. This, he said while address-

ing a gathering at Naushaher in Srinagar. Exuding confidence that the people will foil all such attempts by keeping the flame of unity and brotherhood alive, he said, "I see no way of achieving anything in J&K without a lasting unity between different sections of our society. We have to stop seeing ourselves as Hindu Muslim, Shia- Suni, Bareli Deobandi. Unity in diversity must be our creed to last for all time and under all circumstances, otherwise there is no end in sight to our common problems in the shape of poverty, unemployment, and under-development. Our mutual discord will make our de-



scent into darkness. Divided we cannot achieve anything let alone get back our abridged constitutional and democratic

Earlier he visited Chanapora, Naushahar to condole with the bereaved family of noted trader Ghulam Rasool Mir, who breathed his last the other day. Joined in by the party's local unit functionaries, he offered Fatiha for the departed soul.

Meanwhile Party Chief Spokesperson & Incharge Zadibal Tanvir Sadiq visited Lalbazar in Zadibal constituency to share grief with the family of late Haji Ghulam Muhammad Thatroo, who had breathed his last the other day.

Progress Of Work On 'Wular Walkway' Reviewed



Observer News Service

BANDIPORA: The Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Bandipora, Waseem Raja on Wednesday took a review of the Wular Walkway, non motorable road around Wular Lake in a meeting with officers of different departments.

The locals of the Wular adjacent areas appraised the chair about the local issues with regard to the construction of the walkway.

While commenting on the benefits of the walkway, the ADC reiterated the commitment of the District Administration towards early completion of the walkway which is a prestigious project of the Government and will be beneficial

for the locals. He said the construction of the walkway shall not only attract tourists towards these areas but also provide various employment opportunities to the local youth.

During the meeting, it was decided that field visits with concerned officers shall be made in the coming days to assess the progress of the walkway.

Waseem Raja assured the locals that all the bottlenecks and genuine issues, if any, shall be resolved during the field visit. He also urged people to coordinate with administration and executive agencies for implementation of the prestigious project.

The meeting was attended by Executive Engineer R&B Bandipora, Coordinator WUCMA, A.D Rakhs & Farms, besides, local inhabitants of the Wular adja-

190 Kanals Encroached Land **Retrieved In Bandipora**

Observer News Service

BANDIPORA: On the directions of Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Dr. Owais Ahmed, a massive anti encroachment drive was held at Chitibandi, Chaliwan areas of Bandipora district during which 190 kanals of en-

croached land was retrieved. The evicted land was handed over to concerned Sarpanch and Lumberdar to protect the

land from encroachment. The general public appreciated

the move and expressed satisfaction for eviction of the land. The Deputy Commissioner said that land evicted shall be used for developmental purposes as and when required. He urged the public to voluntarily surrender the encroached land and sought cooperation of the

general public in its action

against encroachments.



JAMMU ENCOUNTER

Spotlight Again On Demand To Install Vehicle Scanners On Highways

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: With yet another incident of militants trying to sneak into Kashmir by hiding in a truck, security experts have batted strongly for the installation of vehicle scanners along the highways.

Four heavily-armed terrorists, travelling in a truck to Kashmir after infiltrating from Pakistan, were killed in a "chance encounter" with security forces here early Wednesday morning, a police officer said.

The gunfight took place around 7.30 am amid dense fog near Tawi Bridge in the Sidhra bypass area along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway

It is a "major challenge" for security forces which have foiled over a dozen such bids on national highways in Jammu and Kashmir by eliminating several terrorists and recovering large quantities of weapons and explosive material during the past few years.

"There is a long pending demand of security forces to install full body vehicle scanners along the highway," security expert and retired army officer Brig Anil Gupta

He said that in the absence of such scanners, one cannot check each and every truck.

Brig Gupta, who served at the Nagrota-based 16 Corps headquarters, said the "loophole is being exploited" by terrorists and their supporters.

"I think the only solution to his is to have full body scan ners installed at various locations along highways with checking made mandatory for vehicles," he said.

Police had on November 10 busted a terror module of Jaish-e-Mohammad and arrested three operatives from the Narwal area, recovering arms and ammunition including three AK-56 rifles, one pistol, nine magazines and six grenades from a Kashmir-bound truck.

On April 22, police arrested two persons including the driver of a truck who had ferried terrorists in a truck from the International Border of village Supwal in Samba district to Sunjuwan where they carried out a terror attack in which two terrorists and one CISF officer were killed and four security personnel were injured.

Four suspected Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorists, who were hiding in a truck, were killed on November 17, 2020 in an encounter with security forces on the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway near Nagrota in the outskirts of Jammu city.

