

No Property Tax For Small Houses; Meagre For Small Businesses: Govt

J&K One Of The Last In The Country To Levy It With Minimum Financial Implications For People

Observer News Service

Jammu: LG administration Thursday clarified that all the poor, marginalized having small houses with built-up area of up to 1000 square feet have been exempted by the government from paying any property tax to be levied from April onwards this year.

In a meeting chaired by the Chief Secretary to deliberate upon, what an official spokesman called misinformation created regarding property tax in Jammu and Kashmir, it was informed that Jammu and Kashmir was one of the last States/UTs to levy property tax and non-imposition of the tax was depriving local bodies to become self-sustaining.

The meeting attended by Additional Chief Secretary, Home; Principal Secretary, H&UDD; ADGP Jammu/Kashmir; Deputy Commissioners; SSPs; Commissioners of Jammu and Srinagar Municipal Corporations and other concerned officers was informed that levy of property tax was an essential part of urban sector reforms.

Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) are required to render multiple civic services in their jurisdiction and



need resources. The levy of this tax will improve the financial health of these institutions and improve services, besides creating employment.

While explaining the methodology of levying this tax in the UT, the Principal Secretary, H&UDD, Rajesh Prasad stated that there is no tax liability for those having built-up area of their houses less than 1000 sq ft besides the proportion of taxes is considerably lesser here than that levied in other parts of the country. Similarly, all places of worship, including Temples, Masjids, Gurudwaras, Churches, Ziarats, Cremation and Burial grounds etc are exempt from

payment of property tax.

It was further informed that the Tax is proposed to be levied at just 5% of Taxable Annual Value (TAV) of the property in case of a residential property and at 6% of TAV in case of Non-Residential property. It was also apprised that the tax rates, even in the Corporations are one of the lowest in the country, almost half that of Himachal, and one fourth to one sixth, overall, of other progressive States like Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Delhi. Tax to be paid in Municipal Committees shall be much lower than that of Municipal Corporations. There is no property tax in rural areas. **More on P10**

Put Property Tax On Hold: Azad

The Jammu and Kashmir government should postpone the imposition of property tax for a few years till the economic situation in the union territory improves, DPAP chairman Ghulam Nabi Azad said on Thursday. He also said if his party is elected to power, it will bring back the Roshni Act under which ownership rights were given to **More on P10**

Jammu Lawyers Suspend Work In Protest

Lawyers of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court Bar Association on Thursday held a strike against the administration's decision to impose property tax in the Union Territory. Lawyers of the Jammu Bar association suspended the work in the courts on Thursday against the "anti-people" **More on P10**

DSEK Orders Completion of Classes 1st to 7th, 9th Exams by March-20



Agencies

Srinagar: In order to commence with new classwork, School Education Department Thursday ordered completion of examinations of Classes 1st to 7th and 9th till March-20.

Director of School Education Kashmir (DSEK) said this in a communique

to Chief Education Officers and Principal of all DIETs.

"The examinations of Classes 1st to 7th and 9th are school based as per the guidelines formulated by SCERT J&K and in this regard students are quite well prepared and waiting for the conduct of the examinations as per the feedback from the school heads." **More on P10**

'Make 6 Years Minimum Age For Class 1 Admission': Govt Tells States, UTs

Agenceis

New Delhi: The Ministry of Education has directed all states and Union Territories to fix the minimum age for admission in Class 1 as six years, officials said on Wednesday.

According to the new National Education Policy (NEP), the foundational stage consists of five years of learning opportunities for all children (between 3 to 8 years) that includes three years of preschool education followed by Classes 1 and 2.

"The policy thus promotes seamless learning and development of children from pre-school to class 2. This can only be done by ensuring accessibility to three years of quality preschool education for all children studying in Anganwadis or government, government-aided, private and NGO-run preschool centers," a senior MoE official said. **More on P10**

How Indian Students Rescued From Ukraine A Year Ago Are Completing Degrees

Agenceis

New Delhi: From being a student in a country which is bearing the wrath of a brutal war to studying in another that is responsible for this mayhem, Jisna Jiji (25), a final-year medical student who was among thousands evacuated from Ukraine nearly a year ago, has ended up in Russia to complete her education.

"Russia has been very



welcoming to us. It did not impose any extra charges. We were allowed to continue our studies and our hard work has not been

wasted," Jiji told PTI over the phone. Hailing from Kerala, Jiji is pursuing her MBBS from the Northern State Medical University in Russia's Arkhangelsk.

Exactly a year ago, Jiji, who was in her fifth year at a university in Sumy in Ukraine, was looking forward to completing her studies in Ukraine and had no inkling that 2022 would be so tumultuous for her and the country in which she was studying.

The war waged by **More on P10**

Admin Expects Rs 150 Cr In Property Tax

The Jammu and Kashmir administration expects to get Rs 150 crore in revenue from property tax and the money will go towards bolstering municipal bodies to give people better civic services, an official said. Under the new property policy, he said, there will be a 10 per cent rebate for early submission, which can be paid in two equal instalments. The Jammu and Kashmir administration had on Tuesday ordered the imposition of property tax across its municipal areas from April 1. The tax rates will be five per cent of taxable annual value (TAV) for residential properties and six per cent for commercial properties, it had said.

"The government is expected to get Rs 150 from the property tax imposition in 2023-24. It is imposed for **More on P10**



PROPERTY TAX : TRUTH & FACTS

- Tax Rates in J&K is one of the lowest in the country
- Tax to be levied annually and not monthly
- Tax Implication is linked with Stamp Duty Rates
- Tax collected shall be deposited in the Bank Account of the concerned Municipality
- Tax collected to be utilized by Municipalities for improving infrastructure/services in the Town
- Houses and Apartments up to 1000 sqft, Agricultural land EXEMPTED
- Tax is progressive in nature with minimal implications to small households and businesses
- All places of worship, including temples, masjids, gurudwaras, churches, ziarats and Cremation / Burial Grounds EXEMPTED

ANNUAL RATES OF PROPERTY TAX ON RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES

Property	Municipal Corporations of Jammu/ Srinagar	Municipal Councils of Jammu/Kashmir	Municipal Committees of Jammu/ Kashmir	Chandigarh	Delhi	Ludhiana
Residential House/Flat upto 1000 Sqft	0	0	0	600-1000	300-7000	150-3500
Flat/Apartment 1500 Sqft	100-1150	75-600	50-300	900-1500	500-10000	300-10000
Residential Independent House 2000 Sqft	225-2500	150-1200	100-400	1200-2000	650-14000	400-13000
Residential Independent Kothi 4500 Sqft	600-7500	200-3000	100-1000	3000-5100	1400-31000	800-25000

ANNUAL RATES OF PROPERTY TAX ON COMMERCIAL ESTABLISHMENTS

Property	Municipal Corporations of Jammu/ Srinagar	Municipal Councils of Jammu/Kashmir	Municipal Committees of Jammu/Kashmir	Chandigarh	Delhi	Ludhiana
Small Shop 100 SqFt	50-600	30-600	20-100	200-650	275-3500	275-3500
Small Shop 200 SqFt	150-1800	100-600	75-300	400-1300	550-7000	550-7000
Medium shop 1000 Sqft	1200-14000	300-3000	120-900	1900-6500	2800-37000	1100-35000

ISSUED IN PUBLIC INTEREST BY

Directorate of Information & Public Relations
Government of Jammu & Kashmir

Dated: 23-02-2023

DIPK-17861/22



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2

Air Pollution Speeds Up Bone Loss From Osteoporosis: Study

Press Trust Of India

Increased levels of air pollutants such as nitrous oxides are associated with bone damage among postmenopausal women, according to a study. Scientists at Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health, US, found that the effects were most evident on the lumbar spine, with nitrous oxides (NO) twice as damaging to the area as in normal ageing. Previous studies on individual pollutants have suggested adverse effects on bone mineral density, osteoporosis risk, and fractures in older individuals. The latest research, published in the journal eClinicalMedicine, is the first to explore the connection between air pollution and bone mineral density spe-

cifically in postmenopausal women, and the first to explore the effects of air pollution mixtures on bone outcomes. The researchers analysed data collected through the Women's Health Initiative study, an ethnically diverse group of 161,808 (over 1.6 lakh) postmenopausal women. They estimated air pollution (PM10, NO, NO2, and SO2) exposures based on participants' home addresses. The team used dual-energy X-ray absorptiometry to measure bone mineral density (BMD) at enrollment and at follow-up at year one, year three, and year six. The magnitude of the effects of nitrogen oxides on lumbar spine BMD would amount to 1.22 per cent annual reductions -- nearly double the annual effects of age on any of the anatomical sites evaluated, the re-

searchers said. These effects are believed to happen through bone cell death by way of oxidative damage and other mechanisms, they said. "Our findings confirm that poor air quality may be a risk factor for bone loss, independent of socioeconomic or demographic factors," said study first author Diddier Prada, an associate research scientist at Columbia Mailman School of Public Health. "For the first time, we have evidence that nitrogen oxides, in particular, are a major contributor to bone damage and that the lumbar spine is one of the most susceptible sites of this damage," Prada said. Study lead author Andrea Baccarelli, from Columbia Mailman School of Public Health, noted that improvements in air pollution exposure, particularly nitrogen

oxides, will reduce bone damage in postmenopausal women, prevent bone fractures, and reduce the health cost burden associated with osteoporosis among postmenopausal women. "Further efforts should focus on detecting those at higher risk of air pollution-related bone damage," Baccarelli said. Car and truck exhaust is a major source of nitrous oxides, as are the emissions from electrical power generation plants. Osteoporosis impacts women more than men, with 80 per cent of the estimated 10 million Americans with osteoporosis being women, the researchers said. Postmenopausal women are at higher risk, with one in two women over 50 experiencing a bone fracture because of osteoporosis, they said.

ASF ENTERPRISES

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Sale and Sendee of Laptops. Desktops. Printers, Photocopiers. Faxes, ,CCTV Cameras, Security System and Refilling of all Types of Cartridges, Toners Registered Government order Suppliers.

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform general public that in my passport bearing No J7894822 my name has been wrongly written as Chowhan Abdul Latief while my correct name is Abdul Lateef Chohan which needs to be corrected. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Regional Passport Officer Srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Abdul Lateef Chohan
S/o Mohd Ibrahim Chohan
R/o Malangam Bala Tehsil Aloosa Distt. Bandipora

bb_r

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my driving licence bearing no: JK09-2019-0000370 while travelling from Dargah Hazratbal to Shalteng Sringar on 21-02-2023. If anybody has found the same he is requested to return back otherwise I have to apply for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection may contact concerned RTO within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Rayees Ahmad Lone
S/o Nazir Ahamd Lone
R/o Marhama Tergam Distt Kupwara

NJ

From The Principal District Judge, Srinagar

Present : Mr. Jawad Ahmad

Nazneen Bano
D/O Late Syed Mubarak Ahmad Qadri
R/O Shalimar Srinagar

V/S

1. Syed Sabayeenah Qadri D/O Late Syed Mubarak Ahmad Qadri
2. Syed Mubeen Qadri S/o Late Syed Mubarak Ahmad Qadri
3. Syed Shabeen Qadri D/O Late Syed Mubarak Ahmad Qadri
all residents of Shalimar Srinagar
In the matter of
Application for issuance of Succession certificate in favour of the petitioner(s)

Notice to public at Large
Where the petitioners(s) FILED ABOVE TITLED PETITION BEFORE THIS COURT OF ISSUANCE OF SUCCESSION certificate in favour of Petitioner(s) in respect of Rs 5,11,825 as debits and securities in name of Deceased Namely: Late Syed Mubarak Ahmad Qadri S/o Syed Mohammad Yousuf Qadri R/o Shalimar Srinagar who died on 27-03-2022. The petition is pending disposal before this court and the next date of hearing is fixed on 02-03-2023
Public Notice is hereby issued, informing all and sundry through the drom of this proclamation that at any anyone has any objection for issuance of succession certificate, he/ she / they shall appear before this court either personally or through counsel or any authorized agent and file objections on or before 02-03-2023. Failing which the petition will be taken up and appropriate orders will be passed in the same
In case, the date fixed is declared as holiday the matter shall be taken on the next working day.
Given under my hand and seal of this court on ---

Jawad Ahmad
Principal District Judge, Srinagar

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از عدالت سبج میو نیل جمسٹریٹ سرنیگر
بالاجلاس مہرین مشتاق

Ayaz Ahmad
Bhat
نام

سائل اسانکھ

درخواست بغرض اندراج تاریخ پیدائش اوقات

نام: Habibullah Bhat

تاریخ وفات : 03-02-1987

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدور میں سائل سائلنے عدالت ہذا میں ایک درخواست بشمول حلفی بغرض اندراج تاریخ وفات : 03-02-1987
Habibullah Bhat S/o Late Qadoos Bhat
مورخہ : 17-02-2023
R/o Naid Booni Rainawari Srinagar
بذریعہ اشتہار مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ نسبت درخواست کوئی غدر یا اعتراض ہونے کی صورت میں اپنے غدرات اشاعت اشتہار کے اندر سویم عدالت میں آ کر پیش کرے۔ بعد گزرنے معیا کوئی غدر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔ تاریخ آئندہ عدالت ہذا میں 02-03-2023 کو مقرر ہے۔
تحریر الصدور

