

# KASHMIR OBSERVER<sup>TM</sup>

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## WD Brings Snow To Hilly Areas, Rains Lash Plains



KO Photo | Abid Bhat

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The higher reaches of Kashmir received fresh snowfall on Tuesday, while the plains were lashed by the rains under the influence of a fresh Western Disturbance (WD) bringing down the day temperature sharply.

According to reports, the higher reaches of the Valley, including the hill stations of Gulmarg, Pahalgam and Sonmarg received fresh snowfall much to the delight of the tourists present there. Snowfall was also reported from parts of south Kashmir, including Anantnag, Shopian and Kulgam. However, the plains received intermittent rainfall throughout the day.

Director Meteorological department (MeT), Sonum Lotus said the rain and snow would likely intensify with main activity later tonight and

tomorrow. "Heavy snowfall is very likely over the middle and higher reaches," he said.

The MeT Director further said that the fresh wet spell would likely affect surface transportation over major passes including Jammu-Srinagar national highway. He said the snowfall would also lead to avalanches in avalanche-prone areas.

"People are advised to avoid venturing out in avalanche-prone areas during snowfall days. Travel after confirming road status from the concerned traffic department," he advised.

Meanwhile, the minimum temperature stayed several degrees below the freezing point across Kashmir, officials said. In Srinagar, the minimum temperature settled at a low of minus 2.3 degrees Celsius. Qazigund registered a low of minus 0.6 degrees Celsius, officials said.

Kokernag in **More on P10**

## Rahul In Ramban, March To Valley After R-day Break

Observer News Service

Jammu: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi led Bharat Jodo Yatra reached Ramban, the last district of Jammu on National Highway, after covering 120 kilometres and yatra will resume from Bathi, Maitra and stay in Banihal for a night while march for Kashmir will begin after Republic Day break, where it is scheduled to culminate January 30.

The yatra will resume from Ramban as per scheduled time 8.00 am and stop at Forest Check Post near



### Ladakh Leaders Discuss Statehood With Rahul

A delegation from the Union Territory of Ladakh on Tuesday met Congress leader Rahul Gandhi here and discussed several issues with him, including its demand for statehood for the region. It also raised the issue of safeguards under the Sixth Schedule of the

### Ups The Ante On J&K's Statehood

Alleging that the BJP has created a wedge between the two regions of Jammu and Kashmir, senior Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday said his party wants early restoration of statehood and assembly polls in the Union territory. He said the Congress' position on Article 370 is the same as was declared by the Congress working committee after the

### Kashmir Files Out of Oscar Race

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The final nomination list for the 95th Academy Awards has been announced. This time there are three films from India in Oscars 2023. However, 'The Kashmir Files', which was touted as an Oscar nomination by its director Vivek Agnihotri is officially out of the race.

Other Indian films that have been dropped include Sanjay Leela Bhansali's "Gangubai Kathiawadi" and Rishabh Shetty's Kannada film 'Kantara'.

India's official entry Chhelo Show **More on P10**

## Teacher Fired 13 Yrs After Getting Govt Job On Fake Order

Agencies

Srinagar: The School Education Department in Kashmir has terminated the services of a teacher, who had managed to get entry into the department 13 years ago by producing fake appointment orders.

In a letter written in November last, the Chief Education Officer (CEO) Srinagar has reported that the service book of an 'imposter' working as teacher in



a government school revealed an entry to the effect that he has been appointed as teacher in 2009 under RBA category, after being selected by the JK Service Selection Board."

"In order to ascertain the genuineness of his

## R-Day Rehearsal Held Under Tight Security In Srinagar



KO Photo | Abid Bhat

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Security has been beefed up in Kashmir for Republic Day celebrations, officials said, even as a full dress rehearsal of the function was held at the Sher-e-Kashmir Cricket Stadium here on Tuesday.

Kashmir Divisional Commissioner Pandurang Kunbarao Pole presided over the dress rehearsal function and

took the salute at the parade by contingents of police and other forces, the officials said.

A cultural programme was also held after the parade at the stadium, the venue of the main Republic Day function in the Valley.

As the dress rehearsal was in progress, roads leading to the venue in Sonawar area of the city were declared off limits for civilian vehicles.

Elsewhere in the

### US Puts Onus Of Talks On India, Pakistan

Press Trust Of India

Washington: The US has reaffirmed that the pace, the scope and the character of any dialogue between India and Pakistan is a matter for the two countries, asserting that Washington has always supported talks between the two neighbours to ensure peace in South Asia.

Responding to a question raised by a Pakistani journalist on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's recent remarks seeking peace talks with India, US State Department Spokesperson Ned Price on Monday



Election Commission of India  
wishes all Voters on the occasion of

# 13<sup>th</sup> NATIONAL VOTERS' DAY

25<sup>th</sup> January, 2023



Theme :

## Nothing like Voting, I Vote for sure



Chief Guest

### Smt. Droupadi Murmu

Hon'ble President of India

Guest of Honour

### Shri Kiren Rijiju

Hon'ble Minister of Law & Justice

## Highlights of the Event

Awards

Best Electoral Practices

Distribution

EPIC to First Time Voters

Release of ECI Song

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Srinagar |Wednesday| 25-01-2023

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# Emerging From A Coma

Response To Language Can Help Assess States Of Consciousness

## The Conversation

A man for the sake of this exercise, let's call him Paul - has a heart attack and his brain is starved of oxygen. After several resuscitations and a week in a coma, he finally opens his eyes.

However, he doesn't always appear to be present. Doctors say he is still unconscious, in an unresponsive state the patient's eyes are open, but he doesn't move his hand when asked. For families in such situations, the question is always the same: will their loved one become conscious again?

Recent advances in intensive-care medicine have allowed many people with severe brain injuries to come back to life.

However, from a seemingly inert state to full wakefulness, there is a wide range of different states of consciousness that neuroscientists are working to better define.

After a coma episode (where the eyes remain closed) lasting between one hour and four weeks, there are normally several states of recovery until emergence, but some intermediate states of consciousness may persist and even become chronic: Unresponsive wakefulness syn-

drome: the patients open their eyes but show no signs of consciousness. (This was previously called a vegetative state, but was renamed in 2010 to better describe the symptoms.)

Minimally conscious state minus: recovery of some signs of consciousness such as visual pursuit/fixation, or localisation of painful stimulation.

Minimally conscious state plus: reappearance of signs of language awareness response to verbal commands, production of words, attempts to communicate.

Emergence from the minimally conscious state: as soon as the patient is able to communicate using a yes/no code or to use everyday objects.

It is crucial to be able to distinguish these disorders of consciousness from a locked-in syndrome, also the result of a severe brain injury, but located in the brain stem.

The result is paralysis of the body, head and face, although consciousness and cognition may be preserved. Communication is most often achieved through eye movements.

The challenging diagnosis of disorders of consciousness

Such altered states of consciousness are difficult to diagnose because brain imaging does



not yet allow an optimal diagnosis of unresponsive wakefulness or minimal consciousness.

The most widely accepted method at present is a bedside assessment using standardised and validated scales. The Glasgow Coma Scale is the most known and investigated one.

However, it does not assess the most frequent signs of minimal consciousness (notably visual fixation/pursuit).

This is in contrast to the Coma Re-

covery Scale-Revised or the Simplified evaluation of consciousness disorders, which identify auditory, visual, motor and language signs of consciousness.

Without such assessments, a diagnosis based on simple clinical observation would have about 40 per cent error. These assessments must be repeated about five times in a short period of time (for example, two weeks), reducing the risk of diagnostic errors from 36 per cent after one assessment to 5 per cent after the fifth.

The challenge in making a correct diagnosis on the basis of behavioural assessments is partly related to patients' fluctuating level of arousal, and also lesions such as palpebral ptosis inability to open the eyes that can impede the assessment of visual fixations/pursuits.

## A new approach through language

One of the most frequent questions health professionals are faced with when taking care of these patients is: Can they understand us? The assessment of language skills is also a key step in establishing communication with the patient.

However, if the language regions of the patient's brain have been too damaged, their state of consciousness could be underestimated he or she may not respond to commands simply because they're not understood.

Indeed, a 2015 study of stroke patients with aphasia language impairment following brain damage showed that about 25 per cent of who were fully conscious could be erroneously diagnosed as minimally conscious.

These data underline the importance of improving the assessment of language in patients waking up from coma. Current research is trying to better understand how we can assess the

language abilities of these patients, despite their visual, auditory and motor dysfunctions.

## An aid to limit misdiagnosis

Our recent systematic review of the literature reports the use of electroencephalography (EEG) or magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) methods, which make it possible to measure the activity of brain regions generally linked to language.

Two types of tasks can be performed with either technique:

Passive listening tasks consist of having patients listen to words or sentences. For example, we look at the difference in brain activity depending on whether the patient hears noise or language.

According to the studies reviewed, about 33 per cent of patients considered to have an unresponsive wakefulness syndrome show signs of language comprehension.

Active listening tasks, in which the patient is asked to think about a physical activity for example, Imagine playing tennis.

If the patient shows signs of the activation of motor imagery on EEG or MRI, it can be deduced that he or she has responded to the command.

## Whatsapp Rolls Out New Shortcuts For Group Admins On Ios San

### IANs

Meta-owned messaging platform WhatsApp has reportedly rolled out some new shortcuts for group admins to quickly and easily perform actions for a certain group

in group events when group participants join or leave a group and group admins can easily interact with them.

If admins tap and hold a phone number, they can use new shortcuts that include the ability to quickly call and chat with par-



participant, on iOS.

The new shortcuts simplify interactions with group members as now the platform supports large groups of up to 1024 participants, reports WABetaInfo.

The new update will help group admins to quickly manage and communicate with such a large number of participants in private.

The feature is available for all users that install the latest update of WhatsApp for iOS from the App Store.

With the new update, the phone numbers are now highlighted

participants in private and they can also add group participants to their contacts book and copy their phone numbers.

"This feature can save group admins a significant amount of time as they no longer need to navigate through the group info screen to find contact information," the report said.

Meanwhile, last week, it was reported that the messaging platform was rolling out a new 'voice status updates' feature on iOS beta, which will allow users to share voice notes via status updates.

Government of India  
**Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)**  
Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment 5th Floor,  
B Wing, Pt. Deendayal Antyodaya Bhawan, CGO Complex,  
Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110003

## Appointment of Chairperson, National Trust, New Delhi

Applications are invited for appointment to the post of Chairperson, National Trust, New Delhi under the administrative control of the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan), Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Government of India, New Delhi.

2. Detailed advertisement is available on the website of the Department [www.disabilityaffairs.gov.in](http://www.disabilityaffairs.gov.in). Candidates fulfilling the eligibility criteria may apply in the prescribed proforma, together with supporting documents. Applications form may be downloaded from the website [www.disabilityaffairs.gov.in](http://www.disabilityaffairs.gov.in) (Home page: Publication - download form). The last date of receipt of applications would be within 30 days from the date of publishing of the advertisement in Employment News/Rozgar Samachar.

CBC 38117/11/0052/2223

## Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER REW DIVISION BANDIPORA

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS  
FRESHE- NIT No. 134/2022-23 Dated:16/01/2023

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, Of Union Territory Of J&K, e-tenders (In Single cover system) are invited on item rate basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with UT of J&K Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works:-

S. No	Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rs.)	Time of completion	Class of Contractor	Earnest Money (In Rs.)	Major Head	Panchayat /Gram Sabha
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Construction of Community Saintry Complex near govt hr sec Quil	3.00	300/-	30 Days	DEE/ OTHERS	3% of Adv Cost	CSC/ SBM	BlockALOOSA HALQA QUIL
2	Construction of Community Saintry Complex at gojerpatibala near Masjid Shareef	3.00	300/-	30 Days	DEE/ OTHERS	3% of Adv Cost	CSC/ SBM	Block BANDIPORA HALQA KHAYAR
3	Construction of Community Saintry Complex near Masjid shareefTilwanpora	3.00	300/-	30 Days	DEE/ OTHERS	3% of Adv Cost	CSC/ SBM	Block GANASTAN HALQA GUNDKHALIL
4	Construction of Community Saintry Complex nearPanchayat ghar Malangam-b	3.00	300/-	30 Days	DEE/ OTHERS	3% of Adv Cost	CSC/ SBM	Block ALOOSA HALQA Malangam-b
5	Construction of Community Saintry Complex at Syed Ali Danayal (RA) park Tulerzoo Rakh Sultanpur	3.00	300/-	30 Days	DEE/ OTHERS	3% of Adv Cost	CSC/ SBM	Block NOWGAM HALQA R-sultanpur
6	Construction of Community Saintry Complex near panchayatgharkalpora	3.00	300/-	30 Days	DEE/ OTHERS	3% of Adv Cost	CSC/ SBM	Block BONKOOT HALQA KRALPORA
7	Construction of Community Saintry Complex near L/O GhNoorani AWAN(GOVT STORE) CBB	3.00	300/-	30 Days	DEE/ OTHERS	3% of Adv Cost	CSC/ SBM	Block BANDIPORA HalqaCHITTAY BANDAY B
8	Construction of Community Saintry Complex AT MIA MOHALLAH RANGDAJI	3.00	300/-	30 Days	DEE/ OTHERS	3% of Adv Cost	CSC/ SBM	Block ARIN HalqaSULMAR A
9	Construction of Community Saintry Complex AT GHSS NADIHAL	3.00	300/-	30 Days	DEE/ OTHERS	3% of Adv Cost	CSC/ SBM	Block BANDIPORA HalqaNADIHAL
10	Construction of LWM unit near Middle School Tularzoo	2.00	200/-	30 Days	DEE/ OTHERS	3% of Adv Cost	SBM	Block Nowgam Halqa R sultanpur
11	Construction of LWM at Rakhi Asham Mehdiabad Ward 4	2.00	200/-	30 Days	DEE/ OTHERS	3% of Adv Cost	SBM	Block Nowgam Halqa R aSHAM
12	Constt of SWM unit near Middle School Gounchipora	3.90	300/-	30 Days	DEE/ OTHERS	3% of Adv Cost	SBM	Block Nowgam Halqa R sultanpur
13	Constt of SWM at Rakhi Asham Ward 1	3.90	300/-	30 Days	DEE/ OTHERS	3% of Adv Cost	SBM	Block Nowgam Halqa R aSHAM
14	Constt of LWM at naidkhai gundjehangeer A	2.00	200/-	30 Days	DEE/ OTHERS	3% of Adv Cost	SBM	Block Naidkhai Halqa Gundjehnger A
15	Constt of LWM at at ward 1 nainara	2.00	200/-	30 Days	DEE/ OTHERS	3% of Adv Cost	SBM	Block sumbal Halqa nainara
16	Constt of LWM unit near watjinar pampal	2.00	200/-	30 Days	DEE/ OTHERS	3% of Adv Cost	SBM	Block sumbal Halqa nesbal

Position of AAA: Accorded Position of funds:Partially Available

The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) as per schedule of dates.

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	18-1-2023
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	18-1-2023
3.	Bid submission Start Date	18/01/2023 from 4:00P.M.
4.	Bid Submission End Date	25/01/2023 at 4:00 P.M.
6.	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online) -	26/01/2023 at 11:00 A.M.
7.	Note: Hard copy of original Treasury ChallanReceipt , EMD in shape of CDR of 3% Adv cost Cost and 3% of QUOTED / ALOTTED Cost other bid relevant documents within five days after opening of bid by the 1st lowest bidders and additional CDR if applicable as per table below	

ADDITIONAL SECURITY IN SHAPE OF CDR AS PER TABLE BELOW to be UPLOADED at the Time of BIDDING BIDDER WHO FAILS TO UPLOAD ADDITIONAL CDR AT TIME OF BIDDING WILL BE REJECTED

Sno	Quoted cost of bid	Additional performance security
1	Upto & including 15% below	NIL
2	Greater than 15% and upto 20% below	5%
3	Greater than 20% and upto 25% below	10%
4	Greater than 25% and upto 30% below	15%
5	Greater than 30% and upto 35% below	20%

Special Condition: As per Govt. Order No: 238 -FD OF 2021 Dated : 07-09-2021: Special Condition: Participation/Allotments of works can be limited to members of Gram Sabha of each panchayat upto amount of 3.00 lacs only and participants should be registered with District Development Commissioner BANDIPORA however members from nearest panchayat may be included in case of non availability in concerned panchayat.

Special Condition: As per Govt. Order No: 251 -FD OF 2020 Dated : 17-09-2020: Special Condition: Allotments of works can be limited to members of Gram sabha of each panchayat for Btv3 Works for all amounts

1. All other terms conditions are as per PWD Form 25 (Double agreement Form)

No.Xen/REW/BPR/22666-77  
DIPK-16567/22 Dated:-24/01/2023

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer  
REW Bandipora

**ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**  
AWANTIPORA, KASHMIR.  
Tel: 01933-247954/247955. Website: [www.iust.ac.in](http://www.iust.ac.in)

### NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

E-NIT No: -IUST/EW/23/TEND/SRQ/03 Dated: - 21-01-2023

For and on behalf of Vice Chancellor, Islamic University of Science and Technology, Awantipora, J&K UT, E-Tenders (in Two cover system) are invited on percentage basis, from approved and eligible contractors registered with J&K UT Govt. / CPWD / Railways or other State / Central Govt. Departments for the following work.

ENIT No & Date	Advertised Cost of Construction	Class of Contract
E-NIT No: -IUST/EW/23/TEND/SRQ/03 Dated: - 21-01-2023	Rs. 4,41,19,568.00/=	"A"

Bid submission Start Date: 21-01-2023  
Bid submission End Date: 11-02-2023 Up to 6:00 PM  
Date of Submission of DD (Hard Copy): 13-02-2023 From 10:00 AM Up to 4:00 PM  
Bids shall be opened at IUST, on 14-02-2023 at 2:00 PM

Tender documents can be downloaded from website: <https://jktenders.gov.in>  
Detailed Tender/Re-Tender Notices are available on university website [www.iust.ac.in](http://www.iust.ac.in)  
Sd/-, Executive Engineer IUST Awantipora

**DIPK-NB-6125/22**  
**DATED: 24-01-2023**

Government of Jammu and Kashmir  
**Office of the Executive Engineer (Jal Shakti) Irrigation Division Pulwama**  
Phone/ Fax No.: 01933240112 Email: [ifckmrxenidpul@gmail.com](mailto:ifckmrxenidpul@gmail.com)

### ADDENDUM

The date of "Bid Submission end date" and the "date & time of opening of Bids (online)" for the work namely "Construction of Retaining wall for LIS Hassanwani (Part B) mentioned in the NIT No. 29 of 2022-23(e-Tendering) circulated vide No. PID/CS/5970-93 dated 11-01-2023 at S. No. 1 has been changed owing to the arising of some technical error, as follows:-

1. Bid Submission end date = 25-01-2023 (4.00 PM)
2. Date & Time of opening of Bids (online) = 27-01-2023 (10.00 AM).

All other terms and conditions shall remain the same as are laid down in original NIT.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,  
Irrigation Division Pulwama.