Three Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) militants were killed on January 31, 2020 in a gunbattle that broke out after a group of terrorists, travelling in a truck, opened fire at a police team at a toll plaza on the Jammu-Srinagar national highway on the outskirts of Jammu city.

Former director general of police S P Vaid pointed out that a whole network is involved in such activities and poses a major challenge for

"It is a very big security

challenge for the forces. They (terrorists) are always desperate to cross the border and do some big terror act. It is a full ring to get them across the border and then pick them up in trucks and take them to destinations," Vaid told PTI.

He said that dozens of such incidents in which terrorists were ferried in trucks have taken place in the last couple of years.

"It is their plan to cross the border in Kathua, Samba and Hiranagar during foggy weather and they are picked up by some people (truckers). It is difficult to cross the border during snow in winter in Kashmir", he said. He also batted strongly for putting scanners to check vehicles.

Speaking in the same vein. former director general of police and former intelligence chief Kuldeep Khoda said that this is not the first time trucks have been used to carry out terror attacks and ferry terrorists to the Valley.

"They can upgrade it (security setup and body scanners). Militants come through tunnels also. They get bypassed through air and underground (on the borders)", Khoda said.

"You cannot think of such intelligence in which every such movement can be known in advance. It is not possible to get information about all the movements. Some of the movements can go unnoticed," the former DGP said, adding that upgrading technology will help

Mehbooba Targets Govt Over Jammu Encounter

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The government has totally failed to control militancy in Jammu and Kashmir and the terrorism now spreading to the Jammu region is its "biggest failure", PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti said on Wednesday.

She said the encounter in Jammu's Sidhra area in the morning, where four terrorists were killed, belied the government claims of uprooting militancy in J and K.

The government claims that it has uprooted militancy from J-K. But, today, there is militancy even in Jammu which is its biggest failure," Mehbooba told reporters here.

She said it was disappointing that the militancy has spread to the Jammu region now.

"They (government) have totally failed to control militancy," she added. The PDP chief also claimed that the government might make excuses like Covid or militancy to stop the Congress' Bharat Jodo Yatra

in the Union Territory.

The former chief minister said democracy has been "sus-

"The fundamental rights of people like the right to express yourself (has been suspended). If anyone talks, he is arrested, be it a journalist or a common man. Politicians are pressured through the ED or other agencies and they are facing difficulties in playing their role," she said.

On the Bharat Jodo Yatra led by Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, Mehbooba said it was compulsory and "our duty" to stand with someone who is



out there to "save" democracy and secularism.

"A person is standing and raising his voice against the communal forces who are trying to divide the country, destroy secularism, and destroy the democratic setup," she said. J-K has the utmost belief

in secularism and democracy because when in 1947 Hindus and Muslims were getting killed in India and Pakistan, Kashmir was the only place where Pandits, Sikhs, Dogras were protected by the Kashmiris, she said.

"That is when (M K) Gandhiji said he can see a ray of hope from Kashmir. When there are attempts to destroy secularism in the country, the people of J-K face its maximum brunt. We acceded to India even as we were the single Muslimmajority state, because it was a secular and democratic country for which Gandhi ji sacrificed his life," Mehbooba said.

"So, it is our duty that if a person has come out to save the country's democracy and secularism, its Ganga-Jamuni tehzeeb, then standing with him is compulsory," she said.

On being asked that on one hand, her party was demanding restoration of Article 370, which

was abrogated by the Centre on

August 5, 2019, but on the other, she was supporting the vatra of the Congress party which "supported" the government's move, Mehbooba said the two issues were separate.

"Joining yatra is for saving democracy and secularism in the country. Our fight is separate and we will continue to fight that," she added.

The PDP chief also condemned the ban on girl education imposed by the Taliban in Afghanistan.

'Seeking education is in our Islam and if there is anyone who tries to use the name of Islam to work against the religion, then we condemn it," she said.

While welcoming the statement of J-K LG Manoj Sinha that killings of Kashmiri Pandits in the valley should not be communalised, Mehbooba said he should give that lesson to the BJP. "It is better late than never,

because it is the BJP government which communalises the unfortunate killings of Kashmiri Pandits. They made a film (Kashmir Files) on it and then showed it everywhere. "They are trying to cre-

ate hatred between Kashmiri Muslim and Kashmiri Pandit communities. It is good that he (Sinha) said it, but, I think, he should give this lesson to the BJP," the PDP chief said.

She alleged that J-K has been turned into an open-air prison where "no one is allowed to say or express anything".