سبج میو نیل جمسٹریٹ سرنیگر

nj

از عدالت سبج میو نیل جمسٹریٹ سرنیگر
بالاجلاس مہرین مشتاق

Riyaz Ahmad
Parray
نام

سائل اسانکھ

درخواست بغرض اندراج تاریخ پیدائش اوقات

نام: Ghulam Mohamad Parray

تاریخ وفات : 09-09-1995

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدور میں سائل سائلنے عدالت ہذا میں ایک درخواست بشمول حلفی بغرض اندراج تاریخ وفات : 09-09-1995
Ghulam Mohamad Parray S/o Abdul Karim Parray
مورخہ : 21-02-2023
R/o Baghat Rawalpora Srinagar
بذریعہ اشتہار مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ نسبت درخواست کوئی غدر یا اعتراض ہونے کی صورت میں اپنے غدرات اشاعت اشتہار کے اندر سویم عدالت میں آ کر پیش کرے۔ بعد گزرنے معیا کوئی غدر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔ تاریخ آئندہ عدالت ہذا میں 02-03-2023 کو مقرر ہے۔
تحریر الصدور

سبج میو نیل جمسٹریٹ سرنیگر

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PUBLIC NOTICE

It is for general public that i have lost my passport bearing No. R3371379 while travelling from Ompora to Budgam. Date of issue 10/08/2017 Date of Expiry 09/08/2027. Now i want to apply for its duplicate. Any body having any objection may contact Regional Passport Officer Srinagar within a period of 7 days after published this notice. No objection shall be entertained after that.
Ayaz Ahmad Najar
S/o / Abdul Majeed Najar
R/o Ompora Budgam cell : 8899409700

mcb

PUBLIC NOTICE

My name has been wrongly mentioned in my passport bearing no: J7227420 as Hafeeza Banoo while her correct name is Hafiza Begum which needs to be corrected. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Regional Passport Office Srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Hafiza Begum
D/O Assadullah Lone
R/O Qazipora Potushi Distt. Bandipora J&K UT - Pin 193502

BB

PUBLIC NOTICE

My mother's name has been wrongly mentioned in my passport bearing no: SI174240 as Hafeeza Banoo while her correct name is Hafiza Begum which needs to be corrected. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Regional Passport Office Srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Mohammad Saleem Jan
S/O Mohammad Syed Jan
R/O Arampora Sonerwani Distt Bandipora J&K UT - Pin 193502

BB

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my 10th pass DOB certificate issued by Govt High secondary school goshbug. Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the above mentioned office within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.
Tabasum Ayoub (DOB : 06-03-2002)
D/o Mohammad Ayoub Ganie
R/o Chanderhama Pattan

FKO

In the Court of Additional Munsiff /Judicial Magistrate 1st Class Srinagar

Present: Shafeeq Ahmad Malik

Mst Shahzada V/S Altaf Hussain Pathan Notice Through Publication to Mehbooba Wo Mukhtar Ahmad Akhoun D/o Late/ Mehraj Ud Din Pathan R/o Ahmad Nagar Soura Srinagar A/P Old Road Ahmednagar Near Al Khudam
Whereas, above titled suit has been filed against you in this court and you have been conveyed as defendant no: 06
The next date of hearing is fixed on 05-04-2023
Whereas., Summons were issued for your appearance in this court ,but you avoided to acknowledge the summon, as a result the summon got returned as untraced. This way you did not appear before the Court to answer the suit and it appears that your attendance may not be procured through the issuance of ordinary summons. You are as such summoned through this Publication and directed to appear before this Court personally or through counsel on 05-04-2023 failing to which appropriate orders will be penned against you. In case the date fixed in declared as holiday the matter shall be taken up on next following day.
Given under my Hand and Seal of this court.

Ist Additional
Munsiff Srinagar

nj

از نیابت پٹان

عنوان:- درخواست مخائب غفور بشیر مرگوری پریشر احمد شیر گوجری ساکنہ اوٹن کھٹی تحصیل پٹن ہمداد اجرائی شگل کات بڑیو شیر گوجری

اشتہار برخواست و عام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدور میں سائل نے ایک درخواست بغرض پیش کاسٹ سرٹیفکیٹ بذمرہ شیر گوجری پیش کی ہے جو کہ زیر کاروائی ہے اس بارے میں پٹواری حلقہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی ہے جس سے عیاں ہے کہ سائل واقعی شیر گوجری ذات سے تعلق رکھتا ہے سائل مذکورہ پیش کاسٹ سرٹیفکیٹ حاصل کرنے کا خواں ہے اور تئیکہ سالانہ آمدنی 1,03,200 روپے تک ہے سرٹیفکیٹ زیر بحث اجراء کرنے میں اگر کساکر کسی شخص کو کوئی غریا اعتراض ہوو وہ بعد مشتمل اخبار سات دن کے اندر اندر اپنے غدر یا اعتراض و دالت حد او کو دفتر ی اوقات کے دوران پیش کریں۔ بعد گزرنے معیا کوئی غدر یا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا۔
نائب تحصیلدار

FKO

Government of Jammu and Kashmir

Office Of The Principal, Boys

Model Higher Secondary School Bijbehara

Tender Notice

Sealed tenders affixed with a revenue stamp of Rs 5/- are invited from reputed registered canteen catering service providers for running of canteen at GOVERNMENT BOYS MODEL HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL BIJBEHARA. The interested tenderers shall collect the complete tender document from the Office of the Undersigned on any working day during Office hours. The last date for submission of tenders is 02-03-2023 up to 3:00 PM. Terms and conditions Apply.

Note:- The School Administration reserves the right to reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason thereof.

Principal BMHSS
Bijbehara

No:- BMHSSB/1347/23
DIPK-17816/22 Dated:- 23-02-2023

از نیابت کتزر

مضمون:- درخواست مخائب محمد ابرار کھانڈے ولد عبدالغفار کھانڈے ساکنہ موضوع ہر دوہنی کتزر نسبت Unemployment سرٹیفکیٹ بحق خود اشتہار ہمداد اگانی ہرخواست و عام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدور کے نسبت سائل کے کاغذات زیر بحث دفتر ہذا میں زیر کاروائی ہے۔ بیان رپورٹ پٹواری حلقہ و نمبردار سائل مذکورہ ہذا میں راپائش پذیر ہے اور کبھی ترک سکونت اختیار نہیں کی ہے۔ نیز سائل مذکورہ تا حال کسی بھی سرکاری یا غیر سرکاری محکمہ میں کام نہیں کر رہا ہے۔

قبل اس کے کہ سائل کی درخواست پر مذید کاروائی کی جائے۔ اول ہرخواست و عام کو بذریعہ اشتہار مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ اگر اس بارے میں کسی شخص یا اشخاص کو کوئی غدر یا اعتراض ہو تو ایک ہفتہ کے اندر دفتر ی اوقات میں اسات یا وکالتا اپنے غدر یا اعتراض پیش کریں۔ بعد گزرنے معیا کوئی بھی غدر قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا تحریر الصدور

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از نیابت چوکر

مضمون:- درخواست مخائب رؤف احمد جان ولد عبدالغفار کھانڈے ساکنہ موضوع ہر دوہنی نسبت Unemployment سرٹیفکیٹ بحق خود اشتہار ہمداد اگانی ہرخواست و عام

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصدور کے نسبت سائل کے کاغذات زیر بحث دفتر ہذا میں زیر کاروائی ہے۔ بیان رپورٹ پٹواری حلقہ و نمبردار سائل مذکورہ ہذا میں راپائش پذیر ہے اور کبھی ترک سکونت اختیار نہیں کی ہے۔ نیز سائل مذکورہ تا حال کسی بھی سرکاری یا غیر سرکاری محکمہ میں کام نہیں کر رہا ہے۔

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Leopard In City Outskirts:

Wildlife Dept. Mobilizes Teams To Capture The Animal

Agencies

Srinagar: Spotted a week ago, a leopard in Srinagar's Rawalpore area is yet to be trapped, while the authorities at the Wildlife department on Thursday said the teams and traps have been laid to capture the animal.

Regional Wildlife Warden Kashmir region, Rashid Yahya Naqash said that the teams have already been deputed for the last three days and that all measures are in place to capture the animal.

"We have initiated the door-to-door campaign in the area on the advisory, cages, and darts while other needed

measures are in place," he said, adding, "We are monitoring it closely as the animal is been spotted a week ago."

Urging people to follow the advisory, the Regional Wildlife Warden Kashmir said that people should follow the advisory issued by the department.

It is pertinent to mention that it is not the first time that a leopard was spotted in Srinagar. The wild animal has been spotted many times in the district.

The wildlife authorities said the leopards have become urbanized and are learning to live with human landscapes as they are getting enough cover of food in the shape of dogs—(KNO)

CJ Pays Maiden Visit To District Court, Mominabad

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, Justice N Kotiswar Singh, today paid his maiden visit to District Court Complex, Mominabad, Srinagar after assuming charge of the office.

The Chief Justice was accompanied by various High Court judges including Justice Rajnesh Oswal, Justice Vinod Chatterji Koul, Justice Javed Iqbal Wani, Justice Mohan Lal, Justice Wasim Sadiq Nargal and Justice Rajesh Sekhri.

On the occasion, Chief Justice and other Judges of the High Court were welcomed with guard of honour from a squad of Jammu and Kashmir Police.

The Chief Justice inspected the court complex including Family Court, POSCO Court, Vulnerable Witness Deposition Court, Vidhik Seva Kendra, E-Seva Kendra, Help Desk, Crèche and other sections.

Chief Justice along with other High Court Judges visited the Dis-

trict Legal Services Authority Srinagar and took firsthand appraisal of working of Chief Legal Aid Defense System and Legal Aid Clinics.

Later, the Chief Justice had an extensive meeting with the Judicial Officers posted at Srinagar and took stock of the functioning of the courts.

Chief Justice assured all the judges of best support from High Court and urged upon them to extend utmost dedication, diligence and compassion towards upholding the dignity and honour of the institution. He also emphasized upon adopting a compassionate attitude towards litigants especially women victims.

Meanwhile, Jawad Ahmad Principal District and Sessions Judge, Srinagar, apprised the Chief Justice of working of the courts with relevant statistics. He expressed gratitude to Administrative Judge, Justice Tashi Rabstan for his full support to all the judges.

Lastly, Chief Justice and other High Court Judges planted a sapling in the court complex Srinagar.

Elderly Man Dies After Hit By Train In City

Observer News Service

Srinagar: An elderly man died after being hit by a moving train in the Nowgam area of Srinagar on Thursday, officials said.

An official said that an 80-year-old man, Sanaulah Bhat, son of Abdul

Ahad Bhat, a resident of Lajura, Pulwama, was critically injured after being hit by a train in Nowgam.

He said the injured was rushed to a nearby hospital for treatment where doctors declared him brought dead.

Meanwhile, police have taken cognisance of the incident.

16 Students From NIT To Participate In Yuva Sangam Tour

Observer News Service

Srinagar: 16 students from various departments of National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar on Thursday left for a week-long exposure tour to Assam under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat (EBSB), a pilot initiative by Government of India.

IIT Jammu is Nodal Higher Education Institution for Jammu and Kashmir and IIT Guwahati is the Paired Institution (for the pilot tour).

During the visit, the students will have a multi-dimensional exposure under five broad areas – Paryatan (Tourism), Parampara (Traditions), Pragati (Development), Prodyogik (Technology) and Paraspas Sampark (People-to-people connect).

Director NIT Srinagar Prof. (Dr.) Rakesh Sehgal said the idea behind the ex-

posure tour is to promote respect and understanding for other cultures. Such programs will connect people from diverse backgrounds and create harmony between them, he said.

He showered his blessings to students for being selected in prestigious Yuva Sangam Tour under Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat. It will provide an immersive experience of various facets of life, development landmarks, recent achievements, he said.

Prof. Sehgal said these tours are essential for all-around development of an individual and a nation. It will inculcate the qualities of brotherhood, mutual understanding among the students from across India," he said.

Institute's Registrar, Prof. Syed Kaiser Bukhari said such exposure will benefit students in a long way and help them to explore various cultures and diversities.



Traffic Police Seizes Vehicles At Karan Nagar For Wrong Parking

Agencies

Srinagar: Stating that multiple complaints were being received regarding the wrong parking of vehicles on roads from Karan Nagar to SMHS hospital, Srinagar traffic police on Thursday held a drive against the 'violators' and seized many vehicles.

Senior Superintendent of Police for City traffic, Muzaffar Ahmad Shah told reporters that the drive was aimed to ensure the clearance of the corridor leading to the valley's main hospitals.

"The footfall volume on the road stretch is high as that leads

to the valley's main hospitals, and wrongly parking of vehicles on roads causes a larger discomfort to others during their visit to the hospital", he said.

Another senior police officer who was a part of the drive said that the ambulance and movement of patients on the road stretch from Karan Nagar to SMHS hospital was getting hampered due to the wrong parking of vehicles on the roads.

"It was a joint drive by the district and traffic police and in today's drive around 20 vehicles were seized which were wrongly parked on roads and that was causing the problem in movement of ambulances", the officer said.

Urging people to cooperate and to park their vehicles sensibly, SSP City traffic said that people should not resort to parking of their vehicles haphazardly and should think that others have to pass through the road as well.

"The drive is part of an ongoing enforcement series, and today's drive is also a part of that. I appeal to the people to park their vehicles sensibly and they should use the parking slots and if that is not available they should park their vehicles in such a way which won't disturb the movement of other vehicles or give discomfort to anyone", he added—(KNO)

KU, SKUAST-K Organize Programme On 'Supply Chain Management In SMEs'

Observer News Service

Srinagar: A week-long collaborative training programme on 'Supply Chain Management for Increasing Efficiency in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)' started at the University of Kashmir.

The MSME-sponsored E-MDP programme has been organised jointly by the School of Agricultural Economics and Horti-Business Management, Faculty of Horticulture, SKUAST-K in collaboration with NEP Cell, University of Kashmir.

