

Organic Farming Brings A Breath Of Fresh Air In Kashmir

Swati Joshi

When Insha Rasool came back to Kashmir after working as a research scholar in South Korea, she was inclined to work independently and start something of her own. A pass out from Indian Institute of Sciences, Bengaluru, Rasool started Home Greens, an organic farm in the land owned by her family. "I come from a human science research background so I have an idea about the effect of chemical

pesticides and fertilizers on human health," says Rasool. There is a myriad of research articles that suggests fertilizers and pesticides used in conventional farming end up in the body and also the polishing material used to extend the shelf life create mutation and a majority of mutation has some sort of manifestation, informs Rasool.

Rasool started organic farming in 2019 but she didn't go with conventional vegetables rather she opted for exotic vegetables.



"It's been a good learning curve but obviously, there are setbacks," says the researcher, adding, "there are people around me

who still promote conventional methods of farming which imposes many hurdles in my way." Organic farming is

IN WHEAT OR CEREAL CROP, A COMBINATION OF ORGANIC AND INORGANIC FERTILIZERS is used because organic fertilizers cannot replace the inorganic ones; it only supplements inorganic fertilizers in these crops,"

research-driven and Rasool had to gather a lot of information from the literature available. She has to study the impact of a

particular kind of organic fertilizer that is eco-friendly before using it.

Since nothing is readily available in Kashmir, Rasool has to bring a lot of material from outside, and then she performs a set of trials and chooses the product which gives the best result. "It is time-consuming but the product is worth all the efforts," says the entrepreneur.

One of the major challenges faced by Rasool in Kashmir is the unavailability **More on PIO**

Odisha Minister Shot Dead By Police Officer

Press Trust Of India

Bhubaneswar: Odisha's Health and Family Welfare Minister Naba Kishore Das died after battling bullet injuries for several hours after being shot by a policeman, Apollo Hospital officials said.

A team of doctors operated on him after he was airlifted from Jharsugada to Bhubaneswar, hospital officials said.

Das, who was 60-years old, was shot through the heart at Brajrajnagar town around 1 pm when the minister was on his way to attend a programme in the district.

"On operating (it) was found that a single bullet had entered and exited the body, injuring the heart and left lung, and causing massive internal bleeding and injury.

"The injuries were repaired, and steps were taken to improve the pumping of the heart. He was given urgent ICU care. But, despite best of efforts, he could not be revived and succumbed to his injuries," the hospital said in a statement.

In a statement, Odisha chief minister Naveen Patnaik, who was believed close to Das, said "I am shocked and distressed over the very unfortunate demise **More on PIO**

Rahul Talks Of Statehood, Skips Questions On Art 370

Congress Leader Said He Experienced A "Powerful" Feeling Of Homecoming During His Journey Through Kashmir



I don't want to comment on the historical aspect of it, I want to look forward and I (have) come here with an open heart ... and open arms to help in whatever way I can" KO photo Abid Bhat

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday said the restoration of statehood and democratic process is a very important step in Jammu and Kashmir as he avoided a question on whether his party would be part of an Opposition alliance in the union territory.

Gandhi said he has come to Jammu and Kashmir with an open heart and open arms to help

people in whatever way he can.

"Love, affection and listening, I believe, are powerful forces. I don't want to comment on the historical aspect of it, I want to look forward and I (have) come here with an open heart ... and open arms to help in whatever way I can," Gandhi told reporters here at the end of the 4,000-km Bharat Jodo Yatra.

The former Congress president was asked about **More on PIO**

STATEHOOD AND RESTORATION OF DEMOCRATIC PROCESS is a fundamental and very important first step. The other steps will come later and I do not necessarily have to comment on it here"



'Promise Made To India Fulfilled' Rahul Hoists Tricolour At Lal Chowk

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday unfurled the national flag at the historic clock tower of Lal Chowk in the heart of Srinagar as part of the Kanyakumari-Kashmir 'Bharat Jodo Yatra' and said a "promise" made to India has been fulfilled.

Gandhi described the yatra as the deepest and beautiful experience of his life. The security for the 10-minute event was at its peak as all roads in a one-kilometre radius leading to the chowk, which holds symbolic importance for the city, were sealed off from Saturday night and no vehicular movement was allowed. Barricades were **More on PIO**

BJY Spread Message Of Love: Priyanka

Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Sunday said the Rahul Gandhi-led Bharat Jodo Yatra has spread the message of love to every corner of the country and urged the party's supporters to unite for taking the nation forward. Rahul Gandhi unfurled the national flag at the historic clock tower of Lal Chowk in the heart of Srinagar as part of the Kanyakumari to Kashmir 'Bharat Jodo Yatra'. Gandhi, along with his sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, party leaders and workers, **More on PIO**

Senior Army Officer Reviews LoC Situation

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Army's 16 Corps Commander Lt Gen Sandeep Jain visited different sectors along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri and Poonch and reviewed the overall security situation, officials said on Sunday.

Lt Gen Jain, the General Officer Commanding of Jammu-based 16 Corps, nicknamed as White Knight Corps, visited Naushera, Bhimber Gali, Poonch and Krishna Ghati sectors and interacted with the troops, the officials said.

The officials said Lt Gen Jain appreciated the high standards of professional excellence and operational preparedness during his interaction with the troops on the ground. Army and **More on PIO**

LG Launches QR Code-Based Labels Of 13 J&K Crafts

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor Manoj Sinha on Sunday launched QR code-based labels of 13 GI and non-GI registered crafts here, terming the move as a landmark in preserving and promoting priceless artistic and cultural heritage of the Union Territory.

Congratulations the artisan community, handicraft department and other stakeholders, the Lt Governor said the QR code labels will help to authenticate the origin and quality of the crafts, improve the quality assurance in both national and international markets and benefit craftsmen, traders and exporters.

"This is an important



landmark in preserving and promoting priceless artistic and cultural heritage of J&K UT. QR code-based mechanism would help in ensuring product quality, genuineness and boost global demand for J&K handmade products," the Lt Governor said at a function at Raj Bhavan here.

A GI (geographical **More on PIO**

BJP Hits Back, Credits Rahul's Tricolor Hoisting To PM

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has created such an atmosphere in Kashmir that any Indian can hoist the national flag with pride at Lal Chowk in Srinagar, the BJP said on Sunday and asked Congress leader Rahul Gandhi to thank him for the change in the Valley.

The comments from BJP spokesperson and former Union minister Rajyavardhan Singh Rathore came after Gandhi unfurled the tricolour at the historic clock tower of Lal Chowk, popularly known as 'Ghanta Ghar', as part of his Bharat Jodo Yatra, which concludes on Monday.



"Rahul Gandhi is hoisting tiranga with pride at Lal Chowk. PM Modi and his government had created such a situation in Kashmir that every Indian can unfurl tiranga with pride there. Rahul Gandhi must thank Modi ji after unfurling tiranga," he

said in a statement.

Echoing similar views, Jammu and Kashmir BJP president Ravinder Raina said the credit for Gandhi unfurling the national flag goes to Modi who normalised the situation in the Valley with the abrogation of Article 370.

Gandhi was able to do it because of the policies of Prime Minister Modi who dealt a severe blow to separatism and terrorism by abrogating Article 370 (in 2019) and strengthened nationalist forces, paving way for the normalisation of the situation and return of peace to the region, he said in Jammu.

Raina said the Congress ruled the country for most part of the past seven **More on PIO**

Kashmir Braces For Another Snow Spell Avalanche Warning Issued In 10 Districts Of J&K



Observer News Service

Srinagar: Kashmir Valley is all set to receive widespread light to moderate snowfall as a fresh western disturbance hit the region on Sunday, prompting the authorities to issue

avalanche warning in as many as districts of the Union Territory.

A meteorological department official here said that moderate to heavy snowfall over middle and higher reaches was likely under the influence **More on PIO**

Two Girls Killed In Kargil Avalanche

AUQIB JAVEED

Two girls, including a minor were killed on Sunday after coming under an avalanche in Kargil district of Ladakh. 11-year old Kulsum Bano and 23-year-old Bilquees Bano were passing through Tangole village on Kargil-Zanaskar highway on Sunday afternoon when an **More on PIO**

2 Held For Khalistan Graffiti In Delhi

Delhi Police's Special Cell has arrested two men in connection with alleged "anti-national" and "Khalistan-related graffiti" that appeared on walls in areas of west Delhi on January 19, ahead of Republic Day, officials said on Sunday.

The walls were painted with slogans like "Khalistan Zindabad" and "Referendum 2020", they said.

"Two perpetrators have been arrested by the Special Cell in a case related to pro-Khalistan graffiti," a **More on PIO**

Flyer Tries To Open Emergency Exit, Booked

A passenger on board an IndiGo flight to Mumbai from Nagpur allegedly attempted to remove the cover of the emergency exit when the aircraft was approaching for landing here, the airline said on Sunday. An FIR has been registered against the passenger for the alleged act, IndiGo said in a statement and added there was "no compromise" on the safety. The airline, however, did not share other details.

"A passenger travelling **More on PIO**

5 Absent RDD Employees Suspended

The administration in South Kashmir's Kulgam district on Sunday suspended five employees of the Rural Development Department over unauthorised absence from their duties. On the directions of the Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, a team of officers headed by ACD Kulgam, Mohammad Imran inspected several offices of RDD in the district, an official spokesperson said. During the inspection, he said, **More on PIO**

Two Held With Cannabis

Police on Sunday claimed to have arrested two drug peddlers and recovered contraband substances from their possession in Baramulla and Kulgam districts of the Valley. Basharat Rajab Dar was arrested by a police team from Sheeri at a checkpoint after 110grams of Charas and 1.2kgs of Cannabis Hemp was recovered from his possession, a police spokesperson said. Dar, he said, had tried to flee from the spot when intercepted by police.

"He has been shifted to **More on PIO**



Scientists Are Actively Trying To Build Conscious Robots

Hod Lipson, the mechanical engineer in charge of the Creative Machines Lab at Columbia University in New York, is creating a machine that will have "consciousness on par with a human", eclipsing "everything else we've done". Lipson believes that such conscious robots may even be able to cure cancer.

Close PlayerUnibots.in

Consciousness is one the most divisive ques-

tions in artificial intelligence, but other than the technological challenge that stands in the face of achieving this goal, the word itself is philosophically vaguely and subjectively defined.

According to The New York Times, scientists are making efforts to nail down consciousness to specific brain functions but always face an inconclusive end. Lipson describes consciousness in his own words as that being the capacity to "imagine yourself in the future".

He has worked to build adaptable machines

as generalised intelligence that can learn to evolve by machine-learned natural selection and respond to changing environments and errors or injury within the mechanical body. Machines won't just learn and correct themselves but will be able to imagine how they can better evolve.

While humans anthropomorphise human traits onto non-humans, especially machines, researchers hope that robots would be able to adopt human traits and qualities, in a way projecting humanity onto conscious machines.



Women In South Korea Are On Strike Against Being 'Baby-Making Machines'

Hawon Jung

After trying for over a year to persuade more South Korean women to have babies, Chung Hyun-back says one reason stands out for her failure: "Our patriarchal culture." Ms. Chung, who was tasked by the previous government with reversing the country's plummeting birthrate, knows firsthand how tough it is to be a woman in South Korea. She chose her career over nuptials and children. Like her, millions of young women have been collectively spurning motherhood in a so-called birth strike.

A 2022 survey found that more women than men — 65 per cent versus 48 per cent — don't want children. They're doubling down by avoiding matrimony (and its conventional pressures) altogether. The other term in South Korea for birth strike is "marriage strike."

The trend is killing South Korea. For three years in a row, the country has recorded the lowest fertility rate in the world, with women of reproductive age having fewer than one child on average. It reached the "dead cross," when deaths outnumbered births, in 2020, nearly a decade earlier than expected.

Now, about half of the country's 228 cities, counties and districts risk losing so many residents they might vanish. Day care centers and kindergartens are being converted into nursing homes. Ob-Gyn clinics are closing, and funeral parlours are opening. At Seoksan Elementary School, in rural Gunwi County, the student body has shrunk from 700 pupils to four. When last I visited, the children couldn't even form a soccer team.

Young Koreans have well-documented reasons not to start a family, including the staggering costs of raising children, unaffordable homes, lousy job prospects and soul-crushing work hours. But women in particular are fed up with this traditionalist society's impossible expectations of mothers. So they're quitting.

President Yoon Suk-yeol, elected last year, has suggested feminism is to blame for blocking



Making life fairer and safer for women would work wonders toward reducing the country's existential threat. Yet this feminist dream seems increasingly far-fetched, as Mr. Yoon's conservative government champions regressive policies that only magnify the problem.

"healthy relationships" between men and women. But he's got it backward — gender equality is the solution to falling birthrates. Many of the Korean women shunning dating, marriage and childbirth are sick of pervasive sexism and furious about a culture of violent chauvinism. Their refusal to be "baby-making machines," according to protest banners I've seen, is retaliation. "The birth strike is women's revenge on a society that puts impossible burdens on us and doesn't respect us," says Jiny Kim, 30, a Seoul office worker who's intent on remaining childless.

Making life fairer and safer for women would work wonders toward reducing the country's existential threat. Yet this feminist dream seems increasingly far-fetched, as Mr. Yoon's conservative government champions regressive policies that only magnify the problem.

South Korea's demographic crisis was once inconceivable: As late as the 1960s, women had six children on average. But pursuing economic development, the state carried out an aggressive popula-

tion control campaign. In about 20 years, women were having fewer than the 2.1 children needed for replenishment, a number that's only continued to drop. The latest available data from South Korea's statistics agency put the fertility rate at 0.81 for 2021; by the third quarter of 2022 it was 0.79.

Recent governments have indeed been alarmed by a rate that's seemingly approaching zero. Over 16 years, 280 trillion won (\$210 billion) has been poured into programs encouraging procreation, such as a monthly allowance for parents of newborns.

Many women still say nope. No wonder. There's little escaping suffocating gender norms, whether in pregnancy guidelines to arrange clean undergarments for your husband before labor, or the dayslong kitchen drudgework for holidays like the Chuseok harvest festival. Married women are saddled with the lion's share of chores and child care, squeezing new mothers so much that many give up professional ambitions. Even in dual-income households, wives daily

spend more than three hours on these tasks versus their husband's 54 minutes.

Discrimination against working mothers by employers is also absurdly common. In one notorious case, the country's top baby formula maker was accused of pressuring female employees to quit after getting pregnant.

And gender-based violence is "shockingly widespread," according to Human Rights Watch. In 2021, a woman was murdered or targeted for murder every 1.4 days or less, according to the Korea Women's Hotline. Women have dubbed the act of ending a relationship without getting a vicious reaction a "safe breakup."

But women haven't passively accepted the toxic masculinity. They've organised raucously, from Asia's most successful #MeToo movement to groups like "4B," which translates to the "Four nos: no dating, no sex, no marriage and no child-rearing." The country's feminist movements have won the decriminalization of abortion and harsher penalties for an epidemic of spycam-porn crimes.

Many young Korean men, however, have declared themselves victims of women's activism. President Yoon rose to power last year by leveraging this resentment. He echoed the dog whistle of men's rights advocates, declaring that structural sexism no longer existed in South Korea, and vowed tougher punishment for false reports of sexual assault.

Mr. Yoon's government is removing the term "gender equality" from school textbooks and has cancelled funding for programs to fight everyday sexism. "If you find gender equality and feminism so important, you can do it with your own money and time," said one lawmaker in his party.

The government is also working to dismantle its own headquarters for women's empowerment — the gender equality ministry. Established in 2001, it's been transformative in normalizing parental leave for fathers and helping more women achieve workplace seniority.

THE J&K BOARD OF PROFESSIONAL ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS

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Subject: - **Provisional Selection List of candidates for admission to AYUSH (BUMS, BAMS and BPT) Courses-2022 after Mop-Up (Physical) round of counselling.**

Reference: Notification No. 007-BOPEE of 2023 dated 23.01.2023 of the J&K BOPEE

Notification No. 010-BOPEE of 2023
Dated 29-01-2023

Pursuant to Notification No. 007-BOPEE of 2023 dated 23.01.2023, the Board conducted Second round of Physical Counselling and subsequently reduced the Cut-off score to 70 only for BPT Course. Consequent upon receipt of the shortfall from Government/Private Colleges and the seats which have remained unfilled after the conclusion of Second round of Physical Counselling, the Board conducted the Mop-Up round (Physical) counselling of eligible candidates on 27th & 28th of January, 2023 at BOPEE Offices, Srinagar and Jammu simultaneously for admission to the BUMS/BAMS and BPT Courses-2022.

The provisional selection list of candidates, who have participated in this round of counselling and have been upgraded / allotted seats, is hereby notified as Annexure-A to this Notification, which shall remain available on the official website of the Board (www.jkbopee.gov.in) only for information of all the concerned.

The provisionally selected candidates are advised to report to the Upgraded/Allotted Colleges upto **7th of February 2023 (till 04:00 p.m.)**. The Heads of Institutions shall submit the shortfall, if any, to the Board on 07.02.2023 upto 5:00 p.m. through e-mail helpdeskjakbopee@gmail.com or coejakbopee@gmail.com positively.

The concerned Colleges shall keep their admission counters open on all days including holidays / off days in order to facilitate the candidates for taking admission in their allotted/upgraded colleges without any difficulty.

Note: -

- The admission of candidates is purely provisional and shall be liable to be cancelled in case any information furnished by any candidate(s) proves to be false/fabricated, for which action as warranted under law shall be initiated against such candidate(s).
- The Heads of concerned Colleges are advised to release the documents and refund the fee to the candidates who have been upgraded during Mop-Up round of counselling without wasting their time to enable them to report to the upgraded college(s) by or before 07.02.2023.
- In terms of Section 9 (2) of J&K Reservation Act 2004, 10 seats under different Reserved Categories have been converted into Open Merit due to non-availability of the eligible candidates in these Reserved Categories after conclusion of the counselling on 27.01.2023 and have been allotted to the Open Merit candidates strictly on the basis of Merit-cum-Preference.

The other Terms and Conditions shall remain the same as notified in the e-Information Brochure of NEET UG-2022 and in the Notifications/Notices issued by the Board from time to time on the subject.

E & O E

Sd/-

Controller of Examinations,
J&K BOPEE

No: BOPEE/Exam-21/2022

DIPK-NB-6194/22

Dated: 29-01-2023

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Public Notice

I have applied for the issuance of DOB certificate of my son namely Hyder Ali Parray (DOB: 31-01-2016) S/o Altaf Ahmad Parray . If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the BDO office Khore Sherabad within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Altaf Ahmad Parray
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Youth Starts Online Food App To Deliver Food At Doorsteps

Agencies

Srinagar: A youth from Srinagar has launched an online food app so that people can get their favorite food at the comfort of their homes.

