

Fresh Snowfall Cuts Off Kashmir From Outside World

All Flights Cancelled At Srinagar Airport, Highways Blocked; Valley Plunged Into Darkness

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Life in Kashmir was disrupted on the final day of the 'Chilla-i-Kalan', the harshest winter period in the region, on Monday as fresh snowfall snapped the Valley's connections with the rest of the world, affecting surface and air traffic besides disrupting power supply in most parts of the valley.

Moderate to heavy snowfall was recorded in the plains of Kashmir, while the higher reaches experienced heavy to very heavy falls, a Met office officials said.

The officials said Srinagar received about seven inches of fresh snowfall, Gulmarg over a foot, Pahalgam nine inches, Gurez 1.5 feet and the plains of Kupwara district around four inches. In the upper reaches, it was around one-two feet.

The snowfall started late Sunday night in most places and continued till late hours of Monday.

The snowfall brought normal life to a halt and snapped the Valley's surface and air connectivity with the rest of the country, the officials said.

The Srinagar-Jammu National Highway was closed for traffic due to snow and landslides at many places along the arterial road.

Train services on the Baramulla-Banihal route were suspended due to accumulation of snow on the tracks, they added.

The officials said the bad



Residents in Srinagar and other parts of the Valley woke up on Monday to a mesmerizing view of snow spread all around. KO Photo, Abid Bhat

weather affected air traffic to and from the Kashmir valley as flight operations at the Srinagar airport were suspended.

"Visibility is very poor and there is snow accumulation on the runway", they said.

The meteorological department predicted heavy snowfall, and rains with thunderstorms in the plains of Jammu, over the next 12 hours.

"Expect gradual decrease in

the precipitation from Monday night", it said.

Meanwhile, the minimum temperature improved across the Valley but stayed below the freezing point.

Exams postponed

The heavy snowfall also prompted Kashmir University and Cluster University Srinagar to postpone all examinations

scheduled to be held Tuesday.

"In view of continuous snowfall reported across Kashmir, all examinations of the University of Kashmir, scheduled to be held on Tuesday (January 31, 2023) are postponed," Controller Examinations KU Dr Majid Zaman said in a statement, adding, "Fresh dates for the deferred Examinations will be notified separately later."

The Cluster University

Srinagar also postponed all exams scheduled tomorrow due to inclement weather, the varsity said in a notice. "Fresh dates for postponed papers shall be notified separately," Controller of Examinations Cluster University Srinagar added. These varsities also postponed similar examinations scheduled today (January 30).

Helpline

All 68 Flights Grounded At Srinagar Airport

As snowfall continued in Kashmir Valley, all flights to and from Srinagar 'international' airport were cancelled on Monday. Director, Airport Authority of India (AAI), Srinagar Airport, Kuldeep Singh said that 68 flights were scheduled to operate Monday. "All 68 flights were cancelled due to low visibility and **More on P6**

Power Supply Affected In Much Of Valley

The overnight heavy snowfall has plunged most parts of the Kashmir Valley into darkness, even as Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Ltd (KPDCCL) has pushed its field teams on the ground to restore electricity supply. Out of total 33 KV feeders, 14 were under fault along with 4 No. 33 KV Taplines **More on P6**

Avalanche Warning Issued In 10 Districts

Jammu and Kashmir Disaster Management Authority on Sunday issued an avalanche warning for ten districts in upcoming 24 hours, amid prevailing inclement weather conditions. The authority has warned of possible 'High Danger Level' avalanches above 2500 metres above sea-level over Doda, Kishtwar and **More on P6**

In view of inclement weather and advisory issued by MET department regarding heavy snowfall, Police established Emergency Helpdesk Control Rooms in all 10 districts of the Valley for the people in order to facilitate them in case of any untoward incident or distress.

For Bandipora district, the helpline numbers are; PCR Bandipora 01957225278,

9596767430, ASP Bandipora 9596767453, DYSP HQRS Bandipora 9596767440, SDPO Gurez 7006795292, SHO PS Gurez 7006250037, SHO PS Tulail 7780922131, DO Police Post Izmarg 9419991882, SHO PS Bandipora 9596767411, SHO PS Pethkote 9596767415, SHO PS Aragam 9596767421, DO Police Post Aloosa 9596767416, DO Police Post **More on P6**

Protest Against Eviction Drive Rocks Jammu Locality

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Scores of people staged a protest in Sunjwan-Bathindi on the city's outskirts against the Jammu and Kashmir administration's ongoing anti-encroachment drive to retrieve "illegally occupied" land.

The authorities have served public notices to violators in the area and ordered them to remove illegal constructions within seven days.

Carrying Tricolours, the protesters, including women and children, poured onto the main road in driving rain and tried to march towards the Civil Secretariat against the eviction

order, officials said.

However, police stopped the march while a sub-divisional magistrate tried to persuade the protesters to disperse.

The sub-divisional magistrate invited the demonstrators for talks and assured them that no building, residential or commercial, constructed over a small piece of land would be demolished.

Safdar Choudhary, a protester, said the eviction notices had taken away their peace of mind. "We have built our dwellings after investing our life's earnings to provide shelter to our children. What will happen to us if they destroy **More on P6**

Leh Apex Body Calls For Grand Rally Today

Hundreds Join Sonam Wangchuk On Final Day Of His 5-Day Hunger Strike On Issues Of Ladakh

Press Trust Of India

Leh: Hundreds of people on Monday joined education reformist Sonam Wangchuk on the final day of his five-day hunger strike here in support of the demand for various safeguards for Ladakh, including extension of the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution to the Union territory.

Prominent among those who joined Wangchuk, an engineer whose life inspired a character in Bollywood blockbuster "3 Idiots", were leaders of the Leh

Apex Body of Peoples Movement for Sixth Schedule and the Kargil Democratic Alliance (KDA).

The apex body and KDA, a separate amalgam of socio-religious, political and youth organisations, are jointly spearheading a campaign to press for their four-point demands which include full statehood and safeguards under the Sixth Schedule to the region.

"Today is the last day of my symbolic carbon neutral climatic fast and I am thankful to the people for joining me. The fast was an **More on P6**

Bharat Jodo Yatra Ends On White Monday In Kashmir

Opposition Show Of Strength And Cheers For Rahul



'The People Of Kashmir Did Not Give Me Hand Grenades, Only Their Hearts Full Of Love'

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: The Bharat Jodo Yatra ended on Monday in an opposition show of strength with leaders of several parties joining Congress leader Rahul Gandhi as he capped

his ambitious 145-day journey that covered some 4,000 km from Kanyakumari to Kashmir.

The skies over Kashmir opened up and the snow fell steadily through the morning, blanketing much of the Valley in white, as the former Congress president unfurled the tricolour at the yatra campsite and then went to the Pradesh Congress Committee office where party chief Mallikarjun Kharge hoisted the national flag. From there they went to the **More on P6**

...And Rahul Dons Pheran

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, who set off a national debate when he walked the Bharat Jodo Yatra in a T-shirt in north India's cold winter, donned a 'pheran' to ward off Kashmir's bone-freezing chill on Monday and also to convey a message. As the snow fell steadily, carpeting much of the Valley in white, the former Congress president was seen in a sleeveless jacket over his trademark white T-shirt earlier in the morning and then in the traditional long cloak worn by Kashmiris. Soon after attending an event at the PCC headquarters on Maulana Azad Road here, Gandhi, who walked over 4,000 kilometres in 136 days, **More on P6**

Rahul, Priyanka Play With Snow In Kashmir

After a grueling 4000 kilometer trek, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday showed his lighter side. He got engaged in an impromptu fun fight with his sister and party general secretary Priyanka Gandhi at the Yatra camp site near Srinagar. Cheerful siblings threw

snowballs at each other amid applause from the onlookers, mostly Congress leaders and workers. This is literally his style of 'chill out' after a long and exhaustive cross India track" remarked a Congress leader. Gandhi's Twitter handle showed pictures and videos of the **More on P6**

Every Effort Being Made To Empower Citizens: LG

Observer News Service

Jammu: The Union Territory Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha said on Monday that his administration is making every effort to empower the citizens and enable them to play a bigger role in society.

"Our prime objective is quality grievance disposal, constant monitoring of service delivery mechanism, ensuring accountability for welfare and progress of the common man", Sinha said.

He made these remarks while interacting with the people during "LG's Mulaqaat- Live Public Grievance Hearing" at Civil Secretariat here on Monday. The LG appraised



the action taken on the grievances of the applicants by the concerned Administrative Secretaries, Deputy Commissioners and other senior officers.

"Every effort is being made to empower the citizens and enable them to play a bigger role in society. Various **More on P6**

Pays Tributes To Mahatma Gandhi

Asserting that women are leading as a role model and contributing to economic development, Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha said on Monday that it is our collective responsibility to ensure women have access to education, equal opportunities and financial & other assistance to grow and prosper. The LG made **More on P6**

"EVERY EFFORT IS BEING MADE TO EMPOWER THE CITIZENS and enable them to play a bigger role in society. Various interventions and e-Governance tools are ensuring that the benefits of our development programmes, various central sector schemes reach out to the people as intended."

Soldier Dies Inside Army Camp

A soldier died on Monday after falling unconscious inside his camp in North Kashmir's Kupwara district. Official sources said that Subedar Jitendra Kumar from 17 Gharwal fell unconscious at his Unit in Chowkibal area and was taken to the military hospital Drugmulla for treatment. However, the doctors there declared him dead, a local news agency KNT reported Monday. The deceased was a native of Uttarakhand. Police Post Drugmulla have started proceedings under section 174 Cr.PC in this regard.

4 OGWs Held In Awantipora: Police

Police on Monday claimed to have busted a militant hideout and arrested four over-ground workers (OGWs) in South Kashmir's Pulwama district. Acting on specific input, Police, army's 42RR and the personnel of CRPF 180 Bn launched a cordon and search operation (CASO) at Hafoo Nigeenpora forests in Awantipora, a police spokesperson said Monday. During the search operation, he said, a hideout used by terrorists was busted and incriminating materials and other **More on P6**

Police Rescues 3 Tourists In Ramban

Police rescued three tourists from Uttar Pradesh caught in heavy snowfall in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district on Monday, officials said. Acting on a distress call that some tourists were stuck in the snow near Nathatop-Sanasar Road, a police team swung into action and carried out the operation. The police party reached the spot amid intense snowfall and all three tourists were safely rescued, the officials added.

Car Crushes School Girl To Death

A 17-year-old girl student was killed and nine others injured after being hit by a speeding car outside their school in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district, officials said on Monday. The students were waiting for a bus at Barwal Morh along Jammu-Pathankot Highway when they were run over around 12.45 pm, they added. The car was on its way to Jammu from Punjab when its driver lost control and hit the children. Bumika Hans, a resident of Nihalpur Palli Morh, **More on P6**

BSP Leader Joins National Conference

The BSP's Jammu and Kashmir general secretary Ravinder Singh has joined the National Conference here in the presence of party president Farooq Abdullah, a party spokesman said on Monday. Singh joined the National Conference along with dozens of his supporters, the spokesman said. Welcoming them into the party fold, Abdullah described the National Conference as a mass movement that has all along stood for the just cause of the people of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh and strived for development and **More on P6**

Advisory Issued To TV Channels

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting on Monday issued the guidelines for Television Channels in India and among other things asked private broadcasters to undertake public service broadcasting for 30 minutes every day. In this regard, the Ministry undertook extensive consultations with the private satellite TV channel Broadcasters and their Associations and based on their inputs an "Advisory" has been issued on 30.01.2023, an official spokesperson said. **More on P6**



Asteroid 2023 BU Just Passed A Few Thousand Kilometres From Earth. Here's Why That's Exciting

The Conversation

There are hundreds of millions of asteroids in our Solar System, which means new asteroids are discovered quite frequently. It also means close encounters between asteroids and Earth are fairly common.

Some of these close encounters end up with the asteroid impacting Earth, occasionally with severe consequences.

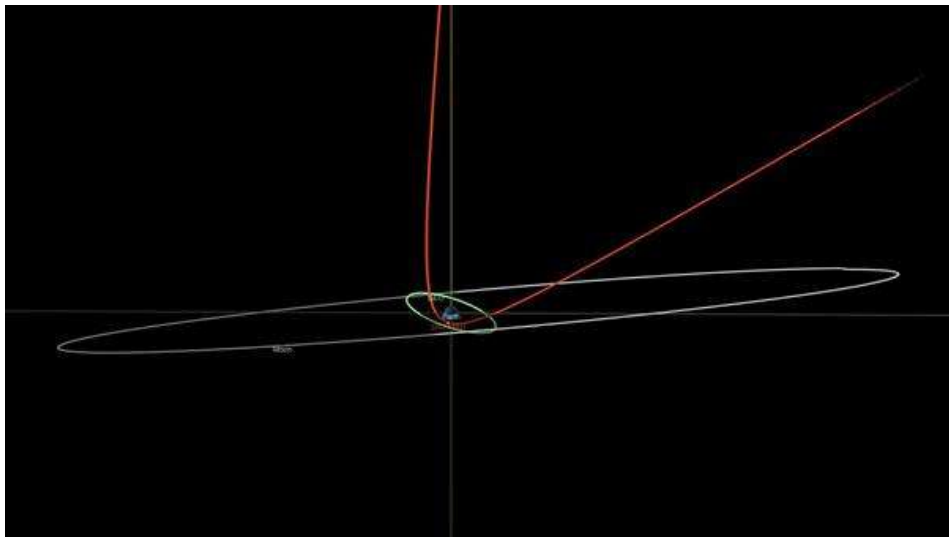
A recently discovered asteroid, named 2023 BU, has made the news because today it passed very close to Earth.