Controller of Examinations KU Dr Majid Zaman was the chief guest at the inaugural session, which was attended by Prof Mush-taq Ahmad Darzi, Director HRDC KU; Prof S H Baba, Head, SAE & HBM, SKUAST-K; Dr Abid Sultan, Training Coordinator, SKUAST-K; Dr Farzana Gulzar, Coordinator NEP Cell; Prof S M Shafi, former HoD Commerce KU; Dr Ravi

Kumar, Joint Registrar, Academics KU; Prof Mohammad Ashraf, Consultant, NEP, KU and Dr Summeer Gul, Coordinator, HRDC.

Dr Farzana Gulzar, host institute coordinator, welcomed the guests and thanked the Director Planning and Monitoring, as well as Organising team from SKUAST-K for the collaborative management programme. She said with NEP laying emphasis on interdisciplinary education, the KU is open to holding more such collaborative programmes in future with SKUAST-K.

Dr Abid Sultan said the programme has been designed to offer an inclusive learning to the participants to develop a comprehensive understanding on supply chain management dynamics, technology development and greening of supply chains.

Prof Darzi appreciated the organises for holding the management development programme on a theme of high importance,

remarking that such programmes will lead to creating more efficient solutions to supply chain issues in the agriculture and allied sectors.

In his inaugural address, Prof S H Baba, thanked the KU administration for agreeing to hold the collaborative workshop. He emphasised re-orientation of elements and actors to integrate supply chains for greater price realization in the interest of producers and other functionaries.

In his special address, Dr Majid Zaman said such workshops are the need of the hour, especially to highlight the importance of new technologies like IoT, Blockchain and Artificial Intelligence. He urged participants to invest their thoughts and time towards developing tech-based supply chain solutions, while highlighting the significance of such collaborative initiatives under the leadership of Vice-Chancellor SKUAST-K Prof Nazir A Ganai and Vice-Chancellor KU, Prof Nilofer Khan.

राष्ट्रीय नवप्रवर्तन प्रतिष्ठान – भारत

विज्ञान एवं प्रौद्योगिकी विभाग, भारत सरकार का स्वायत्तशासी संस्थान

National Innovation Foundation - India

Autonomous Body of the Department of Science and Technology, Govt. of India

The 13th National Biennial Competition for Green Grassroots Unaided Technological Innovations and Traditional Knowledge

National Innovation Foundation-India, an autonomous body of the Department of Science and Technology of the Government of India, invites grassroots innovators, school students, school dropouts, people in employment or self-employed to submit their original technological innovations, creative ideas, or traditional knowledge for the 13th National Biennial Competition until March 31, 2023.

The innovations can be in the field of agriculture, engineering, health, energy, household or utility, transportation, livestock etc. leading to the reduction in drudgery, livelihood generation, development of plant varieties or herbal remedies for human/ animal/ farming problems, or any other low cost sustainable green technologies. Applicants may win prizes ranging from Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 7,50,000 as well as incubation support for unaided, scientific, novel, and useful innovations and outstanding traditional knowledge.

The entries along with educational and occupational details may be sent to the following address through email or post:

National Innovation Foundation - India

Amrapur, Gandhinagar-Mahudi Road, Gandhinagar, Gujarat 382650

Tel: 02764-261134/35/36/37/38 Email: campaign@nifindia.org

Note: People with professional background/experience and students enrolled in professional courses are not eligible for any support/recognition. For detailed eligibility criteria and competition guidelines, please visit website: www.nif.org.in

CBC-36118/12/0007/2223

TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883
PDD: 0194-2450213
FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES :
2479488,2452222,2452155
CAPD: 18001807011
SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081
Ambulance: Kashmir EMS Service: +91 94841 00200

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

HIJRI
CALENDAR

03 Shaban
1444

PRAYERS

FAJR

5:44

ZUHR

12:44

ASR

4:43

Magrib

6:25

ISHA

7:45

This Day In History

- 1389 - Battle at Falköping: Danes defeat King Albert of Sweden
- 1528 - János Szapolyai, disputed king of Hungary, and Ottoman Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent sign treaty
- 1739 - Battle of Karnal: Army of Iranian ruler Nadir Shah defeats the forces of the Mughal emperor of India, Muhammad Shah
- 1875 - The SS Gothenburg hits the Great Barrier Reef and sinks off the Australian east coast, killing approximately 100, including a number of high profile civil servants and dignitaries
- Henrik Ibsen
- 1881 - De Lesseps' Company begins work on Panama Canal
- 1881 - China and Russia sign the Sino-Russian Ili Treaty.
- 1895 - Cuban war for independence begins
- 1918 - Estonia declares independence from Russia
- 1924 - Mahatma Gandhi released from jail
- 1942 - The "Battle of Los Angeles" takes place, a series of anti-aircraft engagements over the city in response to a rumored but false Japanese attack. It would last until the morning of the following day.
- 1945 - Egypt & Syria declare war on nazi-Germany
- 1945 - Manila freed from Japanese
- 1945 - Egyptian Premier Ahmed Maher Pasha is killed in Parliament after reading a decree
- 1948 - Communist Party seizes complete control of Czechoslovakia
- 1949 - Israel & Egypt sign an armistice agreement
- 1955- Pact of Baghdad signed between Iraq & Turkey
- 1968 - US troops reconquer Hue Vietnam
- 1969 - Mariner 6 launched for Mars flyby to study planet's atmosphere
- 1971 - Algeria nationalizes 51 percent of French oil concessions
- 1974 - Pakistan officially recognizes Bangladesh
- 1977 - US President Jimmy Carter announces US foreign aid will consider human rights
- 1979- War between North & South Yemen begins
- 1983 - USSR performs underground nuclear test
- 1984- Iraq resumes air attack on Iran
- 1995 - The Corona reconnaissance satellite program, in existence from

From KO Archives

Noisy Scenes In Assembly

JK Moving Towards Normalcy: Governor

Jammu- Jammu and Kashmir Assembly here today witnessed noisy scenes over the issue of handing over of troubled Udhampur Rajouri belt to army following killings of 20 Hindus by militants in these area.

As the house assembled after the conclusion of the joint address of the State governor for obituary references "Rajouri Udhampur massacres" opposition leader and BJP MLA Lal Shiv Charan asked the State government to hand over the hill-Udhampur-Rajouri belt to army authorities.

Congress MLA Mehbooba Mufti opposed the BJP's demand of army deployment and declaring the area as disturbed.

Mufti said a political solution instead of military solution was need of the hour and the BJP-led central government and the ruling National Conference government in the State had failed to ensure security to the people.

On this BJP MLA's including Ashok Khajuria, stood up and tried to stop Mufti's concordance speech. They raised allegation against the Congress for eruption of militancy in the State, while Congress MLA's stood up and had verbal duels with BJP MLAs.

The situation was brought to normal after the intervention by speaker Abdul Ahad Vakil. Condemning the killing of 20 innocent Hindus, State chief minister Farooq Abdullah said despite our prime minister peace initiative, Pakistan had been harping two strings- "On one side, they are ready to talk peace and ready to welcome our PM but on other side they fire rockets at us", he said. Meanwhile, Government today vowed to effectively stamp out militancy from the State which was speedily moving towards restoration of peace and normalcy.

Addressing a joint session of the Legislative Assembly and Council on the opening day of the budget session, State Governor Girish Chandra Saxena said "our adversary is not silent or has not abandoned his desperate efforts at destabilization of the State and the country.

"On the contrary, being fully conscious of these nefarious designs, our security forces are more vigilant and continue to achieve commendable successes in their anti-terrorist operations", he said. This was possible due to the all-out efforts of the State police and security forces jointly and invaluable cooperation of the people of the State, he said.

(Kashmir Observer, 24 February, 1999)

Ready To Go To Any Extent Over National Security: S Jaishankar On India

Press Trust of India

PUNE: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Thursday said the image of India today is that of a country that is willing to go to any extent to protect its national security.

He also cited a top International Monetary Fund official about 15 per cent of growth this year coming from India, and said India is "15 per cent of the solution" the G20 group of countries is looking for in terms of economic growth.

Addressing the 'Festival of Thinkers' organised by the Symbiosis International University here, he also said that data security and data privacy are the biggest challenges of the digital world, and issues connected to them are expected to be addressed during the G20 meeting.

"In the last few years, we have been tested for a long time on our western border. I think things are a little different now and everyone will agree. Few things had happened in 2016 and 2019, and we have been tested and we are being tested on our northern borders," he said.

How India comes through this test will show our ability to stand up, Mr Jaishankar said.

"We have today the image of the country which is willing to do what it takes to defend its national security. It (India) is a very forbearing country, a patient country, it is not a country that goes around picking fights with other people, but it is a country that will not be pushed out. This is a country that will not allow its basic bottom lines to be crossed," he said.



Referring to the Ukraine conflict, he said the pressures which came with that conflict were also the moment when our sense of independence and sense of confidence were tested.

India is also becoming "the voice of the global south" and wants to go into G20 saying that "there is a large part of the world which is not sitting on that table but they have a legitimate interest and somebody needs to speak up for them," the minister said.

Mr Jaishankar cited managing director of the International Monetary Fund Kristalina Georgieva's statement that in "otherwise a fairly gloomy global economic scenario" India's GDP base is growing at seven percent and is likely to increase in the coming decade.

"Kristalina Georgieva tells that 15 percent of the world's growth this year is going to come from India, that means we are 15 percent of the solution that the G20 is looking for in terms of economic growth and development, but it isn't just growth, the G20 is actually looking at how we handled the COVID challenges," he said.

The G20 countries have noted India's success in effectively vaccinating its vast population against coronavirus, he said.

Opposition Leaders Slam Jaishankar, Point To His Father's Comments On Gujarat Riots

Press Trust of India

Opposition leaders on Wednesday lashed out at External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar for his remarks on China and the BBC documentary on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, with many of them pointing to his father's reported comments against the then Gujarat dispensation following the 2002 riots.

The Congress on Wednesday called Jaishankar a "failed" minister and alleged that his remarks on the China issue have "demeaned" the valour of India's armed forces.

Congress spokesperson Supriya Shrinate also alleged that foreign policy has been reduced to photo-ops and a chest-thumping exercise and is being used to secure contracts for a businessman.

The opposition party's attack came over the minister's reported remarks urging people to not buy the narrative that somewhere the government is on the defensive or is being accommodative on the China issue. Jaishankar also reportedly hit out at the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) over

its documentary on Modi and called it "politics by another means".

Slamming Jaishankar, TMC's Rajya Sabha MP Jawahar Sircar said, "Strange -- that Jaishankar discovered his angst against the Gandhis -- after serving them most loyally and taking the best of postings under them? Is it Amnesia or is he just cuddling up to BJP for his unprecedented promotion as Foreign Minister?"

In another tweet, Sircar referred to Jaishankar's "politics by another means" remark, saying the question is whether the facts shown in the documentary are true or false.

"Could thousands of lives be saved if Modi administration was less indulgent," Sircar said.

"S Jaishankar's father, K Subramanyam said 'Dharma was killed in Gujarat (2002 Riots). Those who failed to protect innocent citizens are guilty of adharma. Rama...would have used his bow against the 'Asura' rulers of Gujarat. Shame on son -- serving Asura!" the TMC MP said in another tweet.

Shrinate also spoke of reported 'Asura' remarks of Jaishankar's father K Subrahmanyam.

Israeli Troops Kill 11 Palestinians In West Bank Clash, Medics Say



Agencies

NABLUS: Israeli troops killed 11 Palestinians, including at least four gunmen and four civilians, and wounded more than 100 people during a Wednesday raid on a city in the occupied West Bank, witnesses, militant groups and medical officials said.

The Israeli military confirmed the operation in Nablus, saying troops shot back after coming under fire while trying to detain militants suspected of planning imminent attacks. There were no Israeli casualties, the army said in a statement.

The Palestinian militant faction Islamic Jihad said Israeli troops had surrounded two of its Nablus commanders in a house, triggering a clash that drew in other gunmen. Explosions sounded and youths threw rocks at armoured troop transports.

Palestinian sources said the two Islamic Jihad command-

ers were killed along with another gunman. The fatalities included four civilians, among them a 72-year-old man and a 14-year-old boy.

The Palestinian Health Ministry said a 66-year-old man who suffered from gas inhalation during the raid died in hospital later on Wednesday. Medical officials said more than 100 Palestinians were wounded.

Nablus and nearby Jenin have been a focus of raids that Israel has intensified over the last year following a spate of lethal Palestinian street attacks in its cities.

Sixty-two Palestinians, including gunmen and civilians, have been killed in 2023, the Palestinian health ministry said. Ten Israelis and a Ukrainian tourist died in Palestinian attacks in the same period, according to Israel's foreign ministry.

"We condemn the occupation's raid into Nablus and we call for an end to the contin-

ued attacks against our people," said Nabil Abu Rudeineh, spokesperson for Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

Hamas, another Palestinian group that sometimes fights alongside Islamic Jihad, said there were four gunmen killed, one from its own ranks, and hinted at possible reprisals from the Gaza Strip, a territory that it controls.

Sirens rang out early on Thursday morning in southern Israeli towns as the military confirmed six rockets had been fired from Gaza into Israeli territory. Shortly afterwards, explosions were heard in Gaza and the military confirmed it was striking targets in Gaza but did not give more details.

Hamas and Islamic Jihad are sworn to Israel's destruction but have in the past observed Egyptian-mediated truces with it.

US-sponsored Palestinian statehood talks have been stalled for almost a decade.

Oman Joins Saudi In Opening Its Airspace For Israeli Carriers

Agencies

Israeli airlines can now fly over Oman after the Gulf nation opened its airspace for all carriers that meet the civil aviation authority's requirements.

Israel's foreign minister Eli Cohen on Thursday thanked Sultan Haitham bin Tariq Al Said for the decision which will shorten flight times to Asia.

"It's an historic and significant decision for the Israeli economy and the Israeli traveller," Cohen said.

Last year Saudi Arabia allowed Israeli airlines to use its airspace but because Omani airspace was closed, Israeli carriers could not use the route to fly to Asia. The Saudi Arabian decision came after United States President Joe Biden visited the region last year.