Shoaib Ahmad Wani, a resident of Habba Kadal area of Srinagar after pursuing B. Com has started an online food app "Ur meals" that is enabling all to order food from 250 favorite eating joints on the click of a button.

With Kashmir's favorite eating joints – restaurants, sweet shops, confectioners' outlets, fast food joints, coffee shops – on board with Ur meals, we promise customers quick and reliable delivery so that they can enjoy their favorite food at the comfort of their homes

Shoaib said that outside J&K one could easily have got food at his doorsteps by simply ordering it online but such facilities are very rare in Kashmir.

"When I saw such facilities outside Kashmir, I decided to start such a facility in Srinagar and launched the app "Ur Meal" and currently 10-15 boys are associated with me who have delivered orders," he said.

He said that we have a type with all restaurants and whatsoever restaurants are

chosen by the customers on the app, accordingly, it is being delivered.

Wani said one will have to download the app from Play Store, view the eating places of his choice and place the order.

"With Kashmir's favorite eating joints – restaurants, sweet shops, confectioners' outlets, fast food joints, coffee shops – on board with Ur meals, we promise customers quick and reliable delivery so that they can enjoy their favorite food at the comfort of their homes," he said, adding that as of now it has received good positive feedback in last few months and is getting around 20 orders on daily basis which is expected to increase.

The customer gets updates while the order is readied and he is able to track real-time as it gets delivered to destination, he said, adding payment is being through PayTM wallet or cash on delivery.

"Since the government can't provide jobs to everyone. Therefore I came up with my own venture, where I don't need to run after government jobs but rather can provide jobs to many," he said.

He said currently our services are available in Srinagar district only but we are planning to expand it to other towns as well.

Shoaib said that Kashmiri youth have got much talent but the need of the hour is to channelise that. He said that the youth instead of moving after government jobs should start their own ventures—(KNO)

Abid Ansari Restarts Public Interactions In Zadibal

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Stressing upon a need to expedite the ground interaction for political activities in the Zadibal Halqa, Senior JKPC leader and former MLA Abid Hussain Ansari has said that parties holistic developmental and pro-people agenda needs to reach the grassroots level to aware common masses to choose better and visionary leadership for the effective representation of their aspirations.

He addressed core party workers of Zadibal Constituency here in Alipora (Zadibal) on Sunday.

Abid Ansari stressed on the need to make regular Mohalla-to-Mohalla meetings to speed up public inter-

actions for maximum party strength in the segment and urged them to highlight the public issues rigorously for effective and expeditious redressal.

The delegates appraised Ansari on this occasion about the execution of various developmental works which have been initiated during his previous spell and expressed hope that in future the segment will lead more on the developmental front under his able and visionary leadership and fully assured him that they will vibrantly work for garnering more and more support in the segment and will make an extensive campaign in the new areas included during new delimitation with the Zadibal constituency.

DC Hands Over 85 Tablets To Patwaris & Girdawars

Calls District e-Governance Society a strong link with the people in this digital age

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad today

by the District Administration to ensure effective and efficient implementation of online services. He said with the availability of Tablets the



handed over 85 Tablets to Patwaris and Girdawars of the district under e-Governance initiative at the Conference Hall of the DC Office Complex, here.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Syed Shabir Ahmad; Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Raies Ahmad Bhat and other Officers were present on the occasion.

On the occasion, the DC said the step has been taken

Patwaris and the Girdawars will be able to discharge their legitimate duties to the best satisfaction of the Revenue Department and general public as well.

The DC asked the Revenue officials to carry out routine works in an efficient manner and ensure prompt delivery of services to people in a hassle free manner.



Congress leader Rahul Gandhi marches and waves during the Bharat Jodo Yatra on Sunday. KO Photo Abid Bhat

INC Rally At SK Stadium Police Issues Traffic Advisory

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Traffic Police on Sunday issued a traffic advisory asking people to take certain routes in view of the rally being organized by "Indian National Congress" at S.K Cricket Stadium Sonwar Srinagar today.

Police have asked the participants in the rally to adopt the following traffic diversions in view of the large number of vehicles expected to enter Srinagar City from various routes towards the venue.

The Rally bound vehicles travelling from South Kashmir (Anantnag, Pulwama, Awantipora, Shopian) have been told to adopt Panthachowk - Athwajan - Batwara Route for reaching the venue. Cut off for such vehicles will be at Kendriya Vidyalaya Shivpora.

The parking venue for the vehicles coming from South Kashmir has been set inside Kendriya Vidyalaya School.

Moreover, other private and commercial vehicles, travelling towards Srinagar have been told

to adopt Panthachowk-Nowgam-Sanath Nagar route. Rally bound vehicles from Budgam shall adopt Hyderpora - Rambagh - Tulsibagh -Pr.Convent route.

Cut off for such vehicles will be at Presentation Convent School. Parking arrangements have been made at Gindun Park Rajbagh, Institute of Hotel Management Rajbagh, Horticulture Department Rajbagh and along Jehlum Bund Rajbagh.

The rally bound vehicles coming from North Kashmir shall adopt Sumbal-Shalteng- BeminaBypass - Tengpora - Hyderpora - Rambagh - Tulsibagh - Pr. Convent route. Cut off for such vehicles will be at Presentation Convent School. Parking facility has been set up at Gindun Park/ Institute of Hotel Management/ Horticulture Department Rajbagh and along Jehlum Bund Rajbagh.

The vehicles from Srinagar have been told to utilize the designated parking lots at Astro Turf, TRC parking and Indoor Stadium Polo view.

The rally bound vehicles from Bandipora/Ganderbal have been told to adopt HMT- Be-

mina Bypass - Tengpora - Hyderpora - Rambagh - Tulsibagh - Pr. Convent route. Cut off for such vehicles will be at Presentation Convent School.

It is pertinent to mention, traffic will not be allowed towards SK Stadium from Radio Kashmir, Dalgate, Panthachowk and Kralsangri except for the participants.

The traffic advisory further mentions that the general Public and Tourists have been told to adopt alternative routes to reach the Srinagar Airport to avoid any inconvenience. Commuters have been requested to plan their movement accordingly as the diversion will be in place from 08:00 AM till 16:00 PM.

Traffic Police has further said that the Medical emergencies will be facilitated.

Furthermore, all the rally bound motorists have been advised to adopt the same route for the return journey to reach their respective destinations. People have been advised to avoid unnecessary travel towards Lalchowk, Dalgate, Rajbagh and Sonwar today.

TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
PCR: 0194-2452092, 2455883
PDD: 0194-2450213
FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488, 245222, 2452155
CAPD: 18001807011
SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +91 94841 00200

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311



RAILWAYS

SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259
ANANTNAG: 01932-228243
BARAMULLA: 0194-102029
BIJBHARA: 01932-228243
PAMPORE: 01933-294132
PATTAN: 01954-293507
QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

**HIJRI
CALENDAR**
07 Rajab
1444

PRAYERS
FAJR 6:04
ZUHR 12:44
ASR 4:21
Magrib 6:02
ISHA 7:25

This Day In History

- 1018 - The Holy Roman Empire and Poland conclude the Peace of Bautzen
- 1077 - Pope Gregory VII pardons German emperor Henry IV
- 1349 - Gunther of Schwarzburg chosen German anti-king
- 1467 - Battle at Velke Kostolany: Hung king Mátyás Corvinus beats Bratrick
- 1487 - Bell chimes invented
- 1522 - Duke of Albany takes captured French back to Scotland
- 1607 - Massive flooding in England destroys around 200 square miles of coastline and results in approximately 2,000 casualties
- 1648 - Spain & Netherlands sign Peace of Munster, ending the Thirty Years War
- 1713 - England & Netherlands sign 2nd anti-French boundary treaty
- 1815 - Burned US Library of Congress re-established with Thomas Jefferson's 6,500 volumes
- 1820 - British explorer Edward Bransfield aboard Williams sights Trinity Peninsula, Antarctica, claiming it for Britain
- 1826 - The Menai Suspension Bridge, considered the world's first modern suspension bridge, connecting the Isle of Anglesey to the north West coast of Wales is opened.
- 1862 - USS Monitor, the US Navy's 1st ironclad warship launched
- 1889 - Archduke Crown Prince Rudolf of Austria, heir to the Austro-Hungarian crown, is found dead with his mistress Baroness Mary Vetsera in Mayerling.
- 1894 - Pneumatic hammer patented by Charles King of Detroit
- 1895 - SS Elbe sinks after collision in North Sea, 332 killed
- 1902 - Britain and Japan sign a treaty after months of negotiating which commits each country to supporting an independent China and Korea, although it acknowledges Japan's 'special interest' in Korea
- 1911 - 1st rescue of an air passenger by a ship, near Havana, Cuba
- 1913 - UK House of Lords rejects Irish Home Rule Bill
- 1915 - German submarine attack on Le Havre
- 1922 - World Law Day 1st celebrated
- 1925 - Turkish government throws out Constantine VI

From KO Archives

Police Detect 150 Fake Finance Companies In J&K

Observer News Service

Jammu: The crime branch of Jammu and Kashmir police has detected 150 finance companies operating in the state allegedly without any registration from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). These have defrauded gullible depositors to the tune of Rs 80 crore. Cases have been registered against 40 such allegedly fake companies, mostly in Jammu involving over 200 accused.

Disclosing this to Kashmir Observer, the inspector general of police, crime and railways, Masood Chaudhary, said over 99 per cent of the companies were fake and had defrauded people mostly from rural areas in the name of higher interest on their deposits. Most of these operators are believed to have gone abroad along with their families while some of them have declared themselves bankrupt and closed down their companies.

Chaudhary said the cases were registered on receipt of complaints from the affected people. A special team of senior police officials, headed by the deputy inspector general (DIG) of police, crime and railways, Prem Kumar, has been constituted to investigate the cases. He said some of the accused have been apprehended while some more were likely to be arrested shortly.

In the absence of more stringent laws, Chaudhary said, police were finding it difficult to intervene in the matter. It can take action only after a formal complaint is received. Some of the accused had defrauded the depositors to the tune of Rs 10 crore to Rs 15 crore. He said some special teams had been rushed to places like Mumbai and other major cities across the country to apprehend the culprits.

(KASHMIR OBSERVER, 30 January, 2001)

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Iranian Navy Ships Dock In Brazil Despite US Concerns



Agencies

Ships from the Iranian Navy have docked in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to proceed toward the Panama Canal as the US scrambles for solutions, reported by Al-Mayadeen on 28 January.

Following Tehran's announcement that its navy would deploy ships in the waterway earlier in January, the US is closely monitoring Iran's activity in the Panama Canal, according to US State Department spokesperson Ned Price, who talked to The Washington Free Beacon on Friday.

Washington is monitoring "Iran's attempts to have a military presence in the Western Hemisphere," Price said.

Price refused to discuss any prospective measures the Biden administration would take on this matter or the position of Washington over Iran's expanding military presence.

Earlier this week, the Brazilian Navy said that the two Iranian warships, one equipped with "anti-ship cruise missiles, torpedoes, and naval guns," were permitted to dock in Brazil.

In recent years, as part of the nation's economic program, Iran

has been fortifying its connections with Latin American nations, most notably Venezuela.

Given that both Iran and Venezuela have a history of suffering from painful sanctions imposed by the US and its allies, Iranian ships have docked in Venezuela more frequently.

Rear Admiral Shahram Irani, the head of Iran's navy, said earlier in January that Iranian forces would arrive in the Panama Canal later this year, marking the first time Iran's armed forces had reached the Pacific.

On 28 January, the commander of the Iranian army fleet announced that several new maritime combat helicopters have been developed and will be revealed soon. Rear Admiral Irani stated that the sea might serve as the focal point of the nation's development while referencing the crucial significance of the nation's maritime capabilities in an interview with Mehr news.

"There is a great opportunity for the development of the country by sea for Iran. The countries that do not have this capacity are experiencing geopolitical suffocation," the senior commander added.

Rajasthan: 10 CURAJ Students Suspended, NGO Relates Action To Screening Of BBC Documentary



Press Trust of India

JAIPUR: Ten students of the Central University of Rajasthan (CURAJ) were suspended for two weeks as disciplinary action for allegedly disobeying the instructions of authorities and carrying out a late-night demonstration at undesignated sites.

However, according to an NGO, the suspension was carried out in connection with the screening of the banned BBC documentary 'India: The Modi Question' on January 26.

The students have been suspended from the academics as well as the hostel on Friday for disobeying the instructions of teachers or the authorities and demonstrating in late hours at places other than designated sites, the suspension order read.

CURAJ Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) president Vikash Pathak said some students associated with the Students' Federation of India (SFI) and National Students Union of India (NSUI) had sent out invitations for the screening of the

banned documentary on Gujarat riots near the canteen, following which the action was taken.

He said on January 26, around 40-50 students gathered and started watching the documentary in public on devices, including laptops. Later, the university administration and police arrived on the spot.

A lot of sloganeering also took place against the Centre's ban on the documentary, Pathak said.

CURAJ authorities, however, said the action on the students has no connection with the screening of the documentary, calling it a routine disciplinary action against the students.

"The action wasn't taken over screening of the documentary. It was a normal, routine, disciplinary action taken against these students, which is a routine activity of an academic institution," a university official said, wishing anonymity.

On January 27, the university administration issued an order that it has decided to enforce a ban on the screening of the BBC documentary with immediate effect.

UN Security Council Does Not Reflect Today's Realities, Is Paralysed: Unga President

Press Trust of India

UNITED NATIONS: The UN Security Council does not reflect today's realities, is paralysed and unable to discharge its basic function of maintaining international peace and security when one of its permanent members has attacked its neighbour, UN General Assembly President Csaba Kórosi has said.

Russia, a veto-wielding permanent member of the UN, attacked Ukraine in February 2022. Russia has vetoed UNSC resolutions on Ukraine while it has voted against a resolution in the UN General Assembly which calls on countries not to recognise the four regions of Ukraine that Russia has claimed.

Kórosi, a Hungarian diplomat currently serving as President of the 77th United Nations General Assembly, said that there is a push from a growing number of member nations to reform the powerful UN organ.

"The Security Council which has been created back then" and given the primary responsibility of maintaining "international peace and security and preventing wars now is paralysed," he told PTI ahead of his visit to India.

Kórosi will arrive in India on Sunday on a three-day visit at the invitation of External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar. It is his first bilateral visit to any country since he assumed his role as President of the UN



General Assembly in September 2022.

"The Security Council cannot discharge its basic function for a very simple reason. One of the permanent members of the Security Council attacked its neighbour. The Security Council should be the body to take action against the aggression. But because of the veto power, the Security Council cannot act," he said, in a reference to Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Kórosi said this was a "very serious lesson learnt" for the future when talking about how to improve functioning of global organisations.

He said that the issue of UNSC reform is both "burning" and "compelling" since the composition of the Security Council reflects "the outcome of the Second World War".

India has been at the forefront of the years-long efforts to reform the Security Council, saying it rightly deserved a place as a permanent member in the United Nations.

Currently, the UNSC has five permanent members – China, France, Russia, the UK and the

China Occupied India's Land in 1962, Not Now: Jaishankar Takes Swipe at Rahul

Press Trust of India

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar on Saturday said some people deliberately spread wrong news about the China issue knowing it is not true for politics and by talking about some land, which was taken by China in 1962, they give the impression this happened recently, the remarks viewed as a dig at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi.

Mr. Jaishankar was interacting with the audience in a question-answer session during the launch of Bharat Marg, the Marathi translation of his book The India Way, in Pune.

He also said the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) is a technical matter and Indus commissioners of both countries will talk to each other on this issue.

Queried about some people or leaders from political parties lacking confidence in India while speaking about China (military stand-off), he said there are some people in the Opposition who have such thinking which he finds difficult to understand.

He, however, added sometimes such people spread



wrong news or information about China on purpose.

"If you want to ask why they have no confidence, why are they misleading people, why they spread the wrong khabar (news) about China? How can I answer these questions? Because I know they are also doing politics. Sometimes they deliberately spread such news that they know is not true," he added.

"Sometimes, they talk about some land, which was taken by China in 1962. But they will not tell you the truth. They will give you the impression that this thing happened yesterday," he said without taking names.

Notably, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi had last September said Prime Minister Narendra

Modi has given "100 square kilometres of Indian territory" to China "without a fight," and asked the government how it will be retrieved.

Mr. Jaishankar also said sometimes some people say there is soch me kami (lack of understanding) in him but in that case, he will approach the military leadership, Army, or Intelligence.

"I will not call the Chinese ambassador and seek information," he said.

Interestingly, in 2017, when India and China were locked in a standoff on the border area abutting Bhutan, the Congress said Rahul Gandhi had met the ambassadors of the two neighbouring countries.

The EAM further said China is India's only neighbour which is a global power and may become a superpower in the years to come.

On India's view regarding current developments in Pakistan and what would be the implications of India's decisions regarding the IWT, Mr. Jaishankar said it would not be appropriate for him to comment in public about the happenings in that country.

PIL Filed In SC Challenging Centre's Decision To Ban BBC Documentary

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: A PIL has been filed in the Supreme Court against the Centre's decision to "ban" a BBC documentary on the 2002 Gujarat riots in the country, alleging it was "malafide, arbitrary and unconstitutional."

The PIL filed by advocate ML Sharma also urged the apex court to call and examine the BBC documentary - both parts I and II - and sought action against persons who were responsible and were involved directly and indirectly with the 2002 Gujarat riots.

Sharma said that in his PIL he has raised a constitutional question and the top court has to decide whether citizens have the right under Article 19 (1) (2) to see news, facts and reports on the 2002 Gujarat riots.

He has sought direction to quash the order dated January 21, 2023, of the Ministry of the Information and Broadcasting, terming it as illegal, malafide, arbitrary and unconstitutional.



His plea said whether the central government can curtail freedom of the press which is a fundamental right as guaranteed under Article 19 (1) (2) of the Constitution.

"Whether without having an Emergency declared under Article 352 of the Constitution of India by the president, Emergency provisions can be invoked by the central government?" the PIL said.

It claimed the BBC documentary has "recorded facts" which are also "evidence" and can be used to further the cause of justice for the victims.

On January 21, the Centre issued directions for blocking multiple YouTube videos and Twitter posts sharing links to the controversial BBC documentary "India: The Modi Question", according to sources.