Discovered on January 21 by amateur astronomer Gennadiy Borisov in Crimea, 2023 BU passed only about 3,600 km from the surface of Earth (near the southern tip of South America) six days later on January 27.

That distance is just slightly farther than the distance between Perth and Sydney and is only about 1 per cent the distance between Earth and our Moon.

The asteroid also passed through the region of space that contains a significant proportion of the human-made satellites orbiting Earth.

All this makes 2023 BU the fourth-closest known asteroid encounter with Earth, ignoring those that have impacted the planet or our atmosphere.



How does 2023 BU rate as an asteroid and a threat?

2023 BU is unremarkable, other than that it passed so close to Earth. The diameter of the

asteroid is estimated to be just 4–8 metres, which is on the small end of the range of asteroid sizes.

There are likely hundreds of millions of such objects in our Solar System, and it is possible 2023 BU has come close to Earth many

times before over the millennia. Until now, we have been oblivious to the fact.

In context, on average a 4-metre-diameter asteroid will impact Earth every year and an 8-metre-diameter asteroid every five years or so.

Asteroids of this size pose little risk to life on Earth when they hit because they largely break up in the atmosphere. They produce spectacular fireballs, and some of the asteroids may make it to the ground as meteorites.

Now that 2023 BU has been discovered, its orbit around the Sun can be estimated and future visits to Earth predicted. It is estimated there is a 1 in 10,000 chance 2023 BU will impact Earth sometime between 2077 and 2123.

So, we have little to fear from 2023 BU or any of the many millions of similar objects in the Solar System.

Asteroids need to be greater than 25 metres in diameter to pose any significant risk to life in a collision with Earth; to challenge the existence of civilisation, they'd need to be at least a kilometre in diameter.

It is estimated there are fewer than 1,000 such asteroids in the Solar System and could impact Earth every 5,00,000 years. We know about more than 95 per cent of these objects.

Will there be more close asteroid passes? 2023 BU was the fourth closest pass by

an asteroid ever recorded. The three closer passes were by very small asteroids discovered in 2020 and 2021 (2021 UA, 2020 QG and 2020 VT).

Asteroid 2023 BU and countless other asteroids have passed very close to Earth during the nearly five billion years of the Solar System's existence, and this situation will continue into the future.

What has changed in recent years is our ability to detect asteroids of this size, such that any threats can be characterised. That an object roughly five metres in size can be detected many thousands of kilometres away by a very dedicated amateur astronomer shows that the technology for making significant astronomical discoveries is within reach of the general public. This is very exciting.

Amateurs and professionals can together continue to discover and categorise objects, so threat analyses can be done. Another very exciting recent development came last year, by the Double Asteroid Redirection Test (DART) mission, which successfully collided a spacecraft into an asteroid and changed its direction.

DART makes plausible the concept of redirecting an asteroid away from a collision course with Earth if a threat analysis identifies a serious risk with enough warning.

‘Neglected Tropical Diseases Continue To Pose Significant Health Burden In India’

Press Trust Of India

Neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) continue to pose a significant health burden on some of the most disadvantaged communities in India, according to an expert working on the spectrum of such conditions.

On World NTD Day observed on January 30 every year, Dr. Kavita Singh, Director, South Asia, Drugs for Neglected Diseases initiative (DNDi), said innovation in diagnostics, treatment, and prevention is needed to create solutions that are effective, relevant, locally feasible, and sustainable.

NTDs comprise 20 conditions that disproportionately affect one billion people in impoverished communities worldwide. Of these, lymphatic filariasis, kala-azar, and leprosy are of greatest concern in most tropical countries.

India has the world's largest absolute burden of at least 10 major NTDs, including hookworm, dengue, lymphatic filariasis, leprosy, visceral leishmaniasis or kala-azar and rabies.

"NTDs continue to pose significant health burdens on some of the most disadvantaged communities in India. In the country, over 670 million people are at risk of infection by Wuchereria bancrofti and Brugia malayi parasites in 272 districts which represents around 40 per cent of the global disease burden," Singh told PTI in an interview.

Both Wuchereria bancrofti and Brugia malayi are the major cause of lymphatic filariasis (LF) also known

as elephantiasis, an NTD characterised by swelling of the lower limbs.

"Infection due to Wuchereria bancrofti is widespread in 21 States and Union Territories. India still has over 23 million people suffering with lifelong disability as a result of LF. The Government of India calls it a priority disease as it is in the focus of the government for elimination since 2002," she added.

It is difficult to estimate the actual burden of NTDs in India as there is no single organisation or government agency which has been given this mandate. "Of the 12-13 NTDs existing in India only dengue, rabies, snakebite and leprosy are notifiable, therefore it is impossible to estimate the true burden," Singh explained.

"Some of the vector borne diseases (mosquito and sandfly) have been targeted for elimination or prevention by the National Centre for Vector Borne Disease Control and Programme for Leprosy and Soil Transmitted Helminths," she said.

Excluding NTDs that are spatially bound by their requirement for unique insect vectors -- such as schistosomiasis, human African trypanosomiasis, and Chagas disease -- India leads the world in terms of the total number of cases for each of the major NTDs, as defined by the World Health Organization (WHO).

India, which has the largest population in south Asia, has been trying for two decades to eliminate these diseases. The country initially aimed for their elimination by 2015, then 2018, then 2020. Post pandemic the loose target is now 2030.

Earlier this month, Union Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya reiterated India's commitment towards the target of eradicating lymphatic filariasis by the end of 2027.

"As per a latest publication, the delays in elimination of NTDs have been because of poor community participation due to deep-rooted systemic mistrust issues that were not addressed in a timely manner, and low compliance. The programme has faced multiple implementation challenges at a higher level," Singh added.

"For example, LF elimination was not a major part of the national public health agenda for years, and few champions publicly voiced support for accelerating elimination efforts. Frequent leadership transitions and postponement of technical advisory committee meetings also contributed to delays," she added. At the implementation level, Singh said, delays in scheduling mass drug administration rounds in endemic districts resulted in other management problems. These included delays in drug inventory projections, lack of availability of family registers for health staff, delays in development of district microplans, delays in training plans, and inaccurate counts of community members in urban and rural areas.

"Limited external partner support in funding and technical assistance to help the states and districts successfully implement MDA further contributed to implementation challenges and thus repeated push back on elimination targets," Singh added.

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Government of Jammu & Kashmir(UT)

Phone:-01933-295302,

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&B DIVISION PULWAMA.

TENDER NOTICE

E-NIT No : 398 /EEP/RNB/of 2022-23/ 16992-17002

Dated: 30 / 01 /2023

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K UT term e-tenders (In Single Cover system) are invited on %age Basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K State Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Government for the following work:-

S.No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost in (Rs. Lacs.)	Cost of T/D (Rs.)	Earnest Money (Rs.) in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG	Time of Completion in working Days	Class of Contract	Major Head of Accounts	Administrative Approval No:
1.	Construction of foot bridge by means steel from seer to Jarrow Jageer P.H Seer	11.19	600/-	2% of Adv. cost	20 Working Days	DEE,CEE & BEE	District Capex	252 - DDCP of 2022 Dated: 08/12/2022

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

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	30 /01/2023
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 30/01/2023 10:00 A.M.
3.	Bid submission Start Date	30/01/2023 from 10.00 A.M
4.	Bid Submission End Date	09/02/2023 upto 4.00 P.M
5.	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	10/02/2023 at 10:30 A.M in the Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Div.Pulwama
6.	Submission of Performance Security (PS)	Within 3 days of receipt of LOA. (The First lowest successful bidder has to provide 3% of allotted cost as Performance Security in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG and EMD of 2% shall be released after receipt of 3% Performance security.

- Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan/Receipt (Debited to M.H.0059 PWD) showing clearly the name of work along with NIT No. & S.No. failing which the tender will be rejected outrightly and EMD in the shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Div.Pulwama.
- The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the office of Executive Engineer R&B Div.Pulwama
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of bids.
- If first lowest bidder fails to deposit 3% as performance security within prescribed date the work will be put to fresh tenders at his risk and cost and the CDR/FDR/BG will be forfeited and shall be debarred from participating the tendering process for the period of one year in this division.

All other terms and conditions shall be available in website www.jktenders.gov.in

Head Draftsman
DIPK-16813/22 dated: 30-01-2023

Technical Officer

Executive Engineer,
R&B Division Pulwama

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost the RC of my motor cycle bearing Regd No: JK05C-9324 . Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the ARTO Sopore within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Shabir Ahmad Dar
S/o Abdul Majeed Dar
R/o Magraypora Pattan

fko

از ریاست ہرہ شورہ با اجلاس ارشاد احمد ملک			
مضمون درخواست منجانب: سزیر احمد خان ولد عبدالصمد خان ساکنہ ترکہ بھ پورہ			
بعض حصول RBA سرٹیفکیٹ تحت ایس آر آر 126			
اشتہار براد آگائی برضام وعام۔			
معاہدہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدر میں سائل نے ایک درخواست بعض حصول			
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گیا جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سائل کا کنبدہ دھڑا میں گزشتہ پندرہ سالوں سے رہائش پذیر			
ہے ساکنہ کی مہادتہ دہنی 66417 ہے اور سائل کا کنبدہ بذمہ ہے۔			
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02	مسعود عزیزہ بیگم زوجہ علی محمد	64 سال	عمر رسیدہ
	نزیرا احمد خان	43 سال	سرکاری ملازم
04	جنید اختر زوجہ نزیرا احمد	42	گھر بیلام
05	صمدیہ زبیر	18	زیر تعلیم
06	محمد سادان خان	12	زیر تعلیم
07	محمد ابراہیم خان	10	زیر تعلیم
08	حفصہ جان	06	زیر تعلیم

اس کے علاوہ درو کوئی اعتراض نہیں بتلایا گیا ہے۔ لہذا زیر بحث سرٹیفکیٹ اجراء کرنے میں اگر کسی شخص کو کوئی اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر اندر اپنا اعتراض معروضات و جوابت پیش کرے۔ معاذ کنڈر نے بعد کوئی اعتراض قائل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔

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All Major Roads Cleared Of Snow: SMC

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In compliance to the directions from Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Athar Amir Khan following prediction of Snowfall, the men and machinery of the corporation has been on the Snow clearance job since early morning to ensure hassle free movement of general public and vehicular movement.

An official informed that all the major roads, link-roads, streets and alleys have been cleared of Snow both through machines as well as manually.

Officers, frontline warriors and machinery are on the ground to meet any challenge in case of any eventual-ity, he added.

The Commissioner SMC also toured various City areas,

hospitals to have firsthand appraisal of Snow clearance status. He visited SMHS Hospital, Dastgeer sahab, JLMN Hospi-tal, Chatti padshahi, Dargah and Imam Bargah Zadibal to monitor the Snow clearance from ground zero.

During the visit to Karan Nagar and adjoining localities and SMHS Hospital, Commissioner SMC directed the concerned officials to install mobile dewatering pumps at all vital places especially the hospitals.

He impressed upon the concerned officials that the roads and streets leading to hospitals, Public Health Centers and educational centers should be given first priority for Snow clearance.

Commissioner SMC was accompanied by officers from various agencies, besides senior officials of Srinagar Municipal Corporation.

Satirical Song ‘Battiye’ On Power Crisis Takes Internet By Storm

Agencies

Srinagar: The comic song on erratic electricity in Kashmir has turned out an instant hit. The song that has been penned by renowned lyricist Peer Zahoor has garnered lakhs of hits on social media including Facebook and Youtube.

The song ‘Battiye’ in the ‘Qawali’ version presents the power scenario of Kashmir in a satirical way. The lyricist has not only taken the Power Development Department to task but has also criticized those people who resort to hook and indulge in power theft.

The music has been given by Rasik Imtiyaz Khan and the singer and composer is Nasir Ahmed while the label is ‘Zeez Originals’. The song has attracted the attention of the common people of Kashmir who have appreciated its nature and style. The song has been recorded at ‘Team Ideation Studio’ at Zero Bridge Srinagar and professionally shot at Alive Academy in the backdrop of candles and lanterns.

Notably, Kashmir, the worst power crisis, continued this year too.

About the song, the lyricist, Peer Zahoor while

thanking all for appreciating the song “Battiye” said that it is our endeavor to give original numbers on diverse topics without compromising our cultural ethos. In this song, we have highlighted both systematic constraints as well as societal habits. Let us practice and encourage the judicious use of electricity as it belongs to all. In essence, each one of us can contribute to energy conservation,” he said and appreciated the efforts of PDD men for ensuring electricity to people despite constraints.