Flight from Israel to Asian

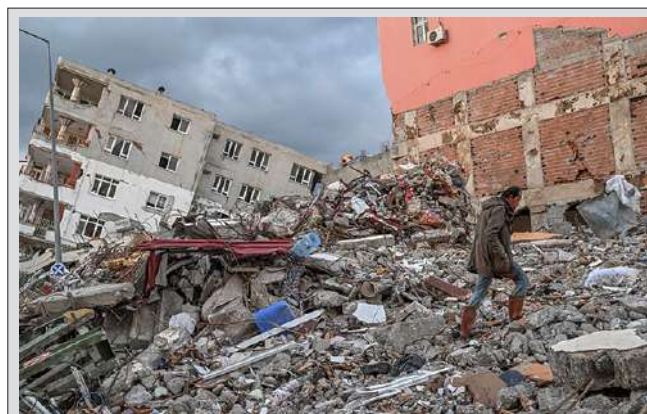


destinations such as Thailand and India would be shortened by at least two hours.

Israel and Oman have no diplomatic relations, but the Gulf state seemed to have been less reluctant in publicising its relations with Israel.

In 2018, the late Sultan Qaboos received Netanyahu in Muscat.

Oman was one of the first countries to congratulate the UAE and Bahrain, who established diplomatic ties with Israel in 2020.



Turkey Earthquake Deaths Rise To 43,556

Agencies

ISTANBUL: The number of people killed in Turkey in this month's devastating earthquakes has risen to 43,556, the country's Interior Minister Suleyman Soylu said overnight.

Soylu told state broadcaster TRT Haber that there had been 7,930 aftershocks following the first quake on Feb. 6 and that more than 600,000 apartments and 150,000 commercial premises had suffered at least moderate damage.

Heavy Snowfall In US, Massive Power Outage, Over 1,500 Flights Cancelled



LOS ANGELES: Powerful winter storms lashed the US on Wednesday, with heavy snow snarling travel across wide areas, even as unusual warmth was expected in others. Blizzards forecast to dump up to two feet (60 cm) of snow swept across a vast band of the country from the West Coast to the Great Lakes, grounding flights and knocking out power to tens of thousands.

Warnings of heavy snowfall were even issued for usually sunny areas near Los Angeles, as well as for more typical winter weather spots in the far north.

Forecasters with the National Weather Service said two rounds of snow would wallop parts of Minnesota in a "historic winter storm (that) will likely lead to impossible travel."

"Heavy snow will combine with northeast wind gusts of 35 to 45 mph (55 to 70 kph)...This will lead to significant blowing and drifting snow with white-out conditions in open areas. Some drifts may be several feet deep," a warning said.

"If you must travel, keep an extra flashlight, food, and water in your vehicle in case of an emergency. Travel should be restricted to emergencies only. If you must travel, have a winter survival kit with you. If you get stranded, stay with your vehicle."

More than 1,550 flights within, into or out of the United States had been cancelled by 0000 GMT Thursday, according to Flightaware.com, with its

"Misery Map" showing Denver, Salt Lake City and Minneapolis-St Paul particularly badly hit.

Roads were also difficult, with Wyoming suffering from problems even on main highways.

"Please change travel plans if you are coming towards Wyoming," the state's department of transport posted on its Facebook page. "A major winter storm and multiday closures are likely on Interstates and secondary roads throughout Wyoming!"

Around 280,000 properties were without power across the country, according to Power-outage.us, almost half of them in Michigan, where snow, sleet and freezing rain were icing power lines, making them vulnerable to gusting winds.

"Cold and Dangerous" An unusual blizzard warning was put in place for the mountains around Los Angeles from early Thursday, with snow expected to fall even at relatively low elevations.

"Now is the time to prepare for a COLD AND DANGEROUS winter storm expected for much of the week," the NWS in Los Angeles warned.

"Several FEET of snow is expected in the mountains with a few inches possible as low as 1000 feet. Gusts and potentially damaging winds are also expected."

While not everyone was expected to wake up to a white-out, even people in Los Angeles will be treated to the sight of snow-dusted mountains.

NEWS MAKERS

Sultan Of Oman To Visit Iran Regarding Nuclear Talks

Agencies

The Sultan of Oman, Haitham bin Tariq, will visit Tehran to hold talks regarding the stalled nuclear negotiations between Iran and the US, Tasnim news agency reported today, 22 February.

Ali Alizadeh, a member of Iran's parliament, said to Tasnim that "Omani officials have recently indicated their readiness to play the role of mediator between Iran and the United States in order to bring the nuclear talks to a conclusion."

Moreover, he mentioned that "the Sultan of Oman had declared his intention to visit Iran shortly to deliver good news."

Meanwhile, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian emphasized that a revival of negotiations to reach a nuclear deal is still possible, according to Hispan TV.

"The path of negotiations is still open and messages are being exchanged



through intermediaries," Amir-Abdollahian announced on 22 February in a meeting with the National Security and Foreign Policy Commission of the Iranian Parliament.

According to the top Iranian diplomat, "the Omani authorities have repeatedly expressed their willingness to act as a mediator between Iran and the United States to conclude the nuclear negotiations."

He also revealed that the Central Bank of Qatar "has entered the dispute between Iran and the US" to play the role of mediator between the two sides regarding monetary and banking issues.

"I Eat Beef, Lifestyle In Meghalaya, No One Can Stop It": State BJP Chief

Agencies

SHILLONG: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) state chief Ernest Mawrie said that there is "no restriction on beef eating" in Meghalaya and that he too consumes beef.

While talking to ANI, Ernest Mawrie said, "I cannot make a statement on the resolution adopted by other states. We are in Meghalaya, everybody eats beef, and there is no restriction. Yes, I eat beef too. There is no ban in Meghalaya. It is the lifestyle of the people, no one can stop it. There is no such rule in India also. Some states have passed some acts. In Meghalaya, we have a slaughterhouse, everybody takes a cow or pig and brings it to the market. It could be a hygienic one. So the people they have the habit."

At a time when BJP-ruled states like Assam had passed a bill to regulate cattle slaughter, transport and sale of beef and Assam Chief Minister Dr Himanta Biswa Sarma who is the face of BJP in North Eastern region has



been appealing to the people to restrict beef eating in the Hindu inhabited areas.

Refusing the allegations made by some political parties that BJP is an anti-Christian party, the Meghalaya BJP Chief said that it is just "political propaganda."

He said, "Now the nine years of the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government is running in the country and not even any church has been attacked or targeted in the country. Opposition political party's allegation that BJP is an anti-Christian party, is just election propaganda. We are in Meghalaya - a Christian-dominated state, and everybody goes to Church."

Gurugram Man Jumps Off 1st Floor Balcony To Evade CBI Arrest, Fractures Leg

Press Trust of India

GURUGRAM: A builder evading arrest by CBI on Thursday jumped from the first floor balcony of his rented flat and fractured his leg, police said.

The builder is wanted in a case of cheating and corruption and lives in a society in Sector 72.

A team of CBI had gone to his house to arrest with a warrant when Sanjiv Kumar, the accused, jumped from the balcony, said police.

Kumar, who moved here from Delhi, lives in a flat at Tata Primanti society in Sector 72. He is admitted in Medanta Hospital at present, police said.

The CBI team led by Inspector Ranbir Singh had been talking to the security guards in the residential society, when Kumar got a whiff of its presence and made the move.

After he fell, the CBI team took him into custody and rushed him to the civil hospital from where he was referred to Medanta Hospital where he is being treated, a senior police officer said.

The CBI team has also informed the Badshahpur Police Station about the raid and the incident, he added.

Accident-Prone Ramban Receives 3 Fully-Loaded Ambulances



Observer News Service

RAMBAN: Ramban administration on Thursday received three fully-loaded AC-fitted Critical Care (CC) ambulances from the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) to cater to the NH-44 related emergencies, officials informed.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that three AC-fitted Critical Care ambulances were provided to the district administration Ramban to cater to the national highway-related emergencies, thereby

saving people's lives.

These ambulances will be stationed at Chamalwas, Ramsoo and Chanderkote along the route, he said, adding that people have to call the helpline number for quick response.

He said the highway in Ramban is prone to accidents and the ambulances can help save lives.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Ramban, MohitaSharma also tweeted: "1033 – MEDICAL EMERGENCY NUMBER to call these newly inducted critical care ambulances on National Highway in case of an accident. Provided by NHAI.

ARTO Budgam Blacklists 25 Vehicles For Violating Traffic Rules



Observer News Service

BUDGAM: Acting tough against the traffic law violators, the Assistant Regional Transport Officer (ARTO), Budgam Manzoor Ahmad today blacklisted as many as 25 vehicles, suspended 3 route permits and 2 driving licenses for violations against traffic rule and road safety violations.

A checking/ enforcement team led by ARTO conducted day-long checking of vehicles in Chadoora area of Budgam and during the drive more than 100 vehicles were checked for traffic rule/road safety violations.

During the drive, as many as 25 vehicles were blacklisted on the spot, while 2 driving licenses and 3 route permits were processed for suspension.

Documents of 25 vehicles were retained for further processing under the provisions of MV Act 1988 and rules framed there under.

An amount of Rs. 30000 as fine is also expected to be realized from offending vehicles/drivers.

The ARTO said that drive shall continue in Towns and Rural areas of the district and strict action as per the law shall be taken against the erring drivers for road safety violations.

LCMA Decides 45 Cases On Merit During 127th BPA Meeting

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The J&K Lake Conservation and Management Authority (LCMA) today convened 127th meeting of the Building Permission Authority (BPA) under the chairmanship of Dr. Bashir Ahmad Bhat, Vice Chairman, LCMA at Miskeen Bagh Office Complex, Srinagar.

The agenda for the meeting was discussed threadbare and a total of 45 cases were decided upon by the BPA on merits.

Among others, Chief Town Planner of Kashmir, Joint Commissioner (P) SMC, Executive Engineer Lake Division 2nd LCMA, Executive

Engineer Electric Inspection Division, Enforcement Officers LCMA, representatives Executive Engineer UEED Division 1st, & PHE, Representative Tehsildar Khanyar and Law officer LCMA as members of the Building Permission Authority attended the meeting.

In the meanwhile, the Vice Chairman Dr J&K LCMA who is also the Chairman of BOCA has requested the people residing in the local jurisdiction of LCMA to apply for proper building permission through its BPA and obtain building permission before starting any sort of construction. Construction raised illegally shall be dealt with under law & will be demolished.

plementation of various programs.

Under the scheme, at least 10th pass candidates will be eligible and no regular students are eligible for applying to NYC volunteers. The deployed volunteers will be paid an honorarium of Rs. 5000 per month. This is neither a paid employment nor confers any legal right to claim employment with the government.

Interested youth can visit the department's website: nyks.nic.in for further details of the scheme, application proforma. For any queries, Youth may also contact Hakim Abdul Aziz, Deputy Director Srinagar at 7889420750 for Kashmir division and Khushal Gupta, District Youth Officer Udhampur at 9906249020 for Jammu division (J&K UT) and Tajamul Ara, Deputy Director Leh at 9797007977 for Ladakh UT.

People Not In Position To Pay Taxes Due to 'desperate' Economic Condition: KCCI

Majid Nabi

SRINAGAR: A day after electing its new office-bearers, Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industries (KCCI) Thursday urged the administration to hold the decision of imposing property tax, given the desperate economic condition of Jammu and Kashmir.

The newly elected president of Kashmir Inc, Javaid Tenga said Jammu and Kashmir received back to back jolts in terms of economy over the past few years and that the people here are not in a position to pay taxes.

"I think this is not the appropriate time to impose property tax in J&K," Tenga said during his maiden interaction with selected media here. "Let the government put the decision on hold for a few years."

Given JK's desperate eco-



THE LOCKDOWN IMPOSED IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE COVID-19 broke the back of the economy," Tenga added. "And therefore, we urge the administration to reconsider its decision."

nomical condition, he added, people can't pay taxes. "First 2014 deluge and then subsequent events that unfolded in J&K crushed its economy."

The government should reconsider its decision for the larger interest of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, he said.

"The lockdown imposed in the aftermath of the COVID-19 broke the back of the economy," Tenga added. "And therefore, we urge the administration to reconsider its decision."

Regarding the future strategy of the newly elected body, Tenga said the biz body will focus on sub sectors including tourism, handicrafts and general trade.

"Everyone knows where business in J&K is heading at the moment," the KCCI president said. "Business community has suffered a lot over the years and we will strive to bring it out of the dilemma."

Teacher Held For Biting Colleague's Ear In Pattan

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: In a bizarre incident, a government school teacher posted in Pattan area of Baramulla district has assaulted his colleague and bit his ear.

The incident, reports said, took place on February 21 after the two teachers entered into a verbal brawl on managing charge of school assignments.

As the teachers exchanged heated arguments, one of the teachers attacked his colleague and bit his ear in a fit of rage.

Following the incident, the J&K Police in Pattan arrested the teacher for assaulting his colleague and registered a formal case into the incident. "The teacher has been ar-

rested and an FIR was registered in Police station Pattan as well," a top police official said.

As the news about the incident spread, the teaching community expressed its concern over the assault saying that such incidents are unbefitting of a teacher.

"Such episodes raise questions on the credibility of the whole teaching community. It is a collective shame for us that such incidents occur in school. It will have an adverse impact on the students and his overall behavior," said a teacher wishing anonymity. "Teachers are treated as role models by the students but what can we expect from students when teachers behave like this," he said.

An official said the teacher

who was attacked has received around 6 stitches in his ear.

Meanwhile, the district education authorities in Baramulla have ordered an inquiry into the matter and are mulling to take departmental action against the teacher.

