

Govt To Impose Property Tax In J&K From April 1

Property Tax Capped At 5% For Residential, 6% For Non-Residential

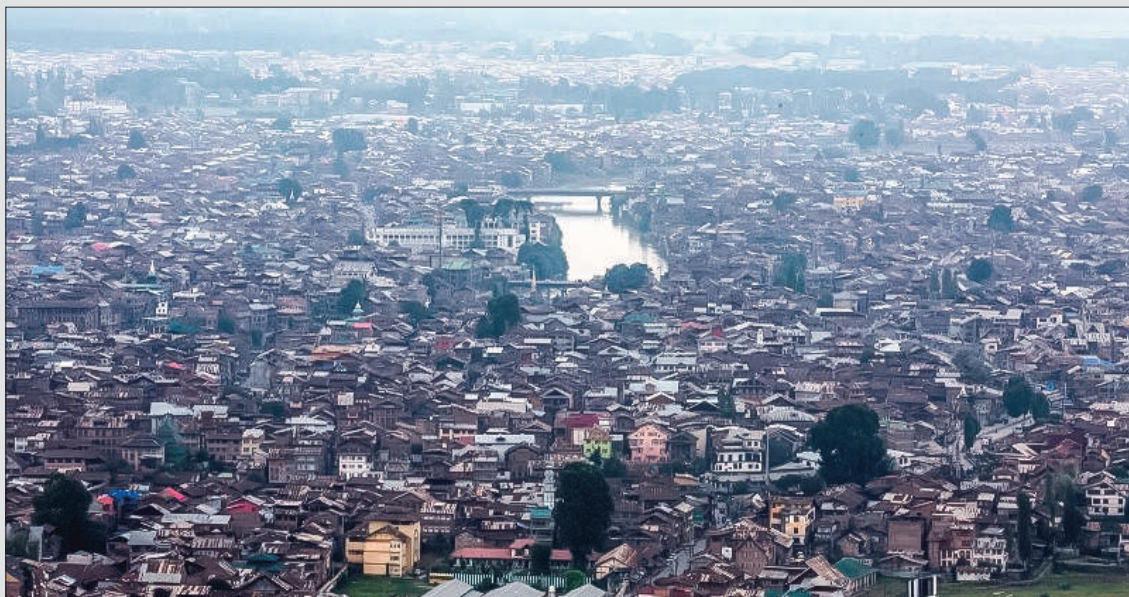
Auqib Javeed

Srinagar: In a move that will have far reaching consequences, the Union Territory administration on Tuesday announced imposition of property tax in Jammu and Kashmir from April 1, this year.

An official order issued today read that in exercise of the powers conferred by Section 71A of the Jammu and Kashmir Municipal Act, 2000, the government has framed rules for levy, assessment and collection of property tax in the Municipalities and Municipal Councils of Jammu and Kashmir.

These rules have been called Jammu and Kashmir Property Tax (Other Municipalities) Rules, 2023. The Property Tax on Residential Property will be 5% of Taxable Annual Value (TAV), while the Property Tax on non-Residential Property will be 6 % of Taxable Annual Value (TAV).

The order has, however, exempted all the properties owned by Central and UT Government from payment of property tax. Only



service charge at the rate 3% of the taxable annual value has to be paid to the Municipality in respect of such properties.

Similarly, all the properties of the Municipality

places of worship, including temples, mosques, gurdwaras, churches, shrines, etc and cremation and burial grounds have been exempted from payment of property tax.

The government has also

exempted vacant lands, not appurtenant to a structure/building from property tax if there's a Master Plan in force in the area, under which any construction/development on such vacant land is disallowed or if they

have been put to agricultural use as per 6-monthly cropping surveys of the Revenue department.

The order was issued by H. Rajesh Prasad, Principal Secretary to the Government Housing and Urban Development Department.

It will be for the first time that such a proposal will be framed where the residents have to pay property tax on residential and commercial establishments.

Pertinently, the J&K was the only state in the country which was exempted from property tax. However, post abrogation of Article 370, the central laws were extended to the newly created UT and all the laws became applicable automatically.

It may be noted that in October 2020, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) empowered the J&K administration to impose property taxes through the municipal corporations, municipal councils and municipal committees in the Union Territory. However the move was strongly opposed by the regional political parties prompting the government to keep the proposal on hold. **More on P6**

NC Seeks Immediate Rollback Of Notification

The Jammu and Kashmir National Conference on Tuesday decried the notification regarding the imposition of property tax in Jammu and Kashmir, saying the notification "smacks of arbitrariness". Responding to the notification, party's State Spokesperson Imran Nabi Dar said, "The people of Jammu and Kashmir have been at the receiving end economically since 2019 due to the losses suffered by Aug 05 2019 lockdown and then the successive Covid lock downs. Imposition of the property tax will further push the people to the wall. Such decisions will make the situation even worse." Questioning the haste in which such decisions are taken in absence of a **More on P6**

Doda Land Subsidence

NGT Forms Panel To Suggest Remedial Measures

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The National Green Tribunal has formed a panel to conduct a study and suggest remedial measures for preventing environmental damage in light of the incident of land subsidence in Doda District of Jammu and Kashmir.

The tribunal was hearing a matter where it had taken cognisance of a media report on its own about the damage and displacement caused by "slipping of the earth".

According to the report, most houses in the area were damaged resulting in displacement of the inhabitants.

A bench of Chairperson Justice A K Goel noted that a geological survey of the area was being conducted to ascertain the reasons for the incident. It said the issue was a "matter of concern" requiring "stringent preventive and remedial measures".

The bench, also comprising Expert Members A Senthil Vel and Afroz Ahmad noted the tribunal had earlier passed an order regarding the fragile areas in the Himalayan region and places including Shimla, Kasauli, Manali, McLeod Ganj in Himachal Pradesh and Aravali hills in Rajasthan.

By the order, the green panel had constituted a committee of representatives of the departments concerned and experts to suggest remedial measures.

"On the above pattern, we direct the constitution of a joint committee to be headed by Chief Secretary, Jammu and Kashmir," the tribunal said.

Other committee members would include the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Wadia Institute of Himalayan Geology, Govind Ballabh Pant National Institute of Himalaya and Environment, National Institute of Hydrology (NIH), Professor **More on P6**

People Of J&K Being In Nat'l Mainstream Was Important: EAM

Observer News Service

New Delhi: Union External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar said on Tuesday that the process of change started three years ago to ensure full benefits of the development and progress like the rest of the country, are now completely available to the people, especially to the youth of Jammu and Kashmir.

"In that sense, the people of J&K being in the national mainstream was extremely important. It was also by doing so, they would connect up with the rest of India and the International mainstream," Jaishankar said, while inaugurating the first international education fair of J&K, at Sushma Swaraj Bhawan here on Tuesday.

"For me it is not just an education event, it is a very integral part of ensuring that a very important region of India is connected to what is happening in



J&K IS WITNESSING A NEW DAWN OF DEVELOPMENT UNDER THE VISIONARY LEADERSHIP OF PRIME MINISTER. With the implementation of National Education Policy, we are internationalising our education sector. The Education Ministry will support, encourage and facilitate the globalisation of SKUAST-Kashmir."

the world," he added.

The Education Fair, a collaborative effort of SKUAST-Kashmir

and ICCR was inaugurated in presence of Union Minister for Education, Dharmendra

Pradhan; Union MoS, PMO, Dr. Jitendra Singh; Lieutenant Governor, Jammu & Kashmir, Manoj Sinha and President ICCR, Vinay Sahasrabudhhe.

Jaishankar, who was Chief Guest at the event, complemented the SKUSAT-Kashmir for the International Education Fair initiative. He also observed that Indian universities should focus on inviting more foreign students to their campuses.

"Today, India has projects done or under-delivery in 78 countries of the world. So, if our relationships are so extensive, investments are so deep & networking is so good, we need to see that translated into a greater flow of international students to India," The External Affairs Minister said.

"In a globalised world, it's absolutely essential that young people of India are fully aware of what's happening in the world and there **More on P6**

1 Month To Go For Ramazan 2023

Sha'ban Moon Sighted, Shab-e-Baraat On March 7

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The crescent of Sha'ban-ul-Muazzam has been sighted and the Shab-e-Baraat will fall on March 7.

Grand Mufti of Kashmir, Mufti Nasir-ul-Islam announced that his office has received several credible witnesses' from across Jammu and Kashmir regarding the sighting of the moon.

"There are several credible witnesses' on record with this office, owing to which the announcement for the observance of Wednesday (February 22, 2023) as first day of Sha'ban-ul-Muazzam 1444 A.H is hereby being made", Islam said. **More on P6**

Narco-Terror Case

SIA Conducts Multiple Raids

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: The State Investigation Agency (SIA) on Tuesday carried out raids at several places in Kashmir as part of a probe into a narco-terrorism case, officials said here.

The raids were carried out by sleuths of the SIA early morning in Anantnag, Baramulla, Budgam and Pulwama districts, they said.

The raids were part of investigations into the narco terror funding case, they said. On Monday, the Special Investigation Unit (SIU) conducted raids on two houses in Tral area of Pulwama district. **More on P6**

Tracks Being Laid On World's Highest Railway Bridge In Reasi



Press Trust Of India

Jammu: The track laying work commenced on Tuesday on the Chenab railway bridge, located 359 metres above the riverbed, in Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said.

The 1.3-kilometre-long bridge, which is 35 metres higher than the iconic Eiffel Tower in Paris, forms a crucial link in the 111-km stretch from Katra to Banihal, which is part of the Rs 21,653 crore Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Railway Link (USBRL) project.

"Another milestone in

USBRL Project! Track laying work begins on Chenab Bridge. Once completed, this bridge will open up new possibilities for the remote regions of Jammu and Kashmir," the Ministry of Railways tweeted.

The base of the steel and concrete arch bridge between Bakhal and Kauri, 42 kms from Reasi town, was completed in November 2017, allowing for the start of the construction of the main arch which was done in April 2021.

Another milestone on the bridge was achieved in August last year when **More on P6**

Banihal Highway Shuts Again, 2000 Vehicles Stranded Agencies

The 294-km-long Jammu-Srinagar National Highway remained closed since last night due to landslides and shooting stones in Ramban district, leaving thousands of vehicles stranded on the highway, officials said on Tuesday. An official said that the landslides and shooting stones incident between Ramban to Banihal has shut the highway since last night. "The major landslide and shooting stone activity took place at Shalgadi, near Banihal," he said. He said the road clearance agencies have been pressed into the service to clear the debris but the **More on P6**

4 Held For Human Trafficking In Jammu

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: Police arrested four people, including two women, who were involved in human trafficking and rescued five minor girls here, officials said on Monday.

A police team received input about some minor girls standing near a bus stand. During questioning, the police found that the girls were being trafficked, they said. The police teams tracked CCTV camera footage and

Hizb Commander From Kashmir Shot Dead In Pak

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Bashir Ahmad Peer, a commander of Hizbul Mujahideen, was shot dead by unidentified assailants in Pakistan's Rawalpindi.

Peer, who hailed from Jammu and Kashmir's Kupwara district, had been living in Pakistan for more than 15 years, intelligence officials here said.

According to Pakistan media reports, Peer alias Imtiyaz Alam

was shot from point blank range by the assailants on Monday outside a shop in Rawalpindi.

Peer, who was reportedly in charge of launching terrorists into Jammu and Kashmir through Line of Control, was designated a terrorist by the Centre on October 4 last year under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act for his role in terror activities.

According to the notification, Peer participated in a number of online **More on P6**

Ladakh Sets Guinness World Record For Highest Frozen Lake Half-Marathon

Press Trust Of India

Jammu: The Union Territory of Ladakh has created history by successfully conducting its maiden 21-km trail running event in sub-zero temperature at 13,862 feet high Pangong Tso, which was registered in Guinness world record as the world's highest frozen lake half marathon.

Spread across the border of India and China, the 700-square kilometer Pangong Lake records a temperature of minus 30 degrees Celsius during winter, making the salt water lake frozen with ice.

The four-hour long marathon started from Lukung and ended at Maan village on Monday with no injury reported to any of the 75 participants, Leh District



Development Commissioner Shrikant Balasaheb Suse told PTI.

Named as the 'Last Run' to remind the people about the climate change and need to save the Himalayas, the

marathon was organised by the Adventure Sports Foundation of Ladakh (ASFL) in collaboration with Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Leh, Tourism Department, Ladakh and Leh district administration.

"The first Pangong frozen lake half marathon is now officially registered in the Guinness book of world records," Suse said.

He said besides spreading the message of ecological awareness among the stakeholders through sports, the marathon was also aimed at promoting sustainable winter tourism in border villages of eastern Ladakh to generate livelihood opportunities for residents especially in winters which is part of 'vibrant village programme' announced by central government.

The run was flagged off by Chief Executive Councillor, LAHDC (Leh) Tashi Gyalson. Five energy stations were set up along the route, consisting of energy drinks, medical teams and oxygen support. **More on P6**

Dry Weather In J&K Till Feb End

The meteorological department on Tuesday predicted mainly dry weather in Jammu and Kashmir till the end of the month with a possibility of light rain and snow at scattered places in the Union Territory between February 26-27.

"Except for the possibility of light rain/snow at

scattered places during 26-27 Feb, weather is very likely to remain mainly dry till ending Feb," a meteorological department official said Tuesday. He also ruled out any major snowfall till the end of this month. Meanwhile, the upper reaches of the Valley, including Gulmarg **More on P6**



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2

New 3D-Printed Superalloy Could Cut Carbon Emissions In Power Plants: Study

Press Trust Of India

Researchers have shown that a new 3D-printed superalloy could help power plants generate more electricity while producing less carbon, according to a new study.

Scientists from Sandia National Laboratories, US, created a superalloy, with an unusual composition that makes it stronger and lighter than state-of-the-art materials currently used in gas turbine machinery, the study said.