No. PID/cs/6095-6117.  
**DIPK-16566/22 Dated 24-01- 2023**

از عدالت جوڈیشل مجسٹریٹ ورجا دل انت ناگ

باجلاس: محمد اشفاق عالم بابا

سرکار، عہدہ 181 سال 2017 تقاضا پولیس انت ناگ

نام: مختیار احمد خان ولد غلام حسن خان

ساکنہ لارکی پورہ آستان پورہ لوگام

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تقریر 18-01-2023

جوڈیشل مجسٹریٹ ورجا دل انت ناگ

**DIPK-16540/22**  
**Dated: 23-01-2023**



## Srinagar Sees Spurt In Registration Of New Vehicles In Last 4 Years

Agencies

Srinagar: The last four years have witnessed significant increase in registration of new vehicles in Srinagar, causing more burden on roads.

The number of LMV vehicles registered in the last four financial years has risen to 30,204, while the number of two-wheelers registered is 43,202.

Official data of Kashmir's Regional Transport Office in Srinagar accessed said Srinagar registered 30,204 Light Motor Vehicles (LMV).

Beginning 2018-19, the vehicles registered were 8414 followed by 7333 vehicles in 2019-2020, 6820 in 2020-21 and 7637 vehicles in 2021-22.

Quoting official data, a senior official at the RTO said that Srinagar has also registered 43,202 two-wheelers during the last four financial years. Of them, the highest number of two-wheelers 12061 were registered in 2019-19 followed by 11372 in 2019-19. The subsequent two years registered 9499 and 10270 two-wheelers.

According to the traffic and transportation plan pro-

posed for district Srinagar by the J&K government in one of its final comprehensive mobility plan (CMP) reports for Srinagar the registered vehicles in Srinagar have increased significantly over the years.

The number of vehicle registration per year has considerably increased from 0.17 Lakh in 2011 to 0.24 Lakh in 2018. This high density and rapid growth of vehicles have worsened the transport situation to a significant extent.

The share of two-wheelers is highest at about 52% followed by 40% share of cars and jeeps. This high density and rapid growth of vehicles have worsened the transport situation to a significant extent. The increase in private modes demands more road space and has resulted in dense concentration of traffic on roads.

The official stated that with the availability and ease of financing facilities for the purchase of any vehicle, they project the increase in the number of registration of vehicles not only in Srinagar but in other parts of the valley—(KNO)

## Bar Mourns Young Advocate's Death

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The lawyer fraternity of Kashmir has paid rich tributes to late Advocate Basit Ashraf Bhat who died due to cardiac arrest on Wednesday. Basit, 25, was a resident of Rawalpura Srinagar.

He was the only son of Advocate Mohammad Ashraf Bhat, Secretary General Jammu Kashmir High Court Bar Association (JKHCBA).

Meanwhile, JKHCBA paid rich tributes to the deceased advocate and observed mourning day on Tuesday.

Also, the normal work remained largely affected at District Court complex Bemina, Srinagar. A delegation of lawyers and advocates thronged

the residence of Basit Ashraf in order to pay tributes and show solidarity with the bereaved family.

Moreover, Valley based lawyers in London, Syed Nazir Gilani, Manzoor Shah, Burhan Malik, Saleem Bhat, Naseer Ahmed Shah, Sobia Bilal, Khalid Sofi have also paid tributes to the late advocate.

"We are deeply grieved and shocked at the sudden death of a young man, the only son of Advocate M. Ashraf Bhat (secretary general Jammu Kashmir High Court Bar Association). May Allah shower his blessings upon departed soul and give Sabre-Jameela to his family," Valley based lawyers in London in a statement said.

## KU To Host Y20 Events As Part Of India's G20 Presidency

Observer News Service

Srinagar: With India assuming the Presidency of the G-20 Group of Countries, the University of Kashmir will be among 15 premier academic institutions in the country to represent the nation in hosting the prestigious Youth-20 events.

The Y20 events are being held in line with the Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision that calls upon the country to present its experiences, learnings and models as possible templates for others, particularly the developing world, during India's G20 Presidency, a statement issued to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

J&K LG, Manoj Sinha, who is the Chancellor of J&K Universities, has called for an active participation of educational institutions in the G20 meeting to be held in the Union Territory and asked the universities to conduct seminars and discussions on the G20 conference.

Vice-Chancellor KU Prof Nilofer Khan said it is an

honour for the University of Kashmir to become a part of Youth-20 events being held under the aegis of the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS). She said academic institutions have been rightly chosen to realise the attainment of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the G-20 countries.

The VC said the University has already geared up to host the proposed University-level seminar.

A high-level committee has already been constituted in the University for necessary preparations and arrangements related to the Y20 event.

"We will be regularly holding discussions in this regard with all relevant stakeholders so that we are able to fulfill our mandate with all determination and success," she said, urging the varsity's faculty to contribute in advancing the G-20 agenda among the students and research scholars so that the same is disseminated through community engagement at grassroots.



## Integrated Communication And Outreach Program Inaugurated In City

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Additional Commissioner Kashmir Abid Hussain Kira on Tuesday inaugurated a two day long Integrated Communication and Outreach Program (ICOP) on Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav (AKAM) at Government Girls Higher Secondary School, Kothi Bagh Srinagar. The outreach programme is being organized by the Central Bureau of Communication (CBC), Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India as part of a series of awareness programmes organized in Jammu and Kashmir.

The highlight of the outreach programme was a photo exhibition showcasing the Indian National Movement and tracing the journey of India's freedom struggle. The photo exhibits contained valuable information about the unsung heroes of the freedom struggle and important events of the movement.

In addition to the exhibition, the outreach programme aims to inform masses about various welfare schemes of the government through expert lectures, group discussions, distribution of printed awareness material and through live performing arts.

Addressing a gathering of officers and officials from CBC and J&K administration, ICDS

field workers, teachers and students, Sh. Kira said that AKAM is a celebration of India's rich and glorious past. He said that diversity is the strength of our nation which has been a cultural and economic power even in the past. He impressed upon the field officials of the ICDS to take the messages of development to the last person, adding that the field workers have a

The outreach programme aims to inform masses about various welfare schemes of the government through expert lectures, group discussions, distribution of printed awareness material and through live performing arts.

direct contact with the people at the grassroots level and can be instrumental in the success of welfare schemes.

The programme was also attended by Chief Education Officer, Srinagar Mohammad

Shabir, District Programme Officer, ICDS, Ms Zeenat Ara, Deputy CEO Ms. Anjum Ara, Ms. Nusrat Bukhari, Principal Government Higher Secondary School Kothibagh Srinagar, Sh. Muhammad Sikander, Incharge CBC, Srinagar and Sh. Mohammad Iqbal Khan, FPA, CBC, Anantnag.

In his welcome address Sh Shahid Mohammad Lone, Field Publicity Officer, CBC gave a detailed overview about the mandate and activities of CBC and briefed the audience about the programme. He said that mass awareness about various welfare schemes is the key to ensure their successful implementation.

He thanked the divisional and district administration for support and coordination in organising the program. Tabasum Zargar, Supervisor ICDS gave a detailed presentation on the programmes implemented by the department especially POSHAN Abhiyan and Pradhan Mantri Matritvu Vandhana Yojana. She urged the field workers to ensure mobilisation at the ground level for success of these programs.

During the program, empaneled Private Registered Troupes of CBC also presented theme based cultural programmes on Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat and Beti Bachao Beti Padhao.

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PATTAN: 01954-293507  
QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

### HIGHWAY STATUS



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

HIJRI  
CALENDAR  
02 Rajab  
1444

### PRAYERS

FAJR 6:06  
ZUHR 12:42  
ASR 4:16  
Magrib 5:57  
ISHA 7:21

## This Day In History

- 1348 - Friuli Earthquake in European southern Alps measuring approximately 6.9, largely destroys Villach, killing 5,000
- 1565 - Battle at Talikota India: Deccan sultanate destroy Vijayanagar's army and the last Hindu kingdom of Southern India
- 1579 - Treaty of Utrecht signed, marks beginning of Dutch Republic
- 1721 - Tsar Peter the Great ends Russian-orthodox patriarchy
- 1840 - American naval expedition under Charles Wilkes is first to identify Antarctica as a new continent
- 1964 - Echo 2, US communications satellite launched
- 1971 - Himachal Pradesh becomes 18th Indian state
- 1971 - Military coup in Uganda under Major General Idi Amin
- 1974 - Dr Christiaan Barnard transplants 1st heterotopic heart transplant (adding donor heart without removal of old)
- 1975 - Bangladeshi parliament disposes of premier Sheikh Mujibur Rahman
- 1979 - 1st documented case of a robot killing a human in US
- 1980 - Highest speed attained by a warship, 167 kph, USN hovercraft

From KO Archives

## SHO Killed In Boulevard Blast

NC activist gunned down in Sopore

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A bomb planted at high security Boulevard here killed a senior police officer this morning while four persons died in separate incidents of violence elsewhere in the security ridden state ahead of Republic day. Four more people were injured in two separate explosions that rocked the city since last evening.

Even as police and other agencies stepped up security for the Republic day, suspected militants blew up an improvised explosive device (IED) inside a public urinal near Hotel Tramboo intercontinental at around 09:45 hours killing instantly station house officer of Ram Munshi Bagh police station, Ghulam Hassan Naaz.

The deceased SHO on his daily round had stopped for a chat with his counterpart from Nehru Park police station. Naaz went to nearby public convenience to relieve himself and immediately afterwards an explosion took place. Naaz was blown to pieces. Reports said, The driver and four guards of the police officer narrowly escaped the blast that also smashed windcreens of several nearby hotels. The guards fired in panic in air. Traffic came to an immediate halt on the vital road which also leads to Rajbhavan. Security forces sealed off Dalgate and adjacent areas. Policemen stationed near the Sulaiman Shopping Complex turned violent and beat up pedestrians and drivers of passenger buses smashing several vehicles. According to the CNS Hizbul Mujahedin has claimed responsibility for the explosion.

An official spokesman quoted by PTI said the blast is suspected to have been caused by an IED activated by a remote-controlled device. Senior police and army officials visited the explosion site and vigil has been stepped up in the highly guarded area frequented by government officials and security vehicles.

In Handwara troops shot dead a civilian after two militants slipped through a security force dragnet following an encounter early today, a CNS report said. Personnel of the 3rd RR according to CNS raided the house of one Samandar Khan in village Dooruhul Handwara after a tip off. While the two militants holed up there gave them a slip after an encounter, troops shot dead the house owner Samandar Khan before destroying his house. Police however said Khan was caught in cross fire.

Meanwhile, a couple received splinter injuries when suspected militants hurled a grenade at a security picket in downtown Srinagar last night, he said. The device fell short of its target and exploded on the road wounding the couple, the spokesman added.


Unknown gunmen shot dead one Tariq Ahmad allegedly a police informer, near Nowpora crossing this afternoon. Gunmen shot dead one Mohinder Kumar inside his house at Kulhand in Doda district while body of an unidentified person was found in Kunzar area in Baramulla.

A woman was wounded when she was caught in a cross-fire between militants and security forces at village Kotli Kalaban in Rajouri district an official spokesman said.


Militants abducted one Muhammad Shafi Ganai from Kulhand area in Doda district, the spokesman said.

NC BLOCK SEC SHOT: Unidentified gunmen shot dead a block secretary of the ruling National Conference at Tujar Sharif, Sopore this evening. Identified as Ghulam Muhammad Mir alias Gula Mir of Tujar Sharif, the deceased was shot point blank at 6.30 pm. He died instantly. Mir, 45, is said to have been working as a manager and accountant with the marketing society, Sopore.

(KASHMIR OBSERVER, 25 January, 2001)



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1	MSS-FZR-JAT-RCR-23-23-1	EAFZR-MIS23-4	Jammu Tawi	03.02.2023 at 11.30 Hrs.
2	MSS-FZR-JUC-RCR-20-22-1	EAFZR-MIS23-4	Jalandhar City	03.02.2023 at 11.30 Hrs.

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## What US Said On Pak PM's Call For Talks With India



Agencies

**WASHINGTON:** The talks between India and Pakistan is a matter for those two nations, US State Department Spokesperson Ned Price has said. His remarks came at a press briefing on Monday in response to a question regarding Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's call for talks with India and New Delhi's response to the offer.

Ned Price said, "We have long called for regional stability in South Asia. That's certainly what we want to see. We want to see it advanced."

"When it comes to our partnership, our partnerships with India and Pakistan, these are relationships that stand on their own. We do not see these relationships as zero-sum. They stand on their own," he added.

"We have long called for regional stability in South Asia, but the pace, the scope, the character of any dialogue between India and Pakistan is a matter for those two countries, India and Pakistan," he said.

Last week, Shehbaz Sharif called for "serious and sincere talks" with Prime Minister Narendra Modi to resolve the out-

standing issues. In an interview with Dubai-based Al Arabiya TV, Mr Sharif said Pakistan has learned its lesson after three wars with India and stressed that now it wants peace with its neighbour.

"My message to the Indian leadership and Prime Minister Modi is that let's sit down on the table and have serious and sincere talks to resolve our burning points like Kashmir. It is up to us to live peacefully and make progress or quarrel with each other and waste time and resources," Mr Sharif said.

"We have had three wars with India, and they have only brought more misery, poverty, and unemployment to the people. We have learnt our lesson, and we want to live in peace with India, provided we are able to resolve our genuine problems," he added.

Reacting to Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's desire of holding talks with PM Modi, Ministry of External Affairs Spokesperson Arindam Bagchi said, "We have already said that we have always wanted normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan. But there should be a conducive atmosphere which does not have terror, hostility or violence. That remains our position."

## Pakistan: Woman Shot Dead By Father In Karachi Court



Press Trust of India

A newly-wed woman was shot dead on Monday by her father in a court here in Pakistan's port city, police said, in the latest apparent honour killing in the country.

The incident happened when the woman, a resident of Pirabad in Karachi, came to the Karachi City Court to record her statement to confirm she had entered into a freewill marriage, police said.

A senior police official said that the woman belonged to Waziristan, in the tribal area, and had recently married a doctor in her neighbourhood.

"When she came to the city court this morning to record her statement, her father opened fire on her, killing her on the spot and injuring a po-

liceman who is out of danger now," Senior Superintendent of Police Shabbir Sethar said.

"The accused has been arrested and the weapon used in the commission of the crime seized," he said. In nearly every case, the father, husband, brother, or any other male relative is behind the honour killing, Sethar said.

The woman had left her home after marriage which angered her father, police said.

Hundreds of women are killed every year in different parts of Pakistan in the name of honour.

The Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) has reported an average of 650 honour killings annually over the past decade. But since most go unreported, the real number is likely to be much higher.

## Israeli Minister Visits UAE Ahead Of Netanyahu Trip: Reports

Agencies

An Israeli minister has made a secret trip to the United Arab Emirates ahead of a possible visit to the Gulf state by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Israeli media reports say.

Ron Dermer, Israel's strategic affairs minister, travelled on Sunday to Abu Dhabi, where he met senior officials, the Israeli news website Walla reported on Monday.

Alongside Dermer was National Security Adviser Tzachi Hanegbi.

The trip would be the first by an Israeli minister to the UAE since the new Israeli government came into power at the end of December.

Netanyahu had been expected to make a visit to the UAE shortly after he returned to the premiership, but the entrance of his provocative national security minister, Itamar Ben-Gvir, to Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in January led to the cancellation of the UAE trip, according to Israeli



media outlets.

The UAE issued a public condemnation of Ben-Gvir's actions at the time.

On his trip to the UAE, Dermer tried to allay some of its government's concerns regarding Ben-Gvir and other far-right members of the Israeli government, according to the reports.

Israel and the UAE normalised ties in 2020 under the United States-brokered Abraham Accords and have since strengthened their relations, including by signing a free trade agreement in May.

Dermer served as Israel's

ambassador to the US when the accords were signed.

Naftali Bennett, a right-wing politician who succeeded Netanyahu as prime minister in 2021, became the first Israeli leader to make a state visit to the UAE in December of the same year before visiting again for talks in June last year.

The UAE lies at the centre of Israel's strategy of normalising ties with Arab governments despite its continued occupation of Palestinian territory and near-daily raids in the occupied West Bank, which have already killed 17 Palestinians this month.

## How Secret White House Documents At Joe Biden's Home Were Discovered

Agencies

**WASHINGTON:** The first secret documents turned up in Joe Biden's former private office and home back in November, but it was January before the White House publicly admitted the embarrassing discovery -- under pressure from a steady drip of media revelations.

Since then, searches of the president's home have uncovered several more sets of classified files in a snowballing affair threatening to overshadow the Democrat's expected announcement that he will seek a second term in 2024.

**HERE IS A TIMELINE OF DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SAGA:**

**November 2, 2022**

While emptying an office that Biden used occasionally between 2017 -- after the end of his term as Barack Obama's vice-president -- and the launch of his 2020 campaign, Biden's personal lawyers find "a small number of documents" marked as classified in a locked closet.

The following day, the documents are handed over to the National Archives, as US presidents and vice presidents are required to do when they leave office.

The White House makes no public announcement of the discovery, which comes a week before critical midterm elections, and at a time when Biden's Republican predecessor Donald Trump is being investigated for his mishandling of hundreds of classified files.



**November 9, 2022**

The Department of Justice begins investigating Biden's handling of classified documents.

**December 20, 2022**

Biden's personal lawyers find more documents in the garage of his family home in Wilmington, Delaware, where the 80-year-old president often spends weekends.

The attorneys inform the Justice Department and hand over the documents.

The White House has yet to make a public statement on either of the discoveries.

**January 9, 2023**

The White House confirms for the first time, reacting to media reports, that secret papers were found in Biden's office, but makes no mention of those found in his home in Wilmington.

**January 10, 2023**

At a news conference in Mexico, where Biden is on an official visit, the president says he was "surprised" to learn about the classified document discoveries and does not know what is in them.

**January 12, 2023**

The White House confirms that a "small number" of classified documents were found in storage areas and in the library of Biden's Wilmington home.

Facing an uproar in opposi-

tion ranks, US Attorney General Merrick Garland names Robert Hur, a Trump appointee, as special counsel to investigate the matter.

Biden's spokeswoman Karine Jean-Pierre tells the press that the search of his Wilmington home concluded the night before, on January 11.

**January 14, 2023**

In a new twist, the White House says a lawyer found five additional pages of classified material in Biden's home in Delaware -- just a day earlier, on January 13.

The total number of documents found in Biden's home and his Washington office has become unclear at this stage -- with the White House referring variably to documents, pages or "items" -- and no details have been released on their level of classification.

**January 19, 2023**

Traveling in California, Biden downplays the furor over the documents, declaring that "there's nothing there" and that he has "no regrets."