The director of the song MJ Nasir said that they have tried to convey the message in the most comic way. “Our electric network system is burdened with an additional load on a daily basis. Winter season disturbs this Demand-Supply ratio to a higher degree on account of numerous heating gadgets.”

He said the traditional products like ‘lalten, and ‘shama’, are still in use and due to the non-availability of electricity several terms like ‘kato-ti’ (curtailment), ‘waer’ (turn) have come into existence.

Overall the song, ‘Battiye’ is a satirical version of the current power scenario in Kashmir Valley. [KN’]

Non- Availability Of Govt Jobs Leaves Rehabilitation Therapists In Jeopardy

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: The Rehabilitation therapists have urged the government to provide them with jobs. The BRT graduates said they had pursued their degrees with high hopes but in absence of jobs they have been left to fend for themselves.

Speaking to Kashmir Observer, the ‘unemployed’ Rehabilitation therapists said specially-abled people from lower middle class families in Kashmir cannot afford to visit private clinics and are not able to get proper treatment or rehabilitation therapy because of the high treatment costs.

“We are trained and qualified professionals having a Bachelor’s Degree in rehabilitation. We have pursued our degrees for four and half years which are monitored by the Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI)” said Mehraj Din Joo, who has completed his graduation from CRC Bemina.

“We have been trained specifically to deliver the rehabilitation services to the specially-abled persons

of the society, especially children suffering from various kinds of disabilities but in absence of jobs we have forgotten all that we had learnt.” Mehraj Din added.

They further said that people suffering from mental retardation, neurological problems, locomotor disability, impaired vision, autism speech and language problems and cerebral palsy are at the receiving end.

Barjeesa Mohiuddin, another aspirant eyeing a job in the Health Department said that from hearing impairment to visual disability, rehabilitation therapists are trained to help specially-abled people overcome these disabilities.

“The number of persons with disabilities is increasing and the government needs to avail the services of these trained professionals. Around 4 years back, the health department had proposed creation of 90 posts, till date no creation has been accorded.” Barjeesa said.

The Rehabilitation therapists pinned hope that the LG administration will come to their rescue and will order the creation of posts.



Braving heavy snowfall, supporters of the Congress party attend a rally led by Rahul Gandhi at SK stadium on Monday. KO Photo Abid Bhat

DC Oversees Snow Clearance Operation In City

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In order to assess the situation in wake of overnight Snowfall in the district, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad on Monday toured various areas around the Srinagar City to inspect Snow-clearance operations and take first hand appraisal about functioning of essential supplies.

The DC also reviewed the status of essential commodities and healthcare services available in the district on the occasion.

Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Athar Amir Khan accompanied the Deputy Commissioner during the tour.

During the tour, the DC visited various areas of the City including Karannagar, Kak Sarai, Batmaloo, Jehangir Chowk, Bemina, Maisuma, Basant Bagh, Gaw Kadal, Lalchowk and other adjoining areas, and took stock of the ongoing snow clearance operations.

He also visited SMHS Hospital to inspect the clearance measures for hassle free movement of ambulances apart from looking into power supply. He took a round of various units of the Hospital and inspected the

Emergency unit, ICU, OPD, IPD and enquired about the patient care facilities available at the hospital.

On the occasion, the DC asked the Medical Superintendent SMHS to ensure all healthcare facilities to the patients and take appropriate measures to ensure patient care services are not affected at all. He also directed the other line Departments to make sure periodical Snow clearance is undertaken besides stationing of mobile dewatering pumps to overcome water logging.

The DC also stressed on ensuring free Ambulance movement enroute all City Hospitals. He emphasized on Snow clearance from outer Srinagar areas like Harwan, Dara, Fakir Gujri, Khanmoh, Balhama, Soiteng, Panzinara, etc.

The DC also visited Power Grid Station Bemina and took stock of the power supply. He was informed that currently power supply is being fed to all City Stations/feeders as per notified schedule.

Giving Division wise details power feeders under fault today due to incessant snowfall, the DC was informed that out of total 267 feeders of 11KV capacity only 08 are under fault which are being restored on priority.

With regard to water supply, the DC was informed by the Executive Engineer who was accompanying him during the visit that all water supply schemes including 9 major water treatment plants catering Srinagar periphery are functional as per routine.

Later, the DC inspected the Transformer Repair yard at Basant Bagh and assessed the stock position of buffer power transformers.

On the occasion, the Superintending Engineer, PDD apprised the DC that as many 22 transformers are in buffer stock to cater any need to replace damaged transformers.

The DC was also informed that a 630 KVA Distribution Transformer which got damaged Sunday evening was replaced on Monday morning.

The DC stressed on inter-agency coordination to ensure hassle free essential services across the City.

Besides, Chief Planning Officer, Mohammad Yaseen Lone; the DC was accompanied by officers from Mechanical Engineering Department, Public Works Department, Public Health Engineering, Srinagar Municipal Corporation, UEED and officers from other line departments.

KASHMIR OBSERVER™

Srinagar | Tuesday | 31-01-2023

3

- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,2452222,2452155
- 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
- BIJBERA: 01932-228243
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153



HIGHWAY STATUS



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



HIJRI
CALENDAR

08 Rajab
1444

PRAYERS

FAJR	6:04
ZUHR	12:44
ASR	4:22
Magrib	6:03
ISHA	7: 26

This Day In History

- 314 - St Silvester I begins his reign as Catholic Pope
- 876 - Charles becomes king of Italy
- 1578 - Battle of Gembloux (Gembloers); Spanish forces win decisive victor over coalition rebel forces
- 1627 - Spanish government goes bankrupt
- 1849 - Corn Laws abolished in Britain
- 1867 - Maronite nationalist leader Youssef Karam leaves Lebanon on board of a French ship for Algeria
- 1925 - Premier Ahmed Zogu becomes president of Angola
- 1927 - Internationall allied military command in Germany disbands
- 1929 - Leon Trotsky expelled from Russia to Turkey
- 1933 - Adolf Hitler promises parliamentary democracy
- 1943 - Chile breaks off relations with Germany & Japan
- 1944 - US forces invade Kwajalein Atoll
- 1945 - Soviet troops reach the Oder River, less that 50 miles from Berlin
- 1946 - Yugoslavia adopts new constitution, becomes a federal republic
- 1948 - Magnetic tape recorder developed by Wireway
- 1950 - US President Harry Truman publicly announces support for the development of a hydrogen bomb
- 1957 - Trans-Iranian oil pipe line finished
- 1958 - James van Allen discovers radiation belt
- 1958 - US launches their 1st artificial satellite, Explorer 1
- 1961 - USAF launches Samos spy satellite to replace U-2 flights
- 1966 - USSR launches Luna 9 towards Moon
- 1971 - Apollo 14 launched, 1st landing in lunar highlands
- 1972 - Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev becomes 11th King of Nepal
- 1972 - Military coup ousts civilian government of Ghana
- 1972 - US launches HEOS A-2 for interplanetary observations (396/244,998).
- 1982 - Gustafson skates world record 10 km (14:26.59)
- 1985 - South African President P. W. Botha offers to free Nelson Mandela if he denounces violence

From KO Archives

Probe Ordered 30 Injured In Prison Riots

Observer News Service

S RINAGAR- At least 30 people, including a deputy superintendent of jail, were injured in a clash between detainees and CRPF jawans in the high security Kotbawal jail near here today. A high-level en-quiry has been ordered into the incident.

Trouble arose when jail of-ficials and CRPF personnel were inspecting one of the bar-racks housing foreign militants around 1100 hours. According to NAFA, CRPF and police had gone to the jail with sniffer dogs on receipt of some information'. A Pakistani militant identi-fied as Khawaja is reported to have entered into an argument with the police who subjected him to a summary thrashing. This at-tracted die attention of other detainees in the adjacent bar-racks. Around 50 of them, mostly foreigners came out and started shouting 'provocative' slogans.

Sensing trouble, the police and CRPF personnel resorted lathicharge which was re-sponded by the detainees with stone pelting. In the ensuing clash 36 detainees besides the deputy superintendent of po-lice, Harish Kotwal, were in-jured. Several visitors who had come meet their jailed relatives and some shopkeepers also started shouting slogans. They were chased away with some of them sustaining injuries in the process.

Later, a large number of visitors and shopkeepers sat on a dharna on the Akhnoor road and caused disruption in vehicular traffic. It was only after the CRPF commandant arrived at the spot that the situation was brought under control. He pacified the agitated inmates and the protesters and later reported the matter to the higher ups.

Taking a serious note of the incident, the director general of prisons, S S Ali, ordered a high level enquiry into it and asked the jail superintendent to submit a report immediately.

(Kashmir Observer, 31 January, 2001)

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After The Yatra

Amid heavy snowfall, a pheran-clad Rahul Gandhi delivered the final speech of his 4000 kilometre yatra atop an open podium at the cricket stadium to a thin but energetic audience. The atmosphere it created served as a fitting end to the yatra. Gandhi said the aim of his Bharat Jodo Yatra was to save the liberal and secular ethos of the country which, according to him, “is under assault from the BJP and the RSS.” However, he dissociated from any political motive of the yatra, saying it was essentially against the BJP’s ideology.

Significantly, Gandhi was joined by major Kashmiri leaders such as Omer Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti who also delivered speeches at the culmination of the yatra. However, there were no major leaders from the prominent opposition parties in the rest of the country. So the opposition unity that the yatra was expected to usher in has so far remained unfulfilled.

Where does the Congress and Gandhi himself go from hereon? It is still difficult to answer this question with any clarity. It is true that the yatra has generated immense goodwill for Congress and Gandhi but the political ground is still far from shifting. Prime Minister Narendra Modi continues to be the unstoppable and all-powerful leader, and no other national leader, let alone Gandhi, comes close.

Similarly, the BJP continues to wield total political dominance. And Congress in its current shrunken state seems no match for it. And that too at a time when the party faces tough competition even from the AAP which is trying to fill in the political space vacated by the former. With its landslide victory in Punjab last year, the AAP is on a roll. It hopes to replicate the performance in other states. Arvind Kejriwal has exhibited political smarts to get his party up and running out of nowhere.

But there is still one year to go before the general elections are held, and much can change during this period. One year is a long time in politics. As things stand, only a combined opposition could be expected to take on the BJP. Gandhi has been trying to forge opposition unity but there are only feeble indications that he has had any success in the endeavour. It won’t be easy to bring all the opposition parties together on one platform, more so, with several regional leaders nursing their personal ambitions. But for now Congress can take heart from the Gandhi’s successful yatra and hope to build on it.

OTHER OPINION

Warning Bells

The latest stock market gyrations induced in large measure by the stock rout in leading infrastructure and commodities intensive conglomerate, the Adani group, over the last two trading sessions last week has cast the spotlight back on India’s regulatory environment. The highly leveraged group’s market troubles, in the wake of a U.S.-based short seller’s report alleging ‘stock manipulation and questionable accounting practices’, dragged down banking shares led by the State Bank of India and even the state-owned Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) appreciably on Friday, triggering investor concern about broader financial sector stability. And while a media report citing sources said the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) had stepped up scrutiny of the conglomerate’s transactions, there has been no official word from the markets regulator. The conglomerate itself has rubbished the short seller’s allegations as being ‘baseless and discredited and born of mala fide intent to hurt the group’s reputation’, and is weighing legal action. Notwithstanding how the conglomerate might move to address the concerns raised in the short seller’s report as well as those of domestic investors who appear to have turned chary of the group’s stocks, India’s regulators including SEBI and the Reserve Bank of India have an opportunity, nay an obligation, to clear the air by allaying fears of any broader systemic contagion.

Even granting that the group’s stocks do not have a significant presence or weight on the major benchmark stock indices, and private equity research reports have sought to downplay concerns about the banking sector’s overall exposure to the group, there can be little argument that the major state-owned banks and the LIC are key pillars of the country’s financial system. Given the extent of public trust reposed in these companies in the form of savers’ deposits and life insurance policies as well as taxpayer resources that have been invested to keep the PSU lenders adequately capitalised, financial system regulators would be serving the larger public interest by pre-emptively communicating messages of reassurance. Regulators could also enhance credibility in India as an investment destination by tightening not just the listing requirements but more crucially the enforcement actions in case of egregious breaches of the laws. The global debate over the credibility of credit ratings that has surfaced from time to time, whether in the wake of the Asian financial crisis of the late 1990s, or the global financial crisis of 2007-08, is also a concern that India’s regulators need to re-engage with. At a time when India holds the G-20 presidency, authorities must ensure the regulatory framework is seen in nothing less than the best light.

The Hindu

Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat

Earlier, they used to be reluctant to even reveal to people in Kashmir that they were from the Chopan tribe but when they met other youth from 16 states from the same communities, they became optimistic and were inspired to work for the welfare of their own community

Young Pastoralists’
Confluence at Bhuj



When Ramesh Bhatti, a senior functionary and board member of Gujarat based NGO Sahjeevan, requested me to accompany a youth group from the Kashmiri Chopan community to attend a national conclave of pastoralists in Kutch between Jan 19 to 21st, I was a bit confused for a few days. The organisers of the event wanted the presence of both young men and women to participate in the conclave but the problem with Kashmiri Chopans (Shepherd community) a majority of the women are illiterate and would not travel all the way from Kashmir to Kutch even with their husbands, brothers or parents. However, Basharat, a young social activist known to me who belongs to the Chopan community said that his sister would tag along for the meeting as well. So Basharat Chopan and his sister Uzma came with me to Bhuj city in Kutch Gujarat on January 18th. A group of four people were also invited to the same event who assisted me to prepare the Kashmiri vegetarian dishes during the food festival which was part of this 5 days cultural event.