A superalloy, or a high-performance metal alloy, is an alloy with the ability to operate at a high fraction of its melting point.

As the world looks for ways to cut greenhouse gas emissions, the findings could have broad impacts across the energy sector as well as the aerospace and automotive industries, and hints at a new class of similar alloys waiting to be discovered, the study said.

The team published their findings in the journal Applied Materials Today.

"We're showing that this material can access previously unobtainable combinations of high strength, low weight and high-temperature resiliency," Sandia scientist Andrew Kustas said.

"We think part of the reason we achieved this is because of the additive manufacturing approach," said Kustas.



Additive manufacturing, also called 3D printing, is known as a versatile and energy-efficient manufacturing method. A common printing technique uses a high-power laser to flash-melt a material, usually a plastic or a metal. The printer then deposits that material in layers, building an object as the molten material rapidly cools and solidifies.

But this new research demonstrates how the technology also can be repurposed as a fast, efficient way to craft new materials.

Sandia team members used a 3D printer to quickly melt together powdered metals and then immediately print a sam-

ple of it.

Sandia's creation also represents a fundamental shift in alloy development because no single metal makes up more than half the material. By comparison, the scientists said, steel is about 98 per cent iron combined with carbon, among other elements.

"Iron and a pinch of carbon changed the world," Kustas said.

"We have a lot of examples of where we have combined two or three elements to make a useful engineering alloy.

"Now, we're starting to go into four or five or beyond within a single material. And that's when it really starts to get interesting and challeng-

ing from materials science and metallurgical perspectives," said Kustas.

About 80 per cent of electricity in the US comes from fossil fuel or nuclear power plants, according to the US Energy Information Administration.

Both types of facilities rely on heat to turn turbines that generate electricity.

Power plant efficiency is limited by how hot metal turbine parts can get.

If turbines can operate at higher temperatures, "then more energy can be converted to electricity while reducing the amount of waste heat released to the environment," said Sal Rodriguez, a Sandia

nuclear engineer who did not participate in the research.

According to the study, Sandia's experiments showed that the new superalloy - 42 per cent aluminum, 25 per cent titanium, 13 per cent niobium, 8 per cent zirconium, 8 per cent molybdenum and 4 per cent tantalum - was stronger at 800 degrees Celsius, or 1,472 degrees Fahrenheit, than many other high-performance alloys, including those currently used in turbine parts, and still stronger when it was brought back down to room temperature.

"This is, therefore, a win-win for more economical energy and for the environment," Rodriguez said.

Energy is not the only industry that could benefit from the findings.

Aerospace researchers seek out lightweight materials that stay strong in high heat, the researchers said.

Ames National Laboratory, Iowa State University, US, scientist Nic Argibay said Ames and Sandia are partnering with industry to explore how alloys like this could be used in the automotive industry, they said.

"Electronic structure theory led by Ames Lab was able to provide an understanding of the atomic origins of these useful properties, and we are now in the process of optimizing this new class of alloys to address manufacturing and scalability challenges," Argibay said.

Most Health Claims On Formula Milk Not Backed By Evidence: BMJ study

Press Trust Of India

Most health and nutrition claims on formula milk products are backed by little or no high quality scientific evidence, according to a study published in The BMJ that used data from 15 countries, including India.

Common claims are that formula milk products benefit brain development, immunity, and growth in young infants, the researchers said.

However, the international team found that "transparency is still lacking" and that revised regulations are needed "to better protect consumers and avoid the harms associated with

aggressive marketing of such products."

Health and nutrition claims on infant formula products are controversial because they can enhance the perceived benefits of formula over breastfeeding and thereby undermine breastfeeding, the researchers said.

Yet data on the frequency of claims and their scientific substantiation are limited, they said.

The researchers searched websites of infant formula companies, examined packaging of formula products, and documented claims made about products marketed for healthy, full-term infants in 15 countries in 2020-22.

These countries were

Australia, Canada, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, the UK, and the US.

The study identified 757 infant formula products, each linked to an average of two claims (ranging from one in Australia to four in the US) and 31 types of claims across all products.

Of 608 products with one or more claims, the most common claim types were "helps/supports development of brain and/or eyes and/or nervous system", "strengthens/supports a healthy immune system", and "helps/supports growth and development".

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JSD PHE DIVISION BIJBEHARA

CORRIGENDUM

Please read earnest money Rs: 100000/- One Lac only instead of Rs:1000000/Ten Lac vide this office e-NIT No: 81 OF 2022-23 issued under No/PHB/16530-50 Dated: 10.02.2023.

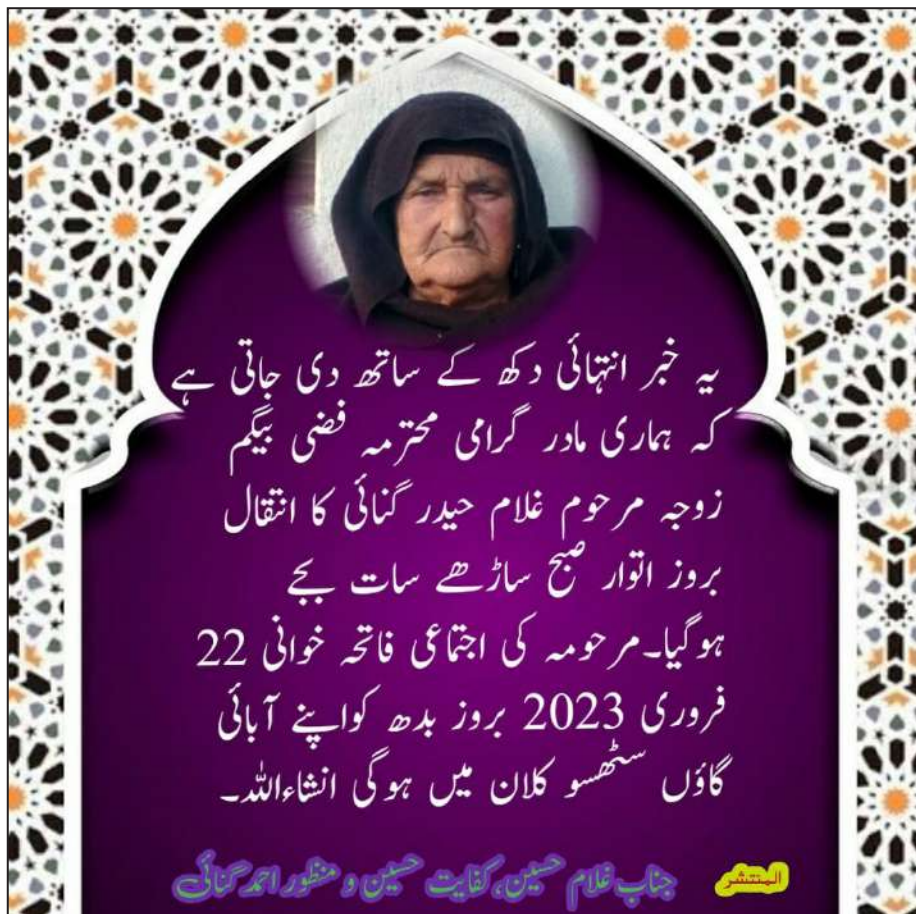
However, the critical dates are hereby extended upto :

- Bid Submission End Date: 25.02.2023 4.00 PM
- Date and time of opening : 27.02.2023 10.00 AM

All other terms and conditions as laid down in the said NIT Shall remain unchanged.

Executive Engineer
JSD PHE Division Bijbehara

NO/PHB/17038-58
DIPK-17697/22
DATED: 21.02.2023



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S/o Mohd Zaman Dar
R/o Diver Yakhaman Pora

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Manzoor Ahmad Wani
S/o Mohd Maqbool Wani R/o Bandipora Kashmir

BB

IN THE COURT OF JMIC, JUDGE SMALL CAUSES, SRINAGAR

Present:- Ms Tabasum

Ghulam Rasool Ghani
v/s
Registrar Births & Deaths SMC, Srinagar.
(Non-Applicant)

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas an application has been received from the applicant for registration of Birth of Burjo Ghani in the records of SMC Srinagar. Objection, if any, be submitted in writing before the undersigned within seven days from the date of this Publication. The details of the Person are as under:-

Name:- Burjo Ghani
Sex:- MALE
Father's Name:- Ghulam Rasool Ghani
Mother's name: Raziya Qadir
DOB: 15-09-1989
Residence: House No; 1 Rose Avenue Peer Bagh Srinagar
Place Of Birth:-at home

Sd/-

nj : Small Causes, Srinagar

اعذالت پونچرکس کشمیر پریویشن سرینگر

سائل: Abdul Khaliq Wani S/o Ghulam Qadir
بنام رجسٹرار برتھس اینڈ ڈیٹھس
درخواست برتھ اندراج تاریخ پیدائش
نام: Gh Nabi Kaloo
تاریخ پیدائش: 05-03-1958
معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدور میں سائل سالک نے عدالت ہڈا میں ایک درخواست بشمول حلفی بغرض اندراج تاریخ پیدائش
Gh Nabi Kaloo S/o Sonaulah مورخہ 17-02-2023 پیش کی ہے۔ لہذا عوام الناس کو بذریعہ اشتہار مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ نسبت درخواست کوئی مذریعہ اعتراض ہونے کی صورت میں اپنے عدالت اشاعت اشتہار کے اندر ہی پیم عدالت میں آ کر پیش کرے۔ بعد گزرنے معیا کوئی مذریعہ اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔ تاریخ آئندہ عدالت ہڈا میں 27-02-2023 کو مقرر ہے۔
تحریر الصدور nj

اعذالت پونچرکس کشمیر پریویشن سرینگر

سائل: اسالک: Khazir Mohammad Hazari
بنام رجسٹرار برتھس اینڈ ڈیٹھس
درخواست برتھ اندراج تاریخ پیدائش
نام: Mohammad Younis
تاریخ پیدائش: 02-05-1984
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Mohammad Younis S/o Khazir Mohammad Hazari مورخہ 31-01-2023 پیش کی ہے۔ لہذا عوام الناس کو بذریعہ اشتہار مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ نسبت درخواست کوئی مذریعہ اعتراض ہونے کی صورت میں اپنے عدالت اشاعت اشتہار کے اندر ہی پیم عدالت میں آ کر پیش کرے۔ بعد گزرنے معیا کوئی مذریعہ اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔ تاریخ آئندہ عدالت ہڈا میں 17-02-2023 کو مقرر ہے۔
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اعذالت پونچرکس کشمیر پریویشن سرینگر

سائل: اسالک: علی محمد وانی
بنام رجسٹرار برتھس اینڈ ڈیٹھس
درخواست برتھ اندراج تاریخ وفات
نام: عبدالخالق وانی
تاریخ وفات: 20/06/1993
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NOTICE INVITING TENDER

E-NIT No:- IUST/EW/ELE/TEND/UPS/23/02 Dated:- 21-02-2023.

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

TENDER DETAILS	
Name of work	Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of SMF Batteries for the existing UPS's in the Campus.
Advertised Cost of Construction	Rs. 13.05,100.00/= (Rupees thirteen lakhs five thousand one hundred only)
Class of Contract	Class "A"
Bid submission Start Date	21-02-2023.
Bid submission End Date	03-03-2023 Up to 6:00 PM.
Date of Submission of DD (Hard Copy)	06-03-2023 (during office hours)
Time & Date of opening of Technical Bids	Bids shall be opened at IUST on 07-03-2023 AT 10.00 AM
Availability of Tender document	Tender document can be downloaded from website. (https://iktenders.gov.in)

Detailed Tender Notice is available on University website: www.iust.ac.in

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Executive Engineer, IUST

DIPK-NB-6561/22 dated: 21-02-2023



Seminar On Domestic Violence Inaugurated At KU

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Vice-Chancellor University of Kashmir Prof Nilofer Khan on Tuesday inaugurated a national seminar on domestic violence.

The day-long seminar was organised by Centre for Women's Studies and Research (CWSR) in collaboration with Mission Shakti, Social Welfare Department, J&K. It was sponsored by the National Commission for Women (NCW).

In her presidential address, Prof Nilofer called for greater sensitisation and awareness at grassroots on the deleterious effects of domestic violence on society's overall development and progression.

She said academic institutions can play a great role in eliminating the "scourge" of domestic violence from society and bring about a perceptible change in the "mindset of people".

"We need to collectively work in this endeavor," she said, thanking the NCW chief and Mission Shakti for sponsoring and collaborating with CWSR to hold the national seminar.

Prof Nilofer, the founder director of CWSR, said the University is fully determined to pursue the cause of gender equality and women's empowerment, and create more spaces for women students and faculty to excel in academics and extracurricular activities.

"Recently our University hosted the C20 Working Group Meeting on Gender Equality and Disability, which has prepared its recommendations for the G20 summit. Our institution is now amongst 15 institutions in the country hosting the Youth20 event in May. Association with such mega events makes our resolve to contribute to nation-building even stronger," she said, urging the CWSR to continue holding such collaborative programmes in future.

Registrar Dr Nisar A Mir, who was a guest of honour, said over 60 percent of students admitted to the University's PG programmes, and nearly half of research scholars, are women who enter the varsity by dint of their hard work and merit. "85 percent of gold medals awarded at our last University Convocation went to women students and it is a great achievement for the institution to feel proud of," he said.

Deputy Superintendent of Police, J&K Police Department, Ms Sleet Shah delivered the keynote address at the inaugural session, advocating that women's empowerment isn't "a fight between men and women" but about ensuring "a rightful place for women in society in terms of decision-making, job opportunities, recreation and other domains."

"Unless we all come together and realise the importance of gender parity, we won't be able to reach anywhere," she said.

Coordinator CWSR Dr Roshan Ara delivered the welcome address and highlighted the achievements of the Centre in academics, research and outreach activities.