"A zonal level committee has been constituted with the instruction to probe the matter and submit its recommendations to the office of CEO Baramulla," an official said. He said once the departmental action will be initiated after the committee submits its report.

"On the directions of CEO Baramulla, a committee was constituted by ZEO Pattan. The report of the committee is awaited," the official said.

MC Ganderbal Ask Shopkeepers To Remove Illegal Hoardings

Observer News Service

GANDERBAL: The Municipal Council Ganderbal has issued a notice to the shopkeepers in the town, asking them to remove illegal hoardings or signage installed without its approval.

According to an official order, multiple hoardings have been installed by the shopkeepers which creates nuisance in the market, besides shabby look to the town.

A few shopkeepers have fixed advertisement hoardings of different companies without the approval of Municipal

Council Ganderbal, it said.

The municipal council said the president of markets (Tawheed Chowk, Duderhama and Beehama) has been called multiple times in the office and it was decided that they will remove the old hoardings and install a uniform design of hoardings.

It further said that the discussions were not adhered to and violations with regard to the installation of "shabby" hoardings continued resulting in loss to the municipal council.

"Keeping in view the above facts, all the shopkeepers of the town are advised to remove all

the illegal hoardings /boards within one day installed by them, otherwise the same will be removed by our Khilafwarzi and sanitation teams," the MC Ganderbal warned.

A senior official of the Municipal Council Ganderbal said all shopkeepers in the market will have to remove their existing sign boards and hoardings. "They will be provided with new boards in uniform design as the administration is currently working on the beautification of the town," he said, adding, "All illegal banners, boards and hoardings will also be removed in Ganderbal town."

Day Care Chemotherapy begins in State Cancer Institute, Jammu

Observer News Service

JAMMU: Secretary, Health and Medical Education, Bhupinder Kumar, today chaired a meeting to review the status of State Cancer Institute (SCI) Jammu with emphasis on various vital aspects like human resource, infrastructure and procurement related issues for its operationalization.

The meeting was informed that OPD services and day care chemotherapy has already been started in the institute on 4th and 20th of February, 2023 respectively.

Pertinently, the SCI at Jammu is presently functional with Medical Oncology, Radiation Oncology, Surgical Oncology and Pain/Palliative Care and Preventive Oncology services. So far, 181 patients in Medical Oncology, 130 in Radiation Oncology, 13 in Surgical Oncology and 25 in Pain/Palliative Care and Preventive Oncology have been treated in SCI.

The Hospital based Cancer Registry has also been shifted from GMC Jammu and all new cancer patients are being reg-

istered in the State Cancer Institute, Jammu.

Secretary appreciated the department for making a leap forward by beginning OPD and Day Care Chemotherapy in State Cancer Institute, Jammu this month. "While State Cancer Institute, Jammu shall be gradually strengthened by way of providing requisite logistics, efforts should be put in in such a manner that the institution is recognized as a new address for cancer care", he maintained.

Bhupinder Kumar emphasized that the services in the SCI should be developed as per the established standards and treatment protocols. The National Standards and guidelines including tumor board discussions should invariably be adopted to provide standard treatment as per the protocols adopted at National Cancer Grid. Further, he instructed the concerned to ensure adequate provisioning for pharmacies with sufficient drug availability within the premises of the institution.

The meeting also deliberat-

ed upon issues with regard to provision for human resource, budget, infrastructure and other logistics. Directions were issued to expedite hiring and recruitment process enabling availability of requisite manpower. The supply chain management and treatment under AB-PMJAY was also discussed.

Secretary appreciated the efforts of all concerned involved in establishment of the SCI Jammu and directed the concerned to further strengthen the patient care and outreach activities pertaining to Cancer awareness to make it "State of Art Institute" so that the patients suffering from Cancers get all the best facilities under one roof on the pattern of Tata Memorial Hospital, Mumbai.

Among others the meeting was attended by Principal Government Medical College, Jammu, Chief Engineer R&B Jammu, Director Finance, H&ME, Managing Director JK-MSCI, Additional Secretary H&ME, Deputy Director Planning, H&ME, Nodal Officer SCI Jammu besides other senior officers of H&ME department.

Kathua Groom Hires Chopper To Bring Bride From Punjab



Observer News Service

JAMMU: A groom from J&K's Kathua district Thursday hired a helicopter to bring his bride home from Punjab's Dinanagar district.

Reports said one Paras Mehta, resident of Village Flote, Block Barnoti, district Kathua got married to Khushboo of Punjab's Dinanagar. The groom's family booked a chopper for Rs 6 Lakh to bring the newlywed couple from Dinanagar, Punjab to Kathua.

Civil and police administration had also made elaborate arrangements for smooth landing of the helicopter in the village.

"It was my family's wish to

see the first arrival of the bride in a gala event," Paras said, adding, "My wife brings fortune and this dream comes true".

Deewakar Mehta, father of the groom said that it's an emotional moment for all of them as their dream has come true.

"I wanted to see my son boarding a helicopter to bring his bride and this has come true. The administration and security personnel have helped us in realizing our dream," said he.

"I am happy that my son will bring his bride in a helicopter, this often happens in the district Kathua," he said, adding that earlier a few years ago a groom of Jammu's Bishnah brought her bride in a chopper.

DC Kupwara Chairs Seminar On G-20 Summit At GDC Sogam

Observer News Service

KUPWARA: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Dr. Doifode Sagar Dattatray, today chaired a one day Seminar on "G-20 Summit 2023 & opportunities for Kashmir" at Government Degree college Sogam (Lolab), organised by the college management in collaboration with 28 RR.

The event, part of various outreach activities on 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', G-20 Presidency and Mission Shakti, was co-chaired by Yougal Manhas, SSP Kupwara and presided over by Colonel Anupum Hajela, Commanding officer 28 RR Bn.

This mega event comprising seminar and debates was patronised by Dr. Shamim Ahmad Dar, Principal, GDC Sogam.

Programme was attended by students of Degree College, higher secondary schools and other educational institutions besides ardent speakers and intellectuals from different subjects and fields.

In his inaugural address, the DC said that India is a great democratic country and third largest economy of the world in purchasing power, India has achieved G-20 presidency

when it is celebrating 75 years of its independence called as Amritkal. He said India holds the presidency of the G-20 from December 1, 2022 but in actual India has remained a global leader throughout the ages. India has guided nations of the world with respect to ideologies, cultural orientations, and religious teachings"

The DC while addressing the audience said "I am lucky to address you from such a beautiful and pious land of Lolab in Kupwara district which has led the world in many ways. When we talk of ancient ages, when people used to live in forests and caves, the Kupwara district used to be a hub of education as at Shardi village of Kishan-ganga in the close proximity of Kupwara district, there was Sharda peeth global University.

Similarly, Lolab of Kupwara district has produced a visionary called Anwar Shah Kashmiri who lead the world through his noble ideas, ideologies" these apt words of DC Kupwara on the soil of Anwar Shah Kashmiri stole the show and attracted the appreciations from the audience and there were cheers for Deputy Commissioner Kupwara from all sides.

7 Injured IN Head-On Collision IN Rajouri

Observer News Service

RAJOURI: At least 7 persons were injured after an auto collided with a car in Siot area of Rajouri this evening, officials said.

An official said the accident took place this evening. "In the incident at least 7 persons were injured and they have been shifted to a hospital," he said.

The injured have been identified as Amar Latif (35), Laliya (25), Rahila (26)—all residents of Mendhar, Deepak Sharma (35) of Dharamsal, Siddhant Sharma (24), Paviter Bala (28), Anita Devi (29), Rekha Devi (35), Priya Sharma (24) and Jatinder Sharma (31)—all residents of Siot.

He said police have taken cognizance of the incident

Mysterious Blast leaves one injured in Sopore

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A civilian was injured in a mysterious blast in Sopore town of North Kashmir Baramulla district on Thursday, officials said.

At about 11:35 am, the civilian identified as Mohammad Jamal Dar, resident of Warpora area of Sopore, in the north Kashmir district, got injured due to the blast while working in paddy fields near his house, they said.

The injured was shifted to SKIMS Soura here for treatment.

Train Knocks Elderly Man Dead in Budgam

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: An unidentified man lost his life after being knocked down by a moving train along Budgam-Srinagar railway section this morning.

Reports reaching here said that a man presumably in his fifties was hit by train number 04614.

The injured was immediately removed to the hospital, where he succumbed later.

The deceased has been identified as Sanaullah Bhat son of Abdul Ahad Bhat, a resident of Lajoora Pulwama.

Meanwhile, a police official said that a case has been registered in this regard and further investigations set into motion.

KASHMIR OBSERVER

Friday | 24-02-2023

Property Tax

The imposition of property tax in Jammu and Kashmir is facing stiff criticism from the people and political parties. More so in Jammu division where the move has also triggered sporadic public protests and severe opposition from civil society groups. National Conference leader Omer Abdullah has asked the administration to leave this important decision for an elected government to decide, saying there should be “no taxation without representation.” The PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti in a hard-hitting statement said that the tax was part of a plan to impoverish the people of the Union Territory. Similarly in Jammu, the tax has been opposed by parties other than the BJP. Democratic Azad Party leader Ghulam Nazi Azad has urged the administration to postpone the imposition of the tax for a few years till the economic situation in the union territory improves. Congress has also opposed the measure.

In a related development, the mayors of the twin capitals of the Union Territory have also spoken out against the tax. Srinagar City Mayor, Junaid Azim Mattu, termed the step “arbitrary” saying that it was not approved by elected Urban Local Body. Jammu Mayor, Rajinder Sharma, said that the property tax was imposed by the administration and not by the Jammu Municipal Committee.

The property tax follows the still ongoing campaign to retrieve the government land occupied by people which too has generated a deep public unease. The administration in its defense has said that by retrieving government land it was only doing its job. No less than Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has reassured the people that only the big land grabbers will be targeted and that the poor people will be spared. The land being retrieved includes the Roshni land, which was earlier handed over by the previous governments to its occupiers under a scheme. The scheme, which was meant to raise Rs 25,000 crore to finance the purchase of hydropower projects from the centre by selling state land under unauthorized occupation turned out to be a damp squib. It has fetched only a few hundred crores since it was enacted in 2002 which makes the revenue earned from the land disproportionately less than the target. The administration is now citing this as a rationale to retrieve the land.

However, unlike the recovery of government land, levying a property tax touches everyone's skin, so it is facing a bigger public backlash. It remains to be seen how the administration assuages the public anger. At the same time it is true that considering the setback suffered by J&K's economy over the last few years, it would be difficult for people to pay the tax now.

OTHER OPINION

The EU's carbon tax

How does the mechanism fare when it comes to cost competitiveness of covered goods? It must be noted that the sectors covered under the CBAM, except hydrogen, are covered under the EU ETS. That means these sectors have already undergone significant decarbonisation.

Therefore, non-EU products are likely to be much more carbon-intensive, leading to significant carbon tax under the CBAM. The free emission allocation that these sectors continue to benefit from under the EU ETS will be neutralised by applying the CBAM to only that portion of emissions not supported by free allowances.

Even then, the CBAM applied on embedded emissions at the EU-ETS carbon-price levels could inflict serious harm to exports from India and other countries to the EU. On top, there are the costs of emission measurement and certification that come with the CBAM.

A significant built-in equaliser in the CBAM is the provision to deduct any carbon price paid in the country of origin from the calculated CBAM taxation. With this provision, it is reasonable to imagine that many non-EU nations will try to implement some form of carbon pricing internally to stop the outflow of money. This may just be the nudge that India needs to create a national compliance market for carbon.

The EU is India's second-largest trade partner, according to the Union ministry of commerce and industry. The sectors covered under the CBAM are hard-to-abate, and the emission-intensity of Indian products from these sectors remains high.

While the CBAM itself will be tested in the courts of law across the world, it is likely to prevail in the current or a modified format.

In fact, more countries like Canada and Japan are expected to implement similar tariff systems, eventually making carbon tax a norm in international trade. For many developing and least developed countries, this will be just one more slice of 'loss and damage' from climate change. However, for a fast-growing economy like ours, it is crucial to take action to decarbonise our industries and simultaneously raise our voices against discriminatory tariff regimes.

Financial Express

Sting in the tail
Prioritising Privacy Over Transparency



Arghya Sengupta

Were the RTI to exist in this amended form, such disclosures would neither have been possible, nor would the reputation of the then Union government taken as large a hit as it eventually did. It is politically myopic for any government today to foreclose such a possibility in the future, no matter what its short-term gains might be

Look at the sting at the tip of its tail”, said Feluda to his sidekick, Topshe, describing a scorpion he had managed to trap in an upturned tumbler in the Jodhpur Circuit House. “If it bites?” asked Topshe. Pat came Feluda's response: “Certain death for the young and old, everyone else half-dead.”

Similar is the effect of Section 30(2), the ‘tail’ of the digital personal data protection bill 2022, India's first comprehensive privacy legislation. This seemingly innocuous provision will certainly kill the Right to Information Act, 2005. Participatory democracy in India will be half-dead as a direct consequence.

In one fell swoop, Section 30(2) prioritises the privacy of personal information over the right to information of citizens. In the original scheme of the RTI Act, personal information may have remained exempt from the scope of RTI disclosure only if two further conditions were met. First, such information should not have any public interest attached to it; second, if such information had to be disclosed to Parliament or the state legislature (say in response to a legislator's question), it would have to be disclosed to the citizen who had filed the RTI request.

As an example, if a judge had failed to disclose his/her assets as per the Supreme Court's own internal resolution, a citizen could ask for such information through a RTI request and it would have to be provided. The proposed amendment shuts this door. It simply states that anything that relates to personal information may be denied in an RTI request. Whether that personal information has public interest attached to it or not, or whether it has to be made available to Parliament or not, is immaterial. Privacy wins. Transparency must give way.