**January 21, 2023**

The president's personal attorney, Bob Bauer, announces that six more classified documents have been found at Biden's Delaware home.

Unlike previous discoveries, the latest search was conducted by the US Department of Justice -- at the president's invitation, according to his lawyers -- and lasted from 9:45 am to 10:30 pm.

The latest find included documents dating back to Biden's tenure as vice president from 2009 to 2017, but also to his decades-long career in the Senate.

## 5G Can Be Misused For Drugs, Terror Financing: Report At Top Cops' Meet

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** Warning against the vulnerabilities of the high-speed 5G telecom network, papers submitted at a key security meet have noted that it can provide an excellent platform for middlemen and agents for creating linkages for crimes such as drug trafficking, human and organ trafficking, money laundering, and terror financing.

The papers, written by some Indian Police Service officers, were submitted at the just-concluded conference of director generals of police (DGPs) and inspector general of police (IGPs), attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The papers noted that the 5G network is built on easily accessible and open Internet protocols and it inherit all the vulnerabilities of previous generations which make it vulnerable to cyber-attacks and compromising the security of the entire system.

The IPS officers who wrote the papers suggested that a reserved 5G bandwidth and highly secured equipment should be developed proactively for sensitive government-related communications and for military usage and only approved and authenticated firms with the least cyber risk or with



maximum safety protocols should be allowed to work in for the government agencies.

"With cryptocurrencies and decentralised banking systems gaining further popularity using the real-time 5G networks, the linkages and financial trail will be difficult to trace."

"The 5G can provide an excellent platform for the middlemen and agents for creating linkages for crimes like drug trafficking, human and organ trafficking, money laundering, terror financing, etc.," the papers said.

Apart from the Prime Minister, the three-day annual conference was attended by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, National Security Adviser Ajit Doval, and about 350 top police officers of the country last weekend.

The 5G network core is built on easily accessible and open Internet protocols such as HTTP and Transport Layer Security (TLS). In a Network-Slicing environment, different sub-networks will have different natures of cyber security.

## Minister Flags "Will Screen BBC Series" Announcements To Pinarayi Vijayan

Press Trust of India

**THIRUVANANTHAPURAM:** Several political groups in Kerala today announced they would screen the controversial BBC documentary "India: The Modi Question" in the state, prompting the BJP to urge Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan to intervene and put a stop to such endeavours.

CPI(M)'s youth wing, DYFI, kicked off the political storm in the state over the documentary by announcing on its Facebook page that it would be shown in the state.

Following that, similar announcements were made by the SFI - a left-wing student organisation allied with CPI(M) - and various wings of Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC), including the Youth Congress.

The Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee's (KPCC) minority cell also said that the documentary would be screened in all district headquarters of the state on Republic Day.

BJP termed such move as "treasonous" and asked the Kerala Chief Minister to urgently intervene and nip such endeavours in the bud.

BJP state president K Surendran filed a complaint with Vijayan demanding that permission be not given to screen the documentary in the state.

In his complaint, Mr Surendran said that the screening of the documentary would be



tantamount to condoning foreign moves to endanger the country's unity and integrity.

He also said that the reliving the unfortunate events of two decades ago was aimed at "fueling religious tensions".

Union Minister of State for External Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs V Muraleedharan also urged the Chief Minister not to allow screening of the documentary and sought his urgent intervention in the matter.

In a Facebook post, Mr Muraleedharan said that re-introduction of allegations rejected by the Supreme Court questions the credibility of the highest court of the country.

Both Mr Muraleedharan and Mr Surendran have dubbed the screening of the documentary as "treason".

SFI, in its Facebook post, said the documentary would be screened in various college campuses in the state.

State Youth Congress president Shafi Parambil, in a Facebook post, said that reminders of betrayal and genocide cannot be hidden by power and the BBC documentary will be screened in Kerala.

## NEWS MAKERS

### BJP Spent Crores To Distort My Image, But...: Rahul Gandhi On "Pappu" Tag

Press Trust of India

**JAMMU:** Thousands of crores of rupees have been pumped in by the BJP and the RSS systematically to distort my image but the truth always comes out, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said today on him being derisively referred to as "Pappu" on social media.



The Congress will teach the BJP that truth works in this country and not money, power and arrogance, Rahul Gandhi said as his 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' continues in its final leg. He was speaking to reporters in Jammu before starting his journey towards the Valley.

"Thousands of crores have been spent to distort my image. This was done systematically by the BJP and its leaders. Thousands of crores can't hide the truth and you have witnessed it. The truth always comes out," the 52-year-old said when asked if the Congress was spending crores of rupees to counter his "Pappu" image. He alleged the RSS and the BJP leaders think that anything can be achieved with money and power.

"You can demean anyone, distort anyone's image, buy any government, anything can be done with money. But that would not be truth. Truth always pushes aside money and power and this stark reality is becoming evident to the BJP leaders slowly," he said.

### Digvijaya Singh's Damage Control Amid Surgical Strikes Remark Controversy

Agencies

**NAGROTA:** Amid an ongoing row over Congress leader Digvijaya Singh questioning the authenticity of the 2019 surgical strikes, agitated party leader Jai Ram Ramesh lashed out at the media on Tuesday, saying all that needed to be said have already been done, and the questions should now be directed at the Prime Minister.

A day after Mr Singh triggered a controversy and the Congress distanced itself from his remarks, Mr Ramesh told the media during the Bharat Jodo Yatra in Jammu and Kashmir that all queries related to the surgical strike uproar have been answered by his party and the media needs to aim its questions at Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Mr Singh, trying to put an end to the row, also said, "I have got the greatest regard for the Defence forces", as the leaders marched on along

with other padayatri.

The Bharat Jodo Yatra led by Rahul Gandhi resumed from Sitti bypass, Nagrota in Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday.

Mr Ramesh refrained from answering any questions and said that "We have answered all the questions." "Congress party has said whatever it wanted to. I tweeted yesterday regarding the same. I do not want to say anything other than this," he said.

Taking to Twitter, Mr Ramesh claimed that even the UPA government had carried out surgical strikes.

"The views expressed by senior leader Digvijaya Singh are his own and do not reflect the position of Congress. Surgical strikes were carried out before 2014 by the UPA government. Congress has supported and will continue to support all military actions that are in the national interest," Mr Ramesh tweeted.



This comes after Digvijaya Singh said there is no proof of the 2019 surgical strike against Pakistan, while the Centre claims to have carried out the attack.

"They (Centre) talk about surgical strikes and that they have killed so many of them but there is no proof," said Digvijaya Singh in his address in Jammu on Monday.

On February 14, 2019, a Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) convoy was attacked by terrorists in Kashmir's Pulwama, in which 44 soldiers lost their lives. Striking back, on February 26, 2019, Indian Air Force fighter jets targetted an advanced terror training camp of Jaish-e-Mohammed in Pakistan's Balakot.

The day after, Islamabad attempted to target Indian military installations but was thwarted by the IAF.

### Pakistan Pm Shehbaz Apologises To Nation For Power Outage

Press Trust of India

**Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif** on Tuesday apologised to the nation for the inconvenience caused by the countrywide power outage that plunged millions of people into darkness and vowed to fix responsibility for the second major breakdown in nearly four months.

Pakistan faced a major power breakdown on Monday due to a voltage fluctuation in the national grid, disrupting normal life and leaving major parts of the country, including capital Islamabad and financial hub Karachi, without electricity.

Taking to Twitter, the premier wrote: "On behalf of my government, I would like to express my sincere regrets for the inconvenience our citizens suffered due to power outage yesterday."

"On my orders an inquiry is underway to determine reasons of the power failure. Responsibility will be fixed," he tweeted.

Power supply was mostly restored in Pakistan, though some parts of the country still experienced blackouts on Tuesday. Minister for Energy Khuram Dastgir said on Tuesday that electricity has been fully restored at grid stations across the country. Power at all 1,112 stations of the national grid has been restored, Dastgir tweeted.



## Row Over Digvijaya's Remark

## Armed Forces Do Not Need To Give Proof: Rahul

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** Snubbing Digvijaya Singh for questioning surgical strikes, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday termed his comments "ridiculous" and said the armed forces are doing their job "exceptionally well" and do not need to give any proof.

Gandhi, who faced a volley of questions from the media on Singh's remarks on surgical strikes and the Pulwama terror attack, said he and the party completely disagreed with his statement.

"There are people who will say ridiculous things during conversation. I am sorry to say so about a senior leader, he said a ridiculous thing," Gandhi told a press conference here.

"We have full trust in our army. If army performs any task, there is no need to give any proof. I completely disagree with his statement and this is the official position of the Congress party that it is personal point of view of Digvijaya Singh," he added.

Singh on Monday had questioned the surgical strikes and accused the government of peddling lies.

Addressing a public meeting during the Bharat Jodo Yatra in

Jammu and Kashmir, Singh alleged that the government did not agree to the CRPF request of flying its personnel from Srinagar to Delhi and 40 soldiers sacrificed their lives in Pulwama in 2019 to a terror attack.

"They talk of surgical strikes. They claim to have killed so many people but no proof is given. They are ruling by peddling a bundle of lies," the former Madhya Pradesh chief minister, who has often courted controversy with his comments, said.

Asked about action being taken by the Congress against Singh, Gandhi said the Congress is a democratic party and "not a dictatorship".

"We don't run our party on the principle of coercion. We don't appreciate Singh's personal views. But views of the party are above Digvijaya Singh's views. The views are generated from the conversation within the party. I would like to assure you that his views...are not views that are held by the centre of the party," he said.

"We are absolutely clear that armed forces do a job. They do the job exceptionally well. They don't need to be providing proof for anything," he said.

## Rahul Shakes Hands With Soldiers In Nagrota



**JAMMU:** Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Tuesday shook hands with some Army personnel watching his 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' from behind the boundary wall of their camp as the march passed through the garrison town of Nagrota here.

Gandhi's gesture to reach out to the soldiers despite the walls secured with barbed wire came a day after his senior party colleague Digvijaya Singh sought proof from the BJP government on the surgical strikes on terror camps across the border.

The former Congress president, who resumed his 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' from Nagrota towards Kashmir, paused outside an Army camp after spotting some personnel watching from behind the wall.

He approached them and shook their hands before marching forward, waving at

the crowd gathered on either side of the road and at those trying to catch a glimpse from their homes and shops.

Some of the Army personnel were seen filming the foot march on their mobile phones.

Snubbing Digvijaya Singh, a former Madhya Pradesh chief minister, for questioning the surgical strikes, Gandhi termed his comments "ridiculous", and said the armed forces are doing their job "exceptionally well" and do not need to give any proof.

Gandhi, who faced a volley of questions from the media on Singh's remarks on the surgical strikes and the Pulwama terror attack, said he and his party completely disagreed with the statement.

Singh had on Monday questioned the veracity of the surgical strikes and accused the government of peddling lies.

## Urmila Matondkar Joins Rahuls BJY In Jammu



Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** Actor-turned-politician Urmila Matondkar joined Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra as it resumed from the garrison town of Nagrota on a cold Tuesday morning.

Matondkar, a popular Bollywood stars of the 1990s, joined Gandhi shortly after the march started from near the army garrison around 8 am amid tight security, with Congress workers and supporters lined up on the road along the route to welcome them.

Matondkar (48) had resigned from the Congress in September 2019 after a short association of six months, and joined the Shiv Sena in 2020.

Dressed in a cream-coloured traditional Kashmiri Pheran (loose gown) and beanie cap, Matondkar was interacting with Gandhi as they marched along.

Noted author Perumal Murugan and J&K Pradesh Congress committee president Vikar Rasool Wani, his predecessor G A

Mir and former minister Tariq Hamid Karra also joined them alongside hundreds of other carrying the tricolor in their hands.

The yatra, which started from Kanyakumari on September 7, entered Jammu and Kashmir from Punjab on Thursday and reached Jammu city on Monday.

The march is scheduled to make two night halts at Ramban and Banihal along the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway before its culmination in Srinagar with a grand rally at the Sher-e-Kashmir Cricket Stadium on January 30.

A 65-member strong Ladakh delegation led by Ladakh Territorial Congress President Nawang Rigzin Jora joined Gandhi at the start of the yatra and briefed him about the issues and concerns of their people, one of the delegation members said.

A group of Kashmiri Pandit migrant women, wearing their traditional attire and carrying flower petals, were waiting outside the famous Kol-Kandoli temple to welcome Gandhi.

## RAJOURI ATTACK

## Take Action Against Each Person Who Helped Terrorists: DGP

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** The Director General of Police (DGP), Dilbag Singh on Tuesday ordered intensified operations to track down the militants involved in the twin attacks in Rajouri earlier this month, and directed stringent action against each and every individual who provided support to militants in executing the attack.

Singh passed these instructions while chairing a high level meeting of army, police and CRPF officers to review the security scenario of the border district, a police spokesperson said Tuesday. The DGP was accompanied by ADGP Jammu Zone, Mukesh Singh.

Addressing the meeting, the spokesperson said, the DGP sought the progress of investigation regarding the Dhangri incident and directed for looking at all the angles and work out involvement of all the anti national elements and terrorists involved in this heinous crime.

On January 1, four people were killed and many injured after unidentified militants fired on their houses in Dhangri village of Rajouri. Two cousin sisters, both minors, lost their lives in an IED explosion the next day.

Singh, he said, emphasized on utilizing modern technology and human intelligence to monitor the suspect movements on borders and as also in the hinterland to prevent anti-peace incidents.



"DGP directed for intensifying the operations with all might to track down the involved terrorists. He also directed for stringent action against each and every individual who has provided any support to terrorists in executing the cowardly attack," he added.

The spokesperson said that the DGP directed for further strengthening the security grid by conducting naka checking and joint patrolling besides ensuring the area domination.

Singh, he said, stressed for following SOPs laid down in this context.

"He stressed for keeping strict surveillance on cross border narco trade saying that elements from across the borders are using it for terror financing besides targeting youth of Jammu and Kashmir. The DGP directed for strict action against the element found involved in anti-peace activities and narco-trade," he added.

The DGP, the spokesperson said, stressed for enhanced coordination among forces; Army, Police and CAPFs, which he said has been the

cause of success on the anti-terror front.

Asserting that during the recent past forces have had tremendous success on the anti-terror front, Singh, he said, stressed for further strengthening the synergy between the Police and security forces so as to track down the remaining terrorists.

"We have to continue our commitment towards the mission peace to consolidate the growing peace in J&K," he added.

According to the spokesperson, the DGP directed the police personnel to be friendly towards the general public which would help in good policing.

"Giving thrust on grievance redressal, Singh, he said, directed for ensuring fast and efficient disposal of public grievances and added that Thana Diwas is an effective initiative in this direction.

"The officers present in the meeting briefed the DGP regarding the security scenario of the District. He was also apprised about the progress in the Dhangri terror incident and various anti-terror measures," the spokesperson added.

## J&amp;K's Budget Proposals Likely To Be Submitted To GoI Next Week

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The Jammu & Kashmir government is likely to submit budget proposals of the Union Territory for 2023-24 to the Government of India in the next week.

A local news agency KNO quoting sources reported that the UT administration has finalized the budget proposals for 2023-24 and revised estimates for 2022-23 and would submit them to the Union Ministry of Home Affairs in the next week.

"The proposals would be submitted to the MHA for their forward submission to the Union Finance Ministry. This would be followed-up by

discussions between J&K administration, MHA and Finance Ministry on the proposals," they said, adding that J&K's budget is likely to be presented in the Parliament in the month of March.

The central assistance for J&K would be announced in the Union Budget to be presented by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on February 1. Last year, J&K was allocated Rs 35,581.44 crore central assistance.

On December 6, 2022, KNO had reported that the Union Finance Ministry has asked



Ministry of Home Affairs to submit Jammu & Kashmir's budget proposals for the next fiscal year.

This will be the fourth consecutive budget of Jammu & Kashmir which will be presented in the Parliament in absence of the Legislative Assembly in the Union Territory. The budget is being presented in the Parliament as law-making powers of UT Assembly are vested with the Parliament in absence of elected government in J&K

Jammu & Kashmir has been without an elected government since June 19, 2018. The budget for 2019-20 was approved by the Governor Satya Pal as head of the State Administrative Council. After the abrogation of Article 370 and reorganization of J&K, all its budgets were presented in the Parliament by the Union Finance Ministry due to the absence of an elected Government in UT.

## CS Stresses On Protection Of Forest Lands

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** Chief Secretary, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta on Tuesday chaired the 22nd meeting of the Steering Committee of J&K Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority (CAMPA) to review the implementation of Annual Plan of Operations (APOs) for FY 2022-23 and to consider the APOs for FY 2023-24.

Administrative Secretaries of Departments of Forests; Rural Development & Panchayati Raj; Revenue; Tribal Affairs; Planning; Secretary in Agriculture Production and Farmers Welfare participated besides many senior officers and HoDs from the Forest Department.

Some of the officers participated in the meeting through video conferencing.

The Chief Secretary directed the Forest Department to complete digitalization of boundaries of all forests of Jammu & Kashmir within a year. He directed constitution of joint teams comprising officers from Revenue, Forest, Tourism, RDD, PRI representatives and other stakeholders concerned to facilitate this process.

He enjoined upon them to

utilize the latest technology like CORS and GIS in culminating the process scientifically in a time-bound manner. He also underscored the need of fixing boundary pillars demarcating the forest land in the shortest possible time to ensure protection of forest land from encroachment.

Dr Mehta also came up with a concept for utilization of biomass from forests, like lantana and pine needles with the involvement of Self Help Groups. While creating sustainable livelihood for communities living around forests, it will also be helpful in removal of potential fire hazards like pine needles and other inflammable materials.

The Chief Secretary stressed on involvement of Panchayats in all afforestation works. Meeting the demands of the forest dependent communities for water, fodder and non-timber forest produce should be main objective of all afforestation works. This will ensure that they become willing partner in protection and conservation of forests, he added.

While reviewing the work proposals relating to Gharana Wetland reserve, the Chief Secretary directed the Wildlife Protection



Department to make it one of the most important tourist attractions of Jammu. He directed that a comprehensive study should be carried out about the habitat and avifauna of Gharana Wetland for its better protection and development. He also emphasized on making arrangements for dissemination of information with visitors and nature lovers so that the visits happen to be a source of infotainment. He told them to look into the potential of developing as a cluster with Border village of Schetgarh so that both are offered as package to the visitors.

PCCF (HoFF), Dr. Mohit Gera apprised the Committee about the main activities of the Department. Under "Green Jammu and

## CC&amp;I Thanks LG For Exempting Poor; Urge Him To 'excuse' Small Hoteliers Too

Majid Nabi

**SRINAGAR:** As the government has initiated an eviction drive against state land encroachers in Jammu and Kashmir, Chamber of Commerce and Industries (CC&I) Monday thanked Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha for 'exempting' poor and common masses.

CCI, an umbrella body of various trade unions, however urged the government to evict those having encroached huge tracts of state land in parts of Union Territory.