Hindu Sena Puts Up Anti-BBC Posters Outside Agency's Delhi Office

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Members of the Hindu Sena on Sunday allegedly put up anti-BBC placards outside the UK-headquartered broadcaster's office on Kasturba Gandhi Marg in Delhi over its documentary on the 2002 Gujarat riots.

Placards reading "BBC is a threat to India's Unity and it should be Banned" and "BBC stop tarnishing India's image. BBC leave India" were put up outside the main gate of the BBC office amid a row over the controversial documentary.

The placards were removed by the police.

Hindu Sena members also

accused the media organisation of conspiring to tarnish and malign the image of both India and Prime Minister Modi.

The BBC is a threat to the unity and integrity of the nation and the channel should be banned in India immediately, Hindu Sena chief Vishnu Gupta said.

He recalled that the BBC was banned in India during the tenure of Indira Gandhi as prime minister. The ban was lifted after the organisation submitted an apology, R Gupta claimed.

When asked, a senior police officer said, "Our patrolling team, which was present nearby, spotted the placards outside the BBC office and removed those."

Mob Protests Against 'Pathaan', Smashes Theatre Display In Maharashtra



Press Trust of India

THANE: A group of people reportedly belonging to a right-wing outfit smashed the display boards of a theatre screening Shah Rukh Khan starrer 'Pathaan' in Bhayander in Thane district on Sunday evening, a police official said.

A video of the mob shouting slogans against Mr Khan and the film has gone viral on social media, he said.

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Nine persons having been detained in this connection and the process of registering a case was underway, he added.

NEWS MAKERS

Kidnapped For Ransom, 26/11 Survivor Gautam Adani Faces His Biggest Challenge Yet

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: He was kidnapped by bandits in 1998 for ransom and when terrorists attacked Mumbai almost 11 years later, he was among the hostages held at the seafront Taj Hotel. College-dropout Gautam Adani's knack of surviving crises and his business acumen has propelled him to the ranks of India's richest but he now faces possibly the biggest challenge of his career.

Hindenburg Research, a tiny New York firm that specialises in short selling, brought out a scathing report that has led to his group shedding more than USD 50 billion in market value in just two trading sessions and Adani himself losing in excess of USD 20 billion, or about one-fifth of his total fortune.

The 60-year-old tycoon has now slipped behind Bill Gates and Warren Buffett to be the seventh-richest person in the world from the



pre-Hindenburg position of being the third richest.

More than his personal status, at stake is the reputation of an empire the first-generation entrepreneur built over three-and-half decades. The immediate task is to see a Rs 20,000 crore follow-on share sale—the second largest in India—at his conglomerate's flagship firm sail through.

Adani Enterprises Ltd's FPO found investors for just 1 per cent of the shares on offer on the opening day on Friday when the com-

pany's share price fell below the offer price because of the damning allegations in the Hindenburg report.

The issue, where the shares are being sold in a price band of Rs 3,112 to Rs 3,276, as of now closes on January 31. On Friday, Adani Enterprises closed at Rs 2,762.15 on the BSE.

EARLY LIFE

Born in a Jain family in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, Adani dropped out of college and moved to Mumbai as a teenager, working for a while as a diamond sorter in the gem trade. He returned to Gujarat in 1981 to help his elder brother Mahasukhbhai run a small-scale PVC film factory the family had acquired at Ahmedabad.

In 1988, he set up a commodities trading venture under Adani Exports and listed it on the bourses in 1994. The firm is now called Adani Enterprises.

KIDNAPPED FOR RANSOM

By the mid-1990s, his business successes started attracting attention, including the unwelcome kind. On January 1, 1998, Adani and his associate Shantilal Patel were abducted at gunpoint after they left Karnavati Club in Ahmedabad in a car.

They were held allegedly by gangsters Fazlu Rehman and Bhogilal Darji alias Mama (who were later acquitted for lack of evidence) for a reported USD 1.5-2 million ransom. Both were let off a day later but it is not known if the ransom was paid.

SURVIVING 2008 MUMBAI TERROR ATTACK

On November 26, 2008, he was dining at Mumbai's iconic Taj Hotel with Dubai Port CEO Mohammed Sharaf. As he was about to exit after paying bills, a few associates called for a second round of meeting over a cup of coffee. That's when terrorists attacked, which killed 160.

Lord Krishna, Hanuman Greatest Diplomats Of World: S Jaishankar

Press Trust of India

PUNE: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has said Lord Krishna and Lord Hanuman were the greatest diplomats of the world.

He was speaking on Saturday while interacting with the audience in Maharashtra's Pune city in a question-answer session during the launch of 'Bharat Marg', the Marathi translation of his book 'The India Way'.

Jaishankar said, "Lord Shri Krishna and Lord Hanuman were the greatest diplomats of the world. I am saying this very seriously." If one looks at them in the perspective of diplomacy, what situation they were in, what mission was given

to them, how they had handled the situation, he said.

"Hanumanji, he had gone ahead of the mission, he had contacted Goddess Sita, burnt Lanka. He was a multi-purpose diplomat," Jaishankar said.

The minister said for the world's 10 big strategic concepts pertaining to international relations in today's discourse, he could give an equivalent for every concept from the epic Mahabharat.

"If you say today it is a multi-polar world, at that time what was happening in Kurukshetra (the site of the battle of Mahabharat), that was multi-polar Bharat, where there were different rajya (kingdoms), they were told 'you are

with them, you are with me'. A couple of them were non-aligned like Balram and Rukma."

He said now people say it is a globalised world, there is interdependence, there is constraint.

"What was Arjuna's dilemma, it was constraint, that he was emotionally interdependent; that how do I fight against my relatives. That was not material interdependence, but it was emotional interdependence," he said.

"We sometimes say Pakistan did this or that, and we will show strategic patience. The best example of strategic patience is the way Lord Krishna handled Shishupal. He (Lord Krishna) forgave him 100 times," he said.

NIA Attaches Hurriyat Office In Srinagar

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The National Investigating Agency (NIA) on Sunday attached the separatist Hurriyat Conference's office in the Rajbagh area here on the orders of a Delhi court in a terror funding case, officials said.

A team of the federal agency arrived at the Hurriyat office and pasted an attachment notice on the building's outer wall, they said.

"This is to inform all members of the public that the building where the office of All Party Hurriyat Conference is lo-

outfits and was formed in 1993.

The office has remained closed since August 2019 following a crackdown on separatist groups by the government.

The Hurriyat Conference-led by Mirwaiz Umar Farooq said the attachment of the amalgam's office will not detach people from their desire for a peaceful solution to the Kashmir issue.

"Those in command and control of Jammu and Kashmir should know that the sentiment and desire to see the resolution of the Kashmir conflict and to live in fearless peace, is embedded in the people of Jammu and



Abid Bhat/KO

cated at Rajbagh and is owned jointly by Nayeem Ahmad Khan, who is presently facing trial ... has been attached by the court order dated 27th January 2023 by Special NIA Court Patiala House, New Delhi," the notice read.

The Hurriyat Conference is an amalgam of 26 separatist

Kashmir... Attaching buildings of stone and mortar will not detach people from their sentiment. They will continue to seek a peaceful resolution," the amalgam said in a statement.

The Hurriyat termed the court order as "lopsided". It also again demanded the release of its jailed leaders and activists.

400 Kanal Land Retrieved In Kulgam In One Day

10 Kanal Land Worth Crores Retrieved From Relatives Of Ex-

Observer News Service

KULGAM: Acting tough against the land encroachers, the District Administration Kulgam in a single day on Sunday retrieved more than 400 kanals of state/ kahcharie and Roshni land during intensified anti-encroachment drives carried out across the district.

Illegal land measuring 10 Kanals was also retrieved from the relatives of Ex MP, with title State Land (Roshni) retrieved after a massive Eviction Drive at Kulgam Town today.

The Property having worth in Crores has been handed over to the MC, Kulgam, for further management.

Land measuring 50 Kanals under Survey No 675 recorded Sarkar in revenue records was retrieved today at estate Lammer.

On spot 40 Kanals were handed

over to the Agriculture Department for Seed Multiplication Farm and 10 Kanals were handed over to the Headmaster Government High School Lammer.

93 Kanals of State land under Survey No. 01 at village Arigatnoo was retrieved from the encroachers and about 1 kanal Kahcharie land with (high commercial value) near Pahloo main market was retrieved with strenuous efforts.

44 kanals of land were retrieved at HM Guri in DH Pora.

It is worth mentioning that Kulgam district Administration has activated men and machinery on mission mode to evict the illegal occupants and retrieve the State/ Kahcharie and Roshni land in the district and today more than 400 Kanals of encroached land were retrieved and many structures raised over the encroached land were also dismantled.

DC Inaugurates 3 Day 'Kupwara Winter Carnival'



Observer News Service

KUPWARA: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Dr.Doifode Sagar Dattatray on Sunday inaugurated 'Kupwara Winter Carnival -2023' at Dringyari Chowkibal.

SSP Kupwara, Yougal Manhas; ADC Kupwara, Ghulam Nabi Bhat; galaxy of Civil, Police and Army Officers, besides hundreds of tourists, adventurers, nature lovers and officials of various departments were present at the inaugural ceremony.

On the occasion, the DC said that the Carnival is the first of its experience in the district to make best possible efforts to boost the tourist activities in the district. He said Carnival will last for 3 days and hoped that this maiden effort will imprint its effect on the history of Kupwara district in near future when Kupwara will be the global tourist destination.

Dr. Doifode Sagar said that Kupwara district has enough potential to be developed as an all season tourist destination adding that during Summer over 10,000 tourists visited Bangus. He said the winter carnival was designed to explore the possibilities to give fillip to winter tourism.

He said that various activities of attraction have been introduced in the winter carni-

val which include ice skating, ATVs, Snow mobile, sagging bridge and zip line, besides, music, refreshment, food courts are available to serve the tourists.

He appreciated all the officers and field functionaries for putting best possible arrangements in place for successful conduct of the Carnival.

The DC said that holding Winter Carnival at Dringyari in the lap of Picturesque Bangus Valley and Shamasbari mountain will be the grand maiden effort to boost the tourism sector in the district.

He asked the officers to make this carnival more attractive so that more and more tourists could visit and enjoy the beauty of Kupwara district especially Drangyari which is the specified venue for the carnival.

He said the conduct of winter carnival shall boost the tourism activities in a big way which will create livelihood opportunities for the local youth of the district. He hoped and appealed the youth of the district to participate in the Winter festival in large numbers

Among others, who visited the Winter Carnival include Major General, A.S Pendharkar General Officer Commanding, 28 Infantry Division, DDC Members of Kralpora, Drugmulla, Sogam, Rajwar and BDC Chairpersons.



RAHUL GANDHI FLANKED BY HIS SISTER PRIYANKA and other Congress leaders waves at a crowd during the last leg of Bharat Jodo Yatra that concluded in Srinagar on Sunday.

KO PHOTO, ABID BHAT

Chinese Sitting On Indian Land Won't Be Tolerated: Rahul

'Many Of Patrolling Points That Used To Be In Indian Territory Are Now Firmly In Chinese Hands'

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The government must deal with China firmly and make it clear that "we are not going to tolerate them sitting on our land", Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said here on the eve of the culmination of his Bharat Jodo Yatra on Sunday.

Gandhi said that the approach that the government was following "by completely denying" that the Chinese have "taken our land" is extremely dangerous as it would give them the confidence to do even "more aggressive things".

Addressing a press conference hours after unfurling the tricolour at Lal Chowk here, the former Congress president, who undertook the 134-day Bharat Jodo Yatra from Kan-

yakumari to Srinagar, said, "I think the way to deal with these Chinese is to deal with them firmly and to be very clear that they are sitting on our land and it is not something we are going to tolerate."

"The Prime Minister of India is the only person in the country who is under the impression that the Chinese have not taken any land from India. I recently met some ex-army people, even a delegation from Ladakh which clearly said that 2000 square kilometres of our Indian territory have been taken over by Chinese," Gandhi said.

They also said that many of the patrolling points that used to be in Indian territory are now firmly in Chinese hands, he said.

His remarks come a day af-

ter External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said some people deliberately spread wrong news about the China issue, knowing it is not true, for politics and by talking about some land, which was taken by China in 1962, they give the impression this happened recently - comments that are viewed as a dig at Gandhi.

"Sometimes, they talk about some land, which was taken by China in 1962. But they will not tell you the truth. They will give you the impression that this thing happened yesterday," he had said without taking names.

Rahul Gandhi has been raising the issue of Chinese aggression along the Line of Actual Control, alleging that Indian land has been occupied.

Nearly 23,000 Hectares Of Encroached Land Retrieved In Jammu

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Nearly 23,000 hectares of state and 'kahcharai' land were retrieved during the ongoing anti-encroachment drive in different districts of the Jammu division, officials said on Sunday.

The major chunk of 13,793 hectares of land was retrieved from encroachers in Rajouri, followed by over 6,100 hectares in Poonch, over 2,300 in Kishtwar, 15.9 hectares in Udhampur and some parcels in Kathua and Samba districts so far, an official spokesman said.

Quoting information received from Rajouri, he said teams of police and revenue officials visited different tehsils of the district, including Rajouri, Darhal, Thanamandi, Nowshera, Qila Darhal, Sunderbani, Siot, Kalakote, Terayth, Beripatan, Manjakote, Moughla and Khawas, and retrieved 2,75,867 kanals and 12 marlas of state land.

The retrieved land include 2,68,321 kanals and seven marlas of state land, including Roshni land and 7,546 kanals and five marlas of kahcharai land, the spokesman said.

In nearby Poonch, he said,

against 1,25,030 kanals of encroached land, 1,22,277 kanals and eight marlas have been retrieved till date.

Similarly, out of total encroached 8,530.16 kanals of kahcharai land, 8,391 kanals have been retrieved in different parts of the district, the spokesman said.

He said the retrieved land included commercial land worth crores of rupees which was under illegal occupation of land by mafia and big businessmen including a former legislator from Lasana.

In Kishtwar district, the spokesman said, 75 percent progress was achieved with the district administration retrieving around 47,552 kanals (2,377.6 hectares) of state and Roshni land, out of the total 64,192 kanals.

Under kahcharai land, he said, over 384 kanals have been retrieved, out of the total encroached 572 kanals through a series of anti-encroachment drives. The retrieved land in Kishtwar town is worth crores of rupees, he added.

The spokesman said more than 35 kanals of encroached land was retrieved from illegal occupants in different parts of

Kathua district on Saturday.

The retrieved land included over three kanals and six marlas from former minister Prem Sagar Aziz and nine kanals and 15 marlas from District Development Council, Chairman, Kathua, Col (ret'd) Mahan Singh from Plahi village, the spokesman said.

He said the land freed from the encroachers also includes high-value land worth Rs 2.41 crore in Basohli sub-division.

The Jammu district administration has retrieved prime government land, measuring 20 kanals and five marla, from Machallian-Nagbani village in the Domana area on the outskirts of the city, he said.

The spokesman said 318 kanals of state, kahcharai and Roshni land was retrieved during a day-long anti-encroachment drive in Udhampur district, while district administration Samba retrieved over six kanals of prime commercial Roshni land near Mansar Morh on the Jammu-Pathankot national highway.

A JCB machine was deployed for dismantling the RCC structures, boundary walls and pavements constructed on the land, he said.

R-Day Celebrations End With Beating Retreat Ceremony

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Beating the Retreat ceremony, marking the culmination of four-day-long Republic Day celebrations was held at MA Stadium here on Sunday, an official spokesperson said.

The occasion was graced by Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha.

During the ceremony, the spokesperson said, marching Bands of Armed Forces played the inspiring patriotic tunes on the Brass bands and Pipe drum bands on the slow and quick strathspey.

He said musical tunes including Vijay Bharat, Dhawaj ke Rakshak, Kadam Kadam

Dy Parade Commander, marching contingents of cadets from NCC (Boys), contingents of schools (Boys and Girls), Ex-Servicemen, cultural performers, Gymnastics and the DareDevils of JKP for their outstanding display in the Republic Day Parade on 26th January, 2023," he said.

"The Beating Retreat ceremony concluded with the ever-popular 'Jahan Dal Dal Pe Sone ki Chidiya' with simultaneous display of spectacular fireworks followed by the National Anthem," he added.

Beside other, the spokesperson said, LG's Advisor, Mayor Jammu Municipal Corporation;



Badhaye Ja, Veer-Sipahi, Jai Ho, Sare Jahan Se Achha on the Brass Band, and Deshon Ka Sartaj Bharat, India Gate, Naurange, Lahure Ko Relimai, Surya, Kargil Hill and He Kancha on Pipe Band enthralled the audience.

The LG, the spokesperson said, felicitated the contingents of Jammu Kashmir Police, Army and the Border Security Force.

"The Lt Governor also felicitated the Parade Commander,

Chief Secretary; Additional Chief Secretary; DGP; Divisional Commissioner Jammu; ADGP Jammu; elected representatives of ULBs and PRIs; former Legislators; Administrative Secretaries; senior Civil, Police, and Army officers; Vice Chairperson, J&K Khadi Village and Industries Board; prominent citizens; media persons and the youth in large number witnessed the centuries-old military tradition.

BJP Committed To J&K's Inclusive Growth: Rana

Observer News Service

NAGROTA: Saying that Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi has transformed the country's politico-development ethos in the recent past, Senior BJP leader Devender Singh Rana said Sunday the world's largest political party is committed to inclusive growth of Jammu and Kashmir in every sphere by taking every segment along.

"BJP's nationalistic character and inclusive ethos, guided by the Prime Minister's cherished Mantra of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Paryas is key to taking the nation to the glory it deserves in the comity of nations", Rana said while interacting with people during his day long visit to Suketar, Janakha, Chadali, Jhajjar Kotli, Badsoo and Damsal in Nagrota Assembly Constituency.

Rana said that Indian politics has entered into a new era of bonding with social barriers crashing and 'nation first' philosophy becoming the way of life and guiding force to ensure progression of all, irrespective of religion, region or caste. In this journey of New India, every segment of the society is working towards strengthening the hands of Narendra Modi to carry forward his mission of nation building.

He referred to the great initiatives taken over the years and implementation of various schemes and welfare programmes with missionary zeal, saying these have resulted in the growth of every section of the society.

"The agenda of inclusiveness has instilled a sense of confidence and hope among the

people, who have been craving for marching ahead as proud Indians to become part of the country 's growth story," he added.

Rana said the the BJP's outreach to every single person across the country has unnerved and rattled the elements creating fear psychosis with sinister designs of creating vote banks.