How is this provision likely to be used? The former Central Information Commissioner and RTI activist, Shailesh Gandhi, has provided many telling examples — the redevelopment of Crawford Market in Bombay was halted after an RTI request disclosed that the developer would make a gain of Rs 1000 crore and the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation would only get Rs 40 crore. Again, a land parcel in Pune allocated to

the former president, Pratibha Patil, for building a post-retirement home was shown in an RTI request to be far beyond her entitlement. After public outcry, the former president chose to forego the land allocation. (<https://scroll.in/article/1042602/these-instances-show-how-the-digital-data-protection-bill-will-undermine-the-rti-act>).

These requests can now be legally denied since they relate to personal information — the financial details of the developer, the address of the plot where Patil's new house was being built and so on. This is a self-serving amendment that is likely to damage good governance immeasurably.

The amendment is also conceptually unjustified. In principle, the right to privacy does not mean the right to do things in secret. If that were the case, privacy would include a right to take hard drugs inside one's home and to strike corrupt deals in hotel rooms. Instead, privacy implies the right to be able to do as one chooses, to be let alone on matters that are essentially self-regarding. But for holders of public office, parts of their life and associated personal information aren't self-regarding — they may certainly have public relevance. If bank accounts of public officials show disproportionate increases relative to income, then the public certainly has a right to know the source of such funds; similarly, the contact details of an elected representative should be available publicly, as should the record of disbursements made in a welfare scheme by a village official, including details of beneficiaries. On the other hand, some parts of their private lives may not have any public value except as gossip. But a one-size-fits-all solution of privacy trumping transparency in all instances, leading to a routine denial of RTI requests as the amendment has done, is egregiously wrong in principle.

The blanket privileging of privacy over transparency is also a politically disempowering move. One of the key factors that catapulted the National Democratic Alliance under Narendra Modi to power in 2014 was the promise of a corruption-free India. The country had been rocked by the Commonwealth Games scandal, the corruption in house allotments in Adarsh Society, and the 2G corruption scandal. Each of these scams was uncov-

ered in part because of persistent RTI queries that shone a light on several shady deals and questionable decisions. Were the RTI to exist in this amended form, such disclosures would neither have been possible, nor would the reputation of the then Union government taken as large a hit as it eventually did. It is politically myopic for any government today to foreclose such a possibility in the future, no matter what its short-term gains might be.

Needless to say, defenders of the amendment will point to the many instances where the RTI Act is and may be abused. Decision-makers may be deterred from taking bona fide decisions if motivated applications are filed; at other times, for a few eyeballs on social media, bogus RTI applications may be filed that hold up governance. But these are minuscule exceptions. A dispassionate assessment of RTI orders by Public Information Officers and appellate bodies shows how few and far between such bogus queries are in relation to genuine ones. It is no surprise that in the Global Right to Information Rating, a comprehensive assessment of the operation of all RTI legislations in the world, the Indian RTI Act is currently ranked 8th out of over 100 countries to have such laws. In this context, the fear of abuse is hugely exaggerated.

The only kind of State that has historically refused information to its citizens is a colonial State that rules by force and dictat, not by reason and consent. If India is serious about its emerging identity of a postcolonial State that refuses to play by the colonial playbook, it should drop the garb of the colonial State at home. Section 30(2) of the digital personal data protection bill takes the government from being one of the people to becoming one above the people. Dropping it is critical both for the government's own postcolonial image and the future of participatory democracy in India.

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

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Simple Pleasures

DESPIITE living in the digital age, there are some habits which many of us simply cannot give up. Preferring to read a printed book over the online version is one such. There are multiple reasons why a large swathe of Indian readers always prefer hard copy of books to online reading. Psychologically, the ‘ownership’ factor

could be a key reason, besides the nice feeling you get while touching a new book, its fragrance, pleasure of turning the pages, easy portability, leisure reading – all make a physical book comfortably win over an e-book. However splendid the cover image of an e-book may look on screen, it is still an image rather than a physical thing. Another major disadvantage

with an e-book is that you cannot look at more than one page at once. In fact, a study from West Chester University of Pennsylvania reveals that students who read on iPads had lower reading comprehension than when they read traditional printed books. A good physical book is like a full course of a sumptuous meal, whereas an e-book is just fast food.

Said the noted American novelist Harper Lee: “The book to read is not the one that thinks for you, but the one which makes you think.”

Ranganathan Sivakumar
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Mindful Fridays

Grit is Not Always Great

Wasim Kakroo

“I believe you have to be relentless about pursuing a big opportunity but ruthless about killing your own bad ideas along the way.” Reid Hoffman (Founder of LinkedIn)

WHAT IS GRIT?

Grit is the determination and drive to accomplish long-term objectives. Grit is sometimes referred to as mental tenacity or mental toughness. According to University of Pennsylvania professor Angela Duckworth who operationalized its definition, grit is a significant predictor of success and the capacity to achieve one's goals. Grit entails working strenuously toward challenges, maintaining effort and interest over years despite failure, adversity, and plateaus in progress. The gritty individual approaches achievement as a marathon; his or her advantage is stamina. Whereas disappointment or boredom signals to others that it is time to change trajectory and cut losses, the gritty individual stays the course ((Duckworth et al. 2007, p. 1087).

In recent years, the word "grit" has gained some recognition among entrepreneurs and professionals in personal development. If you follow any aspiring businessmen on social media, chances are that you've seen some of them post something similar to this:

1. Grit is the stubborn refusal to quit
2. If you quit once, it becomes a habit. Never quit.
3. Winners never quit; quitters never win.

WHY IS GRIT AS A PERSONALITY TRAIT BEING PRAISED SO MUCH?

Grit has unquestionable advantages. Successful people frequently stand out from the crowd due to their capacity to surmount challenges, stick it out through challenging situations, and maintain a passion for long-term goals. Additionally, a large body of research suggests that those with "grittier" personalities may be better able to achieve specific life goals. They might also enjoy some benefits including better scores, better results on particular academic assignments, and improved work



WE WORRY THAT BY GIVING UP, WE ARE ADMITTING DEFEAT AND THAT OUR EFFORTS HAVE BEEN IN VAIN. Yet instead of viewing waste as a problem that only exists in the past, we need to start thinking about it in the present. Realizing this entails understanding that the waste of another minute or another Rupee spent on something that is no longer worthwhile is much greater than the initial investment

performance.

WHAT IS THE DOWNSIDE OF GRIT?

Grit includes passion, but being passionate is only healthy when you are managing it rather than allowing it to manage you. You won't succeed if your passion turns into an obsession that overshadows other crucial aspects of your life such as family, friendships, self-care etc. You can persist, work tirelessly on a task or

project and perhaps even feel a sense of achievement from it, but if all that effort and tenacity is not helping you achieve your life's objectives (that should be driven by values rather than by materialism), it is simply not serving you any advantage.

Many lives have been squandered by sons obstinately following in their fathers' footsteps or pursuing their father's ambitions, even though those steps or those dreams led in

a direction that the obedient son found to be unappealing on an internal level.

The worst type of rigidity—one that results in all kinds of unhappiness and wasted opportunities—is holding on to unattainable or harmful ambitions, which are frequently motivated by unresolved emotions. For fear of making a mistake or admitting that their ideals have changed, many people spend years

making unsatisfactory or unrealistic decisions. By the time reality compels them to change their minds, other's ships have sailed.

THE ART OF QUITTING AND WHEN QUITTING IS MORE HELPFUL THAN GRIT

It's possible that the novel you've been working on doesn't turn out to be a success and needs to be put on hold so you can focus on something

else. Maybe you've realised you're in the wrong relationship, but you're hesitant to end it since you've already spent a lot of time and energy into it. In such situations, saying "I just can't do this to myself anymore" is the most brave thing you can do.

Yes, we should be tenacious, but not foolish. Goal adjustment, which involves disengaging from an unattainable goal and then reengaging in an alternative, is the most quick and adaptive response to an unachievable objective.

We worry that by giving up, we are admitting defeat and that our efforts have been in vain. Yet instead of viewing waste as a problem that only exists in the past, we need to start thinking about it in the present. Realizing this entails understanding that the waste of another minute or another Rupee spent on something that is no longer worthwhile is much greater than the initial investment. Contrary to popular assumption, winners quit a lot. Actually, that is how they win.

Several motivational posters proclaim statements like "Champions never quit" or "Quitting lasts forever." But, altering one's course or giving up aren't always bad things. The most resilient people may profit from striking a balance between blind perseverance and a defeatist mindset. Your biggest ambitions might be easier to accomplish if you know when to give up and give yourself permission to do so.

You're making a mistake if you go to work or training every day just because you went yesterday, or if you go there because you think that's the only way to support your family. Maintaining the status quo without purpose can be traumatic.

I end this article with a quote by Seth Grodin that goes like, "Quitting is better than coping, because quitting frees you up to excel at something else."

The author is a licensed clinical psychologist (alumni of Govt. Medical College Srinagar) and works as a consultant clinical psychologist at Centre for Mental Health Services (CMHS) at Rambagh Srinagar. He can be reached at 885067196

Why Walking Through The Countryside 'Tames' Our Brain

José A. Morales García

“I'm going to the countryside over the weekend to disconnect.”

This is a common refrain among people who, overwhelmed by the big city, seek to spend a few days in nature as a means of escape. We all know it works – a couple of days spent in rural relaxation and we return with our batteries recharged.

The sheer concentration of people in urban areas is growing faster than desired. Currently, more than half of the world's population lives in cities and the proportion is expected to continue to rise. It is estimated that, by 2050, seven out of ten people in the world will live in large municipalities. Many of us will spend up to 90% of our lives within buildings.

Life in the city has its advantages, but it also poses a significant mental health risk. In fact, mood disorders, anxiety and depression are up to 56% more common in urban settings than in rural ones.

GETAWAYS TO APPEASE THE AMYGDALA

There is a mechanism in the brain that allows nature to change our perception of things. It's called the amygdala.

This is suggested in a study from a few years ago. In situations of stress, the amygdala is activated more in city dwellers than people living in rural areas.

The amygdala is the region of the nervous system responsible for the control of emotions and feelings. This is logical because it is in a privileged position that allows it to establish connections with many different parts of the brain. One of these regions is the frontal lobe, which explains why the amygdala participates in the inhibition of behaviour and decision making.

The amygdala is also involved in other activities such as controlling



our eating (it is responsible for the feeling of satiety), managing fear and stress, structuring memories, regulating sexual behaviour and controlling aggression.

The essence of fear is survival, and this portion of the brain helps us to survive by avoiding dangerous situations, because it continually reviews the information provided by our senses, instantly detecting what may affect our survival (whether that be real or not). Once the threat is identified, it develops a response that moves us away from risk, and our probability of survival increases.

THE ADVANTAGES OF IMMERSING ONE-SELF IN A RELAXING FOREST 'BATH'

We can intervene on the amygdala to help it avoid anxiety and stress.

It is possible to do it with medication – although science also offers us another cheaper and simpler option: just contact with nature.

A recent study has shown that repeated exposure to natural environments has a positive effect on amygdala activity. People in frequent contact with nature present less activity in their amygdala during stressful situations.

Interacting with the environment is, therefore, a way to improve mental health. The Japanese have a word for it: shinrin-yoku or "forest bathing".

Many other studies have reached

the same conclusion. They show that contact with nature increases our feeling of happiness and decreases mental anguish, since this contact reduces negative emotions and stress.

It also gives us greater capacity to manage daily tasks, improving the ability of the so-called "working memory", which allows us to temporarily store information in the brain. To this we must add an improvement in cognitive function – attention, memory, orientation – both in adults and children, with benefits in terms of imagination, creativity and school performance.

Another advantage of going out into the countryside is that it is an

activity that can be done alone. People who walk alone in nature are less prone to depression and stress.

Like any good treatment, contact with nature also requires the right dosage. We need to spend at least half an hour in nature per week to feel the mental health benefits.

In conclusion, exposure to nature decreases amygdala activity and has beneficial effects on stress-related brain regions. This suggests that walking in the countryside buffers the detrimental effects of city life. And, in turn, it potentially acts as a preventive measure against the development of some mental disorders.



LEAVING THE CITY IN SEARCH OF TREES AND CLEAN AIR IS NOT ALWAYS WITHIN EVERYONE'S REACH.

In this sense, we have an enemy: the massive and uncontrolled growth of cities, especially when urban planning does not include large green areas

THE NEED FOR GREEN OASES

Leaving the city in search of trees and clean air is not always within everyone's reach. In this sense, we have an enemy: the massive and uncontrolled growth of cities, especially when urban planning does not include large green areas. Even if such areas are included, it is of little use if they are for decorative purposes – not taking into account the benefits these areas could have for the mood of the city's inhabitants.

The impact of urban green spaces on mental health has been the subject of research for years. Many scientists point out the need to include natural elements in our city projects, taking into account the many benefits they bring to our psyche. While we wait for our cities to become greener, there is no other choice but to take great care of our natural environment. It is for our own good: we do not want to anger the amygdala.

By arrangements with The Conversation

'E-Bandage' That Speeds Healing By 30% Developed

Press Trust Of India

Researchers have developed a first-of-its-kind small, flexible and stretchable bandage that accelerates healing by 30 per cent through the delivery of electrotherapy directly to the wound site.

In an animal study, published in the journal Science Advances, the new bandage healed diabetic ulcers much faster in mice than those without the bandage.

The bandage also actively monitors the healing process and then harmlessly dissolves -- electrodes and all -- into the body after it is no longer needed.

The new device could provide a powerful tool for patients with diabetes, whose ulcers can lead to various complications, including amputated limbs or even death, the researchers said.

It marks the first bioresorbable bandage capable of delivering electrotherapy and the first example of a smart regenerative system, they said.

"For people with diabetes, infections are even harder to treat and more dangerous," said Guillermo A. Ameer, from Northwestern University, who co-led the study.