The biz body urged the LG administration to also consider exemption of small hoteliers from the ongoing eviction drive so that the people associated with tourism business are not affected.

Addressing a press conference here, CC&I President, Tariq Ghani while appreciating the administration for acting tough against encroachers said those having encroached huge tracts of state land must not be spared.

The CC & I president said except small hoteliers, all those businessmen who have occupied government land and erected tall structures on it should be dealt with strictly as per law.

"We appreciate the gov-

ernment for initiating action against encroachers; we don't support people who violate laws and demand punitive action against them. But at the same time we urge LG administration to also exempt small hoteliers who have constructed lodges or hotels on state land for the larger interest of those associated with tourism business," added Ghani.

The biz body president claimed that a majority of people in J&K have erected concrete structures on state land and that the government should bear in mind that their lives might be affected in case their houses are demolished.

He termed the drive as justified and urged the administration to continue the same till all encroachments are removed permanently. He also appealed to the center and UT administration to prioritize locals for setting up business in J&K than to offer land to big business houses.

"We don't oppose outsiders to set up their business in J&K but want the government to give priority to locals. There are thousands of educated youth without jobs in J&K and the government must think about those first," he added.

## Over 500 Kanal Govt Land Retrieved In Shopian: Admin

Observer News Service

**SHOPIAN:** Acting tough against the illegal encroachments, the District Administration Shopian on Tuesday retrieved 502 kanals of State/ Kahcharai land during massive anti-encroachment drives held across the district, an official spokesperson said.

The land, he said, retrieved from illegal encroachment since yesterday consisted of 47 kanals at village Haripora, 99 kanals at village Kadigam in tehsil Barbugh, 31 Kanals in village Daramdora tehsil Keegam, 78 Kanals in village Kharwara tehsil Hermain, 101 Kanals in Mingipora tehsil Shopian, 44 Kanals in village Dragad tehsil Chittragram, 67 Kanals in village Zainapora

tehsil Zainapora and 35 Kanals in Berthipora of tehsil Keller.

He said the drives were conducted under the supervision of Tehsildars of respective Tehsils.

"More than 640 Kanals of land were retrieved since yesterday during these anti-encroachment drives," the spokesperson said.

He said that the District Administration has passed directions to all Tehsildars for intensifying the anti-encroachment drives in the district for retrieval of all encroached state and kahcharie land.

"Tehsildars of the district have been instructed to continue the drives till the entire encroached land is retrieved from the encroachers," he added.

## National Girl Child Day Celebrated At Anantnag

Observer News Service

**ANANTNAG:** An event was organized on Tuesday by the District Social Welfare Department Anantnag to celebrate National Girl Child Day at Govt College for Women, Anantnag.

The event marked the culmination of the Girl Child Week being celebrated in the district under the aegis of 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao'.

Speaking on the occasion, Secretary DLSA, Mir Wajahat highlighted the importance of creating awareness in the society about the importance of girls. He said that strict legal provisions are in place to prevent sex determination prior to birth. He said that girls have

proven their mettle in every field and there is no rational basis for gender bias.

Principal, GCW Anantnag and District Social Welfare Officer Anantnag also highlighted the role of girls in the society.

DSWO Anantnag giving a brief about the achievements of the department under 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' said that this year the Male Female ratio has improved by 22.7 per thousand males. He said the dropout rate of girls is on the decline and enrolment at the secondary level is increasing.

He said that there has been significant improvement in institutional deliveries, ANC registrations and coverage under Menstrual Hygiene Management.

of 2022-23 and proposed APOs for the financial year 2023-24. He informed that against the current year's target of rehabilitation of degraded forests of 15000 ha area, 8108 ha with planting of 59.70 Lakh plants have already been covered. Winter planting in temperate zone is in progress and targets for the year are likely to be achieved in full.

The meeting was informed that the APOs of FY 2023-24 envisage afforestation of 13,719 ha area through assisted natural and artificial regeneration with planting of about 90.00 lakh plants. APOs also include proposals for eco-restoration of ecologically sensitive areas like Patnitop-Nathatop and areas with southern slopes etc.

Later on the Chief Secretary released publications titled "Har Gaon Hariyal" under Green Jammu & Kashmir Drive" and "Digitalization of Forests: Strengthening of Forest Protection and Management" by Forest Department, "Pollinators: Nature's Miracle Workers" by J&K Biodiversity Council, and "Key Wildlife Species: Kishitwar High Altitude National Park" by Wildlife Protection Department.

KASHMIR OBSERVER

Wednesday | 25-01-2023

New Normalcy

Kashmir has traveled a considerable distance towards normalcy since the withdrawal of Article 370 in August 2019. Union home minister Amit Shah highlighted this fact during his inaugural address at a three-day conference of director generals and inspector generals of police. He said that the government's multi-dimensional efforts, terror incidents and the number of related deaths in Jammu and Kashmir have fallen. Drawing a comparison with the time when insurgency forced children from Jammu and Kashmir to study in other parts of the country, the home minister said, today 32,000 children from other parts of the country are studying in J&K. He also said that in the last four years, J&K has witnessed more investment than in the last 70 years. The home minister counted the booming tourism among the government's major achievements, saying more than "one crore and 80 lakh" tourists visited the union territory last year. This he attributed to the new normalcy in Kashmir.

It is true that Kashmir has become very normal in the last four years. This has happened incrementally over the period with violence declining sharply, reaching its lowest last year. Earlier, an MHA review highlighted the progress made in J&K over the last year on economic and security fronts. The union territory, the report said, witnessed "a 54 percent reduction in terrorist incidents, a 22 percent drop in recruitment of militants and 84 percent decline in the deaths of security forces." In real terms, the militancy related violence has decreased from 417 incidents in 2018 to 229 in 2021 while the number of slain security personnel had reduced from 91 in 2018 to 42 in 2021.

On the development front, the report says that the BJP government at the centre has brought an investment of Rs 56,000 crores in just three years. Under the Prime Minister's Development Package in Jammu, the report mentions, J&K got about 63 projects in hydroelectricity at a cost of Rs 80,000 crore.

One biggest indicator of the new normalcy, as highlighted by the home minister, has been the growth of tourism. And last year is said to have broken all previous records. According to the tourist officials, the number of tourists Kashmir received this year is the highest so far, beating by far even the pre-turmoil period record. This has generated employment for the thousands of people who had lost their jobs during Covid pandemic. Going forward, the situation looks set to only improve further, hopefully with all other political and social drivers of the place remaining unchanged.



Feature image caption: An assortment of Kashmiri vegetarian dishes

# Promoting Kashmir's Vegetarian Food

We love our Wazwan. However, we must also be cheerleaders of some of our own authentic vegetarian options

Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat

Majority of people living across India have a wrong notion about the food habits of Kashmiris. They perceive that Kashmiri people only eat meat based dishes. The reason for this misapprehension and confusion is massive promotion and publicity given to our Non-vegetarian food especially Wazwan and the non-availability of good vegetarian food in Kashmiri restaurants.

A majority of tourists visiting Kashmir eat vegetarian food but don't get authentic Kashmiri vegetarian food at restaurants. Vegetarian menus are restricted to Punjabi cuisine and rely on borrowed dishes like Dal Makhani or Aaloo Parathas. This is misperceived as the 'authentic' vegetarian food of Kashmir. This also promotes the idea that Kashmiri cuisine does not have any vegetarian options. Some fine dine restaurants have now incorporated Dum Aloo or Nader Yakhin.

Recently, I got an opportunity to present our vegetarian food to a larger audience in Kutch Gujarat at a grand cultural event. However, no well coordinated effort has been made to explore the true scope of Kashmir's vegetarian delights.

## Forest Food Festivals

The idea of organising Forest Food Festival struck my mind in June 2015 when I accompanied Mr O P Sharma the then Additional Principal Chief Conservator Forests (APCCF) to Basant Wodder forests near Doodh Pathri in Budgam. We visited the area in connection with commemorating the World Environment Day on June 5th 2015. A group of students from a local private school and their teachers were also accompanying us. When Mr Sharma spoke about various forest herbs and edible green leafy vegetables like Hand, Krech, Obej, Pamb Haakh, Lissa, mushrooms, I suggested that we organise a small food festival wherein we can cook and serve the same leafy forest vegetables and mushrooms to people.

In August 2015, when O P Sharma was posted as Director Environment, Ecology & Remote Sensing J&K Govt, a forest food festival was organised. On Oct 4th 2015, first-ever Forest Food Festival was finally organised at Srinagar by the Department of Environment Ecology and Remote Sensing in association with Centre for Conservation of Culture

and Heritage (CCCH) Kashmir and Institute of Hotel Management -IHM Srinagar.

Faculty of IHM Srinagar especially Chef Yaseen prepared lots of dishes from forest herbs and mushrooms including other Kashmiri vegetables like Makai Halwa, Hand Parotha, Maval Cookies, Soi Soup etc. Before these dishes were prepared, we had several brainstorming sessions at IHM about the food items, soups, and desserts that could be prepared. Nusrat Jahanara Chairperson Centre for Conservation of Culture and Heritage (CCCH) a small NGO working on promotion of forest and Kashmiri veg food, late Ramzan Khan Sahib from Gurez, Chef Yaseen including this author shared many ideas for a week or so. We had brought lots of herbs from Gurez and Ramzan Khan sahib played a great role in that.

In July 2019, the Environment Ecology & Remote Sensing Department in collaboration with CCCH held two more Forest Food Festivals in Yusmarg and Gurez.

a dedicated organisation run by Sushma Ayengar who has been working on Pastoralist communities for the last many decades. Sushma organises Living Lightly exhibitions across India from last 7 years wherein life and culture of these shepherds is promoted and propagated.

I had actually been invited by Sahjeevan, a Kuch based NGO working on pastoralists and I was asked to accompany some youth from the Chopan community (Kashmiri shepherds). As Sahjeevan coordinator Ramesh Bhatti was familiar with my cooking skills and requested me to prepare Kashmiri food during the 4 day event.

Some of my friends who know cooking tagged along with me. Before leaving for Kutch we shopped in Bohri Kadal of old city and purchased some exotic dry vegetables, spices and lentils (daals) like Rajma, Rumah, Pran (Shallots), Ale-Hachhe (sun dried bottle gourd), Wangan Hachhe (sun dried Brinjal), Ruwangan Hachhe, Bamchoonth Hache (Sun

During the festival, we served our group as many as ten Kashmiri vegetarian dishes like Rumah Dal, Rajma Dal, Rumah Masala, Rajma Salad/Chat, Bamchonth Halwa, Gogee Haakh, Nader Pakoda, Nader Fried Rice, Pran Fried Rice, Makai Halwa with desi ghee and walnuts

## Serving Kashmiri veg food in Kutch

From 2018, the Living Learning and Design Centre (LLDC) Kutch Gujarat has been organising winter. LLDC is an Institution set up by Shrujan Trust in Kutch district of Gujarat. LLDC has a beautiful campus situated on 9 acres of land in the Ajrakpur village in the outskirts of Bhuj city. LLDC & Shrujan Trust has been working with the handicraft workers for more than 50 years. The LLDC has set up a good team of researchers who do a lot of research and documentation on craft work of Kutch.

The winter festival could not be held in 2021 and 2022 due to COVID pandemic but this year LLDC decided to hold the event after 2 years. The main highlight of the event was an exhibition on pastoralists organised under the banner of Living Lightly which is

Dried Quince apple) and dry fruits among other things. During the festival, we served our group as many as ten Kashmiri vegetarian dishes like Rumah Dal, Rajma Dal, Rumah Masala, Rajma Salad/Chat, Bamchonth Halwa, Gogee Haakh, Nader Pakoda, Nader Fried Rice, Pran Fried Rice, Makai Halwa with desi ghee and walnuts, badam and much more.

When I was asked to serve Kashmiri vegetarian food during the event at LLD campus in Kutch, I hadn't expected such a positive response. The food was loved by all. We love our Wazwan. However, we must also be cheerleaders of some of our own authentic vegetarian options.

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

## OTHER OPINION

### Reaching out

During a visit to Colombo last week, the external affairs minister, S. Jaishankar, announced India's support for an International Monetary Fund debt restructuring plan for Sri Lanka. The declaration was important in strengthening the hands of the Sri Lankan government in talks with the IMF, as the island nation looks to rebuild a devastated economy, since India is among the country's major creditors. But New Delhi's support for Colombo's debt talks with the IMF also serves as an example of India's proactive approach in responding to the Sri Lankan crisis. That is welcome: far too often in the past, India has been slow to react to difficult situations in its neighbourhood. New Delhi was also quick to offer loans and aid to Sri Lanka after its economy collapsed last year amid a sharp decline in foreign currency reserves and a spike in inflation. Yet, New Delhi must be careful of not repeating another frequent folly: making promises it eventually fails to keep.

At the heart of India's response to Sri Lanka's crisis is an unstated desire to be seen as the country's primary regional benefactor at a time when New Delhi's biggest rival, Beijing, has appeared somewhat hesitant in its financial support to Colombo's efforts to kickstart the economy, once again. Yet India must ensure that its approach to Sri Lanka — and to other neighbours — is fashioned fundamentally by its vision for the region and New Delhi's place in it, rather than by an external actor like China. That alone will make India a truly steady partner in the eyes of its neighbours. Strategic gains over China will follow on their own. At the same time, India must use the influence it gains from its support to the Sri Lankan economy to demand that Colombo moves towards greater autonomy for the country's Tamil-dominated Northern Province and that it respect Tamil rights and sensitivities more broadly. Finally, India must do all of this without emboldening those who accuse it of interfering in the internal politics of Sri Lanka. In Colombo, Mr Jaishankar met the former Sri Lankan presidents, Mahinda Rajapaksa and Gotabaya Rajapaksa, whose family was overthrown from power last year amid a popular people's revolt. The Rajapaksas' party remains in government, even though the family is largely unpopular in Sri Lanka. How India navigates the maze of economic and political factors shaping Sri Lanka will decide whether its current approach yields the results it seeks.

Telegraph India

# ‘Believe In Your Idea’: Kashmir’s Shark Tank Winners Talk Business

## “Our upbringing in a place like Kashmir has made us men of character and this is what keeps us going.”

Aashiq Hussain Andrabi

Shark Tank India, Season 2, lately got a surprise package from Kashmir when two friends operating a logistical service on the tough terrain of the landlocked region showed up with an idea. Their pitch and poise wooed the sharks—showbiz investors—to invest Rs. 90 lakh in their company, FastBeetle.

The sneak peak of the pitch showed the founders—Sheikh Samiullah and Abid Rashid—narrate their story on national TV.

The duo's logistics-cum-messenger brand bridges the gap between customers and Kashmir-based entrepreneurs. They operate their “impeccable delivery service” by standing tall against mainstream providers of the same service.

The duo's “indomitable determination” was hailed across the spectrum with viewers pleased to see a Kashmiri business model emerge as a big winner.

Days after his Shark stint, Sheikh Samiullah back home talks business in a freewheeling chat with Kashmir Observer.

**You recently bagged big at the biggest investment show – Shark Tank India. How was the experience?**

As an entrepreneur, it has been a journey full of excitement and challenges. Securing an investment from the Sharks on Shark Tank India is a significant accomplishment for our organization. It is a testament to the hard work and determination of our team. We were able to achieve this success by having a clear and well-researched business plan that highlighted the potential of our product or service, presenting ourselves as a credible and professional team, and effectively communicating our passion and vision for our business.

**What does this showbiz boost mean to a Kashmir-based startup?**

We feel proud to be considered as torchbearers for all the entrepreneurs of the valley. Our success on the show serves as an inspiration and motivation for others to work against the odds and take risks to make their ventures successful. We believe that our pitch and journey on the show, not only showcases our product or service, but also the hard work, determination and the spirit of entrepreneurship that can help others to take the leap and make their dream a reality.

**Tell us something about FastBeetle?**

We, as entrepreneurs, had the intent to revolutionize the traditional implementations of logistic services. So, we brought up the idea of FastBeetle, a messenger, courier, and logistics company that combines the realm of technology to provide efficient and reliable services. We started our journey from Srinagar in October 2019 and within months, our company expanded its reach to international shipments. Our innovative approach helped us to quickly establish ourselves as the most reliable and fastest logistics company from Jammu & Kashmir. We have been able to help our clients to save time and money, and make their shipping experience more seamless. Our goal is to continue to improve and expand our services to meet the needs of our customers, and to become a leading logistics company in the region and beyond.

**But how did you come up with this idea?**

I had been working in an e-commerce company in Srinagar where I noticed the struggles that people in the region faced



when it came to logistics. They had to deal with long wait times, inefficient processes, and high costs. On the other hand, my partner Abid Rashid was a tech-enthusiast who saw how technology could be used to improve logistics and make it more efficient. One day, we met and started discussing the logistics challenges in Srinagar. We both realized that we shared the same vision of revolutionizing the logistics industry.

That's when the idea of FastBeetle was born. We decided to combine experience in e-commerce with knowledge of technology and set out to create a company that could provide reliable and affordable logistics services. We started by identifying the pain points in the industry and then worked on developing solutions to address them. Our hard work and dedication paid off when we were able to launch FastBeetle in October 2019, and within months, our company had expanded its reach to international shipments.

**How did your Kashmir upbringing prepare you for the challenging world of entrepreneurship?**

Growing up in humble families in a place like Kashmir instills a strong sense of character and resilience in an individual. From a young age, we were taught the importance of hard work, determination, and the value of family and community. These small lessons, whether it be from our schooling or parenting at home, have had a significant impact on shaping who we are as individuals and how we approach life.

Our upbringing taught us that nothing comes easy and that success is the result of perseverance and dedication. It also taught us the importance of having a strong moral compass and standing up for what we believe in, even in the face of adversity. These values have been instrumental in our journey as entrepreneurs and have helped us to overcome the challenges we have faced along the way.

We believe that our upbringing in a place like Kashmir has made us men of character and this is what keeps us going. We're proud of our roots and are determined to make a positive impact in our community and beyond. We believe that our story is an inspiration for others, and we want to continue to be an example of how with hard work and determination, one can achieve success, despite the odds.

**What sets FastBeetle apart from other**

**startups in the same industry?**

One of the key things that sets us apart from other start-ups in the logistics industry is our deep understanding of the rough terrain and specific needs of the region. Being from Jammu & Kashmir, we have first-hand knowledge of the challenges that come with shipping in the area and we have tailored our services accordingly.

We have a strong understanding of the geographical barriers and the lack of infrastructure in the region, which has allowed us to develop innovative solutions that are specifically suited to the needs of the area. We have used technology in a way that is optimized for the rough terrain, ensuring that our deliveries are fast, reliable and cost-effective.

Our team's knowledge of the region and its unique challenges has enabled us to offer a level of service that is unmatched by our competitors. We have been able to help our clients to save time and money, and make their shipping experience more seamless. Our goal is to continue to improve and expand our services to meet the needs of our customers, and to become a leading logistics company in the region and beyond.