Basharat belongs to Chopan community from Watirihail Budgam and has done Post Graduation in Rural Development. His sister Uzma completed her graduation only last year. Another chopan activist Tariq Ahmad Chopan who is pursuing PhD in History from Kashmir University with special thrust on Chopans also decided to come at the eleventh hour. The decision to take these young Chopans to Bhuj Kutch in Gujarat was a great idea and I am grateful to Centre for Pastoralism (CFP) and Sahjeevan for holding an event for the young pastoralists who have the potential to lead their communities in future.

The pastoralist communities across India are a vast tribe who face tremendous challenges but there are only a few NGOs who work for them especially for their better education, health and livelihood. Uzma, Basharat and Tariq who had become pessimistic due to official apathy of Govt towards Chopans in Kashmir found a ray of hope. Earlier, they used to be reluctant to even reveal to people in Kashmir that they were from the Chopan tribe but when they met other youth from 16 states from the same communities, they became optimistic and were inspired to work for the welfare of the community. Same was the case with Bakerwal youth who had come from Samba and other areas of Jammu. In fact, the Bakerwals or Gujjars have been given Scheduled Tribe (ST) status by Govt in 1992 , the poor 2.50 lakh Chopans continue to suffer. The Govt instead granted ST status to the affluent Pahadi tribe and this disadvantaged group was bypassed.

Uzma felt overwhelmed

Uzma, who had hardly gone out of Kashmir, was overwhelmed to see how the pastoral communities had been organised in different states. When she met women from Rabari, Maldhari and other pastoralist groups living in Gujarat, Maharashtra and Telegnaga it boosted her morale to work for the community. Infact the women from these communities were not educated and Uzma being an educated young lady from Chopan community can do a lot of work for her tribe in future.

Uzma along with her brother Basharat and PHD scholar Tariq even assisted our volunteers as well who had set up a Kashmiri veg food stall. The Chopan group got so much love and respect from the organisers namely Centre for Pastoralism, Living and Learning Design Centre -LLDC, Shrujan Trust, Living Lightly and Sahjeevan during the two days conclave. Infact Uzma was asked to formally welcome Mr Parshottam Rupala, the Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying, who was the chief guest during the conclave and this was a great honour for the Kashmiri Chopan community.

During the two days conclave, lots of issues faced by Pastoralist communities were discussed and brainstormed by the younger generation. The main issues raised by young pastoralists was Govt’s failure to give the grazing rights to pastoralists across all the states

Issues discussed during Conclave

During the two days conclave, lots of issues faced by Pastoralist communities were discussed and brainstormed by the younger generation. The main issues raised by young pastoralists was Govt’s failure to give the grazing rights to pastoralists across all the states. The participants from J&K, Himachal Pradesh , Uttarakhand, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Telangana and other states said that Forest Department officials were disrespecting the Forest Rights Act (FRA). Many wanted better health facilities for their animals and mobile veterinary clinics. Some groups discussed livelihood and processing of milk, milk products and wool. Pastoral Culture, ethics, traditions and its erosion was also discussed in detail. Some pastoral groups from Maharashtra and MP raised issues of dacoits looting their livestock at gunpoint and wanted better security from Govt. The Union Minister listened to these grievances and assured the group members that he would try to address them. In Fact a followup meeting was held in New Delhi on Jan 28th

wherein many organisations including CFP and Sahjeevan participated.

Living Lightly

In addition to the youth conclave of pastoralist communities, there was a beautiful exhibition held between 19-23rd January 2023. The LLDC Museum hosted the ‘Living Lightly- Journeys with Pastoralists’ exhibition and event. The exhibition holds space for conversations amongst pastoral communities across geographies, conversations between pastoralists and citizens at large, and engaged dialogues about pastoralism in India. The multimedia exhibition was accompanied by film screenings, Pastoral food festival, Pastoral crafts, workshops and immersive experiences. Sushma Ayengar who heads the Living Lightly organisation has been holding these exhibitions for last many years

Conclusion

A 32 member National Pastoralist Youth Federation was set up during the conclave and both Uzma and Basharat have been included as the members of this national level group.

In a place like Jammu & Kashmir where almost 6000 plus sheep are slaughtered daily for local consumption , is it an irony that we still import mutton from states like Rajasthan ? We have such a huge market for the sheep and dairy sector which still is unexplored. The Chopan community on the other hand is like those landless labourers who work in farms but don’t own any land. Chopans take care of sheep but they don’t own them. The sheep belong to farmers who pay some amount to the chopans for a season. The policies of Govt must focus on empowering the youth from this community by providing them subsidies to set up sheep farms. Under Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) , Chopans of Kashmir must also get their due share and the community must be included under the ST category by Govt of India.

Views expressed in the article are the author’s own and do not necessarily represent the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer
Dr Raja Muzaffar Bhat is an Acumen Fellow and a Srinagar based writer and activist

DSEK Orders To Verify Genuineness Of 2009 Batch, Other Appointees

Agencies

SRINAGAR: In the backdrop of fake posting and appointment orders, the School Education Department has asked the Chief Education Officers (CEOs) of Kashmir region to verify the genuineness of 2009 batch and other appointees of which orders have been issued by the government.

According to the official communiqué issued by the Director of School Education Kashmir (DSEK), the CEOs have been asked to furnish the details in ten days.

"CEOs are advised to get the genuineness of all 2009 and other appointees verified by reference to original orders issued by DSEK and selection list of JKSSB and intimate to the undersigned within 10 days confidentially," DSEK said.

The officer said this in a reference to the fake appointment made by a fraudster who had

managed to get an entry in the department for more than 13 years by producing fake posting and appointment orders.

In previous week, DSEK has said, "Chief Education Officer Srinagar in a letter on November-22-2022 has reported that the service book of a 'imposter' working as teacher in government school reveal an entry to the effect that he has been appointed as teacher in 2009 under RBA category, after being selected by the JK Service Selection Board."

"In order to ascertain the genuineness of his appointment order, the original order issued by DSEK on December-12-2009 appointment Service Selection Board were verified and it has been found that his name does not figure anywhere in the original appointment order nor original select list of JKSSB," the director said—(KNO)

J&K Govt Renames 52 Schools After Slain Cops, Security Men

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The government Monday renamed 52 public schools and five other infrastructures in the Union Territory after the policemen and security personnel who died in the line of duty.

Besides, the government also renamed road from Naaz crossing to Gonikhan market after Makhani Lal Bindroo—a prominent pharmacist, who was shot dead in his business establishment by militants on October 5, 2021

In an order issued here, Secretary to Government Piyush Singla accorded sanction in naming of 57 infrastructure and assets in Srinagar, Anantnag, Bandipora, Shopian, Budgam, Kupwara, Ganderbal, Pulwama, Baramulla, Kulgam, Samba, Udhampur and Jammu after martyrs and eminent personalities.

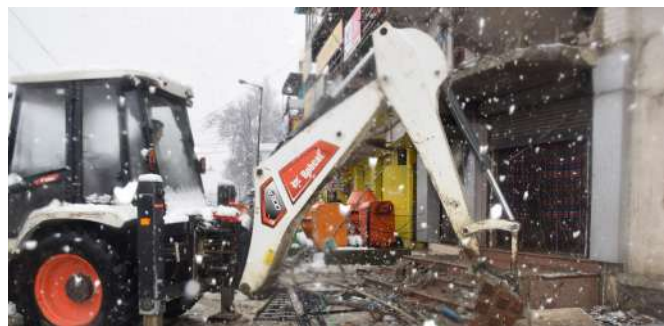
Previously, the government had renamed scores of educational establishments and roads after some eminent personalities and the security forces who lost their lives on the line of duty.

Besides, the government had ordered necessary steps to be taken for amending the records for effecting the changes.

According to the order, the School Education Department has been asked to take immediate necessary steps including amending records for effecting the changes.

"Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir and Jammu shall personally monitor the naming of infrastructure assets in their respective divisions while the Deputy Commissioners shall ensure that appropriate events are held in connection with the naming of these infrastructures and assets," it reads.

Admin Takes Over Illegal Structure Raised By NC Leader In Anantnag



Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: The District Administration here on Monday took over an illegal commercial structure belonging to Ex-MLA Homeshalibugh and National Conference Senior Leader, Abdul Majeed Larmi at LG Pora in Anantnag.

The structure had been erected by encroaching on Shamlat 4 land close to NH44. The property is situated on a prime piece of land. As per reports, the property worth over Rs 50 lakhs including the land was being rented out to various businesses, an official spokesperson said.

He quoted a senior revenue official as saying that there has been a full onslaught on encroachers in Anantnag who

have occupied prime pieces of State/ Shamlat lands for their own benefits.

"Influential encroachers who have abused their official positions to amass ill gotten gains are the priority for removal of encroachments," the officer said, adding that the vacated buildings and lands can be put to public use.

It is in place to mention that a few days ago a notice had also been issued to Abdul Majeed Larmi regarding the encroachment which was followed up with decisive action today.

A senior revenue official said that while encroachments on the road side including fencings have been demolished, the main building has been taken over by the Revenue department.

One Kanal Land Illegally Occupied By Police Officer Freed

Majid Nabi

SRINAGAR: Days after knocking down the outer wall and main gate of a former Ministers residence at Humhama, authorities' retrieved one kanal land illegally encroached upon by a JKPS officer at Gogo area of Budgam district in central Kashmir on Monday.

Officials told Kashmir Observer that the squad, as part of governments drive against illegal encroachers, demolished the outer wall and a small structure erected on the piece of land, illegally occupied by a police officer, presently posted

as a commandant.

They said the one kanal land which was retrieved during the ongoing drive was lying next to the property owned by the said police officer in the name of his wife.

Pertinently, authorities demolished the outer wall and main gate of the residence of National Conference leader, Ali Mohammad Sagar at Humhama near Srinagar Airport last week.

The outer wall, the main gate as well as the entry of the guardroom of the NC leader's Humhama residence was demolished as part of the government's ongoing demolition drive against the "land grabbers".



RAHUL GANDHI, HIS SISTER PRIYANKA and former J&K Chief Ministers Omar Abdullah and Mehbooba Mufti pose for a photograph amid heavy snowfall at the venue of Congress rally in Srinagar on Monday.

KO PHOTO, ABID BHAT

'GOING TO MY HOME'

Rahul Told Priyanka, Sonia Ahead Of J&K Leg Of Yatra

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Congress leader Rahul Gandhi had sent a message to his sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra and mother Sonia Gandhi before the Bharat Jodo Yatra entered Jammu and Kashmir, saying that he was "going to his home".

This was narrated by Rahul Gandhi's sibling Priyanka Gandhi at a rally to mark the culmination of the nearly five month-long Bharat Jodo Yatra from Kanyakumari to Kashmir.

Later, Rahul Gandhi said he had tears in his eyes when Priyanka Gandhi talked about his message. The Gandhis have their familial roots in Jammu and Kashmir.

In her remarks at the rally at the Sher-e-Kashmir stadium which was attended by several Opposition leaders as well, Priyanka Gandhi said the politics that is happening cannot benefit the country.

"The politics that divides, harms the country," she said. "My brother has been walking for the last five months from Kanyakumari to Srinagar. At the start, I thought it was a long journey, whether people would come out or not. But they came out everywhere from Kanyakumari to here," the Congress general secretary said.

"They came out because people of the country have a spirit for the country's constitution, its unity," she said.



Priyanka Gandhi thanked the people of Jammu and Kashmir for welcoming the yatra with open hearts.

"When my brother was about to reach Jammu and Kashmir, he sent a message to me and my mother saying that he was getting a feeling that he was going to his home," she said.

"He (Rahul) had said that 'my family members (people of Jammu and Kashmir), when they meet me and hug me, they have tears in their eyes, their pain and sentiments touch my heart'," she said.

Priyanka Gandhi said she felt proud standing here that the Congress carried out a yatra which was supported by the whole country.

In a way the yatra has been spiritual for the Congress leaders who participated, the leaders of other parties who took

part, 'Bharat Yatris' and Rahul Gandhi, she said.

"It is our duty to protect the foundation of this country built on the basis of truth, 'ahimsa (non-violence)' and love," she said.

Priyanka Gandhi said the 'Bharat Yatris' have shown the way of love and brotherhood.

"They have shown us a ray of hope. I hope that the hate will end and love will take the country forward and unite everyone," she said.

The yatra culminated on Monday with an event at the Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) headquarters in the Lal Chowk area here and the rally at the stadium. The yatra traversed 12 states and two Union territories in over 140 days after its launch on September 7 last year, clocking over 4,000 km.

See A Ray Of Hope In Rahul, Say Omar And Mehbooba

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Former chief ministers of Jammu and Kashmir Mehbooba Mufti and Omar Abdullah said on Monday that they see a ray of hope in Congress leader Rahul Gandhi.