"For these patients, there is a major unmet need for cost-effective solutions that really work for them. Our new bandage is cost-effective, easy to apply, adaptable, comfortable and efficient at closing wounds to prevent infections and further complications," Ameer said.



For these patients, there is a major unmet need for cost-effective solutions that really work for them. Our new bandage is cost-effective, easy to apply, adaptable, comfortable and efficient at closing wounds to prevent infections and further complications

Although the new bandage is an electronic device, the active components that interface with the wound bed are entirely resorbable.

"As such, the materials disappear naturally after the healing process is complete, thereby avoiding any damage to the tissue that could otherwise be caused by physical extraction," said Northwestern's John A. Rogers, who co-led the study.

One side of the smart regenerative system contains two electrodes: A tiny flower-shaped electrode that sits right on top of the wound bed and a ring-shaped electrode that sits on healthy tissue to surround the entire wound.

The other side of the device contains an energy-harvesting coil to power the system and a near-field communication (NFC) system to wirelessly transport data in real time, the researchers said.

They also included sensors that can assess how well the wound is healing. By measuring the resistance of the electrical current across the wound, physicians can monitor progress, the researchers said.

A gradual decrease of current measurement relates directly to the healing process. If the current remains high, then physicians know something is wrong, they added.

'Mobile Health Intervention Can Help Prevent Secondary Stroke'

Press Trust Of India

Mobile health intervention can lead to improved lifestyle-related behaviours that can prevent secondary stroke, according to a study conducted in India whose findings were published in the Lancet Global Health journal.

Mobile health (mHealth) refers to the use of mobile and wireless devices to improve health and deliver care. The study was done across 31 stroke centres in India and the trial's intervention was a package composed of SMS text messages, health education videos and stroke prevention workbooks for patients.

The trial was conducted by SPRINT-India (Secondary Prevention by Structured Semi-Interactive Stroke Prevention Package) under ICMR's Indian Stroke Clinical Trial



The results of the trial revealed that a structured semi-interactive stroke prevention package improved lifestyle behavioral factors and adherence to medication, which might have long-term benefits.

Network (INSTRuCT) of stroke-ready centres in India, one of its kind in developing countries and the fourth government-supported network around the world.

Dr Meenakshi Sharma Scientist-G, Noncommunicable Diseases Division, ICMR stated that the SPRINT study is the first trial in India (and perhaps globally) to try to assess the role of an mHealth intervention in secondary prevention of stroke at such a large scale.

It was a multicentre, randomised-controlled trial of a semi-interactive mHealth intervention among stroke patients, the ICMR said in a statement.

The messages given on mobile phones focused on control of blood sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol, improving physical activity, eating a healthy diet and not missing taking medicines to prevent stroke. The awareness material was systematically developed in 12 different regional languages.

The patients in the control group received standard care whereas those in the intervention arm received awareness material at weekly intervals to promote healthy living and adherence to medicines, the statement said.

A total of 4,298 patients were randomly allocated to the intervention arm (2148) and control arm (2150).

Besides, 1502 patients in the intervention arm and 1536 patients in the control arm completed a one-year follow-up.

The trial used complex behavioral interventions to reduce the recurrence of stroke, the statement stated.

The results of the trial revealed that a structured semi-interactive stroke prevention package improved lifestyle behavioral factors and adherence to medication, which might have long-term benefits.

The trial went a step further than contemporary trials in assessing the effect on endpoints such as the recurrence of cardiovascular events and deaths.

However, the follow-up period was short to show any differences between the control and the intervention groups. The results of the trial were published in the Lancet Global Health journal on 14th February 2023.

Dr Jeyaraj D Pandian, Professor of Neurology and Principal, Christian Medical College, Ludhiana who is the Principal Investigator of the clinical coordinating centre for the trial said that the proportion of patients who stopped smoking (83 pc) and alcohol (85 pc) improved in the intervention group as compared to the control group (78 pc and 75 pc respectively).

Adherence to medications was also better in the intervention arm (94 pc) as compared

to the control arm (89 pc). The events like stroke, heart attack and death did not differ between the two groups (5.5 pc vs 4.9 pc) at one-year follow-up.

This may be because the follow-up period was too short or study centres were stroke-ready centers, which were already providing good quality care to stroke patients.

The findings of the SPRINT India trial have a long-term benefit for patients who had a stroke through mobile health interventions.

Dr Meenakshi Sharma said the trial provides hope in improving lifestyle and medical complications by leveraging technology in a resource-constrained setup.

In phase 2 which started in September 2022, four more stroke trials, which are very relevant to the country, have been initiated by ICMR. We would get answers to important treatments for stroke in the coming years.

Stroke (brain attack) is one of the leading causes of death and disability in India. There are two types of stroke; ischemic when there is a blockage in one of the brain arteries and brain hemorrhage when there is rupture and leakage of one of the arteries which supply blood to the brain, the statement said.

High blood pressure is the number one cause of ischemic and hemorrhagic strokes. High blood sugar, high cholesterol, smoking, obesity, alcohol intake, lack of exercise and unhealthy diet are the other reasons why stroke occurs.

In addition, after a stroke about 15 to 20 per cent of the patients in India develop another stroke (recurrence).

The main reasons for recurrence are discontinuing medicines, lack of control of BP, blood sugar, continuing smoking, alcohol intake, following unhealthy food habits, etc.

Pulses Are Packed With Goodness: Five Cool Things You Should Know About Them

The Conversation

Each year on February 10, the United Nations commemorates what probably sounds to many like a strange occasion: World Pulses Day.

But, as a researcher focused on forgotten and underutilised legumes, I think the initiative is an important step towards food security. Getting people to eat more pulses can ultimately help achieve UN Sustainable Development Goal 2: Zero Hunger.

First, for clarification, legumes and pulses have different meanings. Legumes are all plants belong to the family Leguminosae or Fabaceae, while pulses are the dried seeds of legume plants. Pulses include beans, lentils and chickpeas.

One reason that legume plants offer such promise in ending hunger is that they don't need good soil or nitro-



gen fertilisers. Plants need nitrogen to build important molecules such as protein and DNA. Most legumes can thrive in poor soil by fixing nitrogen gas from the air for their own use. This happens through symbiotic interaction with friendly bacteria known as rhizobia. The rhizobia are housed inside structures called nodules on the plant's roots.

Thanks to their nitrogen-

fixing ability, pulses are nutritional powerhouses: high in protein and fibre, and low in fat.

But that's not the only interesting thing about legumes and pulses. In honour of World Pulses Day 2023, I would like to highlight five pulses that have unique properties and stories.

The African yam bean: high protein beans and underground tubers

The African yam bean (Sphenostylis stenocarpa) offers two servings of food: beans and underground tubers. The tubers have higher protein content than any non-legume tuber crops like potato and cassava, and the beans are also high in protein.

Their nutritional value was proved during the Nigerian Civil War (1967-1970) when the beans were cooked with amaranthus, telfaria or cassava leaves to feed the malnourished in war-affected areas.

This crop is native to Africa and was once grown across the African continent. Researchers have proposed that it may have been domesticated multiple times in west and central Africa.

Today, it is mostly grown as security or subsistence crop, rather than commercially. But its high protein content and drought tolerance are attracting increasing interest.

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FM Pitches Framework To Regulate Crypto In Meeting With G20 Ministers

Press Trust Of India

BENGALURU: Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Thursday pitched for a global framework to regulate cryptocurrencies, besides firming up ways to tackle global debt vulnerabilities and strengthening multilateral development banks during bilateral meetings with her counterparts, including from US and Japan, ahead of the G-20 meeting.

The finance ministers of the G20 countries, which is a grouping of developed and developing nations, are here to participate in the two-day meeting of G20 finance ministers and central bank governors (FMCBG) beginning February 24.

Under the G20 Presidency, India will be pressing for a global framework to regulate the cryptocurrencies, ways to tackle the aggravated debt vulnerabilities facing the developing nations mainly on account of the continuing geopolitical tensions and the pandemic.

It is feared that if left unaddressed, the mounting debt vulnerabilities of developing nations could trigger global recession and push millions to extreme poverty.

The minister so far has held separate bilateral meetings with the US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, Finance Minister of Japan Shunichi Suzuki, and Italian Minister of Economy and Finance Giancarlo Giorgetti ahead of the G-20 FMCBG meeting.



She is scheduled to have more than 10 such meetings.

In her meeting with Yellen, the finance minister discussed issues relating to crypto assets, strengthening multilateral development banks and global debt vulnerabilities.

"The two leaders exchanged views on #G20 #FinanceTrack priorities under #G20India Presidency in 2023. The two leaders discussed their perspectives on strengthening #MDB, #GlobalDebt vulnerabilities, #CryptoAssets, and #health, besides the Just Energy Transition Partnership #JETP and possible takeaways for the two sides," the finance ministry tweeted after the meeting.

In a separate tweet on Sitharaman's meeting with her Japanese counterpart, the finance ministry said the ministers exchanged views on priorities under G20 Finance Track 2023.

"Both Ministers looked forward to close cooperation between Japan as #G7 Presidency and India as #G20 Presidency on strengthening of #MDBs, #debt related issues, financing cities of tomorrow and coordinated policy for #CryptoAssets," it said.

India Inc Should Take Equal Blame For Trade Imbalance With China: Jaishankar

Press Trust Of India

PUNE: The businesses should share equal responsibility for the skewed trade balance with China, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Thursday, blaming India Inc for not developing sufficient sourcing capabilities within the country.

Stating that the government's flagship 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiative pitching for self-reliance is a corrective attempt, Jaishankar warned that "massive external exposure" puts our national security at threat.

With some experts, including former RBI Governor Raghuram Rajan pitching India to focus more on services, Jaishankar said neglecting manufacturing will lead to damaging India's "strategic future".

In 2022, India-China trade touched USD 135.98 and New Delhi's trade deficit with Beijing crossed the USD 100 billion mark for the first time despite frosty bilateral ties.

Terming the challenge posed by the trade imbalance with China as very serious and formidable, the career bureaucrat turned politician said the responsibility here is not just of the government, but it is an equal responsibility of businesses as well.



"Indian corporates haven't developed the kind of backward (linkages), vendor supplies, components and parts, ingredients and intermediates that should be supporting us," he said while speaking at the annual Asia Economic Dialogue organised by the external affairs ministry here.

Acknowledging that the government is also to be blamed for such a trade imbalance, Jaishankar said the self-reliance motto is a corrective step taken by the administration after the flaws that got exposed during the COVID pandemic.

"Atmanirbhar Bharat it is not a slogan. It is actually a messaging to (the) industry, to people saying, please, what you can source from India, you have an obligation to source, not as a moral obligation. Our national security is at threat if you have this kind of massive external exposure," the career diplomat-turned-politician said.

India's Potential In Green Energy No Less Than Goldmine Or Oil Field: PM Modi

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday invited global investments in the green energy sector stressing India's potential in renewable energy like wind, solar and biogas is no less than a "goldmine or oil field".

Addressing a webinar on various announcements made in the Union Budget 2023-24 on green growth, PM Modi said, "This budget is not only an opportunity, but it also contains the guarantee of our future security." He said India has been the fastest in renewable energy capacity addition among major economies since 2014.

"India will play an important role in green energy, I invite all stakeholders to invest in India," he said.

On the great opportunities for investors in India, he stated that "the potential of solar, wind and biogas in India is no less than any gold mine or oil field for our private sector".

He opined that India has huge potential to lead the world in green energy and the country will forward the cause of global good apart from generating green jobs.

PM Modi addressed the post-budget webinar on 'Green Growth' on Thursday, which is the first of a series of 12 post-budget webinars, organized by the government to seek ideas and suggestions for the effective implementation of the initiatives announced in the



Union Budget 2023.

He stated that all the budgets tabled in the country after 2014, have been forwarding new-age reforms apart from finding solutions to the challenges faced in the present day.

The Prime Minister outlined three pillars for green growth and energy transmission.

First, increasing the production of renewable energy; second, reducing the use of fossil fuel in the economy; and finally, rapidly moving towards a gas-based economy in the country.

He highlighted measures like ethanol blending, PM KUSUM Yojana, incentives for solar manufacturing, rooftop solar scheme, coal gasification, and battery storage in the Budgets of the past few years.

Underlining the significant announcements in previous years' budgets, PM Modi highlighted schemes such as green credit for industries, PM Pranam Yojna for farmers, Gobardhan Yojna for villages, vehicle scrapping policy for cities, Green Hydrogen and wetland conserva-

tion in this year's budget.

Referring to the global efforts for diversification of the energy supply chain, the Prime Minister said that this Budget has given a great opportunity to every green energy investor to invest in India.

This will also be very useful for the startups in the sector, he added.

He also stated that India's track record shows its capability to achieve the objectives before time when it comes to renewable energy resources.

He that India achieved the target of 40 per cent contributions from non-fossil fuels in the installed electricity capacity nine years before the target date.

He also mentioned that India achieved the target of 10 per cent ethanol blending in petrol five months before time and emphasised that the nation strives to achieve 20 per cent ethanol blending in petrol by 2025-26 instead of 2030.

He also mentioned that the total renewable energy capacity of 500 GW will be achieved by 2030.

Recalling the launch of E20 fuel, the Prime Minister noted the government's emphasis on biofuels and said that it has brought new opportunities for investors. He observed the abundance of agri-waste in the country and urged the investors to not miss the opportunity of setting up ethanol plants in every corner of the country.

'Record Surge In Tourism In J&K, Some Politicians Also Enjoying In Kashmir Now'

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: After a "record surge" in tourism in Jammu and Kashmir, some politicians are also having a leisure time in Kashmir and other parts of the Union Territory, Union minister G Kishan Reddy said on Thursday.