GDC Sgr Granted Permission For Renewal Of MDS Seats

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoH&FW), Government of India has granted permission for increasing the intake capacity of MDS from 3 to 4 Government Dental College & Hospital (GDC&H), Srinagar for the academic year 2023-24.

The intake capacity has been increased in the specialty of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery, Conservative Dentistry and Endodontics, Periodontology, Prosthodontics and Crown & Bridge of GDC&H Srinagar.

In addition, the MDS seating capacity in the specialty of Pediatric & Preventive Dentistry, Oral & Maxillofacial Pathology and Oral Microbiology of this institution has also been renewed as 3 seats each.

Leopard Captured In City Outskirts

Agencies

Srinagar: Wild Life Department Tuesday captured a leopard in Bagandar Lasjan area of Srinagar outskirts.

The leopard was seen roaming in the area by some locals during pre-dawn hours when they were on their way to the mosque to offer 'fajar' prayers.

An alert was sounded and announcements were made using the public address system of the mosque asking people, especially children not to venture out.

"Locals informed us on phone and our team rushed to the spot and captured the animal with the assistance of locals," an official from Wild Life Department told Kashmir News Trust. [KNT]

family complained of chest pain. He was shifted to SMHS Hospital Srinagar where doctors declared him dead.

The deceased has been identified as 47-year-old Muhammad Magsood Hussain, a native of Ahmadabad, Gujarat.

International Mother Language Day 2023

Old City's Burusho Community Hopes To Protect 'Burushaski'

Syed Mohammad Burhan

Srinagar: In the old city's Kathi Darwaza neighborhood, an elevated plain leads to Botraj colony where community of around three hundred "Burusho" people live. Originally hailing from Hunza, Nagar and Yasin major belts forming Gilgit Baltistan, the community has settled down in old Srinagar for more than a century.

Botraj colony largely comprises of Burusho people, locally known as "Botraj". They speak a language alien to the majority community in Kashmir.

Many linguists consider Burushaski a language isolate. Burushaski is spoken by around 300 people of the Burusho community of Kashmir and around 100,000 people of the Hunza, Nagar and Gupis-Yasin districts in Gilgit-Baltistan.

Raja Mehboob Ali Khan, a senior member of the community in his 80's says the community actually came from northern states of Hunza,

Nagar and Chitral, now in Gilgit Baltistan.

Mehboob says during British rule these places used to have their own kings.

"We are the descendants of Raja Rehan Ali Shah." He says.

"The British and Dogras needed Kings who would work as their puppets. They sent Raja Rehan Ali Shah to Kashmir under some pretext and did not allow him to return".

"We came here and then we became residents, rest is history"

Raja Mehboob acknowledges the cultural differences between the two communities. However, he says he loves the Kashmiri culture.

"Well, there are some differences between the Burusho culture and the Kashmiri culture but as a community we can relate to Kashmir.

However, he acknowledges the community has not done much to protect their language.

"Earlier, we did not have the means to protect our language. We would struggle to feed our families. Now, with

the standard of living increasing by the day, I hope we can do it" Mehboob says.

Pertinently, it has been widely reported that Burushos in Kashmir are descendants of two former kings of the erstwhile princely states of Hunza and Nagar (located in present-day Gilgit-Baltistan).

The community which comprises of Shia Muslims migrated to Kashmir in 1888 after their forefathers were persecuted by the British.

Raja Anees Ali, another member of the Burusho community says Burushos had very limited interaction with the Kashmiri community and that is how they preserved the language in a natural way.

"Earlier, we had very limited interaction with Kashmiris but with time things changed" Anees says.

As the community intermingles with the majority community and youth failing to find matches within their own community, the fate of 'Burushaski' in Kashmir remains unknown.

G20 Summit:

Div Com Reviews Progress Of Work For Upgradation Of Roads

Observer News service

Srinagar: In preparation to host G20 Summit, the Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri on Tuesday convened a meeting to review the status of upgradation work of main roads from Srinagar Airport to Foreshore Road.

The meeting was attended by CEO, Srinagar Smart City Ltd; Chief Engineer SSCL; SE, R&B and other officers.

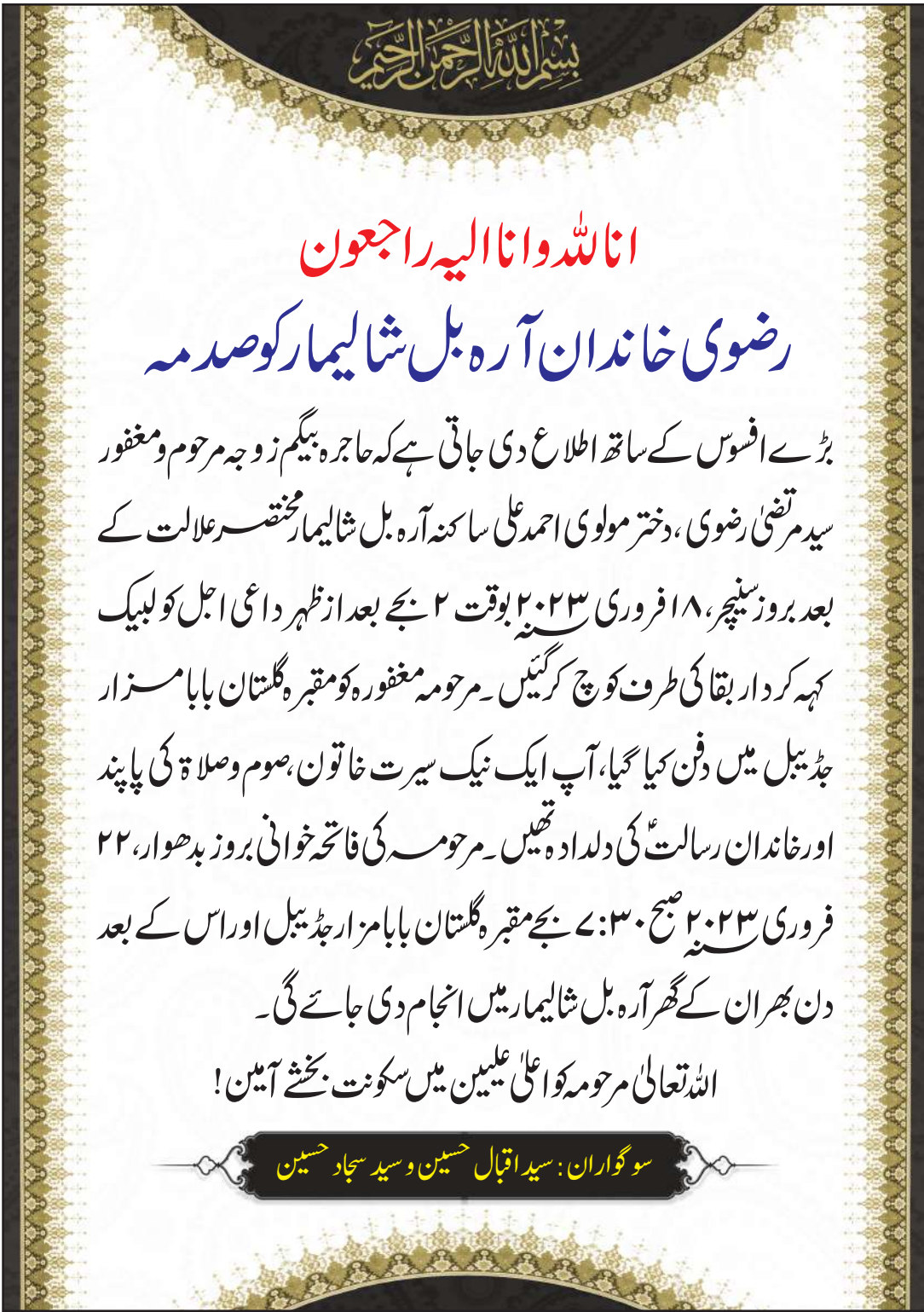
Addressing the meeting, Div Com stressed on officers to speed up the developmental work to enhance facade of roads through macadamization, repairing of footpaths, removal of debris, landscape development of road medians with green trees, removal of wires, painting of flyovers etc

During the meeting he reviewed beautification of IG road, redevelopment of Convent road & Residency road besides upgradation of Ghanta

Ghar, Moulana Azad Road, Gupkar Junction and construction of footpath from Dalgate to Nishat etc

On the occasion, he also directed officers to initiate the tendering process of pending undertaken projects so that the work shall be completed in a stipulated time.

Also, he directed concerned officers of R&B to mobilize men and machinery to continue work during the night hours to meet the deadlines—(KNO)



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- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153




HIGHWAY STATUS



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

PRAYERS	
FAJR	5:56
ZUHR	12:45
ASR	4:41
Magrib	6:25
ISHA	7:45



**HIJRI
CALENDAR**

01 Shaban
1444

This Day In History

- 896 - Pope Formosus crowned Arnulf King of Carinthia and Holy Roman Emperor
- 1071 - Battle of Cassel; Robert I the Frisian defeats Arnulf III/I
- 1281 - Simon de Brion elected Pope Martinus IV
- 1288 - Girolamo Masci elected Pope Nicolas IV
- 1300 - Pope Boniface VIII delegates degree
- 1495 - French King Charles VIII enters Naples to claim crown
- 1744 - Battle of Toulon or Battle of Cape Sicié: British vs. French & Spanish fleet
- 1746 - French troops conquer Brussels
- 1784 - 1st US ship to trade with China, "Empress of China", sails from NY
- 1797 - The Last Invasion of Britain by the French, begins near Fishguard, Wales
- 1821 - Spain sells (east) Florida to United States for \$5 million
- 1825 - Russia & Britain establish Alaska-Canada boundary
- 1828 - Russia & Persia sign Peace of Turkmanstajai
- 1836 - Dutch garrison evacuates fort Du Bus New Guinea
- 1864 - Battle at Dalton Georgia
- 1904 - The United Kingdom sells a meteorological station on the South Orkney Islands to Argentina; the islands are subsequently claimed by the United Kingdom in 1908.
- 1904 - The Hague Tribunal gives its decision in claims against Venezuela; it sets the sum to be paid by Venezuela and gives preferential treatment to the three powers that initiated the block - Britain, Germany, and Italy.
- 1922 - London issues a unilateral declaration of Egyptian independence
- 1940 - German air force sinks 2 German destroyers, killing 578
- 1942 - World War II: President Franklin Roosevelt orders General Douglas MacArthur out of the Philippines as American defenses collapse
- 1945 - Arab League forms (Cairo)
- 1945 - British troops take Ramree Island, Burma
- 1965 - USSR launches Kosmos 57 into earth orbit (Voskhod Test)
- 1966 - Soviets launch Kosmos 110 with Veterok & Ugolek, 1st 2-dog crew
- 1972 - US President Richard Nixon, meets with Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai in Beijing.
- 1973 - US & China agree to establish liaison offices in Beijing & Washington, D.C.
- 1979 - St Lucia gains independence from Britain.
- 1980 - Afghanistan declares martial law
- 1983 - Hindus kill 3000 Muslims in Assam, India.
- 1986 - Start of the People Power Revolution in the Philippines.
- 1989 - UK physicist Stephen Hawking calls Star Wars a "deliberate fraud".
- 1989 - US authors demonstrate against Iranian death threats against Salman Rushdie, author of "The Satanic Verses"

From KO Archives

If There Is Hell On Earth, It Is Here

Observer News Service

S RINAGAR - The devil himself could not have conceived of tortures more horrible. Security forces drenched a local imam of Rafiabab with kerosene, set him alight, and flung him half-dead into his home, with a dire warning of consequence! still more hide-ous if the family let out even a chirp about the incident. As the cleric hovers between life and death in hospital, his relatives say police have refused to register a case.

Locals say the 35-year-old imam, Ghulam Hassan Kumar, of Shalakot, Rafiabab, was arrested by personnel of the 28th Rashtriya Rifles (RR) last Wednesday evening, i.e. the 14th of February, when he was on his way to the mosque. The RR-patrol which picked him up had accused him of signaling away some foreign militants, who they said, had been working near the place of worship.

Residents of the area and the imam's relatives and neighbours say that Kumar's captors had torn off flesh from his arms and legs during his eleven-day-long 'detention'.

He was flung into a blazing fire, and when he crawled out badly burnt, he was put through another ordeal: kerosene oil was poured on his chest, and set on fire again.

When he miraculously survived the torture, the RR major set him free on February 15. Dumping the imam near his home, he was warned neither to go to a hospital nor to inform anyone else. Ghulam Hassan had been suffering his agony in silence, but seeing his condition deteriorate, some villagers and relatives mustered courage and shifted him to the Baramulla hospital. He is said to have sustained 90 per cent burns and doctors say his condition is critical. Relatives say they had tried to register an FIR but the police had refused to do so.

Meanwhile, Hassan has been shifted to the SMHS hospital here. (Kashmir Observer, 22 February, 2001)

KASHMIR OBSERVER

Wednesday | 22-02-2023

Welcome Development

The centre is reportedly planning withdrawal of army from the Kashmir Valley in a fresh sign that the situation in the province is returning to normal after decades. The significant development follows three and a half years after the withdrawal of the special status of Kashmir.

The withdrawal will be done in a phased manner. The government is expected to start with districts where militancy has ended. The CRPF and Jammu and Kashmir Police will fill in the space vacated by the Army.

The decision, the reports say, has followed a careful assessment of the ground situation which has remarkably improved in recent years. Only the militancy which seemed to have been holding up so far has now also been sufficiently reigned in. The UT is now far more peaceful than it was before 2019, another condition for elections. The home minister Amit Shah recently highlighted in an interview that there has been a drastic decrease in terrorism-related incidents in the UT following the revocation of Article 370, and that development efforts in the region are contributing to the fast improving situation. He pointed to the figures on the evolving situation which vindicate the government.