As the two leaders invoked Mahatma Gandhi on his death anniversary while praising Rahul Gandhi for the Bharat Jodo Yatra, Abdullah also urged the former Congress president to undertake another 'yatra' from west to east of the country and promised to join the march "to spread the message of peace, brotherhood and love".

"I welcome Rahul ji and others. Rahul ji said he has come to Kashmir to his home. Rahul ji, this is your home.

"I hope that whatever has been taken from Jammu and Kashmir and this country, by (Nathuram) Godse's ideology, will be returned by a Gandhi, and not just to J-K, but to the whole country," Mufti, the chief of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP), said at the rally to mark the culmination of the Bharat Jodo Yatra.

Both Mufti and Abdullah had joined Gandhi in his walk during the Jammu and Kashmir leg of the Yatra.

Mufti said the father of the nation Mahatma Gandhi had said in 1947 at the time of the Partition that he sees a ray of hope in J-K.

"Today, the whole country sees that ray of hope in Rahul Gandhi," the PDP chief said.



Echoing Mufti's sentiments, National Conference (NC) vice president Omar Abdullah said the Yatra has rekindled the ray of hope in the whole of the country. "Mehbooba Mufti was correct. Today, (MK) Gandhiji was martyred. Gandhiji in 1947 said he sees a ray of hope in J-K. This yatra, perhaps, has once again rekindled that ray of hope in the whole country," Abdullah said.

Congratulating the former Congress president and the party on his behalf and that of his father Farooq Abdullah and the NC, the junior Abdullah said the Yatra has truly been very successful.

"This country was in a dire need of this Yatra," he added.

The NC leader said there has been an attempt to give an impression to the world that there is only one thinking in this country which is of "Sangh Parivar which is communal".

"But, this Yatra has proved that while there are those who like the BJP, but there are also those who want new politics without the BJP, who want a fresh thinking, who want brotherhood and want to live in peace and with love and affection with

each other," he said, adding the "BJP cannot give this thinking".

Calling upon Gandhi to unite the country's east and west through another Bharat Jodo Yatra, Abdullah said he will also take part in it to spread the message of peace, brotherhood and love.

"Rahul, your Yatra joined south India with the north. I know you need some rest as you have been walking continuously since September, but, I request you that perhaps, time has come to join eastern India with the west through a Bharat Jodo Yatra.

"We got to walk a bit with you on this Yatra. There is a vast part of the country from east to west which I have not seen. If you walk from east to west, then God willing, it will be my endeavour to walk with you and spread the message of peace, brotherhood and love," he said.

Speaking amidst heavy snowfall, Abdullah said the fresh snowfall in the Valley was a good omen.

"You (Gandhi) brought snow to Srinagar. We had been waiting for this for long. This snow is a good omen, there is betterment for us in this snow. While the snow affected the programme, it has brought light to our lives, for which we thank you as well," the NC vice president said.

With the rally, curtains have come down on the Yatra that traversed a dozen states and two Union territories in nearly five months after its launch on September 7 last year in Kanyakumari.



All Major Roads Open In Kupwara: Admin

DC Personally Monitors Snow Clearance Operation; Interacts With Public; Inspects Govt Institutions

Observer News Service

KUPWARA: All major roads including Kupwara-Sopore road, Handwara-Baramulla, Kupwara-Sogam, Kupwara-Kralpora-Chowkibal and other roads are open for traffic in Kupwara district.

According to Executive Engineer Mechanical, all priority 1 roads have been cleared twice during the day.

Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Dr. Doifode Sagar Dattatray today inspected various Government offices, health institutions and other establishments to personally monitor the Snow clearance operation and other facilities.

During the visit, the DC inspected the Snow clearance operation at Bohipora-Gushi-Vil-

gam road. He also had a surprise check of NTPHC Gushi and Naya-bat Office Gushi, AYUSH Health & Wellness Centre Gushi. During the inspection, the DC checked the attendance of staff.

He also interacted with the public during the visit and heard them patiently, and redressed their grievances.

The DC directed officers and field functionaries to play a proactive role in facilitating the public during the ongoing Snow season.

He said despite heavy Snowfall in the areas of Kupwara district, Snow clearance operation remained uninterrupted during the day and all major roads were opened open for traffic.

Meanwhile, Snow clearance operation is also on in Karnah sub division.

2 Doctors, 3 Paramedics Suspended For Absence In Kupwara

Observer News Service

KUPWARA: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara on Monday paid a surprise visit to PHC Gushi and found 5 employees, including 2 doctors absent from duty.

The Deputy Commissioner directed concerned BMO for appropriate action under rules.

Meanwhile, the Block Medical Officer Kupwara issued a suspension order under endorse-

ment No.BMOK/3245-47 dated 30-01-2023 in which 5 employees of PHC Gushi namely Dr. Latief Ahmad, Medical Officer; Dr. Imet Pal Singh, Dental Surgeon; Muneer Ah Noman, Sup. Pharmacist; Mohd Sultan Bhat, Male Nurse and Hafeeza Begum, FMPHW have been placed under suspension till pending enquiry.

The order further reads that the pay for the month of January 2023 shall be kept withheld till further directions.

Govt Transfers Four JKAS Officers

Syed Shahnawaz Posted As RTO Kashmir

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Government on Monday ordered transfer of four JKAS officers with one of them, Syed Shahnawaz Assistant Commissioner, State Taxes, Enforcement (North), Baramulla, Kashmir, posted as Regional Transport Officer, Kashmir.

According to separate orders issued by Dr. Piyush Singha, Secretary to the Government, "Sajid Yehaya Naqash, JKAS, Regional Transport officer, Kashmir, has been transferred and has been asked to await further orders of adjustment in the General Administration Department."

As per separate order, Asif Hamid Khan, JKAS, Member, J&K Special Tribunal, Srinagar Bench, has been transferred and has been asked to await further orders of adjustment in the General Administration Department.

Ashiq Hussain Lily, JKAS, awaiting orders of adjustment in the GAD, has been posted as Member, J&K Special Tribunal, Srinagar Bench

33000 Kanal State, Kahcharai Land Retrieved In Bandipora

Observer News Service

BANDIPORA: Acting tough against land grabbers, the District Administration Bandipora has retrieved around 33000 Kanals of encroached land comprising around 16000 Kanals of State Land and 17000 Kanals of Kahcharie land through intensified anti-encroachment drives.

The drives have also evicted around 500 Kanals of high value land from various influential persons of the district especially in Tehsil Bandipora and Sumbal.

The anti-encroachment drives are being continued despite inclement weather conditions and around 500 Kanals of State/Kahcharie land has been retrieved in various Tehsils of the District including 42 Kanals of prime land worth 20 crores in Tehsil Sumbal.

The retrieved land is also being earmarked for various public purposes including developmental projects, playgrounds, village centric amenities, industries, etc. by the Revenue officials in consultation with concerned villagers/PRIs, and sign boards are also erected immediately after the eviction drives.

It was given out that out of total 20887 of kahcharai land 17128 Kanals of land has been retrieved amounting to 82% of Kahcharai land in the district

and the concerned Tehsildars have already issued notices to the encroachers and the efforts for removal of encroachments on the rest of the land are underway in full-swing.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Dr. Owais Ahmad said that illegal occupation of Government and public land puts stress on land resources and urged the encroachers to voluntarily remove illegal occupancies or face action. He said anti encroachment drives are underway across the district and urged the public to cooperate in anti-encroachment drives carried out by administration.

He said that the District has created a land bank of around 25000 Kanals out of which around 1550 Kanals have been earmarked for Industrial Estates, 2000 Kanals for Industrial Use (Out of which around 1377 Kanals stand already transferred), around 100 Kanals for Handloom/ Handicraft and other agri-based activities and around 200 Kanals for setting up of Housing Colony in Watpora Bandipora.

500 Kanals of prime land in Sumbal having industrial utility lying adjacent to highway was retrieved last week and anti-encroachment drives are taken to preserve Government land from illegal possession of land mafia.

61 killed, Over 150 Injured In Taliban Suicide Attack At Mosque In High-Security Zone In Pakistan's Peshawar

Press Trust of India

Peshawar: A Taliban suicide bomber blew himself up in a mosque packed with worshippers during afternoon prayers on Monday in the high-security zone in Pakistan's restive north-western Peshawar city, killing at least 61 people and wounding more than 150 others, mostly policemen, officials said.

The powerful blast occurred inside the mosque in the Police Lines area around 1.40 pm when worshippers, which included personnel of the police, army and bomb disposal squad – were offering the Zuhr (afternoon) prayers.

The bomber who was present in the front row blew himself up, causing the roof to collapse on the worshippers, officials said.

Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Peshawar Muhammad

Ijaz Khan said 61 people have been killed in the blast.

He said that 300 to 400 police officials were present in the area at the time of the blast. "It is apparent that a security lapse occurred," he told the media.

At least five sub-inspectors and the mosque's prayer leader Maulana Sahibzada Noorul Amin were among the dead.

Lady Reading Hospital officials said more than 150 people were injured. The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), known as the Pakistani Taliban, claimed responsibility for the suicide attack, saying it was part of a revenge attack for slain TTP commander Umar Khalid Khurasani who was killed in Afghanistan in August last.

A police official said that a portion of the mosque collapsed and several people were believed to be under it.

"We are currently focused on

the rescue operation. Our first priority is to safely retrieve the people buried under the debris," in-charge Rescue operation Bilal Faizi said.

The bomber entered the highly secured mosque inside police lines where four layers of security were in place. Provincial Police chief Moazzam Jah Ansari said they are investigating the blast and how the bomber entered the highly fortified mosque.

He expressed the apprehensions that the bomber might have been residing in the police lines before the blast as there are family quarters too inside the police lines. The headquarters of the Peshawar Police, Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD), Frontier Reserve Police (FRP), Elite Force and telecommunications department are also located near the blast site.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif

and Army chief General Asim Munir dashed to Peshawar to review the relief and rescue operation. The premier along with the army chief also visited the Lady Reading Hospital in Peshawar and inquired after the health of the injured. Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah and other officials were also present.

The Prime Minister summoned an emergency meeting where the preliminary probe report was presented.

Briefing the prime minister, IGP Ansari said he was unaware from where the bomber had come and how he managed to enter the police lines.

Superintendent of Police (Investigation), Peshawar, Shazad Kaukab, whose office is close to the mosque, told the media that the blast occurred when he just entered the mosque to offer prayers. He said he luckily survived the attack.

Cantabil Opens New Store In Srinagar

The Store Will Offer A Full Range Of Formal-Wear, Casuals, And Ultra-Casual Clothing Exclusively For Women & Kids

Srinagar: Cantabil Retail India Ltd., one of India's leading apparel manufacturer and retailer, has announced the opening of its retail store in Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir. Spread across an area of 661 sq. ft., this is the brand's 5th retail store in the city and is located at Sarah City Centre, Srinagar.

The all-new Cantabil Retail store represents the future of retail experience for its customers, as they offer a full range of formal-wear, casuals, and ultra-casual clothing exclusively for women & kids at competitive price.

Additionally, the brand has an existing retail outlet at the same location which is offers the complete men's wear collection, providing the convenience to the consumers to buy different categories of apparels in one visit to the mall. With this



store opening, Cantabil retail has reached to 440 store mark across India and plans to continue expanding its retail presence.

Commenting on the opening of the store, Mr. Deepak Bansal, Director, Cantabil Retail India Ltd. said, "We are delighted to announce the launch of our new retail store in Srinagar. Cantabil Retail as a brand has been well received and admired amongst our customers in the

mid-premium segment, across all age groups. In order to ensure the availability of trendy yet competitive fashion apparel to our customers, we have opened yet another retail store in Srinagar in addition to the 4 existing ones. Today, we have a strong presence across the length and breadth of the country and aim to aggressively expand our retail presence further over the next few years."

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Fresh Snowfall Cuts

Sumlar 9596767413, DO Police Post Ajas 9596767452, SHO PS Hajin 9596767431 & SHO PS Sumbal 9596767441.

For district Budgam, the helpline numbers are;

PCR Budgam 01951-255207, 01951-255042, 8082567612, SHO Budgam 9419000538, SHO Magam 9906449794, SHO Khansahib 9596000212, SHO Chadoora 7006411196, SHO Charar-e-Sharief 9797279660, SHO Khag 9419905840, SHO Breewah 7006252476, DO Humhama 6005599737, DO Soibugh 9906000474, DO Narbal 9797626526, DO Waterihail 9419007052, DO Pakerpora 9797985415, Out-Post Hardipanzo 9596203940, DO Mouchwa 9797290222.

For district Kulgam, the helpline numbers are;

Police Control Kulgam (PCR) 01931260486, 7889786112, ASP Kulgam 9906605555, DySP Hqrs Kulgam 7051510654, SDPO DH Pora 7051510676, SHO PS Kulgam 7051510661, SHO PS Yaripora 7051510662, SHO PS DH Pora 7051510663, SHO PS Devsar 7051510664, SHO PS Qazigund 7051510665, SHO PS Qaimoh 7051510667, SHO PS Manzgam 7051510671, SHO PS Behibagh 7051510669, SHO PS Kund 7051510670, IC PP Frisal 7051510668, IC PP JT 7051510680, IC PP Mirbazar 7051510679.