"In this unholy pursuit they have been spreading negativity and dividing the people on the basis of religion and caste. This might have benefitted them to some extent but now that the people have started seeing through their dirty game plan, they are rallying behind the BJP for holistic development and equitable opportunities of progress to all," he said.

Rana dwelt in detail various path breaking initiatives taken across Jammu and Kashmir during the past nearly four years with an avowed objective of ensuring development, creating infrastructural facilities, strengthening utility services and giving fillip to growth as a result of massive investments.

He said the investments will manifest in industrialization on a mega scale thus opening vistas of opportunities for economic empowerment and generation of jobs for professionals, technocrats, educated unemployed besides skilled and unskilled workforce.

He said J&K is at the threshold of a new era of peace and progress as per Naya J&K vision of the Prime Minister.

Earlier Mr Rana listened Maan ki Baat by Mr Narendra Modi at Booth No. 96 at Jhajjar Kotli along with a large number of locals.

Mehbooba Remembers Nehru Hoisting Tricolour In Kashmir As Rahul's BJY Ends

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: PDP president Mehbooba Mufti on Sunday said Congress leader Rahul Gandhi unfurled the national flag here under "different circumstances" when Jammu and Kashmir has been turned into a military garrison and assurances given by the Constitution demolished by the BJP.

She said former prime minister Jawahar Lal Nehru first unfurled the tricolour in Kashmir in 1948 amongst a sea of people was a momentous occasion marked by celebrations.

"Today history stands witness as RG (Rahul Gandhi) unfurled the same flag albeit under completely



Abid Bhat/KO

different circumstances at a time when J and K has been turned into a military garrison. Assurances given by Indian Constitution have been demolished by BJP and is a complete betrayal," Mehbooba said in a series of tweets.

"In 1948 when PM Nehru first

unfurled tiranga in Kashmir amongst a sea of people, it was a momentous occasion marked by celebrations. People of J and K had successfully fought off invaders by pushing them back and thus began a new relationship with India based on mu-

tual trust and respect," she said.

The former chief minister said Nehru's efforts ensured a Muslim-majority Jammu and Kashmir acceded to India.

"He assured Kashmiris and allayed concerns about preserving their identity not only in terms of religion but also culturally within India. This was achieved through constitutional safeguards guaranteed by Article 370," she said.

Despite these facts, the BJP claims to have resolved the Kashmir issue by the "unconstitutional abrogation of Article 370, Mehbooba said.

"Not only have they failed to address the issue but also gifted 2000 sq km of our territory to

China," she said.

Gandhi on Sunday unfurled the national flag at the historic clock tower of Lal Chowk here as part of the 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', amid stringent security measures usually reserved for a prime ministerial visit.

Gandhi drove to the Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC) headquarters on Maulana Azad Road from Sonwar and later headed to the clock tower, locally known as 'Ghanta Ghar', to unfurl the tricolour.

He was accompanied by his sister and Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and party leaders from the Union Territory during the event.

KASHMIR OBSERVER

Monday | 30-01-2023

No Polls In Sight

IN a statement that gives people in Jammu and Kashmir little hope for early polls, Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Rajiv Kumar said on Wednesday that the assembly elections in the union territory will be held with various factors in mind, including weather and security concerns. The CEC said that the delimitation process and the revision of electoral rolls in the union territory has been completed. Similarly, returning officers and additional electoral registration officers have also been appointed.

Previously, the election commission invited representatives from eight recognised national and 57 regional political parties to a demonstration of a modified version of the M3 Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) that allows migrants to vote at polling stations outside their home constituencies. Major J&K parties such as National Conference and the PDP who also participated in the meeting made a strong pitch for the polls in the union territory.

As for the weather and security, the concerns cited by the CEC for being factors in holding polls in J&K, this is not an opinion shared by J&K political parties or for that matter people in the region. True, Kashmir is in the middle of winter, but if the polls are announced now, they can only be held by March-April, which is the spring season. And as for the security, Kashmir is now a considerably more peaceful place, a surprising turn of events which government boasts as its singular achievement following the withdrawal of the region's special status in August 2019. So, now is, in a sense, the ideal time for the Assembly polls.

J&K has not had an elected government since June 2018, when Governor's rule was imposed after the PDP-led coalition government lost its majority following the withdrawal of support by the BJP. The last four years have witnessed a drastic political makeover of the state-turned-union territory, so much so that in many aspects, the current J&K bears little resemblance to what it was pre-August 2019.

This should normally pave the way for the polls but this doesn't seem to be the case. For some reason, the elections keep getting deferred. More so, at a time when there is a palpable desire for polls in the region. There is thus hope that the central government will take steps towards holding the long delayed exercise. If deferred further, there will be little scope for the polls considering general elections are due to be held in May 2024.

OTHER OPINION

What Really Worries Indians About Adani's Empire

Mihir Sharma | Bloomberg

When the Adani Group mobilized to defend itself against accusations — leveled by US-based short sellers Hindenburg Research — that it had “engaged in a brazen stock manipulation and accounting fraud scheme over the course of decades,” the choice of décor was more persuasive than the denial. Chief Financial Officer Jugeshinder Singh stood in front of a giant Indian flag that made him look more like a government official than an embattled company executive. The message was clear: If you (a “foreign entity,” in the company's words) come after Adani, you're coming after India.

Unfortunately, that's not entirely untrue. The Adani Group — with investments in ports, roads, rail, airports, and power — is now a crucial vehicle for India's economic ambitions under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Adani and Modi are close, and have been for two decades.

But talk of cronyism misses the point. If Adani didn't exist, the Indian government would have had to invent him: The development model we have now chosen requires risk-taking “national champions” such as the Adani Group. What else did you expect? After all, like so many others, India has turned away from traditional market-supporting structural reform in favor of old-fashioned industrial policy.

Much of what Hindenburg put in its report doesn't count as news for Indian investors. They have known for years that Adani Enterprises Ltd., the fulcrum of the Adani empire, is loaded down with debt, and that the ultimate source of its funding is remarkably opaque. Adani stock is generally thinly traded; few here will be willing to believe that Adani companies set out to defraud retail investors, even if both public sector banks and state-owned insurers have bet heavily on them.

No, Indians' real fear is something else — that Gautam Adani and his companies simply cannot do what they say they will. Can they build the roads they have promised, improve the ports they have been given, maintain the airports they won in a bid? Until now, nobody else has been able to do so.

Adani's companies have not just been entrusted with a wide swathe of India's infrastructure. They have become the government's first choice as partners in multiple sectors that framers of our industrial policy have decided are priorities for India's growth.

Does the government want Indian companies to set up factories that make solar panels? Adani will oblige. Has the prime minister set a stiff renewable energy target? Adani will sign up to meet it. Are we worried we aren't self-reliant in weaponry? Adani will undertake to create an “indigenous defense ecosystem under ‘Make in India.’” Are policy makers worried about the semiconductor supply chain? Gautam Adani will promise “a value chain that is fully indigenous and aligned with the geopolitical needs of our nation.”

Yatra Takeaway

It has certainly generated some goodwill for Congress, and things look potentially set for a change. But Modi persona still looms large

RIYAZ WANI

Here was a top national leader coming to Lal Chowk to hoist the national flag and many Kashmiris were ready to welcome it - and the rest didn't seem to mind it. Have the terms of political discourse now irrevocably changed in Kashmir?



Rahul Gandhi had an enormous popular reception in Jammu and Kashmir, which was not entirely unexpected. More so in Kashmir Valley, where the participation in the yatra was the first such major political mobilization of people after the withdrawal of Article 370 in August 2019. Major Kashmiri mainstream leaders, who now generally refrain from holding public rallies, seized the opportunity to walk alongside Gandhi. But the yatra, the first and foremost, was about Gandhi, his alternative idea of India, and Kashmiri leaders were making a symbolic statement by participating in it.

In Kashmir, the yatra transcended political or electoral calculations. For one, many people who took part in it in the Valley - or for that matter in parts of Jammu - didn't do so out of a sense of allegiance to Congress. It became a pretext to assert themselves in disguise - a way to mobilize in the face of the shrinking space for doing so over the last few years. So, while the yatra may do little to revive Congress in the union territory in the near future, it has provided a channel to vent some pent-up frustrations in Kashmir and in Jammu too - but for largely divergent reasons.

However, the participation in Gandhi's yatra also reflected a transformed political context in Kashmir. Here was a top national leader coming to Lal Chowk to hoist the national flag and many Kashmiris were ready to welcome it - and the rest didn't seem to mind it. Have the terms of political discourse now irrevocably changed in Kashmir? Well, as things stand, they seem to have. Aside from the participation of individuals, the yatra has thus brought to light the current political realities in Kashmir.

But these realities are not immediately relevant to the yatra, whose aim is to combat the BJP's

ideological vision for India and, in the process revive Congress. At the yatra's conclusion in Lal Chowk, it is difficult to imagine whether it has or may in the near term achieve any of those goals. But it certainly has introduced a new dynamic and seeded the ground with new political possibility. When and how it would play out in the coming weeks and months remains to be seen.

But there are some distinct takeaways that can't be ignored. In Kashmir, the yatra did generate some political buzz. For one, it has reinvigorated the Congress' rank and file in the union territory boosted further by the return of leaders who had joined the former Congress leader Ghulam Nabi Azad's newly floated Democratic Azad Party. And for another, Congress entered the former state with a proper political agenda: it sought statehood and Article 371 for J&K. The demand is likely to find a wider political resonance in the UT, including in the Jammu division, where people have become insecure about losing lands and jobs to outsiders.

But more than J&K, the yatra has political significance for the party at the national level. It seems to have breathed a new life into an otherwise dying party. Gandhi drew reasonably good crowds. But mobilizing crowds doesn't guarantee a good electoral performance as was clear in the last Assembly polls in Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh, where Congress performed miserably in the former state, there will be more tests ahead. Around ten Assembly elections are scheduled to be held before the national elections. Among them, the elections in Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Telengana will be very crucial. The BJP will hope to win all of them. But should the party suffer reverses in the majority of these states, this may not bode well for its 2024 chances. The elections in these

five major states represent the last chance for the opposition, especially the Congress, to hurdle back into the reckoning. For now, the party can take heart from the victory in Himachal. It can put some wind in its sails as it prepares for the upcoming Assembly elections.

As for Gandhi's makeover, many political observers remain skeptical about his ability to generate a public groundswell in favour of the Congress. Some are calling the yatra the umpteenth “relaunch” of Gandhi who has so far singularly failed to match up to the political persona of prime minister Narendra Modi. Will he pull it off this time around? The odds are heavily against it. Ever since he took over the leadership of the Congress, both in his formal and de facto roles, Gandhi has proved incapable of rallying people behind the party. True, PM Modi's charisma, oratory skills, and media support have made Hindutva a reigning ideology of the country, but the lack of an alternative ideological narrative has made the BJP's job even easier.

The absence of a narrative, however, is not the only undoing of the Congress. The organization has itself been falling apart with Gandhis becoming its principal political liability, something that may now be changing.

Will the tide turn now? It is difficult to tell. The yatra has certainly generated some goodwill, and things look potentially set for a change. Congress has finally shown some assertiveness about pursuing an inclusive political agenda, but a proper ideological narrative is far from taking shape.

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



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Extinction of languages is a Cultural loss

Language is something that keeps us binding to our motherland. The connection that language makes us feel is its essence. Since childhood, we have been told the phrase, 'Unity in diversity'. The expression perhaps reflects the heterogeneity of our nation where culture and dialects are said to change every 11 kilometres: Kos-kos par badle paani, chaar kos par baani (The language spoken in India changes every few kilometres, just like the taste of the water). India has been home to thousands of languages. But over the years, our country has faced the death of many languages and dialects. And the loss of languages is always a cultural loss.

A UNESCO report says, any language spoken by less than 10,000 people is possibly endangered. UNESCO has recognised 42 Indian languages as Critically Endangered. After the 1971 census, the Indian government decided that any language spoken by less than 10,000 people will not be in-

cluded in the official list of languages. It means the Indian government won't consider those languages worth mentioning. India has lost many of its languages and chances are there for the disappearance of many more in the coming years.

As per a report, India has the highest number of languages - 197 languages- which were endangered, vulnerable or extinct. Out of these 5 languages were extinct, 42 were critically endangered, 7 were severely endangered and 62 were threatened and 81 were vulnerable. Nearly 60% of these languages had their home in the Northeast and Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

Tribal languages are also among those that lost their existence. Some states in India are rich in tribal cultures such as Odisha, Jharkhand, Arunachal Pradesh and the seven sisters. These states too face the extinction of their tribal languages. The vanishing of indigenous languages means the vanishing of human capi-

tal and rich cultural diversity.

Several reasons are there that lead to language extinction. A language disappears when its speakers disappear or when they shift to speaking another language. Sometimes a language moves towards extinction when a community shows a negative attitude towards its language.

An important cause of the disappearance can be an increase in migration and rapid urbanization. It often leads to the loss of traditional ways of life and strongly coerces to speak a dominant language. Money can also force to death of a language as people find a language useful in gaining greater currency, they switch to that language forgetting their mother tongue.

For example, English and some other languages are becoming languages of knowledge and employability. People speaking these languages often look down on those who don't. Domination of one language kills many dialects.

Given all this, the Government of

India has initiated a scheme known as "Protection and Preservation of Endangered Languages of India". In 2013, it came into force by the Ministry of Human Resource Development. Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL) located in Mysuru, Karnataka keeps track of the scheme. Stepping forward for the conservation of threatened languages, University Grants Commission (UGC) provides financial assistance for the creation of centres at Central and State Universities to undertake research projects.

People feel emotionally attached to their dialects and these steps will contribute towards their emotional integration of them. Along with the government, it should be our duty too in protecting India's linguistic heritage. There is nothing bad in becoming familiar with an unfamiliar language but without hurting our mother tongue.

Surbhi Mishra

Is Apple Cider Vinegar an Elixir After-all?

When my brother and I were kids back in the '80s, we loved going to Long John Silver's. But it wasn't just for the fish.

It was for the vinegar – malt vinegar. We would uncup a bottle at the table and swig that tangy, delicious nectar of the gods straight.

Are most of you repulsed? Probably. Were we way ahead of our time? Apparently.

Some social media and online searches would have us believe that drinking vinegar is a cure-all. Our friends and colleagues will regale us with stories of the healing power of apple cider vinegar for whatever problem we may have just mentioned. "Oh, that backache from mowing? Vinegar." "That last 10 pounds? Vinegar will melt that right off." "Syphilis, again? You know it – vinegar."

As a practicing physician and professor of medicine, people ask me about the benefits of drinking apple cider vinegar all the time. I enjoy those moments, because we can talk about the (extensive) history of vinegar, and then distill the conversations to how it could, maybe, benefit them.

A cure for colds, the plague and obesity?

Historically, vinegar has been used for many ailments. A few examples are that of the famous Greek physician Hippocrates, who recommended vinegar for the treatment of cough and colds, and that of the Italian physician Tommaso Del Garbo, who, during an outbreak of plague in 1348, washed



his hands, face and mouth with vinegar in the hopes of preventing infection.

Vinegar and water has been a refreshing drink from the time of Roman soldiers to modern athletes who drink it to slake their

thirst. Ancient and modern cultures the world over have found good uses for "sour wine."

While there is plenty of historical and anecdotal testimony to the virtues of vinegar, what does medical research have to say on the subject of vinegar and health?

The most reliable evidence for the health benefits of vinegar come from a few humans studies involving apple cider vinegar. One study demonstrated that apple cider vinegar can improve after-meal blood glucose levels in insulin-resistant subjects. In 11 people who were "pre-diabetic," drinking 20 milliliters, a little more than one tablespoon, of apple cider vinegar lowered their blood sugar levels 30-60 minutes after eating more

than a placebo did. That's good – but it was only demonstrated in 11 pre-diabetic people.

Another study on obese adults demonstrated a significant reduction in weight, fat mass and triglycerides. Researchers selected 155 obese Japanese adults to ingest either 15 ml, about one tablespoon, or 30 ml, a little more than two tablespoons, of vinegar daily, or a placebo drink, and followed their weight, fat mass and triglycerides. In both

the 15 ml and 30 ml group, researchers saw a reduction in all three markers. While these studies need confirmation by larger studies, they are encouraging.

Studies in animals, mostly rats, show that vinegar can potentially reduce blood pressure and abdominal fat cells. These help build the case for followup studies in humans, but any benefit claims based only on animal studies is premature.

In all, the health benefits we suspect vinegar has need to be confirmed by larger human studies, and this will certainly happen as researchers build on what has been studied in humans and animals to date.

Is there any harm in it?

Is there any evidence that vinegar is bad for you? Not really. Unless you are drinking excessive amounts of it (duh), or drinking a high acetic acid concentration vinegar such as distilled white vinegar used for cleaning (consumable vinegar's acetic acid content is only 4 to 8 percent), or rubbing it in your eyes (ouch!), or heating it in a lead vat as the Romans did to make it sweet. Then, yeah, that's unhealthy.

Also, don't heat any kind of food in lead vats. That's always bad.

So have your fish and chips and vinegar. It's not hurting you. It may not be doing you all the good that you're hoping that it will; and it certainly is not a cure-all. But it is something that people all over the world will be enjoying with you. Now raise high that bottle of malt vinegar with me, and let's drink to our health.

By arrangements with The Conversation



SO HAVE YOUR FISH AND CHIPS AND VINEGAR. It's not hurting you. It may not be doing you all the good that you're hoping that it will; and it certainly is not a cure-all.



What's Driving Migration In Mena?

Ehtesham Shahid

"Brain drain is better than brain in drain." Those eight words explain a nation or a region's dilemma related to opportunities for their people and their struggle to retain talent. Here is the thumb rule first. If you don't build an adequate ecosystem for your people, they will find greener pastures within the country or abroad. Migrations happen in all directions; some patterns are more discernible than others.

Various reasons and varying circumstances are attributed to migrations. A developed country's steep tax regime could compel some affluent people to move elsewhere. In contrast, upward mobility, the security of future generations, and a general quest for quality of life are the most obvious motivations for developing countries' migrants seeking upward mobility. What applies to brain drain also applies to unique skills, quality of education, and even muscles that move machines.

According to the World Migration Report 2022, most people do not migrate across borders, and much larger numbers migrate within countries. That said, "the increase in international migrants has been evident over time – both numerically and proportionally – and at a slightly faster rate than previously anticipated," it says. While this phenomenon unfolds, countries at the receiving end often struggle to differentiate between migration and asylum.