A recent MHA review highlighted the progress made in J&K over the last year on economic and security fronts. The union territory, the report said, witnessed “a 54 percent reduction in terrorist incidents, a 22 percent drop in recruitment of militants and 84 percent decline in the deaths of security forces.” In real terms, the militancy related violence has decreased from 417 incidents in 2018 to 229 in 2021 while the number of slain security personnel had dropped from 91 in 2018 to 42 in 2022.

One biggest indicator of the new normalcy has been the growth of tourism. And last year, number of tourists visiting Kashmir broke all previous records. According to the tourist officials, the number of tourists Kashmir received in 2022 is the highest so far, beating by far even the pre-turmoil period record.

On the development front, the report says that the BJP government at the centre has brought in an investment of Rs 56,000 crores in just three years. Under the Prime Minister's Development Package, the report mentions, Jammu and Kashmir got about 63 projects in hydroelectricity at a cost of Rs 80,000 crore. The fruits of these projects are likely to become visible in the coming years. And by then, hopefully, there wouldn't even be the need to deploy CRPF across the Valley.

OTHER OPINION

Sanitising literature

It is a curious conceit of well-meaning adults that makes them believe that children need to inhabit a world, even in their imagination, of padded walls and training wheels. In this patronising conception of childhood, the purpose of storytelling is a stifling, moralising pedagogy meant to create perfect little citizens — not a fun, transgressive way for children to find their own worlds and voice. For generations, Roald Dahl helped children — and sometimes even beleaguered adults — find humour (often dark and macabre) and irreverence. Now, nearly 33 years after his death, Dahl's publisher and estate are going to sanitise the writer's works to remove language they deem “offensive”.

To be clear, Dahl's works for children do not carry expletives. They do call an overweight glutton fat. So, Puffin books will rework the classics. In Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Augustus Gloop will be “enormous” rather than the f-word and the iconic Oompa Loompas are going from being male to gender neutral. The desire to protect children from adjectives does not end at mere censorship. Entire passages will reportedly be inserted into the works of one of the most original writers. In The Witches, lines that say that witches are bald under their wigs will be followed by the following insertion: “There are plenty of other reasons why women might wear wigs and there is certainly nothing wrong with that.”

First, the obvious point: The way to change what people read, and how they think, is not to censor and rewrite books but to write your own. What the well-meaning censors do not understand is that children's stories are not just about conforming to the fundamentalism of the day — whether regressive or woke. A cursory look at Grimm's fairytales will give you stories of cannibalism, kidnapping and even suicide. Roald Dahl's appeal for so many young people has been in his delicious wickedness. And if profit-hungry publishers have a problem with that, they should avoid the self-serving hypocrisy of trying to “fix” literature. They can just give up their copyright and forego the profits.

Indian Express

India at a Crossroads

NOURIEL ROUBINI



The main risks to India's development prospects are more micro and structural than macro or cyclical. First, India has moved to an economic model where a few “national champions” – effectively large private oligopolistic conglomerates – control significant parts of the old economy

India is poised to become the world's most important country in the medium term. It has the largest population (which is still growing), and with a per capita GDP that is just one-quarter that of China's, its economy has enormous scope for productivity gains. Moreover, India's military and geopolitical importance will only grow, and it is a vibrant democracy whose cultural diversity will generate soft power to rival the United States and the United Kingdom.

One must credit Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi for implementing policies that have modernized India and supported its growth. Specifically, Modi has made massive investments in the single market (including through de-monetization and a major tax reform) and infrastructure (not just roads, electricity, education, and sanitation, but also digital capacity). These investments – together with industrial policies to accelerate manufacturing, a comparative advantage in tech and IT, and a customized digital-based welfare system – have led to robust economic performance following the COVID-19 slump.

Yet the model that has driven India's growth now threatens to constrain it. The main risks to India's development prospects are more micro and structural than macro or cyclical. First, India has moved to an economic model where a few “national champions” – effectively large private oligopolistic conglomerates – control significant parts of the old economy. This resembles Indonesia under Suharto (1967-98), China under Hu Jintao (2002-12), or South Korea in the 1990s under its dominant chaebols.

In some ways, this concentration of economic power has served India well. Owing to superior financial management, the economy has grown fast, despite investment rates (as a share of GDP) that were much lower than China's. The implication is that India's investments have been much more efficient; indeed, many of India's conglomerates boast world-class levels of productivity and competitiveness.

But the dark side of this system is that these conglomerates have been able to capture policymaking to benefit themselves. This has had two broad, harmful effects: it is stifling innovation and effectively killing early-stage startups and domestic entrants in key industries; and it is changing the government's “Make in India” program into a counterproductive, protectionist scheme.

We may now be seeing these effects reflected in India's potential growth, which seems to have

declined rather than accelerated recently. Just as the Asian Tigers did well in the 1980s and 1990s with a growth model based on gross exports of manufactured goods, India has done the same with exports of tech services. Make in India was intended to strengthen the economy's tradable side by fostering the production of goods for export, not just for the Indian market.

Instead, India is moving toward more protectionist import-substitution and domestic production subsidization (with nationalistic overtones), both of which insulate domestic industries and conglomerates from global competition. Its tariff policies are preventing it from becoming more competitive in goods exports, and its resistance

this scandal. But the optics of the Adani story are concerning.

There is a perception that the Adani Group may be, in part, helping to support the state political machinery and finance state and local projects that would otherwise go unfunded, given local fiscal and technocratic constraints. In this sense, the system may be akin to “pork barrel” politics in the US, where certain local projects get earmarked in a legal (if not entirely transparent) congressional vote-buying process.

Supposing that this interpretation is even partly correct, Indian authorities might reply that the system is “necessary” to accelerate infrastructure spending and economic development. Even so, this practice would be toxic, and it would represent a

One must credit Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi for implementing policies that have modernized India and supported its growth

to joining regional trade agreements is hampering its full integration into global value and supply chains.

Another problem is that Make in India has evolved to support production in labor-intensive industries such as cars, tractors, locomotives, trains, and so forth. While the labor intensity of production is an important factor in any labor-abundant country, India should be focusing on industries where it has a comparative advantage, such as tech and IT, artificial intelligence, business services, and fintech. It needs fewer scooters, and more Internet of Things startups. Like many of the other successful Asian economies, policymakers should nurture these dynamic sectors by establishing special economic zones. Absent such changes, Make in India will continue to produce suboptimal results.

Finally, the recent saga surrounding the Adani Group is a symptom of a trend that will eventually hurt India's growth. It is possible that Adani's rapid growth was enabled by a system in which the government tends to favor certain large conglomerates and the latter benefit from such closeness while supporting policy goals. Again, Modi's policies have deservedly made him one of the most popular political leaders at home and in the world today. He and his advisers are not personally corrupt, and their Bharatiya Janata Party will justifiably win re-election in 2024 regardless of

wholly different flavor of realpolitik compared to, say, India's vast purchases of Russian oil since the start of the Ukraine War.

While those shipments still account for less than one-third of India's total energy purchases, they have come at a significant discount. Given per capita GDP of around \$2,500, it is understandable that India would avail itself of lower-cost energy. Complaints by Western countries that are 20 times richer are simply not credible.

While the scandal surrounding the Adani empire does not seem to extend beyond the conglomerate itself, the case does have macro implications for India's institutional robustness and global investors' perceptions of India. The Asian financial crisis of the 1990s demonstrated that, over time, the partial capture of economic policy by crony capitalist conglomerates will hurt productivity growth by hampering competition, inhibiting Schumpeterian “creative destruction,” and increasing inequality.

It is thus in Modi's long-term interest to ensure that India does not go down this path. India's long-term success ultimately depends on whether it can foster and sustain a growth model that is competitive, dynamic, sustainable, inclusive, and fair.

Views expressed in the article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer. The article was originally published by Project Syndicate



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Haircut Gone Wrong

Many of us would have read a weird news item recently that a model from New Delhi had actually won Rs. 2-crores from the National Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission (NCDRC) as compensation for a wrong hair-cut done to her at

a five-star hotel in New Delhi, when contrary to her instructions, most of her hair was chopped off by a lady hair-stylist, leaving only four inches from the top. Poor and wrong coiffures can have adverse effects on a person's mental health and his/her career prospects. Many of us had mo-

ments where a barber or a hair-stylist seriously screwed up our hair and all we did was to shake our head in a losing cause. But, this woman from Delhi decided to speak up against the injustice done to her. The harrowing incident proves a point or two that it cannot be said that a professional

hair-stylist will always do a good job to you just because he/she works in a star hotel salon. Personal aesthetics, lifestyle, and habits all factor into what we need in a hair-cut.

Ranganathan Sivakumar

Why Do We Need Philosophy If We Have Science?

MUGEES UL KAISAR*

To answer the question posed in the title above, one recalls Wittgenstein here who basically said that all the things that we can describe through science are not actually the things that matter most in our lives; the things that are actually most important are beyond discursive language and science. This is the whole Wittgenstein's critique of positivists who misinterpreted his early work. Ethics, religion, wisdom, art/aesthetics, joy, humility, poetry, meaning, beauty, openness to being/ reality, etc which are beyond totalizing reductive linguistic and scientific descriptions are in actual fact the highest ends of human life which make our lives worth living. These things essentially depend on one's (existential) orientation towards life/reality rather than abstract speculative & calculative truth finding as critics like Dawkins wrongly conceive.

Why is philosophy important? Why do we need it? Well, the point is that what is going on in one's "head" is far more important than the gadgets one possesses in one's "hand". We need philosophy/thought/psychology over and above mechanical robotic science & technology simply because we do not want people to bomb each other out with atom bombs! "Thought" is more important or dangerous (depending upon how one looks at it) than technology. Technology comes in service of "thought", asking for its use. Moreover, it is philosophical discourse that drives the wheel of history. Industrial revolution and science/renaissance were themselves stimulated by philosophical ideas/outlooks. Influence of, say, Locke's philosophy on French & American revolutions is hidden from none.

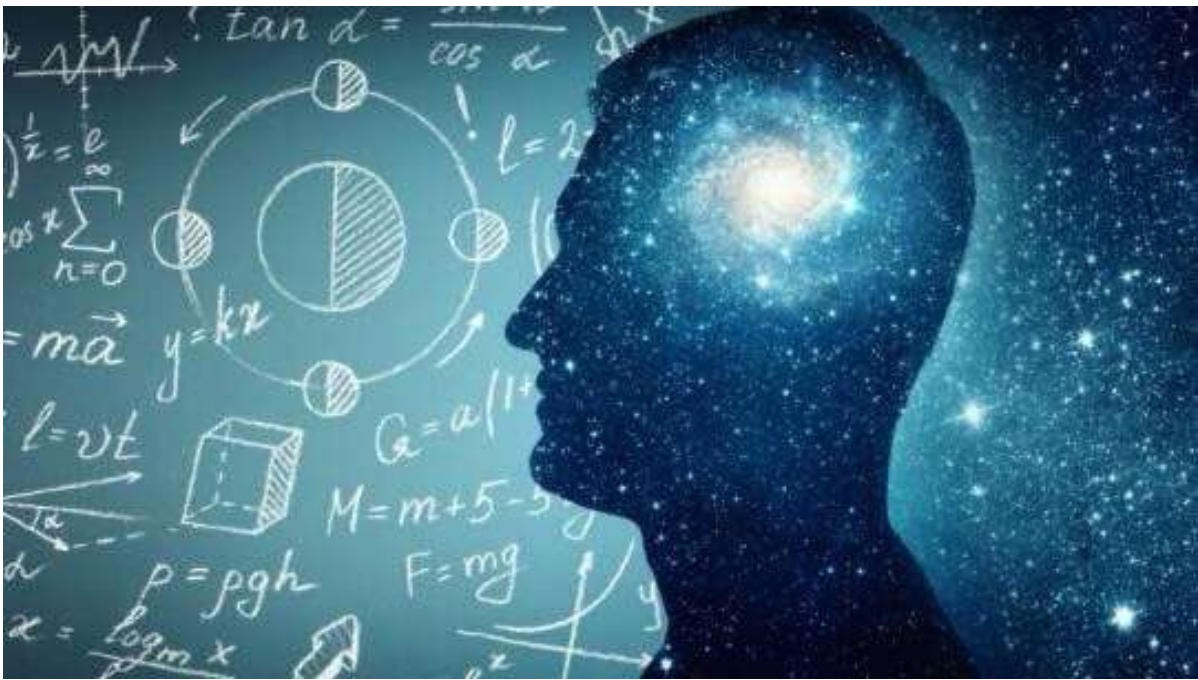
People ask: why do we need philosophy? What will it do? Well, philosophy as hikmah is wisdom which teaches the art of living. And it is here that philosophy (as traditionally understood) intersects with religion. Traditional philosophy/hikmah, for example, says that selfish action invites misery; this is hikmah; this teaches us how to live life such that suffering is transcended and joy erupts from one's own being. What is more urgent than that? It is a reorientation towards life. It cannot be achieved by merely multiplying scientific calculations. Physics, chemistry, technology, etc do not help when we are loneliest at the lowest points of our lives – in the darkest pits of our lives; when life asks us pinching questions of meaning & suffering; when we face inner turmoil; it is one's meaningful orientation

towards life that helps and not fancy gadgets.

The world needs wisdom more than ever today. It is more relevant than technology which has suffocated both humans and the environment with its pollution and meaninglessness. Technological mindset reveals the world through a certain ontological commitment under which the world is perceived as an "object" i.e. everything, even human beings, is seen through the category of "resource" to be tapped into. This ontological attitude towards reality has been & continues to be disastrous for both the environment and the human race.