He made the remarks while addressing a gathering at an event here, without naming anyone.

Recently, videos of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi skiing in Gulmarg in north Kashmir, and he and his sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra enjoying a ride on a snow scooter there went viral on social media.

"After Independence, the tourism fallout in Jammu and Kashmir has seen a record surge. If we look at figures for one year, in 2022, it was about 1.8 crore tourists in J&K," the Union tourism minister said.

Reddy said earlier there were "hardly any tourists", but today some politicians are "also playing there" and having a leisure time in Sri-



nagar and other parts of Jammu and Kashmir.

"It is a good thing, people must go, it is part of our India. That is the situation today, people are eager to visit Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

Reddy was addressing a function held at the Institute of Hotel Management, Catering and Nutrition (IHM), Pusa, here.

Union minister Reddy on August 4 last year had said that Jammu and Kashmir had registered a "record fallout" of tourists at airports and sightseeing places in the last several months due to "transformative initiatives" of the Narendra Modi government

such as the abrogation of Article 370.

His comments had come a day ahead of the third anniversary of the revocation of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir under Article 370 of the Constitution and the bifurcation of the erstwhile state into Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

It was on August 5, 2019, when the Centre ended the special status of Jammu and Kashmir and restrictions imposed in the region had severely impacted tourism there.

In a major intervention for the upliftment of the tourism sector in J&K, the Union government had made a record allocation of Rs 786 crore in the budget for the tourism sector there, which was Rs 509 crore higher than the last budgetary allocation, officials in Srinagar had said in February 2022.

The officials had added the intent of the massive budgetary allocation was to boost tourism and allied services in the union territory.

Sensex, Nifty Extend Losses Into 5th Session On Growing Rate Hike Fears

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI: Equity benchmark indices buckled under selling pressure for the fifth straight session on Thursday as a bearish trend in Asian markets and concerns over rate hikes by the US Federal Reserve unnerved investors.

Besides, fresh foreign fund outflows also hit investor sentiments, traders said.

In a highly volatile trade amid monthly derivatives expiry, the BSE Sensex declined 139.18 points or 0.23 per cent to settle at 59,605.80. During the day, it hit a high of 59,960.04 and a low of 59,406.31.

The NSE Nifty slipped 43.05 points or 0.25 per cent to end at 17,511.25.

In the Sensex pack, Asian Paints, Larsen & Toubro, Titan, IndusInd Bank, Bharti Airtel, Power Grid, Bajaj Finserv, Infosys, HDFC Bank and HDFC were the major laggards.

On the other hand, Axis Bank, Tata Motors, ITC, State Bank of India, Tata Steel and Sun Pharma were among the gainers.

"The equity market traded cautiously between gains and losses as the minutes of the central bank policy meeting revealed concerns over high inflation and its commitment to bring inflation under control.

"In response to the heightened fears of rate hikes, the US



10 yr treasury yield continued to stay high, near 4 per cent. Additionally, the dollar index rose as the greenback cheered over hawkish Fed comments and rising geopolitical tensions," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

In the broader market, the BSE midcap gauge declined 0.40 per cent, while the smallcap index gained marginally by 0.06 per cent.

Among the sectoral indices, reality declined by 1.60 per cent, utilities by 1.29 per cent, power (1.19 per cent), consumer durables (0.95 per cent) and capital goods (0.84 per cent).

FMCG, auto, bankex, metal, oil & gas and services were the gainers.

"Nifty fell for the fifth consecutive session, to close at 17,511. Nifty ended below its 200 Days EMA for the second consecutive day. Today, Nifty found support at its upward sloping trend line adjoining the lows of September 30, 2022, and February 1, 2023," Nandish Shah, VP and Senior Derivative and Technical Analyst, HDFC Securities, said.

JKTPO Organises GeM Onboarding Drive For ODOP-DEH Products



Observer News Service

JAMMU: As part of the ongoing GeM onboarding drive in UT of J&K, the Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organisation (JKTPO) organized an onboarding drive of products under District as exports hub (DEH) & one district one product (ODOP) of Doda & Kishtwar Districts on Government Marketplace (GeM) for potential exporters providing direct access to all the Government departments, FPOs/Manufactures/societies of districts/other relevant stakeholders participated in the onboarding drive organized by JKTPO in collaboration with ODOP Team, Invest India and District administrations, Doda and Kishtwar.

On the directions of Principal Secretary to Government, Industries and Commerce, Prashant Goyal, JKTPO is reaching out at grassroot level to promote local ODOP & DEH products and aware entrepreneurs/artisans regarding the benefits of selling products on the Gov-

ernment e-Marketplace.

The drives are planned to be held across the UT for onboarding of the ODOP & DEH products on GeM platform.

Lavender oil has been selected as one of the products under District as Export hub initiative from district Doda and has immense potential for exports. District Administration is working in full swing with Government and other export institutions to promote the Lavender oil. The drive was attended by the members /growers of 25 FPO from district of Doda and senior officers from agriculture and Floriculture department along with the representatives of JKTPO and Invest India.

Saffron of Kishtwar, selected as one of the products under District as Export hub. The onboarding drive in Kishtwar was attended by about 40 saffron producers/ FPO members along with officials from Invest India. Chief Agriculture officer Kishtwar and Saffron Development officer Kishtwar were also present on the occasion.

Salaries In India Likely To Increase By 10.3 Pc In 2023: Survey

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Salaries in India are expected to increase by 10.3 per cent in 2023, highest among major world economies and Asian peers, according to Aon plc.

In 2022, salaries in India witnessed an actual increase of 10.6 per cent in 2022.

As per Aon plc's 28th Annual Salary Increase Survey in India, double-digit salary growth will continue in India despite economic volatility, largely as a response to high attrition rates.

At 21.4 per cent, the attrition rate in India for 2022 remained high – a consequence of an ever-changing talent strategy and the ongoing gap between supply and demand of talent.

"With back-to-back double-digit increments, India Inc continues to be bullish on talent despite fears of global macro-economic uncertainty. "Organisations are in-



creasingly prioritizing their spends towards top performances, key talent and high potential talent," said Prithish Gandhi, Aon Director & India Practice Leader, Executive Compensation & Governance. The study, that analyzed data across 1,400 companies from more than 40 industries noted that India continues to have the highest salary increases in the region and among major world economies.

Among other economies, Brazil is also seeing a healthy increase of 7.2 per cent, Indonesia 6.7 per cent, China 6.3 per cent, Philippines 5.9 per cent, Malaysia 5.2 per cent

and Singapore 4.8 per cent.

According to the leading global professional services firm strong business growth has led to higher proportion of population being assessed in higher tiers of performance. "Increments of top-performances are approximately four-times the increment of bottom performances (in companies which have given increments to both categories). Interestingly, almost 8 in 10 companies give 0 increment to bottom performances," Gandhi said.

Globally connected industries, such as Technology Platform and Products, are somewhat cautious in their salary budgets while industries driven by domestic demand, such as Manufacturing or FMCG/FMCD, are bullish on their budget planning as compared to their five-year averages, said Roopank Chaudhary, partner, Human Capital Solutions, India at Aon.

Scandal-Hit Adani Group Invests Over USD 400 Million In Bankrupt Sri Lanka

AFP

COLOMBO: Cash-strapped Sri Lanka on Thursday announced its first major foreign investment since it declared bankruptcy, approving a \$442 million wind power project by India's scandal-hit Adani group.

Sri Lanka's Board of Investment said Adani Green Energy, part of the business empire of controversial Indian tycoon Gautam Adani, will set up two wind farms in the island's north.

The total investment will reach \$442 million and the two plants will be supplying power to the national grid "by 2025", the BOI said in a statement.

The project comes after Sri Lanka awarded Adani a \$700 million strategic port terminal project in Colombo in 2021. That concession was widely seen as a bid to address New Delhi's growing concern over China's expanding influence in the region -- Adani had been nominated as the contractor by the Indian government.



The firm is building a 1.4-kilometre, 20-metre deep jetty right next to a Chinese-operated terminal at Colombo harbour, the only deep-sea container port between Dubai and Singapore.

Energy minister Kanchana Wijesekera said he met with Adani officials in Colombo on Wednesday to finalise the wind farm project.

"We expect the power plants to be commissioned by December 2024," he said.

The development comes after a US investment firm last month accused Adani's companies of accounting fraud and price manipulation, triggering a rout that saw \$120 billion wiped off the group's market capitalisation.

Group Of 33 Farmers Flagged-Off On Inter-State Exposure Tour By Agri Deptt Kmr

Observer News Service

GANDERBAL: A group of 33 farmers from three different districts of Kashmir was Thursday flagged-off by Joint Director Agriculture (Inputs) Kashmir, Farooq Ahmad Bhat for an exposure cum training visit outside the UT of J&K from the Farmer Training Centre (FTC) Ganderbal.

The seven day exposure visit has been organised by the FTC Ganderbal under the Sub Mission on Agriculture Extension (SMAE) of centrally sponsored schemes, National Mission for Agriculture Extension Technology (NAET-ATMA).

Joint Director while interacting with the farmers on the occasion, said that the visit has been organised for making the farmers aware of the latest technologies for commercial agriculture. Real-time trends in organic farming and cultivation of different agricultural crops on scientific lines.

He impressed upon them to interact with the farm scientists,

experts, and extension functionaries to get acquainted with up to date methodologies in crop cultivation on scientific lines.

He also asked them to enhance their technical skills in the field of integrated farming and to adopt the advanced technologies for cultivation of different agricultural crops after learning from such training/exposure visits.

Farooq said that under the holistic document special attention has been given to the capacity building of farmers and to achieve this target a number of programs have been devised.

Giving details of the programme, Deputy Director Agriculture (Trainings) Kashmir, Idris Bashir Ahmad said that the group of 33 farmers (in 2nd phase) from Pulwama, Kulgam and Shopian will visit Punjab Agriculture University (PAU) Ludhiana Punjab, National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal, Haryana and Indian Institute of wheat and barley research Institute Karnal, Haryana.

Tens Of Millions Still Use Instagram In Iran Despite Crackdown: Meta



Agenceis

San Francisco: Meta on Thursday said that tens of millions of people in Iran are using Instagram despite government efforts to block the service due to months-long protests.

Iran has been rocked by citizen outrage since the September 16 death in custody of 22-year-old Mahsa Amini following her arrest for an alleged breach of dress rules for women.

"Instagram has been widely used by Iranians to shed light on the protests and the brutal response to them," Meta president of global affairs Nick Clegg said during a briefing.

"People have also shared Instagram footage of the protests with international media outlets, many of whom can't report directly from Iran."

Protests triggered by Amini's death resulted in authorities clamping down on speech and freedom of assembly, and limiting the use of the internet and apps such as Instagram, Clegg noted.

"Despite attempts to block Instagram, we're seeing tens of millions of people still finding ways to access it," Clegg said.

Tactics to access the

image-centric social network service include using virtual private network software that encrypts and conceals online activity, said Meta head of security policy Nathaniel Gleicher.

People in Iran are also using a "light" version of the Instagram app released in Iran last year that is designed for places where internet bandwidth is meager, Gleicher added.

Meta has also put policies in place to remove posts that "outs" activists, journalists.

"It's an unfortunate reality that when a government wants to prevent its citizens from having access to public debate, they have a lot of tools in place that they can use to do that," Gleicher said during the briefing.

"But, we are seeing the Iranian efforts not be as effective as I'm sure they would like."

Since Amini's death, hashtags related to protests in Iran have been used on Instagram more than 160 million times, according to Meta.

Iran imposed sanctions this week on 36 individuals and entities from the European Union and Britain in reaction to similar measures against Tehran over its response to the protests.

Ex-Mastercard CEO Ajay Banga Nominated By US President To Lead World Bank

Agenceis

Washington: US President Joe Biden said Thursday that Washington is nominating former Mastercard Chief Executive Ajay Banga to lead the World Bank, after its current chief David Malpass announced plans to step down early.

The development lender has just started accepting candidate nominations in a process set to run until March 29, with the bank saying that women candidates would be "strongly" encouraged.

The president of the World Bank is typically American, while the leader of the International Monetary Fund is customarily European.

Banga, 63, is Indian-American and currently serving as vice chairman at equity firm General Atlantic.

He was previously chief executive at Mastercard.

Banga has "critical experience mobilizing public-private resources to tackle the most urgent challenges of our time, including climate change," said Biden in a statement.

Last week current World Bank President Malpass -- who was nominated to the post by Biden's predecessor Donald Trump in 2019 -- said he would step down nearly a year early, ending a tenure that was clouded by questions over his climate stance.

His term would originally have ended in 2024.

Banga's nomination comes amid a push for development lenders to revamp and address global problems like environmental issues more effectively. US Treasury Secretary Janet



Yellen earlier said that lenders' core models, where countries borrow to make specific investments addressing developmental constraints, is "insufficient to meet the moment."

The United States is the World Bank's largest shareholder.

Green transition -

Speaking to reporters, a senior US administration official said: "At Mastercard and General Atlantic, Ajay has made combating climate change and mobilizing private capital to help power the green transition a priority."

"These are experiences and priorities that will guide and drive his work in the years ahead at the World Bank," the official said.

In a separate statement, Yellen said Thursday that she applauded Biden's decision.

Banga "has the right leadership and management skills, experience living and working in emerging markets, and financial expertise to lead the World Bank at a critical moment in its history," Yellen said.

She added that his record of forging partnerships between the public sector, private sector and non-profits will serve him in helping to "mobilize the private capital and press for the reforms needed to meet our shared ambitions."

Asked about the World Bank's encouragement for women candidates, a US official told reporters that Banga -- who was born, raised and spent an early part of his career in emerging market India -- had a "personal conviction and excellent track record" in promoting diversity in his work.

Deep Earthquakes Could Reveal Secrets Of The Earth's Mantle

Agenceis

The