For district Ganderbal, the helpline numbers are: PCR Ganderbal 01942416564, 01942416478, 9906668731, DySP Hqrs Ganderbal 9419014565 9541786715, SDPO Kangan 94190 03184 9541786714, SHO Sonamarg 9419001413, 9541786717, SHO Gund 9906034729, 9541786718, SHO Kangan 9419088801, 9541786719, SHO Lar 9419006700, 9541786720, SHO Safapora 94190419228, 9541786723, SHO Ganderbal 9419042458, 9541786721, SHO Kheerbawani 7006403030, 9541786722, DO Nagbal 7006248873, 9541786725 DO Gutlibagh 9541373526, 9541786724 DO Shadipora 9906000959, 9541786726

For Sopore, PCR Sopore 01954-222312, 01954-225333, 9596773024 Police Station Tarzoo 9596773011, 01954-223355 Police Station Sopore 9596773010, 01954-222217SDPO Sopore 01954-222422, 9596773004 SHO Bomai 9596773012, SHO Dangiawacha 9596773014, SHO Panzla 9596773013.

PCR Srinagar 0194-2477567, 9596222550, 9596222551.

PCR Awantipora 01933247369, 7051404001. PCR Shopian 9596768831, 01933-261891, 9596768831.

PCR Anantnag 01932-222870, 01932-222100, 9596777669.

PCR Handwara 01955262295, 9906767076.

PCR Baramulla 01952234410, 01952237830, 9596767768.

PCR Kupwara 01955-252451, 9596152621, 7051404938.

PCR Pulwama 01933-241280, 01933-241986, 8491942867, 9070123536.

PCR Kashmir: 0194-2506506, 0194-2506507 Citizens can also avail any kind of assistance by Dialling 112. (With PTI inputs)

All 68 Flights

continuous snowfall," he said. All airlines will accommodate the passengers of the cancelled flights in the next available flight without any extra charges, he said.

"The option of the full refund without any deduction will also be available".

A senior official of the Airport said that the surface was kept clean and clear of snow throughout the day despite continuous and heavy snowfall. However continuous snowfall and low visibility meant that no flight could operate.

Power Supply

which affected the power supply mainly to Sopore, Kupwara and Handwara areas of Kashmir Valley, an official spokesperson said.

Besides, he said, few portions of District Budgam and of District Anantnag were also affected due to the outage of 4 No. of 33 KV lines out of 14.

In addition to that, around 215 11 KV feeders were under fault due to heavy Snowfall.

The spokesperson said that due to overnight snowfall the load of the whole Valley dipped below 850 MWs during the early morning hours of Monday.

From early in the morning, he said, KPDCL field teams were mobilized to rectify the faults and despite the continuous snowfall in the region and braving the extreme freezing temperature, the field teams started patrolling the faulty lines and were able to bring up the load of Kashmir Valley to around 1590 MWs by 3 PM.

"It is important to mention that at present only four 33 KV lines which specially feed to Sopore Area of District Baramulla and few areas of Bijbehara are under fault and by evening all the 33 KV lines will be charged. Out of all the 11 KV feeders only 154 feeders remain out due to the faulty status of four 33KV lines," the spokesperson said.

He said MD, KPDCL Yasin M Choudhary is closely monitoring the situation and assures the public that all the feeders will be up and live.

"This is the first time that such a quick restoration has happened since the incorporation of KPDCL," the spokesperson said.

Choudhary, he said, has also praised the patience shown by the public towards the corporation and assures the public that the field team of KPDCL will not rest till all the feeders are up and running.

Avalanche Warning

Poonch districts.

Avalanche with 'Medium Danger Level' is likely to occur above 1500 to 2500 metres over Bandipora, Baramulla, Ganderbal, Kupwara, Kulgam and Ramban, reads the advisory.

Avalanche with 'Low Danger Level' is likely to occur above 1500 metres over Anantnag district.

"People living in these areas are advised to take precautions and avoid venturing in the avalanche prone areas", the advisory reads.

Protest Against

our homes?," he said, asking, "Where will we go? We are also the citizens of Jammu and Kashmir and this country."

They have been holding the land for over 70 years and, instead of regularising the area, the administration is serving notices, he said.

BJP Rajya Sabha MP Gulam Ali Khatana also spoke to the protesters and assured them that he would take up their grievance with the Lt Governor and the Centre.

People's Democratic Party (PDP) leader Varinder Singh Sonu and Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Rajesh Gupta joined the protesters and launched a scathing attack on the BJP for the "anti-people" drive.

"This is not a political issue but a humanitarian one. All political parties are standing with the protesters as their concerns are genuine. They have been living on the land for generations and today, they have been served a notice to leave," Sonu said.

AAP leader Gupta accused the administration of harassing and persecuting the downtrodden on the pretext of removing encroachments and retrieving state and forest land.

The government action to divest the poor farmers and agriculturalists of their lands and work places was not only loathsome but "sinful", he said.

"The BJP government is pro-rich and anti-poor. It will pay a heavy price for its sins in the days to come," Gupta said.

Leh Apex Body

attempt to invite the attention of Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) so that our leaders can brief him about their concerns and demands," Wangchuk told reporters at Himalayan Institute of Alternatives Ladakh (HIAL) campus.

Wangchuk said safeguarding the Himalayas, including its glaciers, should be more important than making some "corporators happy" as it is having a direct bearing on the people of the sub-continent.

"The government needs to have a futuristic plan for safeguarding the environment of the Himalayas. It should also keep its promise of extending the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution to Ladakh," he said.

Wangchuk threatened to intensify his protest in case there was no response from the government. "This was just a symbolic protest and if there was no response, I will go on a hunger strike for 10 days, later 15 days and so on till my last breath."

Former MP and Chairman of the Leh Apex Body of Peoples Movement for Sixth Schedule Thupstan Chhewang announced a grand rally on January 31 against the "failure of the government to protect the identity and culture of Ladakh".

On January 15, the Apex Body and the KDA jointly staged a protest in Jammu in support of their demands, including protection of land and jobs, and announced a similar protest at Jantar Mantar in Delhi in the third week of February.

Bharat Jodo Yatra

Sher-e-Kashmir Cricket Stadium in the high security Sonwar area for a rally marking the

grand finale of the cross-country yatra.

"I have not done this (yatra) for myself or for the Congress but for the people of the country. Our aim is to stand against the ideology that wants to destroy the foundation of this country," Gandhi said.

Those on stage in a show of solidarity included leaders from the DMK, National Conference, People's Democratic Party, Communist Party of India, the Bahujan Samaj Party, the Indian Union Muslim League, the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, Viduthalai Chiruthaigal Katchi, and the Revolutionary Socialist Party.

Among the notable absentees of the 22 parties invited were the Trinamool Congress, Samajwadi Party and JD(U).

Sources said some opposition party leaders could not make it on account of the weather. However, some leaders had also expressed their inability to be part of the rally on account of previous commitments.

In a speech that was in turn political and personal, Gandhi challenged the BJP top brass to undertake a yatra such as his in Jammu and Kashmir and said they would never do it as they were scared.

The Congress leader, who started walking on September 7 last year and crossed a dozen states and two Union Territories, said he was advised against walking the Jammu and Kashmir lap on the grounds that he might be attacked.

"I thought over it and then decided that I will walk in my home and with my people (in J&K).... The people of Kashmir did not give me hand grenades, only their hearts full of love," he said.

Undeterred by the heavy snow and cold, hundreds of people gathered at the stadium for the rally that some viewed as a turning point for the former Congress president who has long fought the "Pappu" image and may have finally come into his own, and possibly for the electorally battered Congress.

"When I was walking to Kashmir, I thought this is the same route through which, years ago, my relatives came from Kashmir to Allahabad. I felt that I was returning my home. Since I was a child, I have lived in government accommodations, I do not have a house," Gandhi said.

He also recalled the moments when he was informed about the assassination of his grandmother and father, former prime ministers Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi.

"Those who incite violence like Modiji, Amit Shahji, the BJP and the RSS - will never understand this pain. The family of an Army man will understand, the family of the CRPF personnel who were killed in Pulwama will understand, Kashmiris will understand that pain when one gets that call."

Congress president Kharge and general secretary Priyanka Gandhi Vadra also spoke.

"The yatra was not for winning elections but against hate. BJP people are spreading hate in the country. Rahul Gandhi has proven that he can unite the country from Kanyakumari to Kashmir on issues like unemployment and inflation," Kharge said.

"My brother has been walking for the last five months from Kanyakumari.... (people) came out everywhere. They came out because people of the country have spirit for unity," added Priyanka Gandhi.

Many opposition leaders endorsed Gandhi's leadership and had words of fulsome praise.

Former Jammu and Kashmir chief ministers, PDP's Mehbooba Mufti and NC's Omar Abdullah, said they see a ray of hope in him.

"I request Rahul Gandhi to undertake a yatra from west to east. I would like to walk with him," Abdullah added.

DMK MP Tiruchi Siva told the gathering that party chief and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin was there when the yatra started and has sent him on his behalf now.

"Rahul Gandhi has successfully completed the yatra and reached out to every common citizen, conveying a message that a leader has emerged to save this country."

Addressing the rally, CPI leader D Raja urged all secular parties of the country to unite.

"We all fought together for the independence of the country and liberated the country from British Raj. All secular parties must come together to liberate the country from BJP Raj," he said.

RSP leader N K Premchandran described the yatra as a historic movement.

"With this yatra, Rahul Gandhi has proved that he is the right leader in this country to fight all these communal and divisive forces."

During the course of the yatra, Gandhi addressed 12 public meetings, over 100 corner meetings and 13 press conferences. He had over 275 planned walking interactions and

more than 100 sitting interactions.

As the marathon ended, it was not just about hardcore politics. There were several fun moments too.

Videos of the two Gandhi siblings in a snow fight at Pantha Chowk were circulated widely. With them was close aide K C Venugopal.

That it was the first big snowfall in the city this season was not lost on people, with some saying it not just made for great optics but was also a good omen.

And as always, Gandhi's clothes were noticed too.

At the campsite in Pantha Chowk, he was in his trademark white T-shirt with a sleeveless jacket in deference to the cold.

A little later in the morning, the Congress leader, who set off a national debate when he walked the Bharat Jodo Yatra in a T-shirt in north India's cold winter, donned a 'pheran', the traditional long cloak worn by Kashmiris.

Gandhi's white T-shirt hit the limelight when the yatra entered Delhi, his supporters praising his resilience while his opponents criticised him. Gandhi, on his part, said he decided to wear only T-shirts during the march after meeting three poor girls "shivering in torn clothes" in Madhya Pradesh.

That's when he decided that he won't wear a sweater until he shivers, the Congress leader said.

...And Rahul

emerged in a grey pheran as he headed to the Sher-e-Kashmir Cricket stadium for the closing ceremony of the Bharat Jodo Yatra.

All politicians, including Prime Minister Modi, have donned pheran during their public rallies here in order to strike an emotional chord with the people of Kashmir.

However Rahul Gandhi has passionately highlighted his familial links with Kashmir describing his entry to the land of his ancestors", as a "return to his roots."

Earlier his sister Priyanka Gandhi thanked the people of Jammu and Kashmir for welcoming the yatra with open hearts.

"When my brother was about to reach Jammu and Kashmir, he sent a message to me and my mother saying that he was getting a feeling that he was going to his home," she said.

"He (Rahul) had said that 'my family members (people of Kashmir), when they meet me and hug me, they have tears in their eyes, their pain and sentiments touch my heart'," she said.

Rahul donned pheran on the last day of the yatra concealing beneath it his white T-shirt that has remained in the limelight for long, when the yatra entered Delhi, his supporters praising his resilience while his opponents criticised him. Gandhi, on his part, said he decided to wear only T-shirts during the march after meeting three poor girls "shivering in torn clothes" in Madhya Pradesh.

That's when he decided that he won't wear a sweater until he shivers, the Congress leader said.

Rahul, Priyanka

brother-sister duo enjoying the moment as they broke into an impromptu snowball fight.

Rahul Gandhi ended his over 4,000 km march, covering 12 states over a span of five months with a rally in Srinagar on Monday.

Every Effort

interventions and e-Governance tools are ensuring that the benefits of our development programmes, various central sector schemes reach out to the people as intended," he added.

Taking note of the grievances received from various complainants regarding pending cases for social security schemes' benefits, the LG directed the Administrative Secretaries and Deputy Commissioners for strict implementation of all measures and monitoring of such cases to ensure the benefits reach all eligible.

Rehana Batul Commissioner/Secretary, Public Grievances informed the chair about the progress and status of grievances received on JK-IGRAMS.

The LG appreciated the efforts of all which resulted in 96% disposal rate of all grievances received. Sinha also emphasized on taking dedicated measures to make the public grievance redressal mechanism more responsive at all levels.

Pays Tributes

these remarks during an event organized by Gandhi Global Family J&K in memory of Father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi on his death anniversary.

Sinha said Babu's life and teachings continue to guide the inter-dependent world in the 21st century and the eternal values he taught us

will sustain human civilization in the decades and centuries to come.