The report also examines the quality of life and visa access factors. It reveals that migration options are partly related to "the lottery of birth" and, in particular, the passport of the potential migrant. Citizens of countries with high human development levels can travel to around 85 percent of all other countries worldwide without requiring a visa.

Not surprisingly, these countries are preferred destinations for those seeking migration. Less likelihood of visa-free arrangements for some nationality groups triggers their quest for change. To each their own may be the right mantra in these circumstances. However, broad regional and global patterns are worth analysing.

The desire to migrate is high across



IN MOST COUNTRIES SURVEYED, AT LEAST A FIFTH OF THE POPULATION is considering emigrating. The percentage is highest in Jordan where nearly half (48 per cent) say they want to leave the kingdom, and lowest in Egypt where only 13 per cent share this desire."

the Middle East and North Africa (Mena) region. The levels are highest in Jordan, Sudan, and Tunisia, where nearly half the population desires to leave, according to an Arab Barometer survey. It claims sizable proportions of citizens consider leaving their home countries across Mena.

The desire to emigrate has also largely remained at the pre-Covid-19 levels. "In

most countries surveyed, at least a fifth of the population is considering emigrating. The percentage is highest in Jordan where nearly half (48 per cent) say they want to leave the kingdom, and lowest in Egypt where only 13 per cent share this desire," it reveals.

Several reasons are cited for people wanting to emigrate. Studies suggest most

potential migrants mention economic factors as the primary reason behind their decision to leave. "The levels range from virtually all potential migrants in Egypt (97 per cent) and Jordan (93 per cent) to more than half in Libya (53 per cent)," the Arab Barometer survey reveals.

A look at the unemployment numbers in these countries indicates another pattern.

The ILO Rapid Labor Force Surveys on the impact of Covid-19 concluded that among surveyed people, the unemployment rate increased by 50 percent in Egypt, 33 percent in Tunisia, and 23 percent in Morocco, further drawing attention to the labour market's structural weaknesses. However, even these numbers do not nail the argument that economic woes automatically translate into the desire to migrate.

While other reasons, including security, political, and educational opportunities, are mentioned by minorities across the region, they seem to correlate with each country's political atmosphere rather than being recurring themes across Mena. The question that policymakers in the region would grapple with is, are these numbers worrying? If yes, what would be its net outcome? More importantly, what could be done about it?

OECD attributes Mena's population movements to numerous factors, including the modernization of the agricultural sector, alternative economic opportunities, and migration from political instability and conflicts. Its estimates indicate that "28 of the 30 largest cities in the broad Mena region will experience rapid levels of growth, with populations expected to increase over 15 per cent by 2035."

Unchecked and unregulated population migration – from rural to urban or one country to another – is bound to create bigger problems at some stage, requiring a vast expansion of infrastructure and other critical resources. One way to salvage this situation is addressing the labour market's structural weaknesses and capitalizing on new economic trends to create and maintain employment.

Without appropriate and timely measures, potential migrants in the region will become just another statistic, as discovered by these startling International Organization for Migration figures. "The total estimated 281 million people living in a country other than their countries of birth in 2020 was 128 million more than in 1990 and over three times the estimated number in 1970." Let's hope this pattern does not repeat in the next two decades.

Google's New AI Can Generate Music From Text

ANI

Researchers from American tech giant Google have created an AI that can generate minutes-long musical pieces from text prompts, and can even transform a whistled or hummed melody into other instruments, similar to how systems like DALL-E generate images from written prompts, reported The Verge, an American technology news website, via TechCrunch. According to the outlet, the model is called MusicLM, and while you can't play around with it for yourself, the company has uploaded a bunch of samples that it produced using the model.

The examples are impressive. There are 30-second snippets of what sound like actual songs created from paragraph-long descriptions that prescribe a genre, vibe, and even specific instruments, as well as five-minute-long pieces

generated from one or two words like "melodic techno." Also featured on the demo site are examples of what the model produces when asked to generate 10-second clips of instruments like the cello or maracas, eight-second clips of a certain genre, music that would fit a prison escape, and even what a beginner piano player would sound like versus an advanced one. It also includes interpretations of phrases like "futuristic club" and "accordion death metal," reported The Verge.

MusicLM can even simulate human vocals, and while it seems to get the tone and overall sound of voices right, there's a quality to them that's definitely off. As per The Verge, AI-generated music has a long history dating back decades; there are systems that have been credited with composing pop songs, copying Bach better than a human could in the 90s, and accompanying live performances.

Taking Dietary Nitrate Boosts Muscular Power During Exercise: Study

ANI

A study found that taking dietary nitrate, the active component in beetroot juice, significantly increases muscle force while exercising. While it is well known that dietary nitrate improves exercise, both endurance and high-intensity exercise, researchers still have a lot to learn about why this happens and how our bodies convert the dietary nitrate we consume into nitric oxide that our cells can use.

To help close this gap, researchers at the University of Exeter and the U.S. National Institutes of Health traced the distribution of ingested nitrate in the saliva, blood, muscle and urine of ten healthy volunteers, who were then asked to perform maximal leg exercise. The team wanted to discover where in the body the dietary nitrate was active, to give clues on the mechanisms at work. (Also read: 6 superfoods for faster muscle recovery)

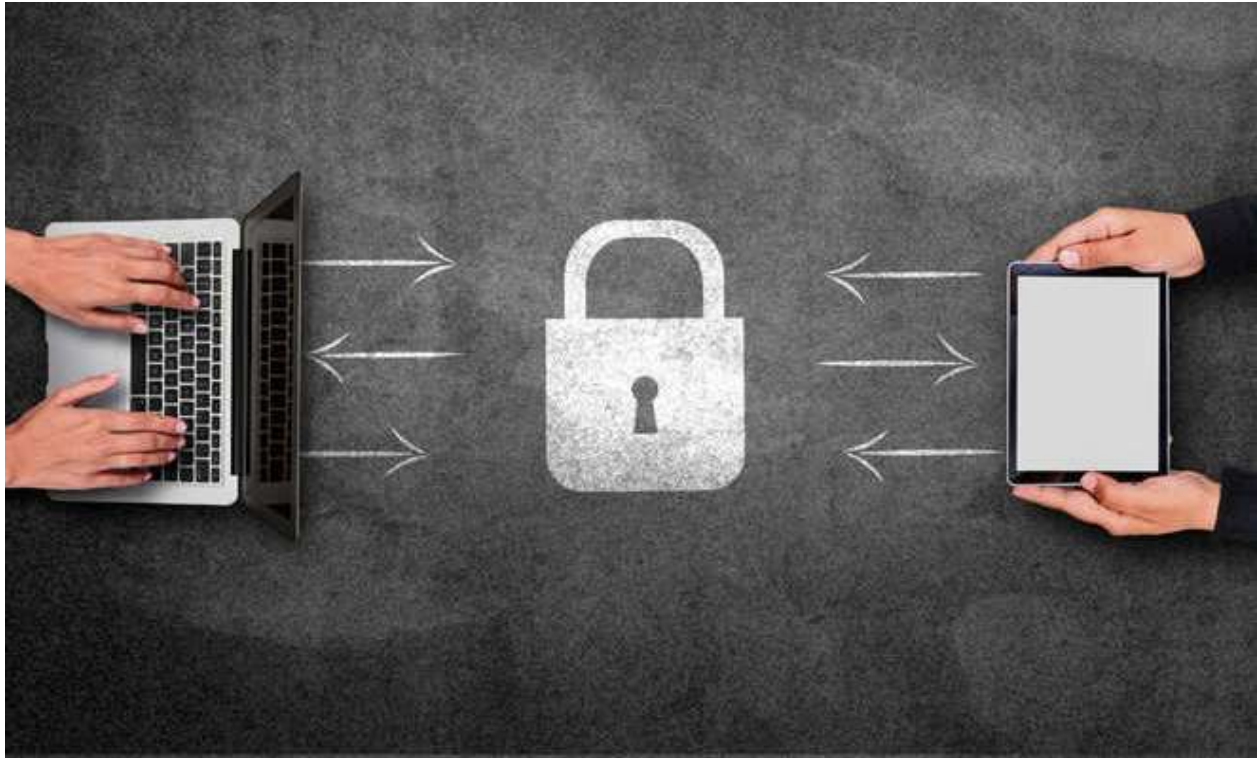
An hour after the nitrate was taken, participants were asked to perform 60 contractions of the quadriceps - the thigh muscle active while straightening the knee - at maximum intensity over five minutes on an exercise machine. The team found a significant increase in the nitrate levels in muscle. During the exercises, researchers found this nitrate boost caused an increase in muscle force of seven

per cent, compared to when the participants took a placebo.

Andy Jones, Professor of Applied Physiology at the University of Exeter, said: "Our research has already provided a large body of evidence on the performance-enhancing properties of dietary nitrate, commonly found in beetroot juice. Excitingly, this latest study provides the best evidence to date on the mechanisms behind why dietary nitrate improves human muscle performance."

Previous studies had found an increase of nitrate in tissue and body fluid after ingesting labelled dietary nitrate. By using the tracer in the new study, researchers were able to accurately assess where nitrate is increased and active, and also shed new light on how the nitrate we consume is used to enhance exercise performance.

"This study provides the first direct evidence that muscle nitrate levels are important for exercise performance, presumably by acting as a source of nitric oxide," said Dr Barbora Piknova, research collaborator and staff scientist in the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases at the National Institutes of Health. "These results have significant implications not only for the exercise field, but possibly for other medical areas such as those targeting neuromuscular and metabolic diseases related to nitric oxide deficiency."



What Happens To Our Data When We No Longer Use A Social Media Network Or Publishing Platform?

The Conversation

The internet plays a central role in our lives. I — and many others my age — grew up alongside the development of social media and content platforms.

My peers and I built personal websites on GeoCities, blogged on LiveJournal, made friends on MySpace and hung out on Nexopia. Many of these earlier platforms and social spaces occupy large parts of youth memories.

For that reason, the web has become a complex entanglement of attachment and connection.

My doctoral research looks at how we have become “databound” — attached to the data we have produced throughout our lives in ways we both can and cannot control.

What happens to our data when we abandon a platform? What should become of it? Would you want a say?

Massive amounts of personal data

We produce data every day as part of our work, communication, banking, housing, transportation and social life.

We are often unaware — and therefore unable to refuse — how much data we produce, and we seldom have a say in how it's used, stored or deployed.

This lack of control negatively impacts us, and the effects are disproportionate across the different intersections of race, gender and class. Information about our identities can be used in algorithms and by others to oppress, discriminate, harass, dox and otherwise harm us.

Personal data privacy is often thought of along the lines of cor-

porate breaches, medical record hacks and credit card theft.

My research into youth participation and data production on the popular platforms that characterised the late 1990s to 2000s — like GeoCities, Nexopia, LiveJournal and MySpace — shows that this time period is an era of data privacy that is not often considered in our contemporary context.

The data is often personal and created within specific contexts of social and digital participation. Examples include diary-style blogs, creative writing, selfies and participating in fandom. This user-generated content, unless actions are taken to carefully delete them, can have a long life: the internet is forever.

Decisions about what should happen to our digital traces should be influenced by the people who made them. Their use impacts our privacy, autonomy and anonymity, and is ultimately a question of power.

Typically, when a website or platform “dies,” or “sunsets,” decisions about data are made by employees of the company on an ad-hoc basis.

Controlling data

Proprietary data — that which is produced on a platform and held by the company — is at the discretion of the company, not the peo-

“This lack of control negatively impacts us, and the effects are disproportionate across the different intersections of race, gender and class. Information about our identities can be used in algorithms and by others to oppress, discriminate, harass, dox and otherwise harm us.

ple who produced it.

More often, options that a platform provides to users to determine their privacy or deletion do not remove all digital traces from the internal database. While some data is deleted on a regular basis (like Yahoo email), other data can remain online for a very long time.

Sometimes, this data is collected by the Internet Archive, an online digital library. Once archived, it becomes part of our collective cultural heritage. But there is no consensus or standards for how this data should be treated.

Users should be invited to consider how they would want

“Decisions about what should happen to our digital traces should be influenced by the people who made them. Their use impacts our privacy, autonomy and anonymity, and is ultimately a question of power.

their platform data to be collected, stored, preserved, deployed or destroyed, and in which contexts. What should become of our data?

In my research, I interviewed users about their opinions on archiving and deletion. Responses varied drastically: while some were disappointed when they discovered their blogs from the 2000s had vanished, others were horrified at their continued existence.

These varying opinions often fell along differences in context of production such as: the original size of their perceived audience, the sensitivity of the material, and whether the content comprised photographs or text, used vague or explicit language, or contained links to identifiable information like a current Facebook profile.

Privacy protections

It is often debated by researchers whether user-generated content should be used for research, and under what conditions.

In Canada, the Tri-Council Policy Statement guidelines for ethical research assert that publicly accessible information has no reasonable expectations of privacy.

However, there are interpretations that include social media specific requirements for ethical use. Still, public and private distinctions are not easily made within digital contexts.

The European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) has helped shift the standards with which personal data is treated by corporations and beyond, expanding rights to consider restrictions to access, amend, delete and move personal data.

Articles 17 and 19 of the GDPR on the right to erasure (the right to be forgotten) are a significant move toward individual digital privacy rights. Those in the EU have legal standing to remove their digital traces, should it contribute towards personal injury, harm or provide inaccurate information.

The right to online safety

However, many have argued that a focus on individual privacy through informed consent is not well placed in digital contexts where privacy is often collectively experienced.

Informed consent models also perpetuate expectations that individuals can maintain boundaries around their data and should be able to anticipate future uses of it.

Suggesting that platform users can “take charge” of their digital lives places the impetus on them to constantly self-surveil and limit their digital traces. Most data production is out of a user's control, simply because of the metadata generated by moving through online space.

If the web is to be a space of learning, play, exploration and connection, then constantly mitigating future risk by anticipating how and when personal information may be used actively works against those goals.

Study Find Out The Potential Cause Of Dementia

ANI

As per a new study, some patients with behavioural variant frontotemporal dementia (bvFTD), an incurable condition that makes patients lose their ability to control their behaviour and cope with daily living, may instead have a cerebrospinal fluid leak, which is often treatable. The findings of the study published in the peer-reviewed journal Alzheimer's & Dementia: Translational Research and Clinical Interventions, may point the way to a cure.

"Many of these patients experience cognitive, behavioural and personality changes so severe that they are arrested or placed in nursing homes," said Wouter Schievink, MD, director of the Cerebrospinal Fluid Leak and Microvascular Neurosurgery Program and professor of Neurosurgery at Cedars-Sinai. "If they have behavioral-variant frontotemporal dementia with an unknown cause, then no treatment is available. But our study shows that patients with cerebrospinal fluid leaks can be cured if we can find the source of the leak."

Cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) circulates in and around the brain and spinal cord to help cushion them from injury. When this fluid leaks into the body, the brain can sag, causing dementia symptoms. Schievink said many patients with brain sagging—which can be detected through MRI—go undiagnosed, and he advises clinicians to take a second look at patients with telltale symptoms. "A knowledgeable radiologist, neurosurgeon or neurologist should check the patient's MRI again to make sure there is no evidence for brain sagging," Schievink said. Clinicians can also ask about a history of severe headaches that improve when the patient lies down, significant sleepiness even after adequate nighttime sleep, and whether the patient has ever been diagnosed with a Chiari brain malformation, a condition in which brain tissue extends into the spinal canal. Brain sagging, Schievink said, is often mistaken for a Chiari malformation.

Even when brain sagging is detected, the source of a CSF leak can be difficult to locate. When the fluid leaks through a tear or cyst in the surrounding membrane, it is visible on CT myelogram imaging with the aid of contrast medium. Schievink and



his team recently discovered an additional cause of CSF leak: the CSF-venous fistula. In these cases, the fluid leaks into a vein, making it difficult to see on a routine CT myelogram. To detect these leaks, technicians must use a specialized CT scan and

observe the contrast medium in motion as it flows through the cerebrospinal fluid. In this study, investigators used this imaging technique on 21 patients with brain sagging and symptoms of bvFTD, and they discovered CSF-venous fistulas in nine of those

patients. All nine patients had their fistulas surgically closed, and their brain sagging and accompanying symptoms were completely reversed.

"This is a rapidly evolving field of study, and advances in imaging technology have greatly improved our ability to detect sources of CSF leak, especially CSF-venous fistula," said Keith L. Black, MD, chair of the department of Neurosurgery and the Ruth and Lawrence Harvey Chair in Neuroscience at Cedars-Sinai. "This specialized imaging is not widely available, and this study suggests the need for further research to improve detection and cure rates for patients."

The remaining 12 study participants, whose leaks could not be identified, were treated with nontargeted therapies designed to relieve brain sagging, such as implantable systems for infusing the patient with CSF. However, only three of these patients experienced relief from their symptoms. "Great efforts need to be made to improve the detection rate of CSF leak in these patients," Schievink said. "We have developed nontargeted treatments for patients where no leak can be detected, but as our study shows, these treatments are much less effective than targeted, surgical correction of the leak."

Bankers On Adani ₹20,000 Crore Share Sale Consider Delay, Price Cut After Stocks Plunge

Reuters

NEW DELHI: Bankers on the \$2.5 billion share sale of India's Adani Enterprises are considering extending the sale or cutting the issue price after shares plunged on a U.S. short seller's report, said three people familiar with the deal.

MSCI seeks feedback on Adani Group over Hindenburg report

Among the options the bankers are considering are to extend the Tuesday closing date for the subscription of the issue by four days, the sources told Reuters on Saturday.

Seven listed companies of the conglomerate controlled by one of the world's richest men, Gautam Adani, have lost a combined \$48 billion in market value since Hindenburg Research on Tuesday flagged concerns about debt levels and the use of tax havens.

The Adani Group has called the report baseless and said it was considering taking action against Hindenburg.

Friday's 20% fall in shares of group flagship Adani Enterprises dragged it 11% below the minimum offer price of the secondary sale. On first day of retail bidding on Friday, the issue was subscribed around 1%, raising concerns over whether it would be able to proceed.

Adani Group rout hits banking stocks, LIC; drags Sensex lower



"Everyone was shocked. They did not expect such a poor response," one source said.

Adani Group did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Adani had set a floor price of 3,112 rupees (\$38.22) a share and a cap of ₹3,276, but Adani Enterprises closed on Friday ₹2,761.45.

The other option being considered is lowering the price, the sources said, with one saying it could be cut by as much as 10%.

A decision was expected on Monday, the sources said.