People say we need science because it is practical. Well, what is more practical than the question as to how to live daily life in a joyous way or how to find meaning, beauty, joy & contentment in a world that is fraught with suffering & alienation; how to develop virtue; how to avoid psychological suffering generated by ego pathologies; doesn't matter where human beings live, in whatever age they live – ego-energy is there; ego tantrums, selfishness, greed, arrogance, meaninglessness, loss of joy, frustrations, etc are eternal problems of mankind. Human being is not mere "calculation" but is an existential & aesthetic interface with reality; the immensely rich art and literature that human beings live by is a testament to that fact; the intangible bread of poetry – is fundamentally part of human life. This is why we can make the case that most of the human "truths" are "phenomenological" & "hermeneutic" rather than merely scientific.

At this point, however, an important clarification is in order. Philosophy is not to be narrowly reduced down to mere abstract speculative ratiocination. One of the most commonplace misconceptions that has gripped the popular discourse about philosophy is that it is equated with pure rational speculative enquiry. Such a perception fails to realize that this is purely West's definition of philosophy that is too post-Aristotelian (as even pre-Socratics in the Western philosophical tradition would not agree with such a definition). This is not how Islamic philosophy or traditional philosophy understands philosophy to be. Equating philosophy with mere "reason" is a mistake simply because traditional philosophy does not reduce human beings down to mere 'reason'. Human beings have higher noetic gnostic intuitive intellectual faculty (what is referred to as "fitri" intelligence or ayn-al-qalb). This is what Iqbal criticized Kant on who had reduced human episteme down



WITHOUT PHILOSOPHICAL TOOLS WE CAN NEVER GET AROUND THE EDIFICE OF ANY SUBJECT. Scientists are not empty vessels, going around collecting data; there are antecedent theories which condition & determine data collection, data acceptance or rejection and then its interpretation

to mere "twelve categories of understanding". Even in the modern Western philosophical tradition we find thinkers like Spinoza, Wittgenstein, Henry Bugbee, Gabriel Marcel, Unamuno, Heidegger, Levinas, Jaspers, American Transcendentalists like Thoreau, Emerson and various others who move beyond the narrow constricting definitions of philosophy as mere rationalism.

Philosophy, as traditionally understood, means 'cultivating love for wisdom'. Hikmah/philosophy and kitaab/law, both stem from the same revelatory source. The Prophet comes to teach both "kitaab" and "hikmah" (yu'allimuhumul kitaab wal hikmah). Therefore, philosophy is not what Descartes or Kant said – that is just a portion of Western philosophical tradition rather philosophy as traditionally understood is Sophia/wisdom/hikmah which every Prophet comes with and which then is explicated upon by the followers of Prophet i.e. the sages/hukamaa within a tradition, fleshing out the deeper essential truths of religion. Hikmah is the final fruit of religion rather than being antagonistic to each other. Due to the limitation of space, readers are requested to go through the works of Pierre Hadot on Ancient philosophy to see how

philosophy, in its traditional understanding, is actually an art of living. Wisdom, however, should not be confused with the popular uncritical obfuscating platitudes which Žižek rightly critiques. Wisdom has nothing to do with utilitarian sophistry. Wisdom is where metaphysics intersects with ordinary practical ethics.

Now, philosophy, even conceived as merely rationalistic speculative analysis, cannot be ignored at all. Philosophy as a rationalistic, linguistic, conceptual analysis is an inevitable necessity and cannot be avoided in any discipline at all. Philosophical analysis is highly important in second order investigations like Philosophy of Science where one studies the first principles and theoretical presuppositions on which scientific method rests. The theoretical frames of physical and social sciences cannot be conceived of without foundational philosophy.

When a young enthusiastic science student claims that 'I only believe in empiricism – nothing more and nothing less' one realizes the dire importance of re-playing the whole projectile of the British empiricist tradition with David Hume at its logical dead end followed by Kant's critique. Without antecedent theoretical tools, bare experience

is simply blind and useless as Kant showed. This was later on re-played within logical positivist tradition in similar tone when Neurath critiqued Carnap's protocol statements (bare experiential sense data). Carnap, like Hume, asserted that all we have is basic pure elementary sense data whereas Neurath clarified that we already are drenched in theoretical presuppositions without which our observation, data collection and interpretation lose all meaning. This is well established now, for example, again reiterated by Davidson and Sellars. The notion of bare elementary sense datum theory called as phenomenalism has long been debunked. Present day great physicists like Carlo Rovelli are successfully reacting against naïve scientism (that posits anti-philosophy attitude), by showing how science is intimately connected to philosophy. Any basic book on Philosophy of science can cure the fever of scientism.

Similarly, in addition to second order philosophical studies like 'Philosophy of Science', there are literary theories, sociological theories, political theories which are conceptual philosophical paradigms of the basic foundational principles on which these physical and social sciences stand. Without philosophical tools

we can never get around the edifice of any subject. Scientists are not empty vessels, going around collecting data; there are antecedent theories which condition & determine data collection, data acceptance or rejection and then its interpretation.

The world today needs – what people even condescendingly refer to as – "speculative philosophy" as Žižek notes, not only for the critical examination of the scientific method & implications of technology but also for deeper engagements in political & social theory. As long as human society exists, political philosophy shall remain relevant. People who do not appreciate philosophy fail to see that all the major political and ideological debates that pose significant influence on the world we live in today, say for example identity politics, is a direct end result of certain philosophical vantage points; for example, postmodern relativism, free voluntarism, fluidity in gender (I get to be what I "choose") is a direct end result of Cartesian and Kantian philosophy with cogito/self at the centre, in addition to celebration of Ockham's nominalism where all we have are particular individualities/identities & not any "universals", not to mention "self" being at the centre in the 20th century World War engulfed Europe's existentialist & absurdist thought where subject makes/constructs reality. This is why philosophy becomes important; it decides how people think, how they conceive their interface with the world and consequently the nature of their social and political engagements.

How to organize our societies; how to bring about a just distribution of resources; what is justice; these are all fundamentally philosophical questions. Moreover, we need to note with Žižek that even if philosophy may not provide grand answers to our questions but nevertheless it helps us see that sometimes the very way in which a question is framed is itself the part of the problem; philosophy in its foundational meta critique helps us see the hidden presuppositions which then definitely contributes towards the solutions.

In today's technocratic world, where the sole unilateral focus is on simply "doing"/getting things done, we need to pause for a while and "think" as to where we are heading towards. Whether it comes to environmental crisis, existential crisis, disproportionate deprivation of marginalized people, nuclear crisis or other political crises, humanity needs – what popular culture condescendingly refers to as – "idle speculative thinking"; humanity has never been in such a dire need of just clear "thinking".

Why Do We Stop Exploring New Music As We Get Older?

Timothy McKenry

According to an estimate from the International Federation of the Phonographic Industry, an organisation that represents the international music industry, people around the world spend on average 20.1 hours per week listening to music, up from 18.4 hours in 2021.

We have more ways to access music than at any time in history and a whole world of unfamiliar styles to explore.

The thrill of discovering new songs and new sounds can enrich people of all ages.

Except, most of the time, it doesn't.

Our willingness to explore new or unfamiliar music declines with age. Multiple studies confirm the sentiments of US songwriter and musician Bob Seger:

Today's music ain't got the same soul
I like that old time rock 'n' roll

EXPLORING NEW MUSIC

Academics use the term "open-earedness" to describe our willingness to explore new music. Across our lives this willingness waxes and wanes.

Until around the age of 11, children are generally happy to engage with unfamiliar music. Early adolescence sees a reduction in open-earedness, but is accompanied by an intense increase in interest in music more generally. Open-earedness increases slightly during young adulthood, then declines as we age.

A major 2013 study involving more than 250,000 participants confirmed these changing behaviours. It also

showed that the significance we ascribe to music after adolescence declines, and the amount of music we listen to reduces from a high point of 20% of our waking time during adolescence, to 13% in adulthood.

SHIFTING PRIORITIES

Researchers have different, but generally complementary, theories to account for these population-level trends. Some interpret the observed decline in music engagement in terms of psychosocial maturation.

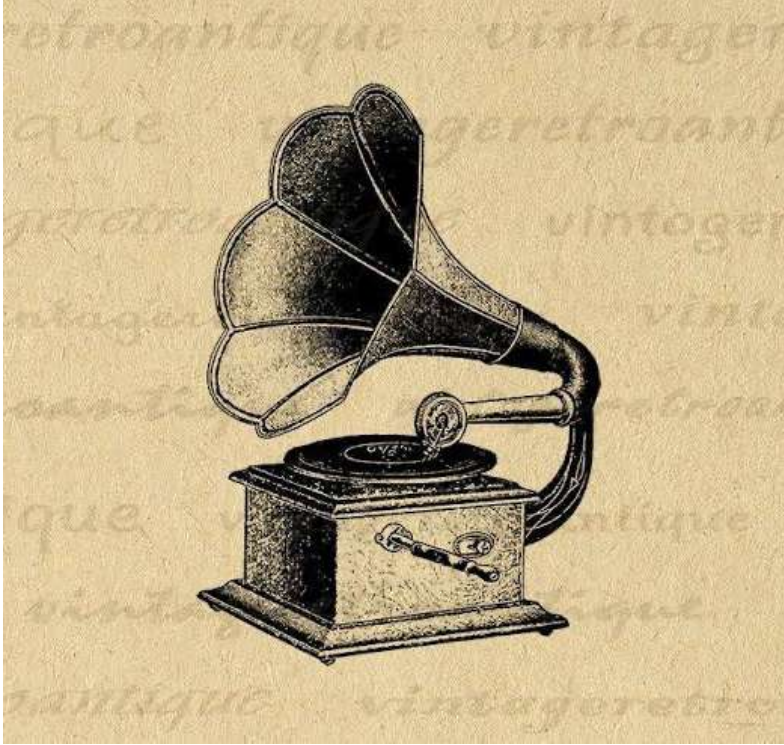
Adolescents use music as an identity marker and engage with it to navigate social circles. Adults have developed personalities and established social groups. As such, drivers to engage with new music are lessened.

One explanation for the age-based reduction in music consumption simply posits that responsibility-laden adults may have less discretionary time to explore their musical interests than younger people.

Some scholars question whether there is a straightforward link between the decline in the rate of new music consumption and increasing music intolerance.

Others argue against using chronological age as a predictor for stagnant musical taste without first considering the different ways we process and use music across our lifespan. Teenagers tend to be very aware of what they are listening to. Adults who use music as motivation or accompaniment for activities such as exercise or menial tasks may be less conscious of the extent to which they actually do listen to new music.

There is consensus that people



Adolescents use music as an identity marker and engage with it to navigate social circles. Adults have developed personalities and established social groups. As such, drivers to engage with new music are lessened

are highly likely to have their taste shaped by the music they first encounter in adolescence.

Adolescence shapes musical taste

firstly because our brains are developed to the point where we can fully process what we're hearing, and secondly because the heightened emo-

tions of puberty create strong and lasting bonds of memory.

SOUNDTRACK OF OUR LIVES

Neuroscience provides some fascinating insights into how and why our musical tastes develop. We know, for example, infants display an affinity to music they heard in utero.

Also, musical taste boils down to familiarity. In his book *This is Your Brain on Music*, neuroscientist Daniel Levitin writes:

When we love a piece of music, it reminds us of other music we have heard, and it activates memory traces of emotional times in our lives.

What we think of as our "taste" is simply a dopamine reaction arising from patterns our brain recognises which create the expectation of pleasure based on pleasures past. When we stop actively listening to new or unfamiliar music the link between the musical pattern and pleasure is severed.

These same researchers point to age-related changes to hearing acuity – specifically a lowering tolerance for loud and high-frequency sound – as one cause for a reduced interest in new music for some people.

It may take a decade or two to get there, but the result is, eventually, "young people's music" will alienate and bring no pleasure.

So, are we doomed to musical obsolescence as we age? Far from it. Recent research suggests musical taste does not need to calcify but can continue to develop across our lives.

EXPANDING OUR HORIZONS

Here are some tips if you want to train your musical taste to extend

beyond the "old favourites" of youth:

1. cultivate different modes of listening including in formal (concerts), focused (solitary), casual (as an accompaniment to other activity) and social settings
2. make listening habitual
3. be curious about what you're listening to. You can help your brain form new patterns by knowing something of the story behind the music
4. be patient and persistent. Don't assume because you don't immediately like an unfamiliar piece that it's not worth listening to. The more you listen, the better your brain will be at triggering a pleasure response
5. find a friend to give you recommendations. There's a good chance you'll listen to music suggested to you by someone you like and admire
6. keep listening to the music you love, but be willing to revisit long-held beliefs, particularly if you describe your musical taste in the negative (such as "I hate jazz"); it's likely these attitudes will stifle your joy
7. don't feel you have to keep up with new music trends. We've 1,000 years of music to explore.

If, after making the effort, you still find new popular music hard to bear, take solace from songwriter Ben Folds, who says in his memoir:

Good pop music, truly of its moment, should throw older adults off its scent. It should clear the room of boring adults and give the kids some space.

By arrangements with The Conversation

Naga Peace Talks Underway, Hopeful PM Modi's Initiative Will Bear Fruit: Shah

Press Trust of India

Tuensang (Nagaland): Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday asserted that Naga peace talks are underway and hoped that the initiative taken by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to bring lasting peace in the northeastern state will bear fruit. Addressing an election rally in Tuensang, Shah said there are some issues related to development and rights of eastern Nagaland and those will be addressed after the assembly elections.

"There was an insurgency in Nagaland before 2014... We started the peace process. I am hopeful that the initiative of Prime Minister Narendra Modi will bear fruit in bringing lasting peace in the state with the preservation of Naga culture, language and tradition," he said.

Eastern Nagaland People's Organisation (ENPO), the apex tribal body in the region, had called for a boycott of the assembly elections over their 'Frontier Nagaland' separate statehood demand.