"The ideals that Babu espoused Satya and Ahimsa - truth and non-violence, protecting human dignity, equality, social justice, respect for all religions, welfare of the underprivileged, rights of women and youth, are powerful instrument & guiding light for peaceful co-existence," he said.

The LG appreciated the efforts of the Gandhi Global Family, J&K for promoting the Gandhian values among the younger generation and asked the voluntary organizations to join hands for eradicating the social evils.

He said that Pujya Babu's ideals and timeless teachings have influenced world leaders to establish the society based on social harmony, syncretic co-existence and economic prosperity.

"Women are leading as a role model and contributing to economic development. It is our collective responsibility to ensure women have access to education, equal opportunities and financial & other assistance to grow and prosper," he said.

"Whole of Society approach is the need of the hour to fulfill the resolve of Amrit Kaal Khand to create a fear-free, corruption-free and drug free Jammu Kashmir," he added.

The LG also spoke on the deep bond shared by Mahatma Gandhi and Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya. He highlighted the measures taken by the government to spread Babu's message for social transformation and accelerated development.

Two-minute silence was also observed and Bhajans were recited to spread the values and noble message of Mahatma Gandhi.

4 OGWs Held

items were recovered from it before it was destroyed.

Accordingly, the spokesperson said, a case vide FIR No. 10/2023 under relevant sections of law was registered in PS Tral and investigation was initiated.

"During the preliminary investigation, so far 04 terrorist associates linked with proscribed terror outfit LeT have been arrested," he said.

He identified them as Arif Bashir Bhat, Mohsin Ahmad Lone, Manzoor Ahmad Wani and Irshad Ahmad Ahangar, all residents of Reshipora.

"They were involved in providing logistic support to active terrorists of LeT in the area. Investigation of the case is going on and more arrests are expected," the spokesperson added.

Car Crushes

died on the spot while nine students suffered injuries, the officials said.

The injured students, all aged between 15 and 17 years, have been admitted to hospital.

One student who suffered critical injuries was later referred to Pathankot for special treatment, the officials said.

BSP Leader

progress of the region with a sense of commitment.

Abdullah hoped that with the joining of Singh, the party would be further strengthened at the grassroots level.

A strong National Conference is key to steer Jammu and Kashmir to peace, progress and development besides meeting various challenges facing the Union Territory, he said.

Singh pledged to carry forward the mission of the National Conference in transforming Jammu and Kashmir into a peaceful and progressive region with devotion and dedication.

Advisory Issued

Through the "Advisory", the Ministry has clarified that the relevant content embedded in the programmes being telecast can be accounted for Public Service Broadcasting.

It is also clarified that the content need not be of 30 minutes at a stretch and could be spread over smaller time slots and requires the broadcaster to submit a monthly report online on the Broadcast Seva Portal.

The theme for the broadcasting should comprise of content of national importance and of social relevance, including the following, namely education and spread of literacy; agriculture and rural development; health and family welfare; science and technology; welfare of women; welfare of the weaker sections of the society; protection of environment and of cultural heritage; and national integration.

The "Advisory" seeks to achieve the objective of Public Service Broadcasting by private satellite TV channels through voluntary compliance and self-certification.

Dulloo Calls For Ramping Up eKYC, NPCI Seeding Of Beneficiary Bank Accounts



Observer News Service

JAMMU: Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Agriculture Production Department (APD), Atal Dulloo Monday chaired a meeting to review implementation of PM KISAN in the Union Territory.

ACS, while assessing scheme status, took stock of online updation of revenue records, eKYC and NPCI seeding of beneficiary bank accounts on a district-wise basis. He asked the Chief Agriculture Officers and district administrators to identify any obstacle in data uploading and eKYC procedures.

Underlining the significant impact of PM KISAN installments on farmers, especially the marginal farmers, the ACS expressed satisfaction that the scheme has enabled the fraternity to purchase fertilisers and seeds in a timely manner.

Atal Dulloo highlighted the importance of quick resolution of misunderstandings and doubts related to revenue pro-

cedures. He emphasised the need for fair disbursal of welfare incentives and asked the Secretary Revenue, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri, to scrutinise the entire process. He also instructed Lead Bank Officers to prioritise NPCI seeding of bank accounts of the beneficiaries.

Dulloo directed the Chief Agriculture Officers to ensure eKYC of the beneficiaries before releasing the 13th instalment of PM KISAN. He called for a thorough analysis of reasons behind pending NPCI seeding and swift redressal of pending inheritance mutations while following laid down rules. He also emphasised the need for timely update of records to deliver welfare to the beneficiaries without any undue delays.

The meeting was attended by Secretary Agriculture, Shabnam Kamili, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Director Agriculture Kashmir, Director Land Records, Anju Gupta besides Deputy Commissioners, ADCs and Chief Agriculture Officers.

'Unsold Housing Stocks Fall 10 Pc To Over 4.61 Lakh Units At December-End'

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Unsold housing stocks dropped 10 per cent to 4,61,600 units across nine major cities at the end of the December on better sales, PropEquity said on Monday.

According to its data, unsold housing inventories stood at 5,12,526 units at the end of the September quarter across these nine cities.

"Despite many challenges...home sales strongly recovered this year. It is worth noting that the demand in the industry and the positive sentiment is growing. Even with the steady rise in mortgage rates, customers were still taking loans in anticipation of appreciation of properties and as end users for the units," said Samir Jasuja, Founder and Managing Director of PropEquity, said.

In Kolkata, unsold housing stocks fell 12 per cent to 1,77,15 units from 20,096 units at the end of the September quarter.

In Navi Mumbai, unsold housing inventories fell 10 per cent to 27,815 units from 30,986 units, while in Mumbai unsold stocks declined 5 per cent to 58,587 units from 61,755 units. Thane saw a 11 per cent fall in unsold stocks to 97,117 units from 1,08,854 units.

Unsold residential stocks in Delhi-NCR fell 10 per cent to



41,693 units from 46,452 units. Bengaluru saw a 16 per cent decline in unsold stocks to 49,246 units from 58,390 units in the September quarter, while Pune witnessed a 11 per cent fall to 65,612 units from 73,644 units.

Unsold housing stocks in Hyderabad stood at 84,545 units at the end of the December, from 93,473 units at the end of the previous quarter.

However, the PropEquity data showed that unsold housing stocks rose 2 per cent to 19,270 units at December-end from 18,876 units in the previous quarter.

Housing sales stood at 1,20,275 units across these nine cities during the October-December quarter, up 8 per cent from the previous quarter and 10 per cent from the year-ago period.

Hindenburg Rejects Adani Charge, Says Fraud Cannot Be Obfuscated By Nationalism

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: US short seller Hindenburg Research has dismissed charge that its report on Adani Group's malfeasance was a "calculated attack" on India, saying a "fraud" cannot be obfuscated by nationalism or a bloated response that ignored key allegations.

Adani group's listed companies have lost over USD 70 billion since the January 24 report of the New York firm that flagged high debt levels at the ports-to-energy conglomerate and the alleged use of offshore entities in tax havens. The Indian group has denied all charges and threatened to sue the US firm.

Hindenburg responded to a 413-page detailed statement issued by the Adani Group late on Sunday, saying it failed to specifically answer 62 of its 88 questions, and conflated the company's "meteoric rise" and the wealth of Asia's richest man "with the success of India itself".

In the Sunday evening statement, Adani group had called Hindenburg "Madoffs of Manhattan" and that its report was "not merely an unwarranted attack on any specific company but a calculated attack on India, the independence, integrity and quality of Indian institutions, and the growth story and ambition of India."

Standing by its report that alleged "fraud" at the second largest conglomerate in India run by the world's then-third richest man, Hindenburg said it disagrees with Adani group's



assertion of its report being an attack on India.

"To be clear, we believe India is a vibrant democracy and an emerging superpower with an exciting future," it said. "We also believe India's future is being held back by the Adani Group, which has draped itself in the Indian flag while systematically looting the nation."

A "fraud is fraud, even when it's perpetrated by one of the wealthiest individuals in the world," it said, adding, "Adani also claimed we have committed a 'flagrant breach of applicable securities and foreign exchange laws'. Despite Adani's failure to identify any such laws, this is another serious accusation that we categorically deny."

Adani's 413 page response only included about 30 pages focused on issues related to the report and the remainder consisted of 330 pages of court records, along with 53 pages of high-level financials, general in-

formation, and details on "irrelevant" corporate initiatives, such as how it encourages female entrepreneurship and the production of safe vegetables.

On Sunday evening, Adani group said the Hindenburg report was intended to enable the US-based short seller to book gains by crashing stock prices.

The report had come just as a Rs 20,000-crore share sale at the group's flagship company, Adani Enterprises, opened to anchor investors.

"All transactions entered into by us with entities who qualify as 'related parties' under Indian laws and accounting standards have been duly disclosed by us," it had said late on Sunday. "This is rife with conflict of interest and intended only to create a false market in securities to enable Hindenburg, an admitted short seller, to book massive financial gain through wrongful means at the cost of countless investors."

LIC Says It Has Exposure Of Rs 36,474.78 Crore To Adani Group

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI: Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) on Monday said it has an exposure of Rs 36,474.78 crore to Adani group's debt and equity, and the amount is less than one per cent of the national insurer's total investments.

LIC's total assets under management stood at over Rs 41.66 lakh crore as of September 2022. The disclosure by the insurer, which is also the country's largest domestic institutional investor, comes amid Adani group stocks taking a beating on the bourses after the short-selling specialist firm Hindenburg Research in a report made a litany of allegations, including fraudulent transactions and share price manipulation, at the Gautam Adani-led group. The allegations have been rejected by the group.

"Our total holding in the Adani group companies under equity and debt as on date is Rs 36,474.78 crore. This was Rs



35,917.31 crore as of December 31, 2022. Total purchase value of these equities of the group companies, bought over the past many years, is Rs 30,127 crore and the market value for the same at close of market hours on January 27, 2023 was Rs 56,142 crore," LIC said in a tweet. Adani group has 10 listed companies.

However, the insurer did not disclose about its exposure on an individual company basis.

According to LIC, credit ratings of all Adani debt securities held by it are rated 'AA' and above which is in

compliance with the Iradi investment regulations.

The Hindenburg Research report came two days before Adani Enterprises' Rs 20,000 crore Follow on Public Offer (FPO) that opened last week on January 27. The anchor investors' quota was fully subscribed on January 26.

LIC invested about Rs 300 crore in buying 9,15,748 shares in the ongoing FPO as an anchor investor. LIC already had 4.23 per cent stake in the company. In all 33 institutional investors put in Rs 5,985 crore as anchor investors in Adani Enterprises' FPO.

More Than 5 Crore Citizens Subscribe To Atal Pension Yojana: PFRDA

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Pension Fund Regulatory & Development Authority (PFRDA) on Monday said more than 5 crore people have enrolled under Atal Pension Yojana (APY), the flagship social security scheme of the central government.

The scheme has done very well in the calendar year 2022 by enrolling more than 1.25 crore new subscribers in comparison to 92 lakh new subscriber's enrolment in the calendar year 2021, PFRDA said in a statement.

Till date, 29 banks have already surpassed the annual target allocated by the government of India, it said.

In the public sector bank category, Bank of India, State Bank of India and Indian Bank have achieved the allocated targets, while in the Regional Rural Bank (RRB) category, 21 banks have achieved the allocated targets, with the highest achievement by Jharkhand Rajya Gramin Bank, Vidharbha Konkan Gramin Bank and Baroda UP Bank, it said.

PFRDA, in line with the saturation drive as announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his Independence Day speech of 2021, took various initiatives for outreach of the scheme, it said.

Few positive trends have been noticed in the profile of the subscribers as currently enrolments of females in the scheme



has grown to 45 per cent of total enrolments, in comparison to 38 per cent, as recorded in 2017.

Similarly, subscribers between age 18 and 25 years have grown to 45 per cent of total enrolments, in comparison to 32 per cent recorded in 2017. As on date, total assets under management (AUM) in APY is also more than Rs 25,000 crore, it said.

Under the scheme, a subscriber would receive a minimum guaranteed pension of Rs 1,000 to Rs 5,000 per month from the age of 60 years, depending on their contributions, which itself would vary based on the age of joining the APY, it said.

The same pension would be paid to the spouse of the subscriber after the demise of the subscriber and on the demise of both the subscriber and spouse, the pension wealth as accumulated till age 60 of the subscriber would be returned back to the nominee, it said.

Air India Says New Software To Facilitate Real-Time Reporting Of In-Flight Incidents

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Air India on Monday said it will use UK-headquartered Ideagen's enterprise cloud software application Coruson to help enhance safety management and facilitate real-time reporting of in-flight incidents.

The Tata group-owned airline's announcement also comes against the backdrop of at least three incidents of unruly passenger behaviour on two international flights last year, for which aviation regulator DGCA had imposed penalties on the carrier for certain reporting lapses.

Coruson, the safety data software application, will be online with effect from May 1, 2023 and will facilitate real-time reporting of in-flight incidents, Air India said in a release.

Air India said the application will weed out the requirement of paperwork to a large extent and ensure automated processes relay critical information to key personnel and authorities without delay. "This will also lead to timely action".