**Can you share any specific metrics or data that demonstrate the success and growth of FastBeetle?**

We started FastBeetle with just two local businesses as our clients. From humble beginnings, we have grown significantly over the past few years. Today, we are proud to work with over 1500 MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) as well as some of the biggest e-commerce giants in the country.

We have come a long way since our early days, when we were delivering just 5 shipments a day. Today, we handle an impressive 5000+ shipments every day, and our services have been recognized and trusted by many businesses. We have been able to achieve this by constantly improving and expanding our services, and investing in technology to provide our clients with the best possible experience.

We have also been able to create jobs and improve the economy in the region, and we are committed to continuing to do so. We are proud of the progress we have made and we are excited about the future. With our team's passion and dedication, we are confident that we will continue to grow and make a positive impact in the logistics industry.

**Since starting a venture is never easy, what were the biggest obstacles your startup faced, and how you overcame them?**

Entrepreneurship is a challenging endeavor, and we have faced our fair share of obstacles along the way. One of the biggest challenges we faced was the tough terrain of the region. The mountainous and remote areas of Jammu & Kashmir made it difficult to provide efficient and reliable logistics services. To overcome this, we set up warehouses and hubs in strategic locations that would ease last-mile deliveries.

Another major challenge we faced was the lack of reliable internet connectivity in the region. We had to develop technology that could work offline or on slow networks, to ensure that our operations were not affected.

Another common issue that we faced was the availability of the right human resources in smaller cities. We tackled this by training our team members as per the requirements of the industry, and providing them with the necessary skills and knowledge to perform

their roles effectively.

Despite these obstacles, we were able to overcome them and establish ourselves as a leading logistics company in the region. We believe that these challenges have made us stronger and more resilient, and have helped us to provide better services to our clients.

**Having a competitive edge is crucial for any startup's success and survival. How does FastBeetle plan to maintain its competitive edge in the market?**

In order to stay ahead of the competition, we believe that it is important to continuously adapt to changes in technology and upgrade our operations. We are constantly looking for ways to improve and streamline our processes, making use of the latest technologies and tools available to us. This allows us to provide our clients with the most efficient and reliable services possible.

We also believe that it is important to be flexible and open to change. This means that we are always looking for new opportunities and are willing to pivot our business when necessary. This means being open to new business models, new product offerings, and new market segments. We have been able to successfully pivot our business a few times and as a result, we have been able to expand our reach and attract new customers.

By keeping an edge always through these means, we have been able to establish ourselves as a leading logistics company in the region and



we are confident that we will continue to do so in the future. We are continuously improving, expanding and adapting our services to meet the ever-changing needs of our customers and to stay ahead of the competition.

**How's FastBeetle giving back to the community and making a positive impact?**

FastBeetle was started with the intention of empowering the society and making a positive impact in the region. One of the ways we have done this is by creating jobs for the local community. By providing employment opportunities, we have helped to improve the economy and the standard of living for many people in the area.

Another important aspect of our mission is to uplift local artisans and promote their products. We have created a network to sell locally-made products, which has helped to support the local economy and preserve traditional crafts. This not only provides economic opportunities but also helps to preserve and promote the cultural heritage of the region.

We are committed to continue working on these major points, as they align with our mission to empower the society and make a positive impact in the region. We will continue to

create jobs, uplift local artisans, and promote locally made products through our logistics services. We believe that by doing so, we can not only improve the lives of the people in the region but also contribute to the development and preservation of the local culture.

**As company that handles sensitive user data, it's imperative to ensure that proper measures are in place to protect it. How does FastBeetle address concerns about data privacy and security for its users?**

At FastBeetle, data security is of the utmost importance. We understand the value of the information that our clients trust us with, and we take every measure to ensure that it is protected. That is why our technology is developed in a way that all the data uploaded by any user is encrypted. This means that it is scrambled and converted into a code, making it unreadable to anyone who does not have the proper decryption key. This ensures that the sensitive information shared with us is kept secure and confidential.

We also take security very seriously when it comes to our networks and website. We update our security protocols on a regular basis to protect against any potential breaches or cyber-attacks. We use a combination of firewalls, antivirus software, and other security measures to ensure that our systems are secure and that our clients' data is protected.

We are committed to maintaining the highest standards of data security and we will continue to invest in the latest technology and security protocols to ensure that our clients' information is always safe with us.

**Collaboration and partnerships are key to driving growth and innovation in any industry, can you tell us of any partnerships or collaborations that FastBeetle has established or plans to establish in the future?**

To that end, we have partnered with some of the biggest names in the logistics industry, to help us expand our operations outside of our region. These partnerships have helped us to tap into their resources and expertise, which has allowed us to provide better services to our clients.

In addition to these partnerships, we have also formed alliances with major e-commerce giants for last-mile and mid-mile services within our region. These partnerships have been instrumental in helping us to expand our reach and attract new customers. It has also allowed us to provide our services to a wider audience and offer our clients a one-stop-shop solution for their logistics needs.



We believe that our partnerships are a win-win situation for both sides, as we can bring our local expertise and knowledge of the region while they provide us with the resources and expertise to grow our business. We are always open to new partnerships and collaborations that can help us to grow.

**Lastly, what would be your advice for aspiring entrepreneurs looking to start their own successful business?**

Trust your instincts and pursue your dreams, despite any obstacles or negativity that may come your way. Starting a business is not easy and there will be challenges, but if you truly believe in your idea and are willing to put in the hard work, you can achieve success.

It is important to listen to your inner voice and have confidence in yourself and your abilities. Do not let fear or doubt hold you back. Believe in your idea and be willing to put in the time and effort to make it a reality. And don't forget to always be open to new opportunities and pivot your business when necessary.

It's also important to surround yourself with positive people who will support and encourage you in your journey. Block out any negative voices and focus on your vision.



# Promising Gene Therapy Delivers Treatment Directly To Brain

Associated Press

When Rylae-Ann Poulin was a year old, she didn't crawl or babble like other kids her age. A rare genetic disorder kept her from even lifting her head. Her parents took turns holding her upright at night just so she could breathe comfortably and sleep.

Then, months later doctors delivered gene therapy directly to her brain.

Now the 4-year-old is walking, running, swimming, reading and riding horses just doing so many amazing things that doctors once said were impossible, said her mother, Judy Wei.

Rylae-Ann, who lives with her family in Bangkok, was among the first to benefit from a new way of delivering gene therapy attacking diseases inside the brain that experts believe holds great promise for treating a host of brain disorders.

Her treatment recently became the first brain-delivered gene therapy after its approval in Europe and the United Kingdom for AADC deficiency, a disorder that interferes with the way cells in the nervous system communicate. New Jersey drug-maker PTC Therapeutics plans to seek US approval this year.

Meanwhile, about 30 US studies testing gene therapy to the brain for various disorders are ongoing, according to the National Institutes of Health.



One, led by Dr. Krystof Bankiewicz at Ohio State University, also targets AADC deficiency. Others test treatments for disorders such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's and Huntington's.

Challenges remain, especially with diseases caused by more than a single gene. But scientists say the evidence supporting this approach is mounting opening a new frontier in the fight against disorders afflicting our most complex and mysterious organ.

There's a lot of exciting times ahead of us, said Bankiewicz, a neurosurgeon. We're seeing some breakthroughs.

The most dramatic of those breakthroughs involve Rylae-Ann's disease, which is caused by mutations in a gene needed for an enzyme that helps make neurotransmitters like dopamine and serotonin, the body's chemical messengers. The one-time treatment delivers a work-

ing version of the gene.

At around 3 months old, Rylae-Ann began having spells her parents thought were seizures her eyes would roll back and her muscles would tense. Fluid sometimes got into her lungs after feedings, sending her to the emergency room. Doctors thought she might have epilepsy or cerebral palsy.

Around that time, Wei's brother sent her a Facebook post about a child in Taiwan with AADC deficiency. The extremely rare disorder afflicts about 135 children worldwide, many in that country.

Wei, who was born in Taiwan, and her husband, Richard Poulin III, sought out a doctor there who correctly diagnosed Rylae-Ann. They learned she could qualify for a gene therapy clinical trial in Taiwan.

Though they were nervous about the prospect of brain surgery, they realised she likely wouldn't

live past 4 years old without it.

Rylae-Ann had the treatment at 18 months old on November 13, 2019 which her parents have dubbed her reborn day. Doctors delivered it during minimally invasive surgery, with a thin tube through a hole in the skull. A harmless virus carried in a functioning version of the gene.

It gets put into the brain cells and then the brain cells make the (neurotransmitter) dopamine, said Stuart Peltz, CEO of PTC Therapeutics.

Company officials said all patients in their clinical trials showed motor and cognitive improvements. Some of them, Peltz said, could eventually stand and walk, and continue getting better over time.

Bankiewicz said all 40 or so patients in his team's NIH-funded study also saw significant improvements. His surgical approach is more involved and delivers the treatment to a different part of the brain. It targets relevant circuits in the brain, Bankiewicz said, like planting seeds that cause ivy to sprout and spread.

It's really amazing work, said Jill Morris, a programme director with the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, which helped pay for the research. And he has seen a lot of consistency between patients.

One is 8-year-old Rian Rodriguez-Pena, who lives with her family near Toronto. Rian got gene therapy in 2019, shortly before her 5th birthday.

Two months later, she held her head up for the first time. She soon started using her hands and reaching for hugs. Seven months after surgery, she sat up on her own.

When the world was crumbling around us with COVID, we were at our house celebrating like it was the biggest party of our lives because Rian was just crushing so many milestones that were impossible for so long, said her mom, Shillann Rodriguez-Pena. It's a completely different life now.

Scientists say there are challenges to overcome before this approach becomes widespread for more common brain diseases.

For example, the timing of treatment is an issue. Generally, earlier in life is better because diseases can cause a cascade of problems over the years. Also, disorders with more complex causes like Alzheimer's are tougher to treat with gene therapy.

When you're correcting one gene, you know exactly where the target is, said Morris.

Ryan Gilbert, a biomedical engineer at New York's Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, said there can also be issues with the gene-carrying virus, which can potentially insert genetic information in an indiscriminate way.

Gilbert and other researchers are working on other delivery methods, such as messenger RNA the technology used in many COVID-19 vaccines to deliver a genetic payload to the nucleus of cells.

## Android 14 To Block Outdated Apps To Help Reduce Malware Attack

IAN S

Android 14 will start blocking the installation of apps that target outdated versions of Android to help reduce the potential for malware.

According to a newly posted code change, Android 14 is set to make API requirements stricter, entirely blocking the installation of outdated apps, reports 9to5Google.

This modification would prevent users from sideloading specific APK files and would also prevent app stores from installing those same apps.

Initially, Android 14 devices will only block apps that specifically target older Android versions.

However, Google intends to gradually raise the threshold to Android 6.0 (Marshmallow), with a mechanism in place to "progressively ramp it up", according to the report. Although, it will probably still be up to device makers to determine the threshold for outdated apps or whether to enable them at all.

The tech giant intends to reduce the spread of malware apps on Android by blocking these outdated apps, said the report.

The report further mentioned that the developer who made the change notes that some malware apps have purposefully targeted older versions of Android in order to circumvent certain protections that are only enforced on newer apps.

Meanwhile, Google said that the upcoming Android 14 will "support our partners in enabling all of this" after SpaceX and T-Mobile unveiled plans to deliver direct satellite connectivity to smartphones.

On Twitter, Hiroshi Lockheimer, Senior Vice President of Platforms and Ecosystems at Google, described how it "was a stretch to get 3G + Wifi working" on the first shipping Android phone (HTC Dream/T-Mobile G1) in 2008".

## 'Regulating Immunological Memory Might Help Immune System Fight Disease'

ANI

Scientists have long worked to better understand the immunological responses of the human body throughout various diseases, such as cancer and inflammatory diseases.

In a recent study at the University of Missouri, Emma Teixeira, an associate professor in the MU School of Medicine, and her team analyzed how immunological memory - the memory the body's immune system retains after an infection or vaccination that helps protect against reinfection - gets generated and maintained, as well as the role inflammation plays in shaping that immunological memory.

"Our immune system defends us from disease, but it is a very complicated system with many interactions occurring, and if things get dysregulated, it may actually play a role in causing disease," said Teixeira, who works in the Next-Gen Precision Health Institute on MU's campus. "So, our research focuses on better understanding how these immune responses can be generated and controlled, specifically by looking at the critical role T cells play, as T cells help protect the body from infection and may play a role in attacking cancer."

Using a mouse model, the researchers created various strains of pathogenic bacteria that increased levels of inflammation through the stimulator of interferon genes - or STING - proteins inside of T cells. While many scientists assumed this increase in inflammation would result in a stronger immune response and therefore stronger immunological memory, Teixeira and her team found the opposite: immunological memory was reduced.

"Some scientists in the field believe STING activation may be targeted to improve cancer vaccines or immunotherapies, so gaining a basic understanding of all the interacting mechanisms at play is critical to reduce the chances of unintended consequences or harmful side effects," Teixeira said. "We want to better understand how to regulate immunological memory, which has implications for potential vaccines or immunotherapies that trigger T cells in a way that hopefully boosts long-term mem-

ory, so our bodies are protected from disease over time."

While her research is fundamental in nature, Teixeira's findings have the potential to contribute to the development of more effective treatments to help patients suffering with cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), STING-associated vasculopathy with onset in infancy (SAVI), asthma and other chronic inflammatory syndromes.

"The pursuit of knowledge is what drives my curiosity as a scientist," Teixeira said. "While there are still more questions to answer, this research is a small step in the right direction, and I am proud to be a part of it."

"STING controls T cell memory fitness during infection through T cell intrinsic and Indoleamine-pyrole 2,3-dioxygenase (IDO) dependent mechanisms" was recently published in PNAS. Coauthors on the study include Michael Quaney, Curtis Pritzl, Rebecca Newth, Karin Knudson, Vikas Saxena, Caitlyn Guldenpfennig, Diana Gil, Chris Rae, Peter Lauer, Mark Daniels and Dezzarae Luera.



## UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR Office of the Executive Engineer, Construction Division

### NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER

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

S.No	Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/ Doc in shape of E-Challan (Rs.)	Earnest Money in Rs.	Time and Date for Submission of E-Tender.	Date & Time of Opening of Bid	Class of Contractor
1.	Plumbing and Sanitary Works for Bioresource and Bioinformatics Department (Phase III) at Zakura Campus.	7.88Lacs	Rs.300/-	15,760/-	20-01-2023 to 30-01-2023 (6.00 PM)	31-01-2023 (11.30 AM)	"CEE" & "DEE"
2.	Providing and Fixing of Aluminium Partitioning for Health Centre, University of Kashmir.	1.29Lacs	Rs.100/-	2,580/-	20-01-2023 to 30-01-2023 (6.00 PM)	31-01-2023 (11.30 AM)	"DEE"

The bid forms and other details can be obtained from the web site [www.kashmiruniversity.net](http://www.kashmiruniversity.net) / [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in).  
Executive Engineer

NIT No: - F(E.Tend)(UCD)/KU/80/22  
DIPK-NB-6137/22  
DATED: 24/01/23.

## OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) KASHMIRQUALITY CONTROL & PROCUREMENT DIVISION, HMT, SRINAGAR

### TENDER DOCUMENT

NIT No:-JS/PHE/QC&PD/27 of 2022-23

Dated:-12-01-2023

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Jammu and Kashmir UT, e-Tenders are invited on item rate basis in two covers (details recorded in tender document) from Registered Original Manufacturers or their Authorized dealer/Authorized Distributors.  
SUBJECT OF SUPPLY: Supply of 5200 MTs of Alumina Ferric Grade- IV conforming to IS 299: 2012 RA 2022 (with upto date Amendments) as per specifications/details enclosed in Annexure A, B&C to the e-NIT.

#### BROAD BAND INFORMATION

General	
Client Name	Chief Engineer, Kashmir PHE, Jal Shakti Deptt. Srinagar.
Circle	Superintending Engineer, PHE Mechanical, Jal Shakti Department, Circle South, Srinagar.
Division	Quality Control & Procurement Division PHE Jal Shakti Department, HMT Srinagar.
Bidding Type	Open
Amount Details	
Estimated Cost	Rs 08.50Crores
Bid Document Fee (Non-Refundable)	Rs 2500.00In shape of treasury Challan/ e-transfer to J&K Bank A/c No:0005010100005110 IFSC: JAKA0CHINAR
Bid document fee payable in the shape of treasury Challan/ e-transfer under major Head MH-0215-Rev-Misc to:	Executive Engineer QC&PD PHE Jal Shakti HMT Srinagar. e-mail: xenmandp@gmail.com
Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	Rs.17.00 Lakh (INR Seventeen Lakh Only) pledged to Chief Accounts Officer Jal Shakti Kashmir PHE Department Srinagar.
Tender Dates	
Tender Notice No.	NIT No:-JS/PHE/QC&PD/27 of 2022-23 Dated:-12-01-2023 endorsed vide No:-PHE/QC&PD/2995-3014
Bid Document Downloading Start Date.	12-01-2023 03:00 PM
Bid Document Downloading End Date.	01-02-2023 03:00 PM
Clarification Start Date	12-01-2023 04:00 PM
Clarification End Date	25-01-2023 03:00 PM
Pre-Bid meeting date	27-01-2023 03:00 PM
Pre-Bid meeting Venue	Chief Engineer Jal Shakti Kashmir PHE Deptt. Engineering Complex, Near Silk Factory, Raj Bagh Srinagar Kashmir -190001. e-mail: kmrphed@gmail.com
On Line Bid Submission Start Date	12-01-2023 04:00 PM
Bid Submission End Date	02-02-2023 03:00 PM
Date of opening of Cover 1st.	03-02-2023 02:00 PM
Bid Validity Period	180 days from opening of the Price Bid.
Officer Inviting Bid	Executive Engineer QC&PD PHE Jal Shakti HMT Srinagar payable at Srinagar. (e-mail:xenmandp@gmail.com)
Bid opening Authority	Chief Engineer, Jal Shakti Kashmir PHE Deptt. Srinagar.
Address	Engineering Complex, Near Silk Factory, Raj Bagh Srinagar Kashmir -190001. e-mail: kmrphed@gmail.com

The tenders of qualifying/eligibility criteria, consisting of general and commercial terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in)

The bids shall be submitted in electronic format on the website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in). The bids uploaded on the website up to due date and time, will be opened on the time and date (given in the broadband information), in the office of the Chief Engineer Jal Shakti Kashmir PHE Deptt. Srinagar in presence of the bidders who wish to be present. In case offices happen to be closed due to a holiday, or any other reason/s, on the schedule date of opening, the bids will be opened on the next working day at the scheduled time and venue or on any day convenient/feasible to the tender opening committee/authority of the Department.