"Revision in price band or time extension of public issue can technically be undertaken with a newspaper advertisement and issuing an addendum," said Sumit Agrawal, managing partner at Regstreet Law Advisors and a former officer of the Indian capital markets regulator.

At the end of the first day of the share sale, investors, mostly retail, had bid for around 470,160 of the 45.5 million shares on offer, according to Indian stock exchange data.

'Capital Gains Tax Should Be Rationalised; Need Simpler ITR Form For Disclosing Such Income'

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The Budget should bring in a simpler income tax return form for assesseees having only capital gains or dividend or interest income, along with simplification of the capital gains tax regime, experts said.

Under the income tax law, gains arising on the transfer of capital assets — both movable and immovable — are charged to tax under the head 'Capital Gains'. The tax rate is different for different asset classes.

Also, depending on the period of holding, the income is classified as short or long-term capital gains and taxed accordingly. With capital markets in India growing at an exponential pace and companies taking the IPO route to raise funds, there is widespread demand that the capital gains tax structure be streamlined.

Deloitte India Partner Rohinton Sidhwa said the holding periods for different types of assets and the number of tax rates for different types of capital assets should be reduced to a maximum of 1-2 periods or rates (along with related surcharges). "Economic and commercial rationale dictates that the set-off of all capital losses (particularly long-term capital loss against short-term capital gains) be allowed seamlessly. Finally, the introduction of a single and simpler tax return for assesseees (resident & non-residents) earning only capital gains/ dividend/ interest income would



go a long way in easing filing challenges," Sidhwa said. The Finance Ministry is already working on a user-friendly common income tax return form for all taxpayers and an announcement to this effect is expected in the 2023-24 Budget to be unveiled on February 1.

Nangia Andersen LLP, Tax Leader, Aravind Srivatsan said many startups redomiciling to India and investors across the board have made representations on capital gains regime to be on par with global regimes. The Budget could simplify the capital gains regime, removing distinctions across debt and equity and also across the short-term and long-term.

"A single rate for taxation of capital gains be it short term or long term be it equity, debt or hybrid products with a unified treatment of assets held beyond 12 months as long term, allowing a free set of losses and carry forward and deduction for STT (securities transaction tax) would be welcome," Srivatsan said. Sharadul Amarchand Mangaldas & Co Partner Amit Singhania said there should be one threshold of holding period viz if assets are held for more than 24 months should classify as long term.

Govt Approves Rs 146 Cr Project For Promotion Of Niche Crops In J&K

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir government has approved a prestigious project worth Rs 146 crore to promote the niche crops as unique heritage of the UT, which will be implemented in the next five years.

"The project aims at diversifying and expanding the area of niche crops over an area of 11,100 hectare thus ensuring livelihood security for 111,000 targeted beneficiaries with a revenue realization of Rs. 2,238 Crore", Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Agriculture Production Department (APD), Atal Dulloo said.

The initiative will focus on increasing production, improving livelihoods and enhancing market accessibility. This will be achieved through establishment of nurseries and seed villages, infrastructure development, and collaboration with various partners and stakeholders, he added.

Pertinently, Jammu and Kashmir is home to a diverse range of niche crops including Saffron, Kalazeera, Kashmiri Lal Mirch, Peanut, Anardhana, Bhaderwah Rajmash, hill garlic, Mushkudhiji (aromatic rice), Red Rice and Shallot (Pran). These crops are grown on an area of 32,000 hectare, with a total production of 24,000 metric tons making a substantial contribution of Rs. 945 crore to the UT GDP.

The main components of the project included establishment of 5,226 nurseries/seed



villages, which will generate 7750 job opportunities for unemployed youth working in the niche sector. Additionally, the project will take up creation of one Mini Spice Park, two Modern Rice Mills and eleven grading and processing units in target clusters, which will be linked with available NABL laboratories and e-trading centers of UT. This will facilitate quality promotion and value addition, leading to profitable accessibility to the market.

To promote these niche crops at the export level, the project shall also undertake tagging of identified niche crops, for which descriptors will be developed for their uniqueness. Likewise, the project will ensure human resource development for capacity building and employment generation. The project is being jointly undertaken by SKUAST Jammu and Kashmir besides the Agriculture and Farmer Welfare Department, Jammu and Kashmir.

Promotion of Niche Crops is one among the 29 projects, which were approved by the Jammu and Kashmir administration after being recommended by the UT Level Apex Committee for holistic development of Agriculture and allied sectors in the UT of J&K. The prestigious committee is headed by Dr Mangala Rai, Former DG ICAR with other luminaries in the field of Agriculture, Planning, Statistics and Administration like Ashok Dalwai, CEO NRAA, Dr. P K Joshi, Secretary, NAAS, Dr. Prabhat Kumar, Horticulture Commissioner MOA and FW, Dr. H S Gupta, Former Director, IARI, Atal Dulloo, Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Agriculture Production Department (APD), apart from the Vice Chancellors of twin Agriculture Universities of the UT.

Director Agriculture Directs Enforcement Officers To Seize Unregistered Fertilizers

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Director Agriculture Kashmir, Chowdhary Mohammad Iqbal Sunday inspected various pesticides and fertilizer dealers at Pulwama to monitor the sale of registered products.

During the inspection, various fertilizers were found without registration and onspot directions were given to concerned fertilizer inspector to seize 150 qtls of PROM and submit the compliance report to the Directorate Office without any delay.

Meanwhile, during his Budgam visit, the Director Agriculture inaugurated the Semi Hi-tech Polyhouse at Chadoora.

Speaking to the farmers, the Director said that the Semi Hi-tech Polyhouses would benefit the farmers of chadoora sub division and other areas of Budgam district.

He said that the department is working robustly not only to fulfill the local demands for fresh vegetables during the winter season but also to cater to the requirements of the



Jammu region as well. He said the department is increasing the number of hi tech poly houses in all the districts of Kashmir division aiming to provide fresh vegetables during the winter months.

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

With the result not only the

cropping intensity, production and productivity is increased but the income of the farmers also gets significantly increased. He said this also helps to generate employment opportunities as well.

Director Agriculture said that we are committed to provide early seedlings to the farmers so that they could make optimum use of their land. 'I am satisfied that this year we have already distributed seedling to the farmers at some places and this process will continue in coming days', he added

Seven Of Top-10 Firms Shed Rs 2.16 Trillion In M-Cap; RIL, SBI Hit Hard

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The combined market valuation of seven of the 10 most valued firms eroded by Rs 2,16,092.54 crore last week, with Reliance Industries Limited and State Bank of India taking the biggest hit.

Last week, the BSE barometer Sensex tumbled 1,290.87 points or 2.12 per cent.

While HDFC Bank, Infosys, ICICI Bank, HDFC and Bharti Airtel were the other laggards among the top-10 firms, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Hindustan Unilever Limited and ITC emerged as the winners.

The market valuation of Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL) tumbled Rs 71,003.2 crore to

Bank plunged Rs 36,836.03 crore to Rs 5,70,509.34 crore.

HDFC Bank's valuation declined by Rs 24,899.93 crore to Rs 9,01,287.61 crore and that of Bharti Airtel fell by Rs 23,747.55 crore to Rs 4,31,583.22 crore.

The market capitalisation (mcap) of HDFC went lower by Rs 10,257.28 crore to Rs 4,85,809.79 crore and that of Infosys dipped Rs 3,029.82 crore to Rs 6,38,891.87 crore.

However, TCS added Rs 17,837.88 crore, taking its valuation to Rs 12,47,882.88 crore.

Hindustan Unilever's mcap jumped Rs 14,931.65 crore to Rs 6,13,689.74 crore and that of ITC climbed Rs 13,591.48 crore to Rs 4,29,031.46 crore.

In the ranking of top-10 firms,



Rs 15,81,601.11 crore, the most among the top-10 firms.

State Bank of India's valuation tanked Rs 46,318.73 crore to reach Rs 4,82,107.53 crore.

The market valuation of ICICI

Reliance Industries remained the most valued company, followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, Infosys, Hindustan Unilever, ICICI Bank, HDFC, State Bank of India, Airtel and ITC.

Finance Ministry To Stick To Privatisation Of Already Announced CPSEs Next Fiscal

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The Finance Ministry will move ahead with the already-announced and planned privatisation of state-owned companies in the next fiscal, and the chances of the new addition to that list of CPSEs in the Budget for 2023-24 is unlikely, sources said.

The disinvestment target outlined in the Budget for the next fiscal is likely to be a scaled-down and realistic one, as the budgeted PSU sell-off target is going to be missed for the fourth year in a row this fiscal.

In the current fiscal, the government had budgeted to collect Rs 65,000 crore from disinvestment. However, so far, it has realised only Rs 31,106 crore by selling minority stakes in public sector companies.

After tasting success in privatising loss-making Air India in 2021, the progress of PSU sell-off has not been very impressive over the past year, and experts say that with the general election around the corner in 2024, no major disinvestment announcement is expected in this Budget either.

"The plan is to move ahead with the strategic sale of the companies for which the Cabinet approval is already in place," an official told PTI.

This means that the government will go ahead with the privatisation of companies like

Shipping Corporation of India, NMDC Steel Ltd, BEML, HLL Lifecare, Container Corporation of India and RINL or Vizag Steel, as well as the big ticket IDBI Bank.

Considering that strategic sale or privatisation takes at least a year, and in some cases even more, to conclude, a high budgeted disinvestment target may not be achievable.

Nangia Andersen LLP, Partner- Government and Public Sector Advisory, Suraj Nangia said: "The privatization process often takes time, depending on the type of privatization and the economic, social, and political context, emphasizing the importance of a medium-term plan, a solid regulatory framework, and competitive markets".

"A multi-year strategic plan for privatisation can be formulated to ensure there is a concrete timeline and a well-designed sequencing and strategy for privatisation," Nangia said.

EY India, Associate Partner, Tax and Economic Policy Group, Rajnish Gupta said the privatisation programme may see an uptick after the 2024 general elections.

"Maybe this year's Budget is going to be a little muted and we may see announcements around disinvestment and sale of minority stakes. After 2024, we may see an acceleration in the privatisation programme again," Gupta said.

Pakistan Govt Raises Petrol, Diesel Prices By Rs 35 Each

Press Trust Of India

ISLAMABAD: Cash-strapped Pakistan's government on Sunday raised prices of petrol and diesel by Rs 35 each, giving another jolt to the country's inflation-stricken people.

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar made the announcement in a televised address on Sunday morning, spoiling people's weekly holiday as prices in the past had been adjusted on a fortnightly basis from the first to sixteenth of every month.

"We have decided to increase the price of petrol and diesel by Rs 35 each. The price of kerosene oil and light diesel oil has been increased by Rs 18 each," Dar said, adding that the new prices would come into effect at 11 am on Sunday.

After the rise, the price of petrol was set at Rs 249.80 per litre, high-speed diesel at Rs 262.80, kerosene oil at Rs 189.83, and light diesel oil at Rs 187 per litre.

Last week, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had said that



the ruling alliance led by his party was ready to swallow the bitter pill of the International Monetary Fund's "stringent" conditions to revive the loan programme and it has clearly conveyed intentions to complete the ninth review to the IMF.

Pakistan entered a USD 6 billion IMF programme during Imran Khan's government in 2019, which was increased to USD 7 billion last year. The programme's ninth review is currently pending with talks being held between IMF officials and the government for the release of USD 1.18 billion.

The IMF team would be in Islamabad from January 31 to February 9 to hold talks with

the officials over the implementation of its conditions attached with the assistance package.

Dar said that speculation was rife on social media regarding a Rs 50 increase in the prices of petrol and diesel. "Because of this, we have received reports of artificial shortages in the market."

"The Pakistani rupee saw devaluation last week and now we are seeing an 11 per cent increase in the prices of petroleum products in the international market," he said.

Cash-strapped Pakistan's currency depreciated to its lowest against the US dollar on Friday in the interbank and open market and closed at Rs 262.6.

Dar said the government had not increased the price of petrol since October last year until January 29 and also decreased the prices of diesel and kerosene oil.

Ahead of the hike in the prices, long queues of motorists were seen at the filling stations. The rush was fuelled by reports of shortage and massive increase in the prices.

Lamborghini Looking To Cross Century Mark In Sales In India This Year

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Italian automaker Automobili Lamborghini is looking to cross the century mark in sales in the Indian market this year on the back of a record showing in 2022, according to the company's country head Sharad Agarwal.

The company, which sells a range of super luxury cars with prices starting from Rs 3.8 crore in India, is also bringing to the country this year its first hybrid car after it makes its global debut in the first quarter of 2023.

Lamborghini posted record sales in India in 2022 at 92 units, growing at 33 per cent from the previous year. Its previous best-ever sales in the country was in 2021 with 69 units. Before that, its best sales was in 2019 when it had sold a total of 52 units.

"Yes, that's going to be our direction. This is the question which has been coming for some time. We look forward to how do we achieve the three digit mark and hit the century, maybe in 2023. We are hopeful that's



the direction we are taking," Agarwal told PTI.

He was responding to a query on whether the company is confident of crossing the 100 units sales milestone in 2023 after missing it by 8 units last year.

"We are not seeing any change or any slowdown pattern in our business in the country. In fact, we are starting the year with a very, very strong order book and all of our models have an average waiting time of about 18 months in the country," Agarwal said.

"So this clearly shows that the production allocation for this year is already sold out in the country. So we remain very positive about our growth," he added.

Demand For Non-Tech Jobs Grew During December 2022: Report

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI: Amid reports on layoffs by multinational technology companies, a report has revealed that there has been an increase in demand for talents in non-tech sectors in India, including healthcare, food services, construction and education in December 2022.

Global job site Indeed's monthly jobs insights showed that healthcare allied fields such as dental and nursing have the highest job postings on its platform at 30.8 per cent in December 2022.

This was followed by food services (8.8 per cent), construction (8.3 per cent), architecture (7.2 per cent), education (7.1 per cent), therapy 6.3 per cent, and marketing (6.1), among others, the report added.

The report noted that the relative resurgence of business normalcy in a post pandemic world has brought buoyancy back in sectors like construction and civil engineering.

Even sectors like marketing, which was one of the earliest to see layoffs during the pandemic, has picked up steam, it said, adding that last year, brands have realised the need for marketing for enhanced customer experience as well as business and sales leading to the increase in demand.

The report is based on job postings data on Indeed platform from December 2021 till December 2022.

The report further revealed that Bengaluru tops the list of cities in job postings, occupying 16.5 per cent of the total share.

Gujarat Junior Clerk Recruitment Exam Put Off After Question Paper Leak; ATS Arrests 16 People

Agenceis

Ahmedabad: The competitive examination for the recruitment of Gujarat government's junior clerks scheduled on Sunday was postponed soon after it came to light that its question paper had been leaked, following which 16 persons were arrested, officials said.

The Gujarat Panchayat Service Selection Board (GPSSB) announced postponement of

the examination early Sunday morning, hours before it was scheduled to start across 2,995 centres at 11 am.

As many as 9.5 lakh candidates had applied for 1,181 posts.

The Gujarat Anti Terrorist Squad (ATS) said it arrested 16 persons in this connection and recovered the copy of the question paper from their possession.

GPSSB's in-charge chairman Sandeep Kumar later announced that the examination will be conducted within 100 days and a new date will be announced in the next few days.

Addressing a press conference, Superintendent of Police (SP) of Gujarat ATS Sunil Joshi said 16 persons have been arrested so far in this case, including 15 from Vadodara and one from Hyderabad. Seven out of

the 16 accused are part of a gang from Bihar.

"The state ATS nabbed 15 accused from a computer exam centre named Stackwise Technology in Vadodara around 1.30 am on Sunday when they had gathered there with the copy of the question paper. The question paper recovered from them matched with that of the original paper, prompting the government to immediately

decide on postponing the exam," he said.

Working on a tip-off that a man from Odisha, identified as Pradip Nayak, was going to deliver the question paper to Ketan Barot and Bhaskar Chaudhary in Vadodara city, the ATS formed a special team involving personnel from the Surat crime branch and Vadodara Special Operations Group (SOG) and arrested 15 persons from the

exam centre along with the copy of the photo and copy of the question paper, Joshi said.

"When we contacted the GPSSB, it confirmed that the copies matched with that of the original question paper. It was immediately decided to postpone the examination," he said.

Further investigation revealed that Nayak was given the copy of the paper by one Jeet Nayat, who worked at K L Hitech Press

in Hyderabad where the paper was printed. A team rushed to Hyderabad and arrested Nayak who was being brought to Gujarat, he said.

Barot and Chaudhary were arrested in the past in cases investigated by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), he said. Chaudhary is a native of Bihar and lives in Vadodara, and Mohanty hails from Odisha and resides in Surat, Joshi said.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Organic Farming

of authentic seeds. To tackle this problem, she has started a seed bank for exotic and conventional farm products. The self-taught farmer plans to go fully commercial once everything stabilizes.

Like Kasool, many people in Kashmir are moving towards organic farming. Organic farming is eco-friendly, sustainable, and helps in maintaining a pollution-free environment. However, with the present exhaustive agricultural practices, the soil has lost the microbial culture that will create an amicable situation in the soil for optimum availability and utilization of nutrients in the soil.

Kashmir with its distinctive topography, exceptional ecological and climatic conditions provide unique aroma and taste to its crops and have been in compulsive unorganized organic farming even after the green revolution for a pretty long time, says Dr. VK Sahani, a Ludhiana based agricultural scientist, who gives training to Kashmiri farmers on the use of organic fertilizers and pesticides through Agricare Organic Farm, an agricultural consultancy group that delivers consultancy for all types of agricultural activities

He claims that Kashmir has huge potential for organic farming as large areas in the hilly districts of the valley are already under semi-organic cultivation due to the unavailability of chemical agro-inputs in these areas.

To encourage more farmers to opt for organic farming, Sahani is planning to give buyback options to them. He plans to buy organic produce from the farmers and sell it through Agricare Organic Farm.

Many organizations are also coming up in Kashmir to promote organic farming. Showkat Hussain, program officer- livelihood at the Indo Global Social Service Society (IGSS) has been working since 2017 to promote organic farming in the Bandipora and Baramulla districts of Kashmir.

To make farmers understand the importance of organic farming IGSS took them back to their roots of permaculture and made them understand its importance. Permaculture is an ecological design system for sustainability in all aspects of our lives. Permaculture teaches how to build natural homes, grow food, restore landscapes and ecosystems, catch rainwater, build communities, take care of waste, and much more.