"The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has held discussions with ENPO and an 'agreed agreement' has been reached. But we could not materialise it due to the implementation of the Model Code of Conduct.

"I promise you all that after the elections, the agreement will be implemented through which all issues of eastern Nagaland will be addressed. There will be massive development in the region and you will get your rights," he said.

Asserting that several measures were taken in the last nine years of BJP rule at the Centre to bring peace in the Northeast, he claimed that there was a 70 per cent dip in violent incidents in the region during the period.

"There has also been a 60 per cent reduction in deaths of security forces, while civilian deaths have dipped by 83 per

cent in the Northeast," he said.

Noting that Armed Force (Special Powers) Act, 1958 has been lifted from large parts of Nagaland by the BJP government, he expressed hope that the Act will be removed from across the northeastern state in the next three to four years.

Shah asserted that there has been an electoral seat-sharing agreement between only BJP and NDPP and no other party is connected to the alliance.

"It has come to my notice that some parties are misleading voters by saying that they have the support of the BJP. I want to clarify that we have only two symbols for Nagaland polls -- lotus (of the BJP) and globe (of the NDPP). We are fighting this election under the leadership of Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio, while PM Modi is the leader of NDA," he added.

Shah said budgetary allocations for tribes have been increased from Rs 21,000 crore in 2014 to Rs 86,000 crore in 2022.

He said more than 100 developmental projects, including 13 in Nagaland, have been finalised after conducting extensive studies using space technology.

"During the UPA rule, only Rs 1,300 crore was allocated for the development of Nagaland in 2009-10, which was increased to Rs 4,800 crore in 2022-23 fiscal by the BJP government," Shah said.

"In the last eight years, 53 developmental projects have been completed in Nagaland and 142 more are in the pipeline," he said.

Listing out the number of beneficiaries of various central schemes, he said, "Support us this election and I assure you that free medical treatment cap will be increased from Rs 5 lakh to Rs 10 lakh under Ayushman Bharat."

After the rally, Shah left for Dimapur, completing his two-day campaigning in eastern Nagaland, and flew to another poll-bound state Meghalaya.

MORBI BRIDGE CRASH

Oreva Group Offers To Pay Rs 5 Crore Compensation To Victims



Press Trust of India

Ahmedabad: Clock manufacturing firm Oreva Group on Tuesday made an offer before the Gujarat High Court to pay an 'interim' compensation totalling Rs 5 crore to the kin of those who lost their lives and people left injured when a British-era suspension bridge maintained and operated by the firm collapsed in Morbi town in October last year.

However, the court said the compensation offered by the company was not "just".

The suspension bridge on the Machchhu river in Morbi town collapsed on October 30 last year, killing 135 persons and injuring 56 others.

The assurance on 'interim' compensation was given in the HC by Ajanta Manufacturing Ltd (Oreva Group) during hearing of a suo motu (on its own) PIL admitted last year following the tragedy.

Senior advocate Nirupam Nanavaty, appearing for Oreva Group, told the court if the compensation is broadly divided among the affected persons, the kin of the deceased should get nearly Rs 3.5 lakh

while the injured will get Rs 1 lakh each, which according to the HC, was not "just".

"Is it just? You volunteered to pay a just compensation. Is it just according to you? This is not near to just compensation," noted a division bench of Chief Justice Sonia Gokani and Justice Sandeep Bhatt.

The bench posted the further hearing on Wednesday and asked Nanavaty to take instructions from his client whether the company would pay more compensation in the future because this payout has been termed as "not final".

The bench had earlier made it clear that Oreva's offer of compensation "will not absolve it of any liability".

Oreva Group, led by its MD Jaysukh Patel, was responsible for the operation and maintenance of the bridge with a special investigation team (SIT) formed by the state government citing several lapses on the part of the firm.

Nanavaty informed the court that the amount of Rs 5 crore is "ad-hoc" and "in-terim". He said Oreva Group "will deposit Rs 5 crore to the Gujarat government within

two weeks and state can determine what amount is to be paid to the injured or to the kin of the deceased"

Moreover, the corporate entity has taken full responsibility of seven children who have lost both their parents in the tragedy, said Nanavaty.

These seven children will get all the required facilities such as residence and education, till they become majors. The company would also give them jobs as per their qualifications, said the senior advocate.

Advocate General Kamal Trivedi informed the court that the state as well as the Centre have so far paid a compensation of Rs 10 lakh each to the kin of the deceased and Rs 2 lakh to each injured person.

The Morbi police have arrested ten accused, including Oreva Group MD Jaysukh Patel, under IPC sections 304 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder), 308 (attempt to commit culpable homicide), 336 (act which endangers human life), 337 (causing hurt to any person by doing any rash or negligent act) and under 338 (causing grievous hurt by doing rash or negligent act).

Digital Transactions To Soon Exceed Cash In India: PM Modi

Press Trust of India

New Delhi/Singapore: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday expressed hope that digital transactions will soon surpass cash with Unified Payments Interface (UPI) increasingly becoming the most preferred payment mechanism in the country.

Modi after the launch of the cross-border connectivity between the UPI and PayNow of Singapore said about 74 billion transactions amounting to more than Rs 126 trillion, which is approximately 2 trillion Singapore dollar, was done through UPI in 2022.

"Many experts are estimating that very soon India's digital wallet transactions are going to overtake cash transactions," he said.

A large number of transactions via UPI demonstrate that this indigenously designed payment system is very secure, he said.

Modi along with his Singaporean counterpart Lee Hsien Loong witnessed the launch of cross-border connectivity between UPI and PayNow via video conferencing.

The facility was launched through token transactions by Reserve Bank of India Governor Shaktikanta Das and Managing Director of Monetary Authority of Singapore Ravi Menon using the UPI-PayNow linkage.

Modi in a tweet said, "Today is a special day for India-Singapore friendship and for our efforts to deepen collaboration in FinTech and innovation. The participation of my friend, PM @leehsienloong made this morning's programme even more special."

Prime Minister Lee said the idea of linking PayNow and UPI was first conceived in 2018, when Modi visited Singapore.

"Since then, our two central banks have been working on this in earnest. Digital connectivity was also a key topic discussed at the inaugural India-Singapore Ministerial Roundtable (ISMR), which

was held in New Delhi last September. So I am very glad that the PayNow-UPI linkage has now become a reality," Lee explained.

"As we progressively add more users and use cases, the PayNow-UPI linkage will grow in utility, and contribute more to facilitating our trade and our people-to-people links," Lee said.

Cross-border retail payments and remittances between Singapore and India amount to over USD 1 billion annually.

"I hope this strong partnership between Singapore and India will continue to spawn innovative technology solutions and create more cross-border opportunities for our digital economies," Lee said.

Stressing that the linkage of UPI and PayNow is a new milestone in India-Singapore relations, Modi said, this will help people of both the countries to do cross-border transactions through mobile phone in an affordable manner.

Singapore is the first country with which cross-border Person-to-Person (P2P) payment facility has been launched, he said, adding, this will help the Indian diaspora in Singapore, especially migrant workers/students and bring the benefits of digitalisation and fintech to the common man through instantaneous and low-cost transfer of money from Singapore to India and vice-versa.

Pointing out that the focus of the government is to promote innovation and modernisation, Modi said the Digital India programme of the government has enhanced 'Ease of Living' and 'Ease of Doing Business' and digital connectivity and has pushed financial inclusion. The Digital India programme has brought in significant reforms in governance and public service delivery.

The linkage will enable users of the two fast payment systems in either country to make convenient, safe, instant, and cost-effective cross-border fund transfers using their respective mobile apps.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Govt To Impose

In an order, Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla issued several amendments in the Jammu and Kashmir Municipal Act, 2000 and Jammu and Kashmir Municipal Corporation Act, 2000 carried through the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization (Adaptation of State Laws) Order, 2020.

According to a Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) Corporator the SMC will call a session and will have the deliberations on the order.

"The SMC is the executive and implementing agency of the property tax. We can call a council and seek an amendment to this," corporator Danish Bhat told Kashmir Observer.

He said the proposal was supposed to go through the SMC to the Government but now without informing SMC, the government has come up with the order.

The notification further says that a person liable to property tax shall furnish to the Executive Officer or any officer authorized by him in this behalf the particulars of the property and the tax by 30 May of the financial year to which the return pertains.

"It shall be accompanied by a proof of payment in Form-2. Acknowledgment of filing of return shall be in Form-3. A copy of the acknowledgment along with the proof of payment of the second installment of tax shall be furnished by 30 November in cases where the payment is made in two installments," the notification reads.

"If any person fails to file return in due time, unless prevented by 'sufficient cause', will have to the interest due for delay in payment, make the person from whom it is due liable to a penalty of Rs 100/- or 1% of the tax due, whichever is higher, for every month of default. The maximum penalty shall not exceed Rs 1000/," it adds.

NC Seeks Immediate

democratically elected government, Imran said, "Such matters should be left to an elected government. The people's representatives must be given an opportunity to discuss these issues. Unfortunately such important issues don't face public scrutiny in the current bureaucratic set up. It has become a habit of those in power in Delhi to issue orders, irrespective of their impact or public opinion."

He termed this decision "anti-people and a grave injustice" and demanded its immediate rollback. "Such revenue generation measures must be left to a democratically elected government in J&K," he added.

NGT Forms

J S Rawat of Kumaon University, Space Application Centre, National Institute of Rock Mechanics and ACS Environment, the tribunal said.

"The committee may suggest remedial measures to prevent environmental damage in the light of carrying capacity, hydro-geology studies, geo-morphological studies and also

covering other allied and incidental issues," it said.

The committee can take assistance from any other experts or institutions and it had to meet within two weeks, the tribunal said adding, it could interact with the stakeholders, including the inhabitants and members of civil society.

The committee had to complete its studies within two months and submit a report by May 15, it said.

Meanwhile, the chief secretary could take preventive and remedial measures found necessary in light of the media report, the tribunal said.

The matter has been posted for further proceedings on May 25.

People Of J&K

is no better way to do that than having international students among you," he added.

Union Minister for Education, Dharmendra Pradhan congratulated the Government of J&K for showcasing the strength and vibrancy of India's higher education landscape as well as the knowledge legacy of Jammu & Kashmir.

"J&K is witnessing a new dawn of development under the visionary leadership of Prime Minister. With the implementation of National Education Policy, we are internationalising our education sector. The Education Ministry will support, encourage and facilitate the globalisation of SKUAST-Kashmir," he said.

He also encouraged all the universities to join efforts to establish India as a global study destination.

Union MoS, Dr. Jitendra Singh said the National Education Policy brought by Prime Minister holds the promise to open career and start-up opportunities driven by aptitude, skill and flexi options at capacity building.

"Jammu Kashmir has a rich legacy of unexplored agricultural avenues, Aroma Mission and Purple Revolution, which impacts it the potential of being the torchbearer of Agri StartUp movement in India," Singh said.

Speaking on the occasion, J&K LG Manoj Sinha expressed his gratitude to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for accelerating development of J&K and transforming it into a favourite destination for students, travellers and entrepreneurs.

Sinha said with this initiative J&K has launched a dedicated programme for foreign students.

"Our aim is to invite international students to J&K for short-term and long-term courses in various disciplines & strengthen the international connect. Over the past three years, we have focused on strengthening education sector, developing knowledge workers for sectors like industries, agriculture & health care. Sincere efforts have been made to convert the knowledge dividends into wealth for process of innovation & growth," he said.

The LG also observed that the initiative of SKUAST-Kashmir will set an example for other universities of the country as well.

"Apart from campuses nestled in nature's paradise, professional faculties, high standard

of living, J&K is also offering variety of courses starting from Artificial Intelligence, Robotics to Agri science, Yoga, Sanskrit & interface with the industries for research & innovation," Sinha said

"With more than 150 higher education institutions, two central universities, seven state universities, two AIIMS, IIM, IIT, NIT, NIIT, IIMC and two Agriculture Science and Technology universities, Jammu Kashmir has emerged as a favourite destination for students in India," he added.

The LG further said that paradigm shift towards virtues of life which humanity is witnessing is also an opportunity for enhancing quality of life by exchange programs between the countries and learn from each other and enable each other to achieve greater heights in our journey.

"The whole world is looking at India with admiration and hope. There never was a better time to be in India to witness and comprehend the glorious chapters of ancient civilization and immortal organic composite culture. The foreign student's residential and exchange programmes, people-to-people contacts and institutional interactions with different institutions of Jammu Kashmir will enrich and strengthen global cultural synergies," Sinha added.

Dr Vinay Sahasrabudde, President Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) assured the cooperation and support of ICCR to J&K in organizing the exchange programs of artisans and fairs whereby the message of changing new aspirational J&K goes loud and clear to other countries.

Distinguished Ambassadors, High Commissioners and members of ICAR, ICCR, UGC, and SKUAST-K were present on the occasion.

Sha'ban Moon Sighted

Notably, Sha'ban, the eighth month in Islamic (lunar) calendar precedes the fasting month of Ramadan.

Islamic calendar months last either 29 or 30 days, depending on when the crescent moon is sighted. As per astronomical calculations, Sha'ban is expected to last 30 days, with the holy month of Ramadan likely to begin on March 24. Residents are likely to get 29 days of fasting, with the first day of Eid al Fitr likely to be on Saturday, April 22.

SIA Conducts

The SIU said the raids were aimed at eliminating the militant ecosystem by identifying the associates and supporters of militants.

4 Held For Human

rounded up four accused of a gang involved in human trafficking. They were identified as Asma Akhter, Rohina Akhter, Mohammad Rafeeq and Mohammad Arif, they said.

The girls were sent for counseling after proper medico legal formalities, they said.

Hizb Commander

propaganda groups to unite ex-militants and

other cadres for the expansion of activities of Hizbul Mujahideen, Lashkar-e-Taiba, and other terrorist organisations.

Ladakh Sets Guinness

along with mobile ambulances.