THE COMPLETE BIDDING SHALL BE ONLINE IN TWO COVER SYSTEM:

The Cover 1<sup>st</sup> of bids shall be opened online in the office of the Chief Engineer, Jal Shakti Kashmir PHE Deptt. Srinagar on the time and date given in the broadband information of tender or any other date and time convenient to Chief Engineer, Jal Shakti Kashmir PHE Deptt. Srinagar.

The date and time of opening of 2<sup>nd</sup> cover, i.e., Financial Bids shall be notified separately. The Financial bids of qualified bidders shall be opened online on same website in the office of Chief Engineer, Kashmir PHE, Jal Shakti Deptt. Srinagar.

The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 180 days from opening of the Price Bid

INSTRUCTION TO BIDDERS REGARDING E-TENDERING PROCESS:

a. The interested bidder can download the NIT/bidding document from the website <http://www.jktenders.gov.in>

To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get (DSC) "Digital Signature Certificate" as per Information Technology Act-2000, to participate in online bidding. This certificate will be required for digitally signing the bid. Bidders can get above mentioned digital certificate from any approved vendor. The Bidders, who already possess valid (DSC) Digital Signature Certificates, need not to procure new Digital Signature Certificate.

The guidelines for submission of bid online can be downloaded from the website <http://www.jktenders.gov.in> (As per J&K Finance Department Order No: - A/24(2017)-651, Dated: - 07-06-2018, furnishing of hard copies of bids immediately after submission of e-tenders is dispensed with. Hence hardcopies need not to be submitted. The hardcopies along with EMD shall be obtained from the bidder who is declared as LI (Lowest Bidder) for each of the item on tender as per BOQ evaluation after opening of financial bids).

b. Position of Funds: - The availability of funds shall be ensured before placement of Supply order.

No:-PHE/QCPD/2995-3014 DIPK-16571/22 Dated:-24-01-2023	Sd/= Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti QC&PD PHE (K) HMT Srinagar.
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## Dulloo Chairs SLEC Meet Of MIDH

Exhorts officers for effective implementation of Comprehensive Action Plan



Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Agriculture Production Department, Atal Dulloo, Tuesday chaired a meeting of State Level Executive Committee (SLEC) of the Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH) here at Civil Secretariat.

Director MIDH, Government of India, Manoj Kumar, was present in the meeting.

The had detailed deliberation on several key agenda points which inter alia included approval of DPR for establishment of nursery under Public Sector by Horticulture Department at Ludwal, Jammu and finalisation and approval of Annual Action Plan 2022-23 and comprehensive Action Plan for five years (2022-23 to 2026-27) under National Bamboo Mission (NBM).

It was informed that a number of ambitious steps are going to be taken up under the five year plan. Besides, suitable budget will be allocated to establish 25 public sector bamboo nurseries, each with the capacity to nurture 4 lakh saplings. The private sector will also see the establishment of 12 bamboo nurseries, each having the capacity to raise 1.92 lakh saplings.

The meeting was further apprised that the Agriculture Department will cover 1300 hectare of area under Block plantation /Boundary plantation in addition to High Density Bamboo Plantation on 162 hectare area through Social Forestry/SKUAST.

Also, SKUAST-J/K will help set up tissue culture labs, bamboo

shoot processing and incense stick units. Funds will also be allocated for development of tools, equipments, machinery besides identification of genetically superior species of bamboo. Moreover, skill development, workshops, seminars and awareness campaigns will be organized to create a buzz around the bamboo sector.

It was revealed that under the comprehensive action plan, one key objective is to expand the area under bamboo cultivation, with an additional 1462 hectare being brought under cultivation. Besides, 435 farmers and officers would be provided skill development training in reputed institutes of India in addition to their sensitisation through workshops and seminars to educate and create awareness among 1550 farmers and officers.

The ACS directed the stakeholders to enthusiastically partake the implementation of comprehensive action plan and the National Bamboo Mission. The officers were directed to submit the plan to the Government of India for approval and implementation.

He said that the public sector nursery envisaged under the plan would generate employment and improve local economy.

The National Bamboo Mission is being geared up towards achieving several objectives, one of which is the production of 7 lakh bamboo saplings. This will be accomplished by establishing nurseries of varied sizes, as well as tissue culture labs, in both public and private sectors.

## Why Is Maruti Suzuki Recalling 11,177 Units Of Grand Vitara?

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** Maruti Suzuki, on Monday, said it is recalling 11,177 units of its mid-sized sports utility vehicle Grand Vitara to fix a possible defect in the rear seat belt mounting brackets.

The affected lot was manufactured between August 8, 2022 and November 15, 2022, the country's largest carmaker said in a regulatory filing. "It is suspected that there is a possible defect in rear seat belt mounting brackets which in a rare case, may loosen in the long run and impact its functionality," it stated.

Vehicle owners will be receiving communication from the company authorised dealer workshops for inspection and



replacement of the affected parts, free of cost, it said.

Last week, the auto major announced that it was recalling 17,362 units of models like Alto K10, Brezza and Baleno to inspect and replace faulty airbag controllers.

The affected models—Alto K10, S-Presso, Eeco, Brezza, Baleno and Grand Vitara—were manufactured between December 8, 2022 and January 12, 2023.

## Kashmir Tweed To Get GI Registration

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Department of Handicrafts and Handloom has submitted the dossier for registration of Kashmir Tweed to Intellectual Property India, Chennai, an apex-level organization for the registration and better protection of geographical indications relating to goods in India.

The Director, Handicrafts and Handloom, (H&H) Kashmir, while commenting on the downswing of the centuries old craft of Weaving of Tweed said that the GI certification of Kashmir Tweed, will give a fresh impetus to the craft. The primary goal of registering it is to seek protection for Tweed of Kashmir, which further promotes and pushes it to grow on a global scale.

"The department felt it necessary to get Kashmir Tweed recognized on National and International markets owing to its uniqueness of having 100 per cent wool unlike the one produced in the rest of the country where it has also the blend of viscose, said Director H&H adding that Tweed cloth is available across the globe, in Kashmir, it has been in the market for centuries.

Initially produced in parts of south Kashmir, mostly in the Pulwama district, a number of areas in Kashmir periphery adopted this art to manage the requirements of the UT. Tweed is being produced in parts of north and central Kashmir like Bandipore and Budgam as well. "There is not much difference between the famous Harris Tweed and the Kashmir Tweed, however Kashmir Tweed could not have much presence in the global markets because of processing deficiencies and branding", said Director H&H. By registering Kashmir Tweed for GI it is expected that all the stakeholders involved shall get benefitted, he added.

UT of J&K already has two major facilities for processing of the wool, one at UNDP under the ambit of Directorate of Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir and another facility at JKI which has been at fore front in ensuring a sustained supply of raw material as well as manufacturing of Tweed in the valley.

The Handicrafts and Handloom Department has been facilitating the promotion of GI-tagged products symbolizing the empowerment of the artisans. These initiatives are aimed to help recognize and promote age-old crafts and methods that are otherwise in danger of being lost due to urbanization and industrialization.

So far seven major crafts from Kashmir namely Kani Shawl, Pashmina, Sozni, Paper Machie, Walnut Wood Carving, Khatamband, and Hand Knotted Carpets have already been GI certified. Besides, the process of GI registration of seven more crafts viz., Kashmir Namda, Wagguv, Shikara, Gab-



ba, Kashmir Willow Bat, Crewel and Chain Stitch is already under process and the dossier for GI certification of all these crafts has been submitted with the GI authorities in Chennai.

The Department of Handicrafts and Handloom from last 2 years has been continuously upgrading the testing and labelling facilities for GI certification of different crafts and because of the aggressive promotion of GI certification of different crafts by the Department, a huge number of manufacturers and exporters are approaching the department for testing and labelling of the GI certified products.

The Department is also in process of launching the QR-Code-based GI labelling of 6 crafts as QR-Code-GI labelling for Carpets was already initiated, and additionally, non-GI crafts will also be brought under the ambit of QR code Labelling, said Director H&H.

Moreover, the visitors have also shown much interest in purchasing exclusive GI-certified crafts post these efforts of promoting Geographical Indication throughout the country and away.

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## J&K Bank Commissions ATM In Kupwara, CRM At TP Anantnag

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Extending basic banking services to people in Kashmir, J&K Bank has commissioned an ATM at Army Garrison Payerpora in Kupwara and a Cash Recycler Machine (CRM) at Treasury Premises in Anantnag.

General Officer Commanding (GOC) Kupwara Major General Abhijit S Pendharkar inaugurated the machine on Tuesday in presence of Cluster Head Kupwara Shadab Mehboob, Lieutenant Colonel Sudhir Dhankhar besides other bank officials.

Speaking on the occasion, Major General Abhijit S Pendharkar congratulated the Bank for taking lead in catering to personal as well as business needs of the people of Kupwara town.

While commending the Bank for installing ATM in the garrison, he said that the ATM will help the troops as well as the locals to withdraw money



at ease without having to visit the branch physically.

Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner Anantnag Dr Basharat Qayoom inaugurated the CRM at T P Anantnag on Monday in presence of Bank's Zonal Head Anantnag Tasaduq Ahmad Dar, Cluster Head Shaista Manzoor amid a gathering of people and bank officials.

While lauding the contribution of J&K bank in economic development of the UT, Deputy Commissioner said that the installation of a CRM will bring further ease for the people availing basic

banking services like depositing and receiving the cash even after the banking hours. He urged the people to avail the facility as per their convenience.

Earlier, Zonal Head briefed the DC about the utilities of CRM and reiterated bank's commitment to provide best banking facilities and financial services to the people irrespective of their location, status and gender. "The commissioning of Cash Recycler Machine here will also help in reducing the footfall at the Bank's adjacent branches", he said.

## Airtel Raises Minimum Monthly Recharge Price By 57% To Rs 155 In J&K

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI-** Bharti Airtel has increased the price of its minimum recharge for the 28-day mobile phone service plan by about 57 per cent to Rs 155 in eight circles, including Jammu and Kashmir, Rajasthan, North East and Himachal Pradesh.

The company has stopped its minimum recharge plan of Rs 99, under which it offered 200 megabyte of data and calls at the rate of Rs 2.5 paise per second. In Haryana and Odisha, Airtel has now started offering the Rs 155 plan with unlimited calling, 1 GB of data and 300 SMSes.

The company had initially implemented the hiked tariff in Haryana and Odisha in November.

When contacted, an Airtel spokesperson said: "In line with our focus on providing a better customer experience, we have discontinued the metered tariff and introduced an entry-level plan of Rs 155 with unlimited voice, 1 GB data and 300 sms. Customers can now use this



plan with no constraints. We believe this plan will prove greater flexibility, convenience and superior value".

Other circles where the Rs 99 plan has been replaced with Rs 155 recharge plan are—Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh West.

According to sources closely engaged with the development, the company will roll out the same across India gradually.

The company is likely to end all 28-day calling plans with SMS and data priced below Rs 155. This means that even for getting SMS service in the monthly plan, a customer will have to recharge his mobile phone account with a Rs 155 voucher.

## How Pakistan Handled One Of Its Largest-Ever Blackouts



Bloomberg

**ISLAMABAD-** Electricity is being restored in Pakistan after a nationwide blackout prompted by a power grid failure. Pakistan has made little progress in upgrading aging electricity transmission infrastructure despite repeated recent outages, including a major failure of the national grid in January 2021.

A vast swath of the 220 million population were left without power after the national grid failed on Monday morning, forcing hospitals to switch to back-up generators and causing major disruption to mobile and Internet services.

Work to restore connections continued into the night in cities including Karachi and Lahore, extending the outages in many locations to beyond 12 hours amid plunging temperatures.

Sharif has ordered a probe into the latest blackouts, Energy Minister Khurram Dastgir Khan told reporters late Monday. Low power demand had increased the "vulnerability" of the system, and a "thorough investigation has begun that will consider all possibilities," he said in a

Twitter post.

Millions of people across Pakistan's major cities were plunged into a blackout prompted by a power grid failure.

Pakistan has made little progress in upgrading aging electricity transmission infrastructure despite repeated recent outages, including a major failure of the national grid in January 2021.

A global squeeze in energy supplies following Russia's invasion of Ukraine has hit Pakistan hard, raising prices of fuel imports and exacerbating the nation's difficulties with soaring inflation and dwindling currency. Conditions for funding from the International Monetary Fund include a further hike in energy prices.

Rolling blackouts and fuel rationing have been in place for months, and a recent series of proposals aims to cut power demand by about half. Public sector employees have been requested to work from home, while shopping malls, markets and restaurants are being asked to close earlier than usual.

## SHORT TAKES

### Air India Modifies In-Flight Alcohol Service Policy

**NEW DELHI:** Amid recent incidents of unruly passenger behaviour, Air India has modified its in-flight alcohol service policy wherein cabin crew have been told to tactfully refuse serving of alcohol if needed.

The Tata group-owned airline has been slapped with penalties in the last few days by DGCA for the unruly behaviour of passengers onboard two international flights for reporting lapses.

The exact changes in the revised policy could not be immediately ascertained.

According to the revised policy, guests should not be permitted to drink alcohol unless served by the cabin crew and that the cabin crew be attentive to identifying guests that might be consuming their own alcohol. "Service of alcoholic beverages must be carried out in a reasonable and safe manner. This includes tactfully refusing to (further) serve a guest alcohol," as per the policy.

In a statement, an Air India spokesperson said the airline has reviewed its existing in-flight alcohol service policy, taking reference from other carriers' practice and input from the US National Restaurants Association's guidelines.

"These were largely in line with Air India's existing practice, though some adjustments have been made for better clarity, and NRA's Traffic Light system included to help crew recognise and manage possible cases of intoxication. **PTI**

### Implementation Of PMFME, ODOP Reviewed

**JAMMU:** Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Agriculture Production Department, Atal Dulloo Tuesday chaired a meeting to review the implementation of the Pradhan Mantri Formalisation of Micro Processing Enterprises (PM-FME) and One District One Product (ODOP) schemes in the union territory.

During the meeting, the ACS was presented with proposed projects, budget allotments, and the current status of their implementation. He also received an Action Taken Report and detailed information on targets set and achieved in the current financial year.

Additionally, a detailed breakdown of subsidies provided until January 2023 was presented.

The ACS also spoke with bankers and sought reasons for the present rate of approval for loan applications. He urged them to be cordial and welcoming while approving cases and instructed them to submit a detailed analysis of key reasons for loan rejection.

The District Nodal Officers and District Resource Persons were also directed to be forthcoming and facilitate the public in taking advantage of the scheme.

Atal Dulloo took strong note of the non-availability of DRPs in several districts and directed that they be deployed at the earliest. He also added that all DRPs be trained afresh and encouraged to work with greater enthusiasm. **ONS**

### EPFO Organising Nidhi Aapke Nikat On Jan 27

**JAMMU:** EPFO Jammu, Srinagar and Ladakh, will be holding Nidhi Aapke Nikat closer to the people and an umbrella awareness program covering themes of Advances for: Illness, Marriage, House Building and Education.

The aim of the program is to ensure broad based participation, awareness, grievances redressal and information exchange network closer to the stakeholders of EPFO.

The P. F. Commissioner, Rizwan Uddin informed that subscribers, pensioners, establishments, labour unions and industrial chambers are advised to actively participate in Nidhi Aapke Nikat Program. The venue of the program will be as following:

Nidhi Aapke Nikat will be held in Samba on January 27, (One hour duration from 10 AM onwards) in the Conference Hall, DC Office, in Kathua on January 27 (One hour duration from 10 AM onwards) in Conference Hall, DC Office, in R.S. Pura, Jammu on January 27 (One hour duration from 10 AM onwards) at BDO Office, in Ganderbal on January 27 (One hour duration from 10 AM onwards) in the Conference Hall, DC Office and in Srinagar on January 27 (One hour duration from 10 AM onwards) at Conference Hall, DLC Office, Srinagar.

EPFO Jammu takes this opportunity to provide handholding support to the stakeholders at the respective venues besides hearing them (their suggestions, inputs and grievances). **ONS**

### Sebi Slaps Rs 26 Cr Fine On Coffee Day Enterprises

**NEW DELHI:** Capital markets regulator Sebi on Tuesday imposed a penalty of Rs 26 crore on Coffee Day Enterprises, which runs Cafe Coffee Day, for diversion of funds from subsidiaries to a company related to promoters.

The company has been directed to pay the fine within 45 days, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) said in an order.

Also, Sebi has directed Coffee Day Enterprises Ltd to take all necessary steps for recovery of entire dues from Mysore Amalgamated Coffee Estates Ltd (MACEL) and its related entities along with due interest that are outstanding to the subsidiaries. Further, the company in consultation with the NSE, is required to appoint an independent law firm to take effective steps for recovery of the outstanding dues.

Sebi found diversion of funds amounting to Rs 3,535 crore from 7 subsidiaries of Coffee Day Enterprises Ltd (CDEL) to Mysore Amalgamated Coffee Estates Ltd, an entity related to promoters of CDEL, according to its 43-page order.

The seven subsidiaries are -- Coffee Day Global, Tanglin Retail Reality Developments, Tanglin Developments, Giri Vidhyuth (India) Ltd, Coffee Day Hotels and Resorts, Coffee Day Trading and Coffee Day Econ. "The money that was transferred from the seven subsidiaries to MACEL has gone to the personal accounts of VGS (VG Siddhartha), his family and related entities and thus remains in the system," Sebi said. **PTI**

### 'Apple's Handset Exports From India Reach \$1 Bn In Dec'

**NEW DELHI:** iPhone maker Apple is not only manufacturing mobile phones for India but it exported handsets worth USD 1 billion as of December, a senior government official said on Monday.

While speaking at The Business 20 (B20), the official G20 dialogue forum with the global business community, Electronics and IT Secretary Alkesh Kumar Sharma said that a number of schemes have been introduced to transform India from a service nation to a product nation.

"Production Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme has actually created a buzz in the market. Our mobile manufacturing has gone to the next level. We are not only making it for India but Apple is exporting from India. The December figure we have just got is that they have exported USD 1 billion worth of mobile phones," Sharma said.

Earlier in the day, Union commerce minister Piyush Goyal said Apple is looking to scale up its manufacturing in India as the business environment is helping global firms make the country their base.

Apple at present makes iPhone in India at the manufacturing plant of contract manufacturer Foxconn and Wistron. Sharma said that India is creating an entire ecosystem of electronic hardware, semiconductors and working on to create facilities like fabrication plants. **PTI**

## PeeGate: AI Closes Internal Probe; Says To Assist Pilot In Appeal Against License Suspension

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

Mumbai: Nearly two months after the urination incident on its New York-New Delhi flight, Air India on Tuesday said it has closed the internal probe into the case and will assist the flight's pilot-in-command with an appeal against the suspension of his license by DGCA as the airline deems the action as "excessive".

Last week, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) suspended the license of the pilot for three months, imposed a penalty of Rs 30 lakh on Air India and Rs 3 lakh on the director of the airline's in-flight services related to the urination incident that happened on November 26, 2022.