At first, Hussain taught the farmers how to practice organic farming in their backyards. They were encouraged to build a low-cost vermicomposting unit near the farms and create a buffer zone in the field to practice organic farming using vermicompost and manure, says the program officer.

IGSS also opened two farmer field schools for vegetable cultivation and rice cultivation in two Bandipora villages and trained 25 facilitators who currently look after their respective areas and tackle the issues faced by farmers, informs Hussain.

Explaining pure organic farming, Hussain says that using organic fertilizers or pesticides for one year cannot be called organic farming rather it can be termed as chemical less farming. "It takes three-four years to have a pure organic farm."

On being asked about the support from the government, Hussain says that initially there was no support from the government but recently the government has started coming ahead. "If the government authorities talk to farmers, it is more effective," says the program officer.

Tahir Maqsoodwani who started organic farming in the valley in 2017 has currently shifted his work to Punjab. He along with his friend, an agricultural scientist, launched organic fertilizers in the valley. The response was good but due to some unprecedented circumstances he had to shift his work to Punjab.

According to Maqsood Wani, the government has not put much effort in organic farming due to which many farmers are unaware of its benefits.

But Dr. Syed Waseem, Information Officer, Department of Agriculture, Kashmir does not agree with the accusations. He claims that the department is in continuous mode of imparting training and awareness to the framers. "Recently we concluded Kisaan Pakwada, where different types of fairs and awareness campaigns were organized for the farmers," informs Waseem.

He says that there are many schemes imparted by the agriculture department to encourage organic farming. Waseem believes that today's farmer is not the same as seen 20 years ago. These days everyone is health conscious and farmers are fetching more price for organically grown crops, suggests Waseem.

"In wheat or cereal crop, a combination of organic and inorganic fertilizers is used because organic fertilizers cannot replace the inorganic ones; it only supplements inorganic fertilizers in these crops," says the information officer. "But we cannot ignore the role of organic fertilizers in fruit and vegetables" continues Waseem.

The government has set up telephone lines to assist farmers and Waseem receives approximately 20-30 calls every day from different parts of the valley.

Odisha Minister

of Minister Naba Kishore Das."

Patnaik described Das as a "grass root person" and said he was "loved and respected by all, cutting across parties and sections of people."

Das was shot by Assistant Sub-inspector of Police (ASI) Gopal Das, who is believed to be suffering from mental disorder.

In a video footage in possession of PTI, Naba Kishore Das is seen bleeding from the chest with people trying to lift the injured minister, who seemed unconscious, and place him on the front seat of a car.

Initially, he was taken to the Jharsuguda district headquarters hospital, the SDPO said.

Das was airlifted to Bhubaneswar in an air ambulance and admitted to Apollo Hospital, Bhubaneswar.

Deputy Commissioner of Police, Bhubaneswar, Prateek Singh said a green corridor was set up in the state capital for ferrying the minister to the hospital from airport.

Tension prevailed in Brajrajnagar in the wake of the incident, with supporters of the BJD minister questioning "security lapses".

Senior Army

other security forces are on high alert in the twin districts to scuttle infiltration attempts from across the border and neutralize the terrorists involved in the recent attacks in the Jammu region.

Seven persons were killed and 14 others injured when terrorists attacked Dhangri village on January 1. Two terrorists were killed when they tried to infiltrate from across the border into the Balakot sector of Poonch on January 7.

LG Launches QR

indication) tag is officially assigned to certain products or crafts that are linked to a particular region to authenticate the origin and quality of such products or innovations.

Highlighting the need to make necessary interventions for brand positioning, Sinha said GI tag, QR code-based label and packaging would make the handicraft sector more productive, financially attractive and contribute to the growth of the handicraft industry and earnings of artisans.

The Lt Governor also shared the vision of the government and the ongoing endeavours to promote local products for greater economic benefits to the artisan and the weaver communities of J&K.

The administration has taken some important steps to boost handloom and handicraft sector through integrated development and export promotion, he said, adding, "we are committed to provide all possible support for the development of this important sector."

The Lt Governor directed the handicrafts department for product diversification, brand promotion and marketing strategy to connect buyers and artisans.

He also emphasised on regular consultation of stakeholders, holding regular buyer-seller meets and promotion of self-help groups and artisans at various platforms.

The souvenirs of G20 featuring local crafts were also presented to the Lt Governor on the occasion, an official spokesman said.

He said the products for which the QR code-based labels were launched included Kashmir pashmina, Kashmiri sozni, kani shawl, paper machie, khatamband, Kashmir walnut wood carving (GI-registered crafts), and namdah, crewel, chain-stitch, silverware, filigree, copperware and willow wicker (non-GI crafts).

The spokesman said J&K has become the first region in the country to issue QR (Quick Response) based labels for all its crafts. The process of getting GI registration for 10 other crafts is under process.

Rahul Talks Of

the promises made to the people of Jammu and Kashmir by the country's first prime minister Jawahar Lal Nehru when he unfurled the national flag at Lal Chowk in 1948.

Earlier in the day, Gandhi hoisted the national flag at the city's iconic Lal Chowk after concluding his foot march.

Responding to several questions about the restoration of statehood, the Congress leader said it should be the first step taken in Jammu and Kashmir.

"Statehood and restoration of democratic process is a fundamental and very important first step. The other steps will come later and I do not necessarily have to comment on it here," he said, referring to a question about holding talks with Pakistan.

"All states have an assembly. Democratic process is the right of the people and it should be restored in Jammu and Kashmir. A solution should be found for the people of Ladakh as well," he added.

In response to a question about the revocation of Article 370 of the Constitution in 2019, Gandhi said the Congress Working Committee has already made its stand clear on the issue.

Article 370 granted special status to the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir. It was revoked by the Centre on August 5, 2019.

The Congress leader sidestepped a question if his party will be part of the Peoples Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD), an amalgam of regional parties and the CPI(M), striving for

the restoration of Jammu and Kashmir's special status.

Gandhi said he was not happy with what he saw in Jammu and Kashmir.

"When I entered Jammu and Kashmir, I met people from the Jammu, Ladakh and Kashmir areas of the region. No one that I met -- and I met farmers, students, youth, businessmen -- seemed to be happy or excited about what is happening here," he added.

The Lok Sabha member from Wayanad in Kerala said he experienced a "powerful" feeling of homecoming during his journey through Jammu and Kashmir.

"A strange idea came to my mind... my family came from Jammu and Kashmir and moved to Allahabad and now I was doing a reverse journey. It was a powerful feeling of homecoming," he said.

Gandhi said he was humbled by the love and affection he received in Jammu and Kashmir.

Asked about the BJP's claims about the security situation in Jammu and Kashmir, Gandhi said bomb blasts and targeted killings are still taking place in the union territory.

"If it (security) had improved, then the security people would not have had the conversations that they had with me.

"If what they claim is the case, then why doesn't the BJP hold a rally from Jammu to Lal Chowk? If the situation is so good, then why doesn't Amit Shah walk from Jammu to Kashmir? I don't think that argument holds," he added.

Asked about the issues raised by people during the Jammu and Kashmir leg of the Bharat Jodo Yatra, Gandhi said most of the issues were similar to the rest of the country like inflation and unemployment.

"Statehood, representation and voice of people was another set of issues that came up here," he said.

Rahul Hoists Tricolour

set up and concertina wires installed at all entry points with a heavy deployment of security personnel, while shops, business establishments and the weekly flea market were closed as part of the security exercise.

Gandhi, along with his sister and Congress general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, party leaders and workers, resumed the final lap of the yatra in Jammu and Kashmir from Srinagar's Pantha Chowk around 10:45 am.

Those part of the march walked for about eight kilometres to Sonwar raising slogans such as "Jodo Jodo Bharat Jodo", and along the way, were cheered and greeted by locals.

Within a multi-layer security ring, Gandhi, in a white T-shirt which he has sported for most of the over 4,000-kilometre yatra from India's southern tip, waved at people as participants, including a large number of women, carrying the tricolour and Congress flags, moved towards Sonwar.

After reaching their destination, Gandhi, Priyanka Gandhi and other party leaders drove to the party's headquarters at M A Road here. Later, they headed to Lal Chowk, where the former Congress president unfurled the national flag.

"By hoisting the tricolour at Lal Chowk, the promise made to India was fulfilled today. Hate will lose, love will always win. There will be a new dawn of hopes in India," Gandhi tweeted in Hindi after the event.

Later at the post yatra presser, Gandhi said he got to learn and understand a lot.

"I met lakhs of people, talked to them. I do not have words to make you understand. The aim of the yatra was to unite India, it was against hate and violence being spread across the country. We have had a tremendous response. In fact, no one expected to get such a love-filled response. We got to see the resilience and strength of the people of India directly," Gandhi said.

Gandhi described the yatra as the deepest and most beautiful experience of his life.

"For me personally, this has been a very good experience. I can say it has been the deepest and most beautiful experience of my life," he said, expressing gratitude to the countrymen, the media, the Bharat Yatris, and the security forces personnel.

The yatra, which was launched on September 7 last year in Kanyakumari, has traversed 12 states and two Union territories. It will culminate with the hoisting of the national flag at the Congress office here on Monday.

The participants of the foot march will halt for the night at Nehru Park here.

On Monday, Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge will unfurl the national flag and unveil a Bharat Jodo Yatra memorial at the PCC headquarters here.

Later, a public rally will also be held at SK Stadium for which 23 opposition political parties have been invited by the Congress.

Earlier in the day, Congress general secretary, communications, Jairam Ramesh on Twitter said the flag unfurling was planned for Monday but had to be done a day earlier.

"@RahulGandhi was supposed to unfurl national flag on Jan 30th in PCC office, since permission to do so elsewhere wasn't given. Last evening, state administration allowed him to do so in Lal Chowk, but under condition that it should be done today on 29th at end of #BharatJodoYatra," Ramesh tweeted.

The Bharat Jodo Yatra has traversed through Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Telangana,

Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana, Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, and Jammu and Kashmir.

On Friday, the yatra was cancelled for the day in Anantnag district after the party alleged security lapse, saying police arrangements by the Jammu and Kashmir administration "completely collapsed".

The administration had said pressure on security resources due to the size of the crowd, larger than planned, may have created an impression of lack of security arrangements during the Gandhi-led march.

It resumed in Pulwama district's Awantipora on Saturday and Gandhi was joined by PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti, her daughter Iltija Mufti and a large number of workers in the march. Priyanka Gandhi also joined her brother in the yatra later.

BJY Spread

resumed the final lap of the yatra in Jammu and Kashmir from Srinagar's Pantha Chowk around 10:45 am.

Those part of the march walked for about eight kilometres to Sonwar raising slogans such as "Jodo Jodo Bharat Jodo", and along the way, were cheered and greeted by locals.

"Today is a historic moment for all of us. With the support of crores of citizens, the Bharat Jodo Yatra, which started from Kanyakumari, has reached its final destination.

"By your hard work, the message of love has reached every corner of the country. We have to remain steadfast with the message of love and unite to take the country forward," Vadra tweeted.

The yatra, which began from Kanyakumari on September 7 last year, reached here this morning after covering a distance of 4,080 kilometres and covering 75 districts spread over 14 states and union territories of the country.

A mega-rally is planned here Monday where leaders from Congress and like-minded opposition parties are expected to address the gathering.

BJP Hits Back

decades but none of its leaders dared to unfurl the tricolour at Lal Chowk.

Modi, along with the then BJP president Murlu Manohar Joshi, unfurled the national flag at the same venue when terrorism was at its peak in 1990, he said.

Today, peace and normalcy have returned to Kashmir due to the efforts of Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah. Gandhi was able to move to Lal Chowk and unfurl the tricolour which none of his party leaders could do in the past 70 years, the BJP leader said.

Referring to the recent statement of AICC in-charge J-K Rajni Patil that Gandhi will unfurl the national flag at the party headquarters rather than Lal Chowk which is the agenda of the RSS, Raina said, "Though late, the Congress has started working on the nationalist agenda of the RSS".

"We want to tell Gandhi and his party leaders to learn from the RSS members who have nationalist sentiments in their hearts and work for the nation," he said in a swipe at the Congress.

Kashmir Braces

of the weather system.

"Under the influence of (the weather) system, widespread light to moderate snow in plains/rain (in jmu) & moderate to heavy snowfall over middle reaches and higher reaches with heavy to very heavy over higher reaches of Pirpanjal, South Kashmir, Doda-Kistawar etc. most likely during tonight to tomorrow afternoon and gradual decrease thereafter (>75% chance)," he said.

On January 31, he said that cloudy weather with light snow/rain at isolated to scattered places was expected on January 31. "From 1st-4th February, partly cloudy weather is expected".

He said that the weather system was likely to cause snow avalanche in the areas prone to them for few days and was also likely to affect Surface and Air transportation on Monday.

Regarding temperature, he said that Srinagar recorded a low of minus 2.4°C against 1.7°C on the previous night. Today's minimum temperature, he said, was below normal by 1.4°C for the summer capital.

Qazigund, he said, recorded a low of minus 2.8°C against 0.2°C on the previous night.

Pahalgam, he said, recorded a low of minus 5.6°C against minus 6.9°C on the previous night and it was 0.5°C above normal for the famous tourist resort in south Kashmir's Anantnag district.

Kokernag recorded a low of minus 2.7°C against minus 0.7°C on the previous night and it was 0.1°C below normal for the place, the officials said.

Gulmarg recorded a low of minus 7.2°C, the same as on the previous night and it was 0.3°C above normal for the world famous skiing resort in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, he said.

In Kupwara town, he said, the mercury settled at minus 1.0°C against minus 2.6°C on the previous night and it was above 1.5°C below normal for the north Kashmir area.

Jammu recorded a low of 7.6°C against 6.1°C on the previous night. It was 1.1°C below

normal for J&K's winter capital, he said.

Banihal recorded a low of 2.0°C (above normal by 2.2°C), Batote 4.0°C (above normal by 2.3°C), Katra 7.6°C (0.7°C above normal) and Bhabarwah 1.4°C (2.2°C below normal).

Ladakh's Leh and Kargil recorded a low of minus 13.0°C and minus 10.6°C respectively, the official said.

Meanwhile, the Jammu and Kashmir disaster management authority (JKDMA) has issued an avalanche warning in ten districts of the Union Territory during the next 24 hours.

"Avalanche with medium danger level is likely to occur above 2200 to 2500 metres over Anantnag, Ganderbal, Bandipora, Baramulla, Kupwara, Doda, Kishtwar, Kulgam, Poonch & Ramban districts in next 24 hours," JKDMA posted on its official Twitter handle.

"People living in these areas are advised to take precautions and avoid venturing in the avalanche prone areas," it said in another Tweet.

Two Girls Killed

avalanche hit the area burying both of them, Superintendent of Police Kargil, Anayat Ali Chowdhury, told Kashmir Observer.

He said a rescue operation was launched by the civil administration with the help of police, locals and volunteers of Baseej-e-Baqiyatullah and both the bodies were recovered.

"The rescue operation has been called off now and no more damage has been reported," Chowdhury added.

Deputy Commissioner Kargil Santosh Sukhdev told Kashmir Observer that the administration has advised people not to venture out of avalanche prone areas of the region.

Chief Executive Councilor LAHDC-Kargil Feroz Khan has expressed grief over the deaths.

"Prayers for the two young lives lost in today's avalanche at Tangle. Both the bodies have been recovered. The efforts of Ladakh Police personnel and volunteers of Baseej-e-Baqiyatullah (ASZ) are highly commendable" Khan tweeted.

2 Held For

senior police officer said.

"On the early hours of January 19, multiple graffiti raising objectionable slogans appeared in the areas of Vikaspuri, Janakpuri, Paschim Vihar, Peeragarhi and other parts of west Delhi," Delhi Police PRO Suman Nalwa had earlier said.

Accordingly, a case under sections 154B (imputations, assertions prejudicial to national integration) and 120B (criminal conspiracy) of the Indian Penal Code was registered by the Special Cell, Nalwa had said.

Since Sikhs for Justice (SFP) is a banned organisation, it is trying to make itself known and wants to be in the news, the PRO had said over the graffiti.

Fringe organisation SFJ, run by a few radical Sikhs of foreign nationality in the US, Canada, the UK, etc, was declared unlawful by the Union government under the provisions of Section 3(1) of the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act, 1967.

The Centre, by its July 10, 2019 notification, had declared the SFJ an unlawful association and had banned it for five years, saying the group's primary objective was to establish an "independent and sovereign country" in Punjab and it openly espouses the cause of Khalistan and in that process, challenges the sovereignty and territorial integrity of India.

Flyer Tries To

on Flight 6E-5274 from Nagpur to Mumbai allegedly tried to remove the cover of the emergency exit while the aircraft was in the air and on approach for landing. On noticing this violation, the crew on board alerted the captain and the passenger was appropriately cautioned," the airline said in a statement.

There was "no compromise" on the safe operation of the said flight, it said.

"An FIR has been filed against the passenger for unauthorised tampering of the emergency exit as the aircraft was in the process of landing," the airline said.

5 Absent RDD

5 employees were found unauthorisedly absent from their duties at DK Marg block and were placed under suspension with immediate effect.

"Moreover, ACD stressed on 100 percent attendance at all offices of Rural Development Department Kulgam and directed all employees to attend their duties regularly in letter and spirit," the spokesperson said.

The ACD, he said, warned that strict action as warranted under rules shall be taken against employees for their unauthorized absence from duties.

Two Held

police station where he remains in custody," he added.

The spokesperson said Sameer Ahmad Reshi was arrested under similar circumstances at Peerbal Frisal in Kulgam district.

"During search, 5.4kgs of grinded Cannabis (Bhang) was recovered from his possession. He has been shifted to police station where he remains in custody," he said.

Accordingly, the spokesperson said, cases under relevant sections of law have been registered in respective Police Stations and further investigation has been initiated.

Second T20: India Beat New Zealand By 6 Wickets

Press Trust of India

LUCKNOW: Indian spinners revelled on a turning track before the batters made heavy weather of a small target to register a scrappy series levelling win over New Zealand in the second T20 International here on Sunday.

The trio of Yuzvendra Chahal, Washington Sundar and Kuldeep Yadav impressed on a helping surface to limit a self-destructing New Zealand to 99 for eight, their lowest total against India in the shortest format.

It should have been a straightforward run chase but the top-order comprising Ishan Kishan (19 off 32), Shubman Gill (11 off 9) and Rahul Tripathi (13 off 18) had a tough time again in spin-friendly conditions.

In the end, Hardik Pandya (15 not out off 20) and Suryakumar Yadav (26 not out off 31) took the team over the line with a ball to spare and six wickets in hand.