The district development commissioner said all the participants underwent six-day acclimatisation — four days in Leh and two in Pangong — in accordance with the SOPs decided by the district administration. The participants were also subjected to medical examination to ensure that they were fit for running.

All medical centres along the route were equipped with trained personnel and equipment to tackle any medical emergencies, Suse said, adding the event saw active support from Indian Army and ITBP in terms of medical support and logistics.

Union Territory Disaster Response Force personnel and Ladakh mountain guide association personnel were deployed along the route to ensure safety of the runners. The route was decided after proper inspection and size of frozen layer of ice, the officer said.

He said the participants were allowed to run only after wearing safety equipment to avoid slipping on ice.

After the successful conclusion of the event, the runners were felicitated with medals and certificates, while cash prizes were also given to first, second and third place finishers in both men's and women's categories.

He said the event was recorded as 'Highest Altitude Frozen Half Marathon' and a certificate was issued by Guinness officials on the occasion to LAHDC Leh and ASFL.

"Congratulations, we have made it to the world record. Indeed a successful event inspired by Prime Minister @narendramodi's #VibrantVillages Programme for border regions," Gyalson tweeted.

Tracks Being

the overarch deck of the bridge was completed with a Golden Joint', paving way for the laying of the track.

As per the officials, the construction work on the bridge started in 2004 but had to be suspended in 2008-09 to consider the aspect of safety of rail passengers in view of frequent high velocity winds in the area.

Once completed, the bridge will be able to withstand winds with speed up to 260 kmph and will have a lifespan of 120 years, the officials said.

Besides the highest railway bridge, the USBRL project has many firsts like the longest railway tunnel having overall length of 12.75 km, first cable-stayed bridge which when completed will be an engineering marvel of the 21st century.

Out of the total 272-km USBRL project, the 161-km was commissioned in phases, with the first phase 118-km Qazigund-Baramulla section commissioned in October 2009 followed by 18-km Banihal-Qazigund in June 2013 and 25-km Udhampur-Katra in July 2014.

The work on the project, which is the most

challenging railway infrastructure project being undertaken post-independence, was started in 1997 and has missed several deadlines amid huge cost escalations.

The under-construction 111-km Katra-Banihal section has a total of 37 bridges (26 major and 11 minor), 35 tunnels with a length of 164 kms (main 27 with 97.64 km and eight escape tunnels with 66.40 km).

Banihal Highway

continuous landslide and shooting stone activity have been hampering the road clearance operation. The official said almost 2,000 vehicles are stranded on both sides of the highway.

Moreover, the district administration Ramban and Himalayan QRT Ramsoo has made accommodation and dinner arrangements for stranded passengers on the highway.

"Around 80 stranded passengers have been accommodated at Ramsoo. More coming in. NH-44 remains closed," Deputy Commissioner Ramban tweeted.

Meanwhile, the authorities have advised the commuters to undertake the journey on the National Highway only after confirming the status of the road from Traffic Control Units of Ramban, Srinagar and Jammu. (KNO)

Dry Weather

received fresh snowfall while rains lashed the plains. The ski resort recorded 10 cms (4 inches) of snow till 0830 hours Tuesday, a MeT department official said.

He said that while Srinagar had traces of rain during the time, Qazigund recorded 4.3mm, Pahalgal 4.3mm, Kupwara 7.6mm, Kokernag 4.2mm, Banihal 0.6mm, Batote 0.2mm and Bhadarwah 1.4mm.

Regarding temperature, he said, Srinagar recorded a low of 5.0°C against the previous night's 5.3°C. Today's minimum temperature, he said, was above normal by 4.1°C for the summer capital.

Qazigund, he said, recorded a low of 4.7°C against 3.7°C on the previous night while Pahalgal recorded a low of 0.8°C against minus 1.7°C on the previous night.

Kokernag recorded a low of 3.7°C, the same as on the previous night and it was 4.4°C above normal for the place, the officials said.

Gulmarg recorded a low of minusv3.5°C against 0.2°C on the previous night and it was 3.2°C above normal for the world famous skiing resort in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, he said.

In Kupwara town, he said, the mercury settled at 3.1°C against 4.5°C on the previous night and it was 3.4°C above normal for the north Kashmir area.

Jammu recorded a low of 13.7°C against 15.5°C on the previous night. It was 3.1°C above normal for J&K's winter capital, he said.

Banihal, he said, recorded a low of 6.2°C (above normal by 5.0°C). Batote 7.6°C (above normal by 4.1°C), Katra 11.7°C (3.2°C above normal) and Bhaderwah 4.7°C (4.1°C above normal).

Ladakh's Leh recorded a low of minus 5.6°C, the official said. (With GNS inputs)

Wages Of Daily Rated Workers, Casual Labourers Hiked By Rs 11

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Tuesday ordered the enhancement of minimum wages of daily rated workers including casual labourers as per the revised minimum rate of wages notified by the Labour and Employment Department.

According to an order, a copy of which lies with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) reads that it is hereby ordered that duly engaged Daily Rated Workers, including Casual Labourers, in all Government Departments and those of Municipalities & Local Bodies, as are in receipt of Rs. 300/-(Rupees Three Hundred) per day, shall be paid wages @ Rs.311/-Rupees Three Hundred & Eleven) per day w.e.f. 17-10-2022.

It is further ordered that bio-metric attendance system will be enforced for all categories of persons engaged by govern-

ment in any capacity. "The concerned ODO/Controlling officer shall certify with every bill that the daily rated workers/casual workers have worked for the prescribed time period every day and that their performance has been satisfactory," it reads.

"With respect to held staff, where bio-metric attendance may be difficult, the concerned DDO shall certify attendance. However, such staff shall be required to mark attendance at defined intervals," it added.

"The Aadhar based data base shall be reconciled to avoid duplication," it further added.

"The concerned Departments shall submit full details regarding unauthorized engagements so as to identify officers/officials responsible for such engagements so that action as appropriate may be taken against them as per rules," reads the order.

"The number of hours of engagement may be restricted to budget availability," it reads—(KNO)

DC Anantnag Reviews Amarnath Yatra Preparations



Observer News Service

ANANTNAG: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr Basharat Qayoom on Tuesday convened a meeting to review the preparations for Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra (SANJY) 2023.

Thorough deliberations were held with stakeholders from various departments including Roads & Buildings, KPDCL, Jal Shakti, Pahalgam Development Authority, Animal Husbandry, Education, Civil Defence and Home Guards, BSNL, Municipalities, Labour department among others.

Various issues pertaining to SANJY-2023 like clearance of tracks, setting up of safety railings, sanitation plan, supply of electricity and water, registration of labour and ponies, deployment plans for various line departments etc were discussed.

The DC also reviewed the works plans submitted by various departments for repair of existing infrastructure and augmentation projects to be taken up at specific locations.

He emphasized that detailed planning and seamless execution will be critical for making SANJY-2023 a fulfilling experience for the Yatries. He said that every effort is to be made to ensure safety of the pilgrims and conservation of the fragile ecosystem along the route.

The DC impressed upon the participants that based on previous experience, a fool proof sanitation plan must be framed and put into practice.

The meeting was attended by ADC Anantnag, CEO PDA, ACR, CAHO, SE R&B, SE KPDCL, SE Jal Shakti, CEO MC, Executive Engineers from Jal Shakti, ALC among others.

DC Bandipora Reviews Performance Of Revenue Dept

Observer News Service

BANDIPORA: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Dr. Owais Ahmad Tuesday chaired a meeting of revenue officers to review the performance of the revenue department.

During the meeting, detailed review regarding different deliverables was taken and necessary directions were issued to the concerned Officers.

The DC also took the status of implementation of the Digital India Land Records Modernization Programme and Jamabandi writing in the district besides geo tagging and agriculture census.

Dr Owais on the occasion also reviewed the status of removal of encroachments. He directed the officers to ensure no underprivileged household gets affected by the ongoing drive.

He asked the officers to ensure eviction of state/Kah-charai land and identify the big patches of land. He said the land would be used for public welfare including construction of stadiums, libraries, Youth hostel and other institutions of public welfare.

Dr Owais directed the officers to complete the first phase of agriculture census till March 10th.

He also asked the revenue officers to expedite the process of distribution of land pass-books.

During the meeting, DC also

asked the revenue officers to provide certification of proposed locations for 4-G and 5-G towers.

The pending court cases were also discussed in the meeting and directions were passed for following the cases for early disposals. He stressed upon the revenue officials to adopt a target driven approach to ensure the time bound completion of the process.

Meanwhile, The DC also directed the Tehsildars to ensure the effective implementation of revenue department e-services under Public Service Guarantee Act and take stringent action against the defaulters for dereliction of their duties irrespective of rank and file, besides to impose penalties.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC said that effective public service and grievance redressal mechanisms shall be placed at the grassroots level on priority so that the public does not suffer anymore.

Dr. Owais asked the Tehsildars for disposal of online Application of Fard within the timeline as per guidelines and directed them to monitor online portals on daily basis for disposal of cases within the set timeline.

The meeting was attended by ADC Waseem Raja, ACR Parvaiz Rahim, SDM Sumbal Aamir Choudhary, Tehsildars and other senior officers of the district.

Travel Time Between Jammu, Srinagar Shouldn't Exceed 7 Hrs: CS

Directs For Making ITMS Functional For Capital Cities Within 7 Days

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta on Tuesday in a meeting with traffic authorities made it amply clear that in no case should travel time between the two capital cities of the UT exceed beyond 7 hours on any day for light motor vehicles.

He made these remarks in a meeting called to review the traffic scenario on this road including that of the two cities.

The meeting was attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Home; Principal Secretary, PWD; Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir; IG Traffic; Secretary, Transport; Deputy Commissioners Anantnag/Ramban; SP Traffic, National Highway; District SPs, Jammu/Srinagar/ Anantnag/ Ramban; Transport Commissioner and many other concerned officers.

Dr Mehta enjoined upon the traffic authorities to submit daily reports about the actual time taken to reach from one city to another. He told them to enhance their personnel on all the damaged portions of the road for better traffic management. He urged them not to let the traffic come to halt due to any of the hindrance. He asked them to improve the road surface damaged due to weather vagaries at all costs for smooth movement of the vehicles on this road.

The Chief Secretary impressed upon them to show zero tolerance towards road side parking hindering traffic flow. He directed for having



stringent regulations in place to deal with all the violators. He asked them to deploy traffic police personnel in busy places like markets etcfor continuous vigil and better traffic management on the highway.

Dr Mehta also took stock of the construction works on different projects presently under progress. He exhorted upon them to make all out efforts to through open the T5 tunnel on Panthiyal stretch of the highway by 15th of March, Jaiswal Bridge by 31st March, and double lane of Ramban Flyover and Banihal Bye-pass by 15th of April this year. He advised them to accelerate the pace of work to meet these deadlines without any fail. He also asked the Secretary Transport and IG Traffic to drive down this road for have better idea about the measures to be taken for making the road better and safe.

The Chief Secretary also emphasized on making all the way side amenities like washrooms etc functional throughout the entire stretch of the highway. He enquired about the status of the truck holding areas designated at many locations

on this road. He told them to look for one more such facility at Ramssoo also. He suggested them to come up with a DPR for additional Bailey Bridge near Ramban at an earliest so that work on the same is taken in hand by March this year.

While reviewing the traffic scenario on the roads of the two capital cities, the Chief Secretary directed the concerned authorities to make the completed phase of the Intelligent Traffic Management System (ITMS) functional within 7 days. He asked them to use the CCTV network of the system to look for the violators and e-challan or tow away their vehicles for hassle-free movement of vehicles on city roads.

On the request of the Traffic authorities the Chief Secretary asked the administration to look into the possibility of taking a traffic holiday for a day every week on the Jammu-Srinagar Highway till 15th of March so that it is better utilized for making some crucial repairs and completing few essential works for making travel on this road a pleasant experience for the commuters.

Haryana's VSU Announces Reservation For Displaced J&K Students

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Vice Chancellor of Shri Vishwakarma Skill University (VSU) Raj Nehru on Tuesday said one seat in each course has been reserved for displaced students from Jammu and Kashmir in the varsity.

He said the university offers courses that are "hybrid" in nature, with a focus on "you earn while you learn".

Nehru called upon the students from Jammu and Kashmir to pursue skill education for better career prospects.

He the Shri Vishwakarma Skill University, located in Haryana, welcomes the displaced students from Jammu and Kashmir with open arms.



"One seat has been reserved in each course for the displaced students," the vice chancellor of the country's first skill university said.

He said the Haryana government has established Shri Vishwakarma Skill University in Palwal district near Delhi to realise the concept of Skill India'.

"More than 40 programmes are running in the university and one seat in each course has been reserved for displaced students from Jammu and

Kashmir so that they can make a career by engaging with skill education," Nehru said.

He said the university is directly associated with industry under a dual-integrated model.

Therefore, after studying at our university, students can directly connect with the industry. Shri Vishwakarma Skill University will facilitate every student to come on the employment model, he added. Nehru said the university also offers scholarships to meritorious students.

AB PM-JAY/ AB PM-JAY SEHAT

99% Beneficiaries Rate Services As Excellent Or Good: Govt

Observer News Service

JAMMU: As part of its efforts to improve services rendered under the AB PM-JAY/ AB PM-JAY SEHAT scheme, Health & Medical Education department, through it's 104 Call Centre, contacted 21,145 beneficiaries during the last six months out of the which 58% rated the services provided under AB PM-JAY/ SEHAT as excellent, 41 % rated the services as good and 1% rated the services as poor.