Tata group-owned Air India on Tuesday said it has closed the internal investigation into the actions of its crew operating and administrative staff supporting the AI 102 (New York-New Delhi) on November 26, 2022.

In a statement, the airline said it accepts that, notwithstanding the mitigating circumstances, based on the letter of the CAR (Civil Aviation Requirement) it did not correctly classify the incident and therefore did not report it as required.

"The crew and ground staff have been issued warning letters to henceforth adhere strictly to CAR definition of 'unruly' when reporting incidents onboard so that later investigation can assess the facts. The cabin crew and ground staff have been counselled and have since returned to duty," it said.

In light of the mitigating circumstances and the financial detriment already incurred by the crew during their period of de-rostering, Air India said it deems the license suspension of the Commander excessive and will be assisting him with an appeal.

"Air India wishes to acknowledge the good faith efforts made by the crew to handle the situation effectively in real-time when not all facts were available. It also notes that a contemporaneous

written statement by a fellow business class passenger includes an explicit commendation of the actions of the cabin crew and that his criticism of the pilot was in the context of not having been granted an upgrade," the statement said.

On January 21, PTI reported that Air India's wide-body pilots' body Indian Pilots Guild (IPG) was mulling legal recourse and other options regarding the suspension of the pilot's license for three months by DGCA.

Giving a detailed account of the post-incident, Air India said the crew were approached by the complainant seeking assistance after allegedly being urinated on by a fellow passenger.

"In the absence of any witnesses, the crew took the complainant's allegation at face value and assisted her by providing fresh clothes, helping clean her belongings and relocating her to another business class seat of the same type as her original one. When awoken and confronted with the allegation, the alleged perpetrator was calm, co-operative and professed ignorance of the allegation," it said.

The airline also clarified that the accused passenger had not been served "excessive alcohol" by the crew and did not appear "intoxicated" to the crew.

It also said that the commander was kept regularly informed by the cabin crew.

"In the judgement of the crew, the alleged perpetrator posed no risk to flight safety at any time," Air India said.

Acknowledging that, in immediately taking the complainant's accusation at face value and providing assistance, it follows that the matter should have been reported as a prima facie case of a passenger "behaving in a disorderly manner toward other passengers".

The matter should have been classified and reported as such, without prejudice to any subsequent investigation into the facts, Air India said.

## Two Way Traffic On Highway To Commence By March 15: Officials



Observer News Service

**Jammu:** Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta on Tuesday chaired a meeting to review the status of development of different roads and Highways connecting different parts of the J&K.

The meeting was attended by Principal Secretary, PWD; Secretary, Transport; Deputy Commissioner, Ramban; Transport Commissioner; Representatives from NHA and other concerned officers.

Dr Mehta impressed upon the officers to ensure that there is smooth movement of traffic on the National Highway during these winters. He asked them to be ever ready with requisite men and machinery to deal with the weather vagaries. He stressed on minimising disruptions and ensuring that traffic movement remains uninterrupted throughout the year. He reiterated that traffic on this National Highway should move in both ways after 15th March as much of the bridges and tunnels being constructed would get completed by then.

He enjoined upon the officers focus on the difficult stretches

between Banihal and Ramban. He urged them to take instant measures in case of inclement weather. He took note of the under construction bridges at Maitra, Ramban and one at Jaiswal. He passed on directions to the concerned to accelerate the pace of work so that these vital connections are completed soon.

The Chief Secretary stressed on developing roads leading to the tourist spots of Mantalai and Sanasar. He maintained that the better road links to these places would give boost to the tourism there as these places have great potential as tourist destinations.

He also reviewed the status of roads developed under Bharat Mala programme and its allied infrastructure. He enquired about different roads and bridges taken up by the PWD for construction in the length and breadth of the UT.

The Chief Secretary stressed on developing the internal roads in both the cities. He remarked that the face of any region are its roads. He made out that road networks facilitate development of whole regions besides adding to the beauty and aesthetics of the city. He urged the concerned

Departments not only to just maintain city roads but develop them on modern lines too.

He directed face lift of the entry point of UT at Lakhampur in district Kathua. He remarked that it should be attractive befitting the pace of progress and development.

Dr Mehta directed the traffic police to strictly maintain lane discipline on the road and take all the steps against the violators including e-Challaning. He asked them to act tough on those resort to road side parking and disrupt others.

The meeting was informed that this winter the Sgr-Jmu National Highway remained closed for just 8 hours in total as against 220 hours in previous winter. No full day was lost in last two years due to closure of NH. It was further given out that in order to ensure movement of traffic on both the sides of the Highway the T5 tunnel would be dedicated to public on 15th of March and Jaiswal bridge on 15th of February this year.

Moreover it was said that the pace on other road projects is smooth and would be completed in a given time frame.

## Plea Of Bilkis Bano Against Grant Of Remission To Convicts Could Not Be Heard In SC

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

New Delhi: The hearing on Bilkis Bano's plea challenging the remission of sentence of 11 convicts in the gang-rape case by the Gujarat government, could not be held in the Supreme Court on Tuesday as the judges concerned were hearing a matter related to passive euthanasia as part of a five-judge Constitution bench.

The petition of Bilkis Bano, who was gang-raped and seven members of her family slaughtered during the 2002 Gujarat riots, was scheduled to be heard on Tuesday by a bench of Justices Ajay Rastogi and CT Ravikumar.

However, Justices Rastogi and Ravikumar were busy hearing, as part of a Constitution bench headed by Justice K M Joseph, the pleas seeking modification of guidelines on execution of a "Living Will or Advance Medical Directive" for permitting passive euthanasia. A fresh date for hearing will now be notified by the apex court registry.

Bilkis Bano had moved the apex court on November 30, 2022 challenging the grant of remission of sentence to 11 convicts by the state government, saying their premature release has "shaken the conscience of society".

Besides the plea challenging the release of the convicts, the gang-rape survivor had also filed a separate petition seeking a review of the apex court's May 13, 2022 order on a plea by a convict.

In its May 13, 2021 order, the apex court had asked the state government to consider the plea of a convict for premature release in terms of its policy of July 9, 1992 which was applicable on the date of conviction and decide it within a period of two months.

All the 11 convicts were granted remission by the Gujarat government and released on August 15 last year.

Her review plea, however, was dismissed by the top court in December last year.

The victim, in her pending plea, said the state government passed a "mechanical

order" completely ignoring the requirement of law as laid down by the Supreme Court.

"The enmasse premature release of the convicts in the much talked about case of Bilkis Bano, has shaken the conscience of the society and resulted in a number of agitations across the country," she said in the plea.

Referring to past verdicts, the plea said enmasse remissions are not permissible and, moreover, such a relief cannot be sought or granted as a matter of right without examining the case of each convict individually based on their peculiar facts and role played by them in the crime.

"The present writ petition challenging the decision of the State/ Central Government granting remission to all the 11 convicts and releasing them prematurely in one of the most gruesome crimes of extreme inhuman violence and brutality by a group of human beings upon another group of human beings, all helpless and innocent people - most of them were either women or minors, by chasing them for days together persuaded by hate towards a particular community," it said.

The plea, which gave minute details of the crime, said Bilkis and her grown up daughters were "shell-shocked with this sudden development".

The decision of the government came as a shock to the citizens, nationally and internationally, and the society across segments showed "anger, disappointment, distrust" and protested the clemency shown by the government.

"When the nation was celebrating its 76th Independence Day, all the convicts were released prematurely and were garlanded and felicitated in full public glare and sweets were circulated and this is how the present petitioner along with the entire nation and the whole world came to know about the shocking news of premature release of all the convicts (respondents no. 3-13) of one of the most gruesome crime this country has ever seen of multiple time gang rape of a pregnant woman," it said.

### CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

### WD Brings Snow

South Kashmir recorded a low of minus 3.5 degrees Celsius, while the minimum temperature in Kupwara settled at minus 3.4 degrees, the officials said.

The minimum temperature in Gulmarg in Baramulla district was minus 9.5 degrees Celsius. The famous ski-resort was the coldest place in Jammu and Kashmir.

Pahalgam recorded a minimum temperature of minus 8.6 degrees Celsius, plunging four degrees as compared to the previous night.

The Met office said there are chances of light rain or snow at scattered places in the Union Territory over the next five days except on Friday.

It predicted a much higher intensity of precipitation from till Wednesday, with the possibility of moderate snow in the plains of Kashmir and moderate to heavy snow over the middle and higher reaches, and rain in Jammu.

Light rain or snow could occur at isolated places on Saturday and Sunday, it further said. (With Agency inputs)

### Rahul In Ramban

Hotel Usman. It will resume from Kharpora, Banihal and cover Gunde Adalkoot-Banihal Market-Transit Camp-T Chowk-Railway station, they said. "The yatra makes a night halt at Lamber Truck yard Banihal where corner meetings with delegates are also scheduled," they said.

Earlier, the scheduled foot march started from Nagrota, Jammu. The foot march continued for a few kilometers but after advice of security forces, Rahul Gandhi boarded the car and reached the venue where few delegations including people of Ladakh apprised him about their grievances.

A delegation from the hills state Uttarakhand joined Rahul Gandhi on the Jammu-Srinagar Highway near Udhampur and sought his intervention to save the hill town from further sinking.

Led by former Chief Minister Harish Rawat, the delegation raised placards "Save Jashimath-Save Uttarakhand" and participated in the foot march with the former Congress president, who also picked up one of the placards.

### Ups The

Constitutional provision was revoked by the BJP-led government in August 2019.

Two days after the Centre's move, the Congress working committee had deplored the "unilateral, brazen and totally undemocratic" manner in which provisions of Article 370 of the Constitution were abrogated and the state of Jammu and Kashmir was bifurcated into two Union territories.

The Rahul Gandhi-led Bharat Jodo Yatra, which started from Kanyakumari on September 7 last year, is currently in Jammu and Kashmir for its final phase.

On not extending an invitation to Democratic Azad Party chairman Ghulam Nabi Azad to join the yatra and former minister Lal Singh not being given a chair on the stage to mark the entry of the march into J&K, Gandhi said, "Singh supported the yatra and we appreciate his sentiment. The people of Ghulam Nabi Azad's party were on our stage. Ninety per cent of them are already in the Congress. I think, there is only Ghulam Nabi Azad-ji on that side." "My respects to Ghulam Nabi-ji and I apologise for any hurt that we may have caused either to Lal Singh-ji or Ghulam Nabi Azad-ji," he added.

Among various delegations that met him during the march, Gandhi said migrant Kashmiri Pandits clearly told him that they were being used politically and asked him to raise their issues in Parliament.

"The Kashmiri Pandits told me that the BJP was using them as a political weapon and forcibly sending them to Kashmir where they face the threat of targeted killings. They said whatever good had happened to them was done during the Manmohan Singh-led UPA government," he said.

The Congress leader said the main aim of the foot march was to listen to the people and amplify what was in their hearts.

"We love all of you and respect you, and feel that J&K is going through a difficult phase. BJP has created a wedge which is harming both (Kashmir and Jammu regions) and this gap needs to be bridged. We want to open lakhs of shops selling love in J&K," he said.

"We have come to listen and understand the people, their pain which is in their hearts and the discomfort. The youth are talking about unemployment, they see no future, there is no industry and farmers are not getting any support," the former Congress president told reporters here.

He said the people need to maintain communal harmony, which is essential for taking the Union territory forward.

"Nothing is achieved by hatred or violence," Gandhi said, adding that the Congress wants the restoration of statehood and assembly polls as soon as possible.

On whether he was satisfied with the security arrangements made by the government for the yatra in Jammu and Kashmir, Gandhi said, "It is the responsibility of the government to protect the yatrias, and I hope they do as good a job as they are capable of doing."

"Yatra Has Changed Narrative In Country" Congress leader said his Bharat Jodo Yatra has achieved success in "changing the narrative" in the country and brought crores of people together to denounce hatred and spread the message of love.

He alleged that the BJP and the RSS have created an atmosphere of hatred in the country and said suppressing or frightening people cannot stop the truth from coming out.

"The yatra has achieved something fundamental, very powerful and what the yatra has

done cannot be changed. It has shown that there are two visions of India, one is hate-filled, arrogant and cowardly and another is love-filled, embracing and brave. It (yatra) has made these two visions absolutely crystal clear," Gandhi told a press conference here.

"Millions of people have walked in support of this yatra, which has changed the narrative in the country. The fundamental fact is that the yatra has been successful and brought India together and shown Indian people believe much more in love and affection," Gandhi said.

He said the sole aim of the yatra is to unite the people against the atmosphere of hatred "created by the BJP and the RSS across the country" and concentration of wealth to a chosen few resulting in inflation and unemployment.

"We have a good yatra which is concluding in the next few days. We learnt a lot from it," he said.

ON BBC DOCUMENTARY On the controversial BBC documentary 'India: The Modi Question', the Congress leader quoted Hindu religious books and said that the truth cannot be hidden.

"The truth always comes out even if you ban, suppress the press, control the institutions, use CBI, ED. Still, the truth shines bright. It has the nasty habit of coming out. So no amount of banning or frightening people can stop the truth from coming out," he said.

Responding to a question about the recent statement of the defence minister that Gandhi is spreading hatred to gain power and tarnishing India's image on international platforms, he said his heart is not filled with hatred.

"I do not understand how the padyatra across the country that unites the people, bringing them together is harming the interests of India. I can see how hatred and violence the Rajnath Singh's party is spreading, harming communities, castes and genders and defaming the nation," he said.

The Congress leader said Singh is in a party, where he needs permission from the top leadership to speak on anything. "He has no choice in the matter and it is nice he has expressed his opinion which he has done on the orders from the top."

Defending his raising political issues and targeting BJP during the ongoing yatra, he said Congress is essentially a political party and political things are going to crop up when you are engaged in such an endeavour.

"People are meeting me and raising their problems. It is now my responsibility to rake up their issues for redressal," he said.

Gandhi said he has only people and their issues in his mind. "There is a clarity (in my mind) that hatred and violence being spread in the country needs to be removed at any cost. I do not accept that India is a country of hate and violence."

### Ladakh Leaders

Constitution for Ladakh. The 65-member delegation comprised members of the Leh Apex Body, the Kargil Democratic Alliance

(KDA) and prominent leaders of Leh and Kargil such as former minister Nawang Rigzin Jora and former legislator Asgar Ali Karbalai, among others.

"We raised four demands with Rahul Gandhi. This includes safeguards under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution to the region," Jora told PTI after the meeting at Jhajjar Kotli.

The delegation also briefed him about the situation along the Line of Actual Control with China, Jora said.

The other issues discussed with Gandhi were creation of two separate parliamentary constituencies for Leh and Kargil districts and recruitment and job reservation for the youth of Ladakh along with creation of a public service commission for the Union Territory.

### R-Day Rehearsal

city, security has been tightened ahead of Republic Day celebrations with police and other security forces carrying out sanitisation and area domination exercises.

Police and CRPF personnel conducted random checking of vehicles at various places in the city to thwart the movement of subversive elements, they said.

The officials said security has been tightened in view of the blasts in Jammu as well as an explosion here.

A civilian sustained injuries in a grenade attack carried out by militants in the Eidgah area of the city Sunday evening. Back-to-back blasts had rocked the Narwal area of Jammu on Saturday, leaving nine people injured.

While the main Republic Day function will take place in Jammu, the biggest event in the Valley will be held at the Sher-e-Kashmir Cricket Stadium here.

### Kashmir Files

(The Last Film Show) was shortlisted in the Best Foreign Film category, but bowed out in the final nominations. It was beaten by Argentina, 1985. The film also defeated 'RRR' at the Golden Globe Award for Best Picture in the Non-English Language category.

Talking about Oscars, RRR, Last Film Show, The Kashmir Files, Gangubai Kathiawadi and Kantara have been dropped from the Best Picture category. However, RRR's song 'Naatu Naatu' is nominated for Best Original Song. At the same time, two documentary movies 'The Elephant Whispers' and 'All That Breathes' have also made it to the list.

In all, three films from India are now left in the race to win the Oscars.

### Teacher Fired

in compliance with the ibid order. According to the CEO, the matter was enquired by the Joint Director (Central) after conducting an in-depth enquiry and it was reported that the appointment order showing to have been issued in favour of some other two teachers was fake and forged and the fraudster

has managed his entry in the department by producing fake appointment order.

"He therefore has deceived the authorities, while drawing illegal wages from the government exchequer."

"The 'delinquent teacher' has responded to the show cause notice and submitted the reply January-10-2023 through speed post, which was thoroughly examined and found devoid of merit for reconsideration," it reads.

It reads the appointment order purportedly issued in favour of the 'fraudster' being not issued by DSEK is treated to be null and void and non-est in the eyes of law."

"Consequently, any benefit derived out of the said fake Order shall be immediately recovered and criminal proceedings shall be initiated against the said person," it reads—(KNO)

### US Puts Onus

said that even though the United States wants to see regional stability in South Asia, its relationships with Pakistan and India "stand on their own".

"We've long called for regional stability in South Asia. That's certainly what we want to see. We want to see it advanced. When it comes to our partnership our partnerships with India and Pakistan, these are relationships that stand on their own. We do not see these relationships as zero-sum." Price told reporters at his daily news conference.

He further said that the "pace, scope, the character of any dialogue between India and Pakistan is a matter for those two countries."

In a recent interview with a UAE media outlet, Prime Minister Sharif expressed a desire for talks with India. However, the Prime Minister's Office later said talks are not possible without India revoking its 2019 actions on Kashmir.

Commenting on Sharif's remarks, India said it always wanted normal neighbourly ties with Pakistan but there should be an atmosphere free from terror and violence for such a relationship.

When asked if the US would open the door for talks with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan and his party if he gets elected as the prime minister, the spokesperson said that Washington is open and would work with any elected government in Pakistan.

"We have demonstrated our desire to see constructive relations with Pakistan over the course of successive governments. As we have said in different contexts, we judge governments by the policies they pursue. It would ultimately be a question of the type of policy that any future government of Pakistan might pursue," Price said.

Khan, who was removed from power through a no-trust vote in April last year, had alleged that the no-confidence vote was part of a US-led conspiracy targeting him because of his independent foreign policy decisions on Russia, China, and Afghanistan. The US has denied the allegations.

# India Thrash New Zealand By 90 Runs; Sweep ODI Series 3-0

Press Trust of India

**INDORE:** Rohit Sharma scored his first ODI hundred in three years while Shubman Gill continued his domination with another sublime ton as India completed a clean sweep with a 90-run win over New Zealand in the third match here on Tuesday.

Batters from both sides lit up the dead rubber as 680 runs were scored at the Holkar Stadium.

Rohit (101 off 85 balls) got to the three-figure mark for the first time since January 2020 while Gill (112 off 78) scored his fourth ODI hundred to take India to 385 for nine.