The airline is also engaged in procuring iPads for pilots and crew members and when introduced, Coruson will also be available on these devices.

According to the release, Coruson will further enhance end-to-end safety management,



including real-time intelligence, reporting and status of in-flight incidents. "Ideagen software covers all aspects of risk, giving the airline full visibility of safety data from maintenance of the aircraft through to cabin crew checks on board.

"It will provide Air India complete visibility across the airline's entire organisation, allowing it to access the latest data and use this to spot and mitigate potential risks, thereby enhancing safety of operations," it said.

Henry Donohoe, Head of Safety, Security and Quality at Air India, said the airline is going for a significant and substantial upgrade of existing systems and processes to ensure seamless flow of intelligence and data on a real-time basis.

Coruson's induction will go a long way in enhancing the capabilities for the safety and well-being of passengers and crew, particularly at a time when Air India is rapidly expanding its network, he added.

Expert Talk On 'Entrepreneurship And Innovation As Career Opportunity' Held



Observer News Service

UDHAMPUR: To promote innovation and entrepreneurship in the Institution through multitudinous modes, a one day expert talk on "Entrepreneurship and Innovation as Career Opportunity" was today organised by I Innovation Council (IIC) of Government College for Women (GCW), Udhampur here on college campus.

The Program targeted to provide undergraduate students and faculty members opportunities to expand their dexterities in various significant facets involved in building Career Opportunities in Entrepreneurship and Innovation.

The College Principal, Dr. Monika Sharma was the Chief Guest.

The programme was held under the supervision Kewal Kumar Vice-president IIC, GCW Udhampur J&K(UT) and Binny Kumar, (Convenor), Innovation activity Coordinator, NIRF Coordinator.

The resource persons on the occasion were Dr. Vipul Chalotra, HOD, Department of Commerce, from Government Degree College Udhampur and Shubham Sharma founder "The Kalari factory", a successful entrepreneur and innovator.

Dr. Monika Sharma appreciated the organizers for organizing such expert talks in educational institutions, which would help in creating awareness among students as well as common people about innovation and entre-

preneurship in the district.

Resource person, Dr. Vipul discussed the importance of having a clear vision and understanding the risks associated with starting a business. He also highlighted the need for creativity and problem-solving skills to succeed in the world of entrepreneurship and innovation.

Later, Shubham Sharma founder "The Kalari factory", a successful entrepreneur and innovator, shared his insights on the opportunities and challenges of pursuing a career in these fields. The audience was inspired by his success story and the advice he shared. Attendees were encouraged to think outside the box and take risks in order to achieve their goals.

Govt Asks Companies To Print Mandatory Declarations On Outer Pack Containing Gift Or Multi-Piece Packages

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Re-tail commodity packages containing more than one pack, including gift and multi-piece packs, are required to mention all mandatory declarations includingP, on the outer pack, according to the Consumer Affairs Ministry.

In the latest directive, the ministry said, "It is observed that the mandatory information is not declared on a retail package containing more than one retail package."

It is mandatory that all the necessary declarations should also be made on all retail packages inside a group/ combination/ multi-piece/gift package, it said.

Name and address of the manufacturer, packer, and importers as well as the country of origin for imported products, net quantity, month and year of manufacture/pack/import, best before use date and consumer care details -- are some of the mandatory declarations required to be printed outside the pack.

There should be mention of the unit sale price which will come into force with effect from February 1 this year, it added.



JKTPO Organises Export Awareness And Capacity Building Workshop In Jammu

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organization (JKTPO) on Monday organized an export awareness workshop here.

The Workshop was held in association with Federation of Indian Export Organizations (FIEO) Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India Ltd (ECGC), Department of Posts, Government of India, and State Bank of India (SBI). These workshops are being organized to realize the vision of LG, UT of J&K to promote each district of J&K as a potential export hub with a vision to increase exports by 3 times in the next 5 years.

These workshops aim to boost and support exports of Niche products such as basmati, Fresh fruits, saffron, Pashmina, Basohli Paintings, Carpets, Paper machie with hard and soft interventions required at the ground level.

The workshop included detailed sessions on Benefits of exports, process of getting IEC code, awareness regarding India Business Portal and India Trade portal, credit linkages



for exports and credit risk insurance facilities, e-commerce platforms, Logistics and potential of products of region in international market.

At the outset, Khalid Jahangir, Managing Director, JKTPO welcomed the business community members from Jammu and briefed the audience about the mandate and various trade and export promotion initiatives undertaken by the Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organization. He said JKTPO regularly organizes and participates in various activities like Buyer-Seller Meets, Trade Fairs, Exhibitions, Conferences, Seminars, etc. at National and International level for registered members & women entrepreneurs. He further highlighted the export potential of unique products of Jammu and Kashmir.

A K Bhushan, Deputy Director

DGFT Jammu briefed about various Government schemes for export and documentation required for IEC registration. The participants were given detailed presentations on all the major aspects related to exports, a checklist for documents required to get IEC Code, market linkages including e-commerce linkages and benefits. Many queries were resolved on the spot and various participants intended to get registered with DGFT. Mr. Bhushan, while interacting with the participants, highlighted the relevance of bridging the information gap. He provided the necessary guidance to the participants for updating their knowledge by explaining to them about various Export related schemes sponsored by the Government of India such as EPCG, MEIS, SEIS, advance authorization schemes etc.



LG Reviews Preparedness For Gulmarg Winter Games

Inaugurates 94 sports projects worth Rs 46.07 crore

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Monday reviewed preparation for the 3rd Khelo India Winter Games scheduled to begin on 10th February.

The LG was briefed by the senior officials on the progress of preparatory works assigned to the respective departments. LG Sinha then directed the officials to complete all pending works expeditiously and to ensure that all the facilities meet the international standards.

"The promotional campaign of the winter games should be stepped up to generate enthusiasm among sports lovers," he said.

The LG further directed for involving sportspersons in the preparations of the mega event and putting in place a comprehensive strategy for traffic management, sanitation, water supply, lodging and transportation.

The meeting was informed that this edition of Khelo India Winter Games is expecting around 1800 participation of players and officials, dignitaries and media persons from across

the country.

Sarmad Hafeez, Administrative Secretary, Youth Services and Sports Department briefed the meeting on the promotional activities including Logo & theme; Mascot, Anthem of the winter game; jingles; cultural programmes throughout the event; besides deployment of experts and the assistance & support required from various departments and organizations.

On the sidelines of the meeting, the LG inaugurated 94 sports infrastructure projects worth Rs 46.07 crore (88 under CAPEX and 6 under JKIDFC).

The projects include stadiums, playfields, lighting projects, cricket competition pitches, synthetic Courts and Prefab Dug-outs.

The LG laid special emphasis on extending all possible support to the sportspersons to safeguard their future. He also released J&K Sports Council's compendium and calendar of activities under My Youth My Pride.

Nuzhat Gul, Secretary, J&K Sports Council briefed the chair on the activities of the Sports Council organized during 2022-23.

The Lucknow Wicket Was A Shocker, Says Hardik Pandya



Press Trust of India

LUCKNOW: India skipper Hardik Pandya on Sunday slammed the standard of pitches used in the ongoing series against New Zealand and called the track prepared for the second T20I a "shocker".

The ball turned in the first T20I in Ranchi and it was no different on Sunday when New Zealand were restricted to 99 for eight. India chased down the target with only one ball to spare.

"To be honest, it was a shocker of a wicket. Both the games we have played on so far. I don't mind difficult wickets. I am all up for that, but these two wickets were not made for T20.

"Somewhere down the line the curators or the grounds that

we are going to play in should make sure they prepare the pitches earlier. Other than that, happy. Even 120 would have been a winning total," said Hardik after the series levelling win over New Zealand.

The series decider will be played in Ahmedabad on Wednesday.

"I always believed that we'll be able to finish the game, but it went quite late. All these games are important with the moments. You don't need to panic because it was about rotating the strike rather than taking the pressure. That's exactly what we did. We followed our basics," he said about the tense finish.

On the bowlers' impressive performance, he added: "They stuck to their plans and ensured they (New Zealand) did not ro-

tate the strike. We kept rotating the spinners. Dew didn't play much part in this. They were able to spin the ball more than us. It was carrying through well."

New Zealand skipper Mitchell Santner said 120 could have been a winning total on the surface.

"It was a great game of cricket. To get it so close was a great effort from the bowlers. If we would have got an extra 10 or 15, could have been the difference. The calmness of Surya and Hardik to get them over the line was pretty good.

"We bowled 16 or 17 overs of spin, definitely something different. With the bounce out there, it looked challenging. You are not sure what a good total is. 120 might have been a good score," said Santner.



Real Madrid & Barcelona To Meet In Copa Del Rey Semis

Agencies

MADRID: Real Madrid will get a chance for revenge against Barcelona when the Spanish teams meet in the Copa del Rey semifinals.

The rivals were paired together in Monday's draw, which also set up a semifinal match between Athletic Bilbao and Osasuna.

Madrid lost the Spanish Super Cup final to Barcelona 3-1 in Saudi Arabia on Jan. 15, the same score it beat the Catalan club in their first "clásico" of the season in the Spanish league.

Barcelona also got the best of Madrid the last time they met in the Copa del Rey, advancing in the 2019 semifinals with a 3-0 win in the second leg at the Santiago Bernabeu Stadium. Madrid will host the first leg this time, with

the second at the Camp Nou.

The first leg of the semifinals this season was set to be played next week, but it will have to be scheduled for about a month from now because Madrid will be participating in the Club World Cup in Morocco.

Barcelona is the club with most Copa del Rey titles with 31, eight more than Athletic. Madrid has 19 but none since 2014, while Osasuna's best result was a runner-up finish in 2005, when it lost in the final to Real Betis.

Every round until now had been played in single games. Madrid advanced to the last four past city rival Atletico Madrid, while Barcelona eliminated Real Sociedad.

The final will be played on May 6 in Seville. (AP)

Usman Khawaja Wins Shane Warne Men's Test POTY Award

Agencies

MELBOURNE: Australia opening batter Usman Khawaja capped his second comeback as a Test opener by claiming the inaugural Shane Warne

Award as the men's Test player of the year. Named in honour of the legendary leg-spinner Shane Warne, who passed away last March, Khawaja polled 22 votes to win ahead of Marnus Labusch-

gne (20) and Steve Smith (16).

"Khawaja was a heavy favourite for the award after a prolific 12 months that saw him score 1,020 runs in the voting period, at an average of 78.46. The Allan Border

Medal's overall winner is decided primarily by test votes, however Khawaja hasn't represented Australia in either limited-overs format in the previous 12 months," Australia Cricket said in an official statement. (ANI)



Real Kashmir Vs Aizawl Postponed Due To Heavy Snowfall



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Heavy snowfall in Srinagar has forced I-League to postpone Real Kashmir FC's home game against Aizawl FC on Monday.

Overnight snowfall had left Srinagar's Synthetic Turf TRC covered in a white blanket, with officials deeming postponement of the match as the only viable option.

"Due to heavy snowfall in Srinagar, Match #85 of the Hero I-League 2022-23 between Real Kashmir FC and Aizawl FC, scheduled to take place on February 1, 2023 at the TRC Stadium has been postponed. The fresh date of the match will be announced later," the I-League said in a statement.

The match against Aizawl would have been the Snow Leopards' first home game in 2023. The team last played at the Synthetic Turf on December 12, in a 1-0 loss against RoundGlass Punjab. Real Kashmir has since endured a run of winless away form, playing seven matches, losing four and drawing three.

Real Kashmir's next scheduled match in on February 8 against Sudeva Delhi FC at Synthetic Turf TRC. It remains to be seen whether the Srinagar side's match against Aizawl will be held sometime in the coming week or not.

India Men's Hockey Coach Resigns After WC Debacle

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Indian men's hockey team's World Cup debacle claimed its first casualty on Monday in the form of chief coach Graham Reid, who resigned from his position following the host nation's disastrous outing at the just-concluded showpiece.

Reid, who was appointed India coach in April 2019, led the team to a historic bronze medal finish at the Tokyo Olympics in 2021.

But following the below-par show in the World Cup, the 58-year-old Australian submitted his resignation to Hockey India president Dilip Tirkey, a day after the conclusion of the event in Bhubaneswar, where Germany beat Belgium in a penalty shootout to emerge as champions.

"It is now time for me to step aside and hand over the reigns to the next management," Reid said, announcing his retirement.

Reid's term was till next year's Paris Olympics.

"It has been an honour and privilege to work with the team and Hockey India and I have en-



joyed every moment of this epic journey. I wish the team all the very best," he added.

Reid took the decision after HI chief Tirkey and secretary general Bholanath Singh met with the players and support staff to discuss the team's performance and strategy going forward.

Besides Reid, the team's analytical coach Greg Clark and scientific advisor Mitchell David Pemberton also tendered their resignations on Monday morning.

The trio will be serving a notice period of one month before relinquishing their duties.

Under Reid, India achieved a lot of success, including an Olympic medal after 41 years, a silver in last year's Birmingham Commonwealth Games and a third-place finish in the FIH Hockey Pro League season in 2021-22.



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