The series decider will be played in Ahmedabad on Wednesday.

With the likes of Rohit Sharma and Virat Kohli not playing T20s since the World Cup last year, opportunities have been presented to the younger players who are yet to make them count.



Kishan has gone off the boil since his double hundred in Bangladesh while Gill has not been able to carry on his scintillating ODI form into T20s. The stylish right-hander fell while trying to pull a spinner for the second game in a row but was surprised by the amount of turn.

Tripathi, who is getting to play at number three in Kohli's absence, was unable to take the attack to the New Zealand spinners.

The Indians felt the pressure and that was evident with the run out of Washington Sundar, who sacrificed his wicket to ensure Surya's

stay in the middle.

Since the asking rate was never an issue, India could afford to stutter in the chase.

A four after 45 balls, coming from Hardik's bat in the 19th over, released a lot of pressure before the skipper completed the job alongside

Surya who hit the winning four.

Earlier, Hardik decided to employ spinners from both ends in the powerplay after opening the bowling himself.

Wrist spinners Kuldeep (1/17) and Chahal (1/4), playing in a T20 together after a while, extracted

a lot out of the Lucknow surface while finger spinner Washington (1/17) produced another tidy spell.

Chahal was left licking his lips after the first ball of his opening spell. It was a ripper that pitched on leg stump before beating the outside edge of Finn Allen's bat. The opener perished two balls later trying to reverse sweep with the ball thudding into his back leg before crashing on to the stumps.

The in-form Devon Conway too fell to a reverse sweep as the ball kissed his gloves on way to wicket-keeper Ishan Kishan.

New Zealand were soon reduced to 35 for three in seventh over when the dangerous Glenn Phillips missed a straight ball from Deepak Hooda in his attempt to reverse sweep the part time off-spinner.

Daryl Mitchell got a beauty from Kuldeep that came back in sharply to shatter the stumps.

New Zealand bat deep but none of their batters were able to apply themselves on a testing pitch.

Pacer Arshdeep Singh, who has been guilty of bowling too many no balls lately and Shivam Mavi, were only used in the death overs.

Arshdeep did well to take wickets in his two tough overs and conceded only eight runs. Hardik ended with figures of one for 25 in four overs.



PM Modi Talks About 'Snow Cricket In Pulwama'

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Prime Minister Narinder Modi on Sunday spoke about Snow Cricket held at Syedabad, Pulwama, Kashmir in his radio programme 'Man Ki Baat'.

In the programme, PM Modi said that apart from snow-capped mountains and natural beauty, there is much more to know and admire about Kashmir.

The PM said that in Syedabad, Pulwama of Kashmir the Snow Cricket was held in winter games. He said that snow cricket is more entertaining, this makes it even more interesting that those games help to identify players who shall play for Team India in future.

He suggested to tourists, "Next time when you visit Kashmir, take your time to watch such programmes too. That will make your trip more memorable."

Sports activities across Pulwama have touched a new mile-

stone with the provision of sports infrastructure in all Panchayats.

Pertinently, under the mission of play fields in each panchayat, land in Syedabad (Pastuna) Panchayat of Tral Sub Division was identified and a playfield was developed under MGNREGA in FY 2022-23, and the village witnessed a big tournament during this winter.

The cricket match in chilai kalan was held in Syedabad (Pastuna) on the smooth surface of Snow for the first time during this winter.

The sports theme of this winter game was Snow Cricket and was a local talent hunt in cricket. This is for the first time that youth were directly benefited by CSSs.

This is a positive and a vibrant change, and shall have far reaching and best results in coming times with youth getting engaged in sports which develops the competition and leadership qualities.

J&K Junior Carrom Team Leaves For Mumbai



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Eight-member J&K Junior Carrom team left on Sunday to compete at the 47th Junior National Carrom Championship, which will be held at Dadar, Mumbai, Maharashtra, from February 1 to February 4, 2023.

"Adil Rashid Shah, General Secretary flagged off the team. Arif Sultan (Secretary), Dawar Rashid (Member) and other members of the association were also present during the flag off ceremony. The team will represent Jammu & Kashmir at the championship hosted by Maharashtra Carrom Association and is being organised by All India Carrom Federation,

New Delhi," a statement from the Jammu and Kashmir Carrom Association said.

"The association selected an eight-member team, including Zaid Bin Ajaz, Haroon Malik, Abdul Basit, Hammad Raashid, Shahid Ahmad, Faisal Khan and Shahzeb in the men's team. Shakir Shahr will accompany the team as Manager. Adil Rashid Shah, General Secretary of the association will also accompany the team," it added.

The players were selected by the selection committee of the J&K Carrom Association headed by Mudasir Khan, President, Adil Rashid Shah, General Secretary and Arif Sultan, Secretary of the J&K Carrom Association.

India Win Inaugural Women's U-19 T20 WC; Defeat England By 7 Wickets



Press Trust of India

POTCHEFSTROOM: India on Sunday won their maiden ICC title in women's cricket as a bunch of sprightly and talented teenagers lifted the inaugural U-19 World Cup with an emphatic seven-wicket victory over England. The Shafali Verma-led India U-19 squad managed to do what their seniors could not do by clearing the final hurdle in a global event. India first bundled out England for 68 in 17.1 overs and then returned to knock off the paltry target in 14 overs to lift the coveted trophy.

The win on Sunday also reaffirms India's dominance at the U-19 level with the boys

winning the world title in the Caribbean last year.

India's bowling attack, led by pacer Titas Sadhu and supported by leg-spinner Parshavi Chopra, set up the comprehensive win on Sunday as they blew England away with a clinical display at Senwes Park.

While Sadhu showed that Indian women pace bowling is in safe hands following the retirement of Jhulan Goswami with impressive figures of 4-0-6-2, Chopra too continued her dream run as she snapped two for 13.

Archana Devi also scalped 2 for 17, while Mannat Kashyap (1/13), Shafali (1/16) and Sonam Yadav (1/3) accounted for one wicket each as England were all at sea after being

asked to take first strike.

Chasing 69, Shafali started with a boundary off Hannah Baker before launching Sophia Smale for a maximum. But Baker came back to get rid of the India skipper, who was caught by Alexa Stonehouse in the 3rd over.

Her opening and team's best batter in the tournament, Shweta Sehrawat, also was back in the hut after giving a simple catch to Baker off Grace Scrivens in the fourth over.

Soumya Tiwari (24 not out) and Gongadi Trisha (24) then dug their heels in with a 46-run partnership.

With four runs needed, Trisha was cleaned up by Stonehouse, as Tiwari knocked off the winning runs.

'King Of Melbourne Park': Novak Djokovic Lands 10th Australian Open Title

Agencies

MELBOURNE: Aruthless Novak Djokovic resumed his reign over Melbourne Park by winning a record-extending 10th Australian Open title on Sunday and crushing the Grand Slam dream of Greek trailblazer Stefanos Tsitsipas in a one-sided final.

In a rematch of the 2021 French Open decider, Djokovic swept to a 6-3 7-6(4) 7-6(5) victory at Rod Laver Arena to reclaim the world number one ranking and again deny Tsitsipas a maiden major title. The atmosphere was electric and the crowd often unruly as Serbian and Greek fans bayed in the terraces as if roaring on football teams.

But at the finish chants of "Nole! Nole!" won out as Djokovic stormed to a 5-0 lead in the final tiebreak and closed out the match with a thumping forehand down the



line that Tsitsipas could only hit long. The 35-year-old Serb tapped his temple then his heart as he walked forward to shake hands with Tsitsipas before jumping into his players box.

Unleashing a roar, Djokovic pumped his fists then cried as

he hugged his mum. Djokovic's 22nd Grand Slam triumph, now matching Rafa Nadal, was the ultimate redemption a year on from his sensational deportation from Australia on the eve of the Grand Slam due to his lack of COVID-19 vaccination. (Reuters)



Rashid Khan To Lead Afghanistan In T20I Series Against UAE

Agencies

Afghanistan cricket team will travel to UAE for a three-match T20I series in accordance with a contract agreed upon by the two cricket boards in November with the series starting from February 16. Afghanistan announced a 22-player squad for the T20I series in UAE next month which will be led by leg-spinner Rashid Khan, who has been re-instated as the skipper after having left go of the leadership role earlier.

Afghanistan has not yet announced the names of their coaching staff after the contracts of head coach Jonathan Trott and bowling coach Umar Gul were not renewed last month. The back-room team of regional coaches has been led by assistant coach Raees Ahmadzai.

Several Afghanistan players will miss the opening week of the Pakistan Super League, which begins in Multan on February 13, due to the timeline of the series. It will be the first meeting between the teams in any international format since 2018, when they met at the 50-over Cricket World Cup Qualifier. Afghanistan won the meeting by five wickets, and the men in blue have been victorious in the last four T20I meetings between the teams.

After a conditioning camp in Abu Dhabi, Rashid's squad will then be trimmed to 17 members, with the first T20I on February 16. After the series, Afghanistan turn their attention to a T20I series against Pakistan in March, with a location for the three matches yet to be finalised.

Ukraine's Zelenskiy Decries Neutrality In Sports At Time Of War



Agencies

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelenskiy condemned the idea of neutrality in sports at a time when his country's athletes fight and die in war, while their Russian counterparts might be allowed to compete. Redoubling his efforts in what he called "a marathon of honesty" to stop Russian athletes from taking part in the 2024 Olympics, Zelenskiy said their presence would normalise Russia's invasion of his country.

"There is no such thing as neutrality when a war like this is going on. And we know how often tyrannies try to use sports for their ideological interests," Zelenskiy said in a Saturday evening video address. Zelenskiy said on Friday that Ukraine would launch an international campaign to keep Russia out of the 2024 summer games, which will be held in Paris.

Russia said that any attempt to squeeze it out of international sport was "doomed to fail". The war in Ukraine, now in its 12th month, has no end in sight, with Russia intensifying attacks on its neighbour in recent weeks. The

Russian invasion has killed thousands, displaced millions and turned cities into rubble.

"Ukrainian athletes are forced to defend the lives of their loved ones and the freedom of our people from Russian aggression," Zelenskiy said. "Russian strikes took the lives of hundreds of Ukrainian men and women who could have brought their talents to world sports."

On Wednesday, the Olympic Council of Asia had offered Russian and Belarusian athletes the chance to compete in Asia, giving them a qualification pathway for the 2024 Olympics. Ukraine says it could boycott the Games if Russian and Belarusian athletes take part.

On Saturday, Belarusian-born Aryna Sabalenka defeated Russia-born Elena Rybakina of Kazakhstan to win the Australian Open, becoming the first player competing under a neutral flag to win a tennis grand slam.

"I think everyone still knows I'm a Belarusian player, and that's it," Sabalenka said flatly afterwards - holding a glass of champagne - when asked how it felt to win the tournament as a neutral player.

Ladakhi Innovator Sonam Wangchuk Says He's Under House Arrest, Police Deny Charge

Agenceis

LEH: Engineer and innovator Sonam Wangchuk claims he has been placed under house arrest at his institute here, a charge denied by police which says he was only prevented from observing a five-day fast at the top of Khardung La.

The education reformist, who inspired a pivotal character in the Bollywood blockbuster '3 Idiots', had announced the hunger strike at the 18,380 feet high Khardung La from January 26 to invite the BJP-led Centre's attention to the demands of the people of Ladakh.

These include extension of the sixth schedule of the Constitution and environmental protection form unchecked industrial and commercial expansion.

In a tweet on Saturday, Wangchuk shared a copy of a bond, which among other things sought an undertaking that he will not make any comments, statements, public

speech, hold or participate in public assemblies or any activity related to the recent events in Leh district.

"CALLING LAWYERS OF THE WORLD!!! The #Ladakh UT administration wants me to sign this bond even when only fasts & prayers r happening! Pls advise How right is it, should I silence myself! I don't mind arrest at all #ClimateFast #6thSchedule #LIFE #saveladakh @AmitShah @narendramodi," he wrote.

He said on social media that he was under house arrest, "actually worse than house arrest."

"I have announced a five-day climate fast to save and safeguard the Himalayas, the glaciers, Ladakh and its people under the sixth schedule of Article 244 of the Indian Constitution. I was initially told that the policemen are deployed for my safety and I did not take it otherwise," he said.

However, police denied his charges.

US to Start Receiving H1B Visa Applications from March 1

Agenceis

Washington: The highly anticipated H1B visa filing season for fiscal 2023-24 will officially begin on March 1 when the US immigration agency will start accepting applications for skilled foreign workers visas, the most sought-after by Indian IT professionals.

The H1B visa is a non-immigrant visa that allows US companies to employ foreign workers in special occupations that require theoretical or technical expertise.

Technology companies depend on it to hire tens of thousands of employees each year from countries like India and China.

The US Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) said for the fiscal year beginning October 1, 2023, it will accept applications between March 1 and March 17 petitions for H-1B visas that allow them to work and live in the US for up to six years in specialised fields



such as technology, engineering, and medicine. After six years, it opens up pathways to permanent residency or Green Card.

"If we receive enough registrations by March 17, we will randomly select registrations and send selection notifications via users' myUSCIS online accounts. If we do not receive enough registrations, all registrations that were properly submitted in the initial registration period will be selected," the USCIS said.

India's Dream Of 'Techade' Will Be Fulfilled By Innovators, Their Patents: PM Modi

Agenceis

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi said on Sunday that domestic patent filings have outscored the country's foreign patent filings as he expressed confidence that India's dream of "techade" will be fulfilled on the strength of its innovators.

This underscores the country's increasing scientific capabilities, he said in the first episode of 'Mann ki Baat' in the new year.

Modi has in the past used "techade" to describe the decade being dominated by technologies and India making most of it.

He said India's rank in patent filling is seventh globally while it is fifth in trademark registration. India's patent registration has risen by 50 per cent in the last five years, the prime minister said, noting that its ranking in the global innovation index has surged to 40 from below 80 in 2015.

"I am confident that India's dream of techade will be fulfilled by its innovators and their patents," he said.

The premier Indian Institute of Science had 145 patents in 2022 which is a rare record, Modi said.

In the broadcast, he informed people that the total number of Ramsar sites, an international recognition for wetlands, in the country has increased to 75 from 26 in 2014.

Lauding local communities, Modi said they deserve praise for preserving the biodiversity.

"It is also a tribute to our age-old culture and tradition of living in harmony with nature. These wetlands of India are also an example of our natural potential. Chilika Lake of Odisha is known to shelter more than 40 water-bird species. Kaibul-Lamjia, Loktak is considered to be the only natural habitat of the Swamp Deer," he said.

Touching on the subject of e-waste, the prime minister said if it is not disposed of properly, it can also harm the environment



but if dealt carefully, it can become a great force in the circular economy of recycle and reuse.

Noting that a United Nations report said 50 million tonnes of e-waste is being thrown every year, Modi said if the weight of all the commercial planes built so far is combined, it will not equal the amount of e-waste being released.

"It is like every second 800 laptops are being thrown away, he said. Use of technologies and start-ups have made India a "global recycling hub", Modi said.

There is no dearth of start-ups that are doing innovative work in this direction, he said.

"Those working in the field of e-waste say that at present, only 15-17 per cent e-waste is being recycled every year," the prime minister said.

In his address, Modi noted that this year's Padma awards, described by him as "People's Padma", include a number of tribal people or those working for the community besides those who have strengthened the world of music.

He urged people to read about the winners and said their stories will inspire new generations.

"Many awardees are those who always kept the country paramount, dedicating their lives to the principle of 'nation first'. They never expected any reward for it.

The satisfaction of those they are working for is the biggest award for them. Our countrymen's pride has risen by honouring such dedicated people," he said.

Lauding a book, 'India - The Mother of Democracy', the prime minister said Indians are also proud of the fact that their country is the "mother of democracy".

"Democracy is in our veins and is our culture. It has been an integral part of our work for centuries. By nature, India is a democratic society," he said.

"After reading this book, you will feel how the spirit of democracy has been flowing in every part of the country for centuries," Modi said.

The prime minister also lauded rising acceptance of Yoga and millets, saying that it was on India's proposals that the United Nations adopted June 21 as the International Day of Yoga and declared this year as International Year of Millets.

"Milletspreneurs" of Odisha are in the limelight these days, he said, mentioning a self-help group of about 1,500 women producing several delicacies made of millets.

Citing several other developments in different states related to millets growing popularity, he said meals prepared from there are being served at various G20 events being across the country.

IndiGo Passenger Tried To Open Emergency Exit Mid-Air, Case Filed

Agenceis

Mumbai: A passenger on board an IndiGo flight to Mumbai from Nagpur allegedly attempted to remove the cover of the emergency exit when the aircraft was approaching for landing here, the airline said on Sunday.

An FIR has been registered against the passenger for the alleged act, IndiGo said in a statement and added there was "no compromise" on the safety. The airline, however, did not share other details.

"A passenger travelling on Flight 6E-5274 from Nagpur

to Mumbai allegedly tried to remove the cover of the emergency exit while the aircraft was in the air and on approach for landing. On noticing this violation, the crew on board alerted the captain and the passenger was appropriately cautioned," the airline said in a statement.

There was "no compromise" on the safe operation of the said flight, it said.

"An FIR has been filed against the passenger for unauthorised tampering of the emergency exit as the aircraft was in the process of landing," the airline said.



Passenger Caught Hiding Rs 64L in Trolley Handles at Delhi Airport

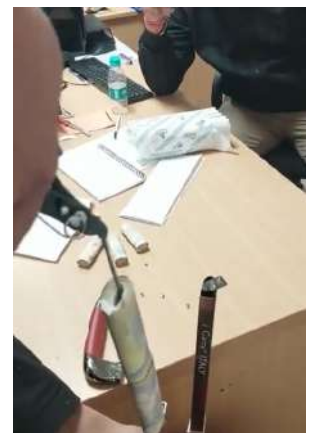
Agenceis

New Delhi: A Bangkok-bound Indian passenger was apprehended by CISF personnel at the New Delhi airport on Sunday for allegedly carrying foreign currency worth about Rs 64 lakh by concealing them in his trolley bag handles, officials said.

The man was intercepted by the security personnel at Terminal-III of the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) airport during security checks when the image of currency notes was spotted on the X-ray scanner, they said.

The passenger was supposed to take a Thai Airlines flight to Bangkok, a senior officer said.

The CISF personnel recovered Euro 68,400 and 5,000 New Zealand dollars, worth about Rs 64 lakh using screwdrivers



to pull out the hidden currency notes, he said.

The man was later handed over to the Customs authorities for further investigation, the officer said.

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