Following twin failures, the New Zealand top-order put up a much better show. Devon Conway (138) stitched crucial partnerships but Shardul Thakur (3/45) and Kuldeep Yadav (3/62) regularly struck to bowl out the Balck Caps for 295 in 41.2 overs.

It was India's second consecutive clean sweep, having beaten Sri Lanka last week.

After Hardik Pandya (1/37) got rid of Finn Allen (0), Conway shared 106 runs with Henry Nicholls and 78 runs with Daryl Mitchell (24).

In the absence of Mohammed Shami and Mohammed Siraj, the Indian bowlers struggled initially, leaking runs as Conway tonked the ball all around the park.

Shardul, however, managed to turn the game, as he took back-to-back wickets of Mitchell and Tom Latham (0) in the 26th over.

In his next over, Thakur sent Glenn Phillips (5) packing with a cross-seamed delivery.

Umrhan Malik (1/52) then got Conway as the centurion pulled awkwardly with Rohit doing the rest at midwicket as the match seemed to slip out of New Zealand's grasp.

The spin duo of Kuldeep and Yuzvendra Chahal (2/43) then cleaned up the tail.

Earlier, Rohit and Gill put up



a belligerent 212-run opening stand, sharing 22 fours and 11 sixes between them.

Rahul Dravid joked on the eve of the match that bowlers don't want to bowl as soon as they land in Indore

because of the batter-friendly conditions. The batting great had a point, and the New Zealanders rolling over their arms during the first 25 overs would have shared Dravid's sentiment. At one point every

ball that Rohit and Gill's bat touched was either flying to the boundary or over it.

Gill hit four fours and a six to plunder 22 runs off Lockie Ferguson in the eighth over, symbolising the kind of form the

23-year-old has been in lately.

The youngster didn't have to even time the ball for it to run to the boundary. After three fours, he launched the short ball for an upper-cut six.

With the outfield quick and the wicket flat, the rather inexperienced New Zealand bowling unit had no answers to the Indian openers' carnage.

The 26th over saw both Rohit and Gill getting their centuries. Rohit pulled away to deep square to get to his mark and, three balls later, Gill got to the triple-figure mark, his third in four innings.

New Zealand skipper Tom Latham used as many as six bowlers and it was his sixth option -- spinner Michael Bracewell -- who provided the tourists their first breakthrough.

Trying to slog one out of the park, Rohit missed the ball as it kept low and turned to eventually hit the stumps. His wicket was met with a roar by the partisan crowd,

welcoming Virat Kohli (36).

A miscued shot in the next over spelt the end of Gill's innings as New Zealand struck twice in quick succession.

Ishan Kishan (17) didn't look too comfortable and took nine balls to open his account. A yes-no with Kohli, who had sprinted halfway, marked the end of the wicketkeeper batter's stay in the middle.

New Zealand were able to bring down the boundaries and sixes and, looking to play a big shot, Kohli couldn't beat Finn Allen at mid-off.

Firmly on course for a 400-plus score, India endured a familiar middle-order batting collapse, before Hardik Pandya (54 off 38 balls) provided the final flourish.

Brief scores:

India: 385 for 9 in 50 overs (Rohit Sharma 101, Shubman Gill 112, Hardik Pandya 54).

New Zealand: 295 all out in 41.2 overs (Devon Conway 138; Shardul Thakur 3/45, Kuldeep Yadav 3/62).

## 4 J&K Footballers In India's U-19 Training Camp



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** Four players from J&K are set to join India Under-19 national football team's training camp.

Jahangir Ahmed Shagoo, Suhail Ahmed Bhat, Parth Dewan and Sahil Khursheed have been recalled for the training camp scheduled to be held at Kalinga

Stadium in Bhubneshwar, Odisha from 1st of February 2023.

"We are proud of our young boys and wish them success in their future endeavours," the Jammu & Kashmir Football Association said in a social media post.

The training camp is in preparation for the upcoming SAFF Championship and Under-25 AFC Asia Cup Qualifiers.

## J&K Field Archery Team Leaves For Bhopal



Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** J&K Field Archery team left for Bhopal Madhya Pradesh on Tuesday to participate in the 13th FAI National Championship scheduled from 26th to 29th January 2023.

The 18-member team includes one team coach and one team manager along with 16 players. The J&K team was selected after going through trials

and coaching camp at Srinagar.

"We hope that J&K team will bring laurels to state," said by Mukhtar Rasool Bhat, General Secretary of the association.

J&K team contingent is supported by The Legends School of Education.

Imran Shah, Chairman of The Legends School said that the school will always be at the forefront to promote the sport of Archery in Jammu and Kashmir.

## AC Gives Nod To LG's Rolling Cultural & Sports Trophies For Employees

Observer News Service

**JAMMU:** The Administrative Council (AC) which met here under the chairmanship of Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha gave its approval to LG's Rolling Cultural and Sports Trophies for government employees.

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

This initiative is part of the overall policy of Government

to promote sporting activities and HR welfare policy of the Government. The sports events are expected to inculcate values like competition, discipline, teamwork and will lead to overall personality development of the employees. As part of the initiative, exclusive teams shall be formed for female employees to encourage them also.

The AC approved the proposal of participation of employees in scores of sporting disciplines, including cricket, football, volleyball, table tennis, hockey, etc.

## Pant Only Indian In ICC Test Team Of 2022; Iyer, Siraj In ODI Team

Press Trust of India

**DUBAI:** Wicketkeeper-batter Rishabh Pant, who is recovering from the injuries he sustained in a serious car crash two days before the new year, is the only Indian to be picked in the ICC Men's Test team of 2022.

The 25-year-old had a glorious year with the bat, amassing 680 runs from 12 innings at an average of 61.81 and a strike rate of 90.90. He had two centuries and four fifties in the year.

He smashed 21 sixes in Tests in 2022 and was decent with the gloves, producing six stumpings and taking 23 catches.

England skipper Ben Stokes, who transformed the side with his aggressive brand of cricket, has been named captain of the Test XI that also has his teammates Jonny Bairstow and James Anderson.

The ICC Test XI features four Aussies including skipper Pat Cummins forming a pace combination with South African ace Kagiso Rabada and Anderson.

Pakistan captain Babar Azam and West Indies skipper Kraigg Brathwaite complete the lineup.

**Iyer, Siraj Only Indians In ODI Team Of 2022**

Middle-order batter Shreyas Iyer and young pacer Moham-



med Siraj are the only two Indians who found a place in the ICC ODI Team of 2022 captained by Pakistan's Babar Azam.

In a fruitful 2022, Iyer played the role of anchor in India's star-studded batting lineup in the 50-over.

Mostly slotting in at No.4, Iyer played 17 games during the calendar year and scored 724 runs at an average of 55.69.

He scored his runs at a brisk pace of 91.52, which included one century and six fifties to cement his place in India's ODI scheme of things ahead of the World Cup in October-November.

Siraj was one of the most improved bowlers in white-ball cricket and finished as the leading wicket-taker for the

Men in Blue with 24 scalps in 15 ODIs in the absence of an injured Jasprit Bumrah.

His wickets came at an economy of 4.62 and an average of 23.50, with best figures of 3/29.

ICC Test Team of 2022: Ben Stokes (c), Usman Khawaja, Kraigg Brathwaite, Marnus Labuschagne, Babar Azam, Jonny Bairstow, Rishabh Pant (wk), Pat Cummins, Kagiso Rabada, Nathan Lyon and James Anderson.

ICC ODI Team of 2022: Babar Azam (c), Travis Head, Shai Hope, Shreyas Iyer, Tom Latham (wk), Sikandar Raza, Mehidy Hasan Miraz, Alzarri Joseph, Mohammed Siraj, Trent Boult and Adam Zampa.

## United Relishing Chance To Win Trophy, Ten Hag Says Before League Cup Semi-Final



Reuters

**MANCHESTER:** Manchester United have a good opportunity to win their first trophy since 2017, manager Erik ten Hag said on Tuesday as his team prepares for the first leg of the League Cup semi-final against Nottingham Forest. United have been criticised by their fans for the club's trophy drought, with the team last winning silverware back in 2017 as they won the Europa League and League Cup.

But United have improved under Ten Hag and are the only English team to remain in contention in four competitions this season -- Premier League, League Cup, FA Cup and Europa League. "It's about that, it's about winning trophies," Ten Hag told reporters ahead of Wednesday's trip to Forest. "We have a good opportunity but you have to go from game to game."

"Now we play Forest in two legs, we focus on the first leg. Don't think further ahead as it will only distract." Ten Hag

said United have moved on from their 3-2 defeat by league leaders Arsenal in their last game and his players are fully focused on facing Forest, who are 13th in the standings, nine spots below United.

The Dutchman said Diogo Dalot, Jadon Sancho and Anthony Martial will remain unavailable for the game, but Casemiro would be available again after serving a one-match ban in the league. The second leg will be played at Old Trafford on Feb. 1.

## Real Kashmir Draw 0-0 With Churchill Brothers In I-League

Observer News Services

**SRINAGAR:** Real Kashmir FC continued its winless away form in I-League after drawing 0-0 against Churchill Brothers FC on Tuesday at Tilak Maidan in Vasco de Gama, Goa.

The Snow Leopards will be happy with this point as playing the Red Machines at their home turf is never easy.

Both teams had chances to score in the first half. However, Real Kashmir were off to a quick

have woken up Churchill Brothers, who then forced Real Kashmir goalkeeper Subashish Roy into making a diving save.

The second half was a different story as both teams created little to break the opposition and turned into a midfield slugfest. However, the Snow Leopards will be happier of the two sides, as the Srinagar-based team held on to grab a valuable point.

Churchill Brothers defender Lamgoulen was awarded the man of the match award.



start as Loken Meitei headed over the bar in the first minute of the match, while forward Ibrahim Nurudeen shot straight at the opposing goalie in the 16th minute.

The early pressure seemed to

The win lifted Real Kashmir to fourth in the I-League table, taking 19 points from 13 matches. Real Kashmir next play table-toppers RoundGlass Punjab on January 27 at Tau Devi Lal Football Stadium in Panchkula, Haryana.

## Kashmir Chess Club To Hold 'Chess For Everyone' Tournament

Observer News Service

**SRINAGAR:** The Kashmir Chess Club on Tuesday said that it will be organising "Chess For Everyone FIDE Rated chess Tournament" from February 17 to February 21 at Indoor Sports Stadium in Polo View, Srinagar.

The tournament will be held in collaboration with All J&K Chess Association and J&K Sports Council, while All India Chess Federation has approved/funded the event. World Chess Federation has allotted an event code "313848/J&K/2023" for the tournament.

A press release was issued by Gowhar Rashid, PRO/Press Secretary of The Kashmir Chess Club in this regard.

"The details and descriptions/Brochure of the tourna-

ment is available at <https://aicf.in> and <https://www.fide.com>. Players can register themselves up to 31st of Jan-2023. Till date, some 50 players have already registered themselves and there is mandatory for every player to have an AICF registration for the current year. Those who don't have AICF registration can apply through <https://prs.aicf.in/new-register>," the press release said.

"It is expected as per the queries/Pledges made by the players/Coaches/Officials and parents from all over the world about 400 players will witness this great event earlier in the month of July 2022 1st Kashmir International Chess Tournament was successfully conducted by this very club," it added.



Jacinda Ardern Makes Final Appearance As New Zealand Leader



Agenceis

Jacinda Ardern made her final public appearance as New Zealand's prime minister Tuesday, saying the thing she would miss most was the people, because they had been the joy of the job.

Ardern, who has been a global icon of the left, shocked the nation Thursday when she said she was resigning as leader after more than five years because she had nothing left in the tank. Labour Party lawmakers voted unanimously Sunday for Chris Hipkins to take over as prime minister, and he will be sworn in Wednesday.

Ardern's final act as leader was to join Hipkins and other lawmakers attending celebrations at the Ratana meeting grounds, the home of an Indigenous Maori religious movement.

Ardern told reporters she'd been friends with Hipkins for nearly 20 years and spent two hours with him on the drive to the meeting grounds. She said the only real advice she could offer was, "You do you."

This is for him now. It's for him to carve out his own space to be his own kind of leader, Ardern said. Actually, there's no advice I can really impart. I can share information, I can share experiences, but this is now for him.

Ardern also addressed the wide discussion that has been going on since her announcement about the vitriolic and misogynistic attacks on her on social media something she has

said did not contribute to her decision to step down.

Whilst there has been a bit of commentary in the aftermath of my departure, I would hate for anyone to view my departure as a negative commentary on New Zealand, Ardern said. I have experienced such love, compassion, empathy and kindness when I've been in this job. That has been my predominant experience."

Hipkins told reporters the leadership transition was bittersweet.

Obviously, I'm really honoured to be taking on the role, but as is well known, Jacinda's a very good friend of mine," he said.

At the meeting grounds, Ardern was greeted with embraces and songs. She told those attending she would leave the job with a greater love and affection for New Zealand and its people than when she started.

I didn't think that was possible, she said.

She said her colleagues were exceptional people.

"I never did this job alone," Ardern said. "I did it alongside these wonderful servants to New Zealand. And I leave knowing that you are in the best of hands.

Ardern plans to stay on as a Member of Parliament until April to avoid triggering a special election ahead of the nation's general election in October. She said she was prepared for her new, relatively obscure role.

"I'm ready to be lots of things," Ardern told reporters. I'm ready to be a backbench MP. I'm ready to be a sister, and a mom.

WHO May Issue Advisory Against Cough Syrups For Children: Report

Agenceis

The World Health Organization (WHO) is investigating whether there is any connection between manufacturers whose contaminated cough syrups it has linked to the deaths of more than 300 children in three countries, a person familiar with the matter told Reuters.

Citing "unacceptable levels" of toxins in the products, the WHO is seeking more information about the specific raw materials used by six manufacturers in India and Indonesia to produce medicines linked to the recent deaths, as well as whether the companies obtained them from some of the same suppliers, the person said. The WHO has not named any suppliers.

The WHO also is considering whether to advise families globally to reassess the use of cough syrups for children in general while questions over the safety of some of these products are unresolved, the person said. WHO experts are evaluating the evidence for whether, or when, such products are medically necessary for children, the person said.

The deaths of children from acute kidney injury began in July 2022 in Gambia, followed by cases in Indonesia and Uzbekistan. The WHO has said the deaths are linked to over-the-counter cough syrups the children took for common illnesses and which contained a known toxin, either diethylene glycol or ethylene glycol.

To date, the WHO has identified six drugmakers in India and Indonesia who produced the syrups. These manufacturers have either declined to comment on the investigation or denied using contaminated materials that contributed to any deaths. Reuters has no evidence of wrongdoing by the companies the WHO has named.



doing by the companies the WHO has named.

"This is of the highest priority for us, to see no more child deaths from something that is so preventable," WHO spokesperson Margaret Harris said, without commenting further on the details of the organisation's work.

The United Nations health agency said on Monday it had widened its investigation into potential diethylene glycol and ethylene glycol contamination in cough syrups to four additional countries where the same products may have been on sale: Cambodia, the Philippines, East Timor and Senegal. It called on other governments and the global pharmaceutical industry to launch urgent checks to root out substandard medicines and improve regulation.

The WHO is expected to comment further on the cough syrup situation during a news conference later on Tuesday.

The WHO has already issued specific alerts for cough syrups made by two Indian manufacturers, Maiden Pharmaceuticals and Marion Biotech, in October 2022 and earlier this month. It said their syrups were linked to deaths in Gambia and Uzbekistan respectively, and the alerts

asked people to stop using them.

Maiden and Marion's manufacturing plants have both been shuttered. Maiden is now seeking to reopen after the Indian government said in December that its testing had found no problems with Maiden's products.

Maiden has repeatedly told Reuters, including in December, that it did nothing wrong and Managing Director Naresh Kumar Goyal said on Tuesday he had no comment on WHO investigating possible connections between the companies under scrutiny.

Marion's office phone went unanswered on Tuesday and the company did not immediately respond to an email seeking comment. Earlier this month, it told the government of Uttar Pradesh, where it is located near New Delhi, that it was being blamed for the deaths in Uzbekistan "to malign the image of India and the company".

The WHO, working with Indonesia's drugs regulator, also issued an alert in October about cough syrups made by four Indonesian manufacturers and sold domestically. The manufacturers are: PT Yarinoda Farmatama, PT Universal Pharmaceutical, PT Konimex, PT AFI Farma.

Destitute Doctor From Haryana Found On Mumbai Street Reunited With Family

Agenceis

A 42-year-old woman doctor from Haryana found in an injured state on a street in Mumbai was reunited with her family following efforts made by a non-governmental organisation in Maharashtra's Palghar district.

The police found Dr Karolina Kapoor with an infected head wound on a street in Goregaon area of Mumbai on December 31, 2022 and admitted her to Jeevan Anand Sanstha's Samartha Ashram in Palghar, a release by the NGO on Monday stated without elaborating how she landed in the Maharashtra capital.

From the day Kapoor entered the ashram, a team of its workers made a concerted effort to trace her relatives through police in Delhi, Haryana and by using the internet, the organisation's trustee Kisan Choure said.

After 21 days of continuous



efforts, the ashram's clinical psychologist succeeded in contacting Kapoor's family after gathering information from her during the counselling sessions, he said.

The woman's uncle and brother-in-law soon arrived in Mumbai and after a verification process at Goregaon police station, Kapoor was handed over to them, the official said.

Kapoor left for her home in Gurugram, Haryana on Monday after expressing her gratitude towards the staff at the organisation.

Marriage Before 18 Years Cannot Be Annulled: Karnataka HC

Agenceis

The Karnataka High Court has ruled that the marriage of a woman that has taken place before her attaining 18 years of age cannot be annulled. The bench also quashed the earlier order in this regard by a Family Court.

The division bench comprising Chief Justice P.B. Varale and Justice S. Vishvajith Shetty gave the order, while looking into the petition in this regard by a woman recently.

According to the Hindu Marriage Act Section 5 (3), the age of bridegroom should be 21 years and bride should be 18 years. The rule specifying 18 years of age for marriage is being kept out of Section 11 of the Act, the bench said. Besides for cancellation of marriage, the facts have to be in contravention to the

Section 5 and rule 1, 4 and 5. Hence, the annulment of marriage won't apply to this case, the bench said.

Petitioner Susheela from Mandya district had married Manjunath on June 15, 2012. Susheela was minor at the time of marriage. The husband came to know about this fact later and he submitted a petition to the Family Court demanding cancellation of his marriage.

The Family Court had accepted the petition and stated according to the Hindu Marriage Act the age has to be 18 years for the bride and at the time of marriage the age of the bride in this case was 16 years, 11 months and 8 days. The court had stated that the marriage won't stand under the Section 11 of the Hindu Marriage Act.

Quick eats for busy people

**Bun Maska** & Chai

Chicken Crispy Burger

JK BANK LAWNS, NEAR GHAT 6, BOULEVARD-SRINAGAR