"Jails are filled with the people from J-K. Our youth are beaten in the colleges outside. The BJP has ruined the atmosphere in the country," she alleged.

Court Denies Bail To Woman Involved In 'Aiding' Her Daughter's Rape

Agencies

SRINAGAR: A local court in north Kashmir's Kupwara district on Wednesday rejected bail application of a woman, who is accused of aiding sexual assault of her own minor

According to a local news agency KNS, the counsel for the accused woman had sought bail on the ground that she was innocent and there were contradictions in the statements of witnesses recorded during the trial.

However, learned assistant public prosecutor, Dar Rashid objected that plea of the accused for his enlargement on bail is groundless as the minor victim in her statement recorded under section 164 has expressly deposed that her mother is involved in the crime in question, and she has aided the accused in inflicting rape on her.

He argued that the minor victim according to her statement was drugged before sexual assault and the charges levelled against the accused are disgraceful, and heinous in nature.

He further argued that mere contradictions in the statements of the witnesses don't give absolute right of bail to the accused as the victim was below 16 years of age at the time

of the commission of the crime. After hearing the arguments, presiding officer of POCSO court, Khem Raj Sharma withheld the discretionary relief of bail to the applicant and said that the reverse burden contemplated under section 29 of the POCSO Act must not only be strictly complied with but at police station Kupwara.

Man Given 3 Yrs In **Jail For Sexually Assaulting Minor**

JAMMU: A court here has sentenced a man to three-year imprisonment for sexually assaulting a minor girl, a police spokesman said on Wednesday.

The court also imposed fine on the convict.

Yasir Hussain, a resident of Drabshalla, was sentenced to undergo rigorous punishment for three years under Section 8 (punishment for sexual assault) of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act and for two years under Section 354 (using criminal force to outrage modesty of any woman) of the IPC, the spokesman said.

Both the punishments shall run concurrently, the spokesman said, quoting the order.

He said the case against the accused was registered on June 26 last year on a complaint by the family of the girl at the Doda women police station.

also may be subject to proof of some basic facts as envisaged under the statute.

He observed that it cannot be decided at this stage that the prosecution story is doubtful.

Notably, On August 21, 2020, a minor girl had alleged that she was raped by a man, who was aided by her mother.

Following the allegations, police registered a case under sections 376, and 109 of IPC and 4 and 17 of the POCSO Act

Court Sentences Hizb Commander To 15 Yrs In Prison

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: A local court on Wednesday sentenced a selfstyled commander of Hizbul Mujahideen to 15 years in prison, police said.

Amir Nabi Wagay alias Abu Qasim, a district commander of the banned outfit, was convicted by a UAPA court on the basis of an investigation by the State Investigation Agency of Jammu and Kashmir.

"Srinagar UAPA Court con-State Investigation Agency (SIA) investigated terrorist Amir Nabi Wagay alias Abu Qasim, self-styled district commander of banned outfit Hizbul Mujahideen. Sentences him 15 years imprisonment,"

Block Diwas Held At Kanjiuller, Shopian

DC Listens To Grievances, Resolves Several Issues On Spot: Assures Early Redressal Of Other Issues

Observer News Service

SHOPIAN: To address the public issues at their doorsteps, Mega Block Diwas was on Wednesday held in Block Office, Kanjiuller Shopian.

District Development Commissioner (DDC) Shopian, Sachin Kumar Vaishya presided over the Block Diwas.

On the occasion, DDC listened issues and demands of public importance projected by the people of Kanjiuller, including establishment of IK Bank Branch at Kanjiuller, better provision of drinking water in Dar Mohalla, Bhat Mohalla and Mangipora, uninterrupted power supply, repairs of lanes and by-lanes, ground at Mantugad Kanjiuller Shopian.

DDC while listening to the issues patiently assured that all the genuine issues would be looked into and addressed in a time bound manner.

He issued on spot orders for laying of water pipes from Dar Mohalla to Bhat Mohalla, eral masses.

having acute drinking water problems and directed the concerned to gearing up their execution works. Directions were passed to

solving the demands and other issues on priority basis. On the occasion, a stall was set by the District Panchayat Election Office, Shopian within the premises of the block of-

fice Kanjiuller Shopian where

information was given to the

the concerned officers for re-

general public about the Revision of Panchayat Electoral Rolls 2022. People were invited to take part in the Revision exercise for

egistration of new voters. DDC directed the Tehsildar

Kanjiuller Shopian to put in service JCB for cleaning of the blocked drain near Jamia Masjid Kanjiuller Shopian by evening today.