On the basis of the feedback of the beneficiaries, grievances received on CGRMS, CPGRAMS, JKIGRMS, feedback of Insurance Company and triggers received from National Anti-Fraud Unit (NAFU) of National Health Authority (NHA) and strictly as per the guidelines issued by NHA, State Health Agency (SHA) conducted audit of 100 % claims preferred by Empanelled Private Hospitals including highly utilized packages like Cholecystectomy (Removal of Gall Bladder). So far more than 60,000 cases have been audited during the current policy period. This is in addition to the audit of each claim being done by the Insurance Company. This ensures efficient claim scrutiny which prevents unnecessary procedures from being booked under the scheme. On the basis of the audit, SHA imposed Rs.

3.06 Crores as penalty on the erring empanelled health-care providers and have taken action under guidelines against erring hospitals and treating doctors for violating standard treatment guidelines or for any other malpractice.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir under Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY) and AB PM-JAY SEHAT empowers every family of J&K with a financial protection of Rs 5 lakh annually for meeting health expenditure. Jammu & Kashmir was one of the first States/UTs to universalize AB PM-JAY. The scheme is being implemented in the Insurance mode. So far, under AB PM-JAY and AB PM-JAY SEHAT more than 7 Lakh treatments have been provided to J&K domiciles including treatments received outside J&K using portability option and the treatments amount to more than Rs. 1100 Crores. On an average the daily claim outgo is about Rs. 2 Crores now.

Every 10 in-patients are facilitated by a Pradhan Mantri Arogya Mitra (PMAM) across all the empanelled health-care facilities of the Union Territory and there are about 425 such PMAMs working in Public Health-care facilities. Besides PMAM, Medical Coordinators have also been designated for

each empanelled hospital for smooth processing of the case after admission of the beneficiary in the hospital.

Under the scheme, 2295 procedures are covered out of which some procedures are exclusively reserved for public hospitals like psychiatric & maternity procedures including Hysterectomy (Uterus removal) etc.

Further, capacity building programs are being conducted by NHA & SHA wherein PMAMs, District Implementation Units (DIUs) and other stakeholders are being regularly trained. Regular IEC activities are being undertaken by SHA for educating and informing the public about different aspects of the scheme.

There is a dedicated National & UT level helpline for the beneficiaries and beneficiaries are being facilitated throughout the process of treatment. General Public or prospective beneficiary patients are requested to contact SHA in case of any grievance through 104 Call Centre, QR Code Scan (available at Ayushman kiosk at all the EHCPs), Helpline No: 18002335554, 18002034138, Whatsapp Helpline No: 9906241592. Further, General Public is advised not to pay heed to any misinformation about the scheme. Any spread of misinformation shall be dealt with strictly.



Div Com Kashmir Reviews Progress On Upgradation Of Roads

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In preparation to host G20 Summit, the Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri on Tuesday convened a meeting to review the status of upgradation work of main roads from Srinagar Airport to Fore-shore Road.

The meeting was attended by CEO, Srinagar Smart City Ltd; Chief Engineer SSCL; SE, R&B and other officers.

Addressing the meeting, Div Com stressed on officers to speed up the developmental work to enhance facade of roads through macadamization, repairing of footpaths, removal of debris, landscape

development of road medians with green trees, removal of wires, painting of flyovers etc

During the meeting he reviewed beautification of IG road, redevelopment of Convent road & Residency road besides upgradation of Ghanta Ghar, Moulana Azad Road, Gupkar Junction and construction of footpath from Dalgate to Nishat etc

On the occasion, he also directed officers to initiate the tendering process of pending undertaken projects so that the work shall be completed in a stipulated time.

Also, he directed concerned officers of R&B to mobilize men and machinery to continue work during the night hours to meet the deadlines.

Govt Seeks Info Of Teaching Staff Pursuing PG During Service

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The government has sought information from the teaching staff of the School Education Department regarding pursuing Post Graduate degrees in various disciplines during in-service.

Deputy Secretary to government, Masood Ahmad Wani said that on directions of the administration, the department needs to submit information regarding pursuing of post graduate degrees in various disciplines during in-service by incharge lecturers, masters and teachers so that it will finalize the seniorities.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the officer said this in a communicque to Directors of School Education of both Jammu and Kashmir regions.

"I am directed to request you to kindly furnish details of incharge lecturers, masters and teachers discipline wise having pursued their Post Graduate Degrees in various disciplines during service in regular as well as distance mode and are not fulfilling the conditions as laid down in 2017 as per the formats prepared by the department," it reads.

He said that the discipline-wise consolidated information as per devised formats should reach the School Education Department within two weeks time positively thereby enabling this Department to take further necessary action in the matter.

Stating the conditions laid down by the government in an order issued on November-2017 reads that, "The University or the institution awarding the degrees through distance mode are UGC recog-

nised and Established by an Act of Parliament or State Legislation."

It also reads that the courses offered are approved by Distance Education Council (DEC) or All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE).

"The in service candidate, who have acquired their degree through Distance Mode prior to the issuance of Jammu and Kashmir Private Colleges (Regulation & Control) Rules 2005 shall be treated as recognised and valid, provided the Universities or the institutions from which they have obtained their degrees are recognized as per UGC guidelines and are DEC or AICTE approved," it reads.

The conditions further states that the courses in Science subjects where practicals are part of curriculum, the concerned University shall certify that the practicals have been conducted from the main campus of the University as envisaged in Clause (VI) of the government order issued in 2012.

"The degrees obtained through Distance Education Mode from off-campus which have been established by the State Universities beyond their territorial jurisdiction shall not be recognised.

"The in-service candidates should have obtained their degrees after seeking proper permission from the Competent Authority at the relevant point of time and the promotion of in-service candidates including Distance Mode degree-holders, shall be performance- based and their regularisation will be effected strictly as per their last three years' performance in their respective disciplines," it reads—(KNO)

KCC&I Elects New Executive Committee, 21 Candidates Emerge Victorious

Agencies

SRINAGAR: After three years' delay, the Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industries (KCC&I) on Tuesday elected its new executive committee with 21 candidates in the fray emerging victorious.

Sources privy to the development said that 42 candidates were in the poll fray today of whom 21 emerged victorious.

They said the highest number of votes were bagged by Akib Chaya with 453 voting in his favour followed by Umar Nazir Tibatbaqal with 444 votes.

Those who have been elected include Aashaq Hussain Shanggloo, Faiz Ahmad Bakshi, Javid Ahmad Bhat, Amir Manzoor, Muzaffar Majid Jan, Ashfaq Ahmad Zahgeer, Farooq Ahamed Kuthoo, Ghulam Nabi Bhat, Fayaz Ahmad Punjabi, Altaf Ahmad Trambo, Jagmohan Singh Raina, Mohammad Lateif Bhat,

Siah Mohammad Ibrahim, Suhail Jan, Zubair Mahajan, Touseef Ahmad Bhat, Faroz Ahmad Bisati, Showkat Khan and Zahoor Hussain Alamgir.

The elections were held under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Muhammad Aijaz Asad, Registrar J&K High Court Judicial, Government of J&K and the Election Committee of KCC&I.

Sources said that the executive committee elected for the term of one-year, will now elect its body within a day.

Pertinently, the elections to elect the new executive committee have been conducted after the delay of three years due to Covid outbreak and other issues. The last election was held in 2019.

The High Court of J&K and Ladhak had in December last year ordered that the elections of Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) be concluded within a month—(KNO)



Real Kashmir Defeat
Aizawl In Dramatic 2-1 Win

Press Trust of India

SRINAGAR: Real Kashmir scripted another late comeback victory in the I-League here on Tuesday, getting the better of Aizawl FC 2-1.

After a goalless first half and a drab first half-an-hour of the second half, the game sprang to life with Aizawl taking the lead in the 75th through Lalramsanga.

But the hosts scored twice in the space of five minutes to turn the tie around. Jestin George found the equaliser in the 79th minute, before Samuel Kynshi scored the winner in the 84th minute.

Real Kashmir could have taken the lead in the seventh minute but Kynshi's right-footed free-kick from just outside the Aizawl box did not swing in enough and hit near post before going out.

Kynshi also tried to curl in a right-footer through the far post in the 18th minute, but it went wide.

Aizawl goalkeeper Lalmuansanga's uneasiness with the aerial ball became clear in the second half and eventually destroyed their team's hopes.

Lalchhanhima Sailo received a pass from the right and played a nice one-two with Lalramsanga, who fired a grounded strike into the corner of the net with his left foot.

But the joy did not last long as four minutes later, Lalmuansanga spilled Wadudu Yakubu's innocuous lob from far, in spite of the fact that nobody was pressing on him. George was close by and calmly used his left foot to make it 1-1.

Real Kashmir settled the issue in the 84th minute as left-back Akashdeep moved into the Aizawl box and managed to cut it back for Kynshi, while two defenders were left watching.

Sania Mirza Ends Career
With Defeat In Dubai

Press Trust of India

DUBAI: Sania Mirza closed her glorious career with a first round defeat at the WTA Dubai Duty Free Championships, losing the contest in straight sets along with American partner Madison Keys here Tuesday.

Sania and Keys lost 4-6 0-6 to the formidable Russian pair of Vernoklia Kudermetova and Liudmila Samsonova in exactly one hour.

The 36-year-old Sania, who turned Pro in 2003, walks out of competitive tennis with six Grand Slam titles, including



three women's doubles with Swiss legend Martina Hingis.

She won two of her three mixed doubles with compatriot Mahesh Bhupathi (2009 Australian Open and 2012 French Open). She won the US Open trophy with Bruno Soares.

Warner Ruled Out Of
India Tests Due To Injury



Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: Struggling Australia opening batter David Warner was on Tuesday ruled out of the remaining two Tests of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy due to an elbow fracture, dealing further blow to the visiting team.

Warner will head home to Sydney to recover but is expected to return to India for the three-match ODI series after the four-match Test series. The ODI series begins on March 17 in Mumbai.

"David Warner has been ruled out of the Qantas test tour of India and will return home," CA said in a statement.

"Warner was struck on the elbow in the second Test in Delhi and sustained a hairline fracture. After further assessment, he will require a period of rehabilitation which will preclude any further involvement in the remainder of the Test series.

"It is currently anticipated that he will return to India for the three One-Day International

als which follow the Test Series."

Warner was substituted by Matthew Renshaw in the second innings in the second Test here with delayed concussion symptoms after being struck on the grille of his protective batting helmet by India fast bowler Mohammad Siraj in Australia's first innings.

That blow came shortly after Warner had been struck on the arm by another rising delivery, with x-rays subsequently confirming the left-hander had also sustained a hairline fracture of the elbow.

The 36-year-old had struggled for form across the first two Tests, which Australia lost heavily to trail 0-2 in the series, returning 26 runs from his three completed innings.

Australia coach Andrew McDonald indicated on Monday that a decision on Warner's fitness would be coming.

"Warner's still sore at the moment. We're in no rush to make any decisions at this point in time around Davey. Just seeing how that settles, how functional that is," McDonald had said.

Travid Head, who came out to bat in Australia's second innings in place of Warner in New Delhi, is expected to open along with Usman Khawaja in the third Test in Indore beginning on March 1.

Australia has already lost fast bowler Josh Hazlewood (achilles soreness) for the remainder of the campaign, while fellow Test squad members Mitchell Starc and Cameron Green were absent from the opening two matches of the series as they recover from finger injuries.

Green is, however, expected to be fit to play in Indore. He was very close to being selected in the second Test, during which he faced fast bowling in the nets.

Leg spinner Mitchell Swepson is due to return to India and rejoin the squad having flown home after the opening Test in Nagpur for the birth of his and partner Jess' first child.



AICF Chess For Every One
Tournament Concludes

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The All India Chess Federation (AICF) Chess For Every One FIDE-rated chess tournament concluded on Tuesday at Indoor Hall Polo Ground here.

Nilanta Chanda of West Bangal, Javid Ahmed Mir of Srinagar (J&K) and Farooq Faisal of Srinagar (J&K) scored 7½ points each, but with a better tie break Nilanta Chanda secured first place.

Chanda won 7 games and drew 1 to win the tournament with 7½ points. He drew with Shah Burhan Ahmad in the 5th round and lost in the final round to Farooq Faisal, but won all other games. Javid Ahmed Mir secured second place and Farooq Faisal had to be content with third place.

Comrade Parvaiz (Treasurer - The Kashmir Chess Club) has been organising chess events and around Srinagar to promote chess. Pavan Rathi (FIDE Arbiter from Telangana) and Arshid Ahmad, Senior National Arbiter from Srinagar) were officially appointed as Chief Arbiter and Deputy Chief Arbiter, respectively.

The Kashmir Chess Club is organising this event and under the auspices of AJKCA, AICF and FIDE. This is the second edition of rating tournament. The event carried a total number of 45 prizes.

Ladakh Sets Guinness Record For
High Altitude Half-Marathon

Press Trust of India

LEH/JAMMU: The Union Territory of Ladakh has created history by successfully conducting its maiden 21-km trail running event in sub-zero temperature at 13,862 feet high Pangong Tso, which was registered in Guinness world record as the world's highest frozen lake half marathon.

Spread across the border of India and China, the 700-square kilometer Pangong Lake records a temperature of minus 30 degrees Celsius during winter, making the salt water lake frozen with ice.

The four-hour long marathon started from Lukung and ended at Maan village on Monday with no injury reported to any of the 75 participants, Leh District Development Commissioner Shrikant Balasaheb Suse told PTI.

Named as the 'Last Run' to remind the people about the climate change and need to save the Himalayas, the marathon was organised by the Adventure Sports Foundation of Ladakh (ASFL) in collaboration with Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council, Leh, Tourism Department, Ladakh and Leh district administration.

"The first Pangong frozen lake half marathon is now officially registered in the Guinness book of world records," Mr. Suse said.

He said besides spreading the message of ecological awareness among the stakeholders through sports, the marathon was also aimed at promoting sustainable winter tourism in border villages of eastern Ladakh to generate livelihood opportunities for residents especially in winters which is part of 'vibrant village programme' announced by Central government.

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