He also directed for demolishing of encroachments in Kanjiuller Shopian and road widening to facilitate the gen-

Panchayat Body Seals Anganwari Centre In Gurez For Unauthorised Absence Of Staff

Agencies

A Panchayat body GUREZ: sealed an Anganwari centre over unauthorised absence of the staff in Markoot village of Gurez in northern district of Bandipora on Wednesday, officials said.

A local news agency KNO quoted locals as saying that the Anganwari Centre at the Markoot village remained locked for months due to lack of staff from several months". "We apprised the Panchayat body several times about the issue," they said.

The said that the panchayat body during its inspection also found the Anganwari Centre closed during the inspection and sealed the center," the locals said.

Abdul Majeed Mir, one of members of Panchayat body said that under the supervision of Sarpanch, an inspection of Anganwari centres in Markoot village was conducted and they found concerned workers absent for two months.

He also said that the ration for the month of December has not yet been distributed which is about to expire now. The locals also alleged that many Anganwari centres are locked from months in the area and officials least bothered



YSS Kashmir To Conduct Ski **Training At Various Places**

Observer News Service

Services and Sports (YSS) J&K is all set to organise Ski Training courses at various destinations across Kashmir Valley

"Beside Gulmarg, Yousmarg, and Gurez, the Department is exploring ways to start such training programs at other famous tourist destinations of Kashmir like Doodhpatri, Sonamarg, and Pahalgam as well," Director YSS Subash C Chhibber said on Wednesday. The Director said this as he chaired an important meeting of senior YSS officers and was accompanied by Joint of the Department Bashir Ahmed.

Chibber inquired about the preparedness for the training courses **GULMARG:** Department of Youth being organised at Gulmarg and Yousmarg under the first phase. Director YSS also told the media that the Department is committed to provide the best possible arrangements of boarding and lodging to the young students.

While referring to the great achievement of Olympian Arif Khan, he said that Mr Arif was also initially trained by the competent trainees of the Youth Services and Sports Department and today he has proved his mettle. He hoped that with the efforts of the Government J&K will have many Olympic stars in the sport of skiing in the years to come.

₹ 260

Kashmir's Women Kayaks Wade **Frozen Waters In Pursuit Of Glory**

Press Trust of India

SRINAGAR: The temperature in Kashmir may have fallen below the freezing point but it has not come in the way of a determined bunch of girls who are practising hard in the chilly Dal Lake here as they train for kayaking and canoeing to bring home glory.

The extreme sub-zero temperatures overnight the past few days has resulted in formation of Olympics or Asian games, most a layer of ice over the surface of the ice before they begin training.

Though they are currently training under the guidance of ful but forbidding Dal Lake. national coach Bilquis Mir for the upcoming national championship to be held in Bhopal, a few of them have trained their sights on Olympic glory.

There is a huge scope in women's sports in our country, If we look at the results of the the girls will miss the competitionals in Shimla, said.



of the medals have been won by the lake. The girls have to break girls," Mir told PTI as her wards concluded the second of the daily training sessions in the beauti-

> "They have made our country proud and the number will only increase as we are doing very well in women's sports," she said. According to Mir, her girls cannot afford for ice to thaw naturally.

including Jammu and Kashmir. to rise to a comfortable level, already participated in the na-

tions next month." she said. One of the emerging talents from the region is 12-year-old Nabeela Khan, who thinks she has it in her to go all in the kayaking and canoeing.

"My dream is to become a kayak Olympic player and I have been working really hard for it. It is cold here, but it is not an obstacle because if I have to do it, nothing can stop me, even "If they wait for temperature if it is too cold," Khan, who has

Downtown Heroes Management Meets AIFF President



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The management Downtown Heroes FC, On Tues-Kalyan Chaubey and General Secretary Shaji Prabhakaran at Football House, New Delhi to discuss various issues pertaining to development of football in Jammu & Kashmir.

delegation comprised Mushtaq tient hearing to all the issues raised Bashir, Kaiser Bhat and Hinan by Downtown Heroes FC delega-Manzoor, and raised various is- tion and promised timely redressal sues with the AIFF president per- of all its genuine demands.

taining to players and coaches.

The delegation stated that no big tournament took place of Srinagar-based football club, in J&K this year and requested the AIFF officials to invite priday met the All India Football vate clubs and players in vari-Federation (AIFF) President ous national tournaments and leagues being organised across the country to play in J&K.

The delegation also apprised the AIFF President about the dearth of coaches and coaching staff in J&K. The President and The Downtown Heroes FC General Secretary AIFF gave a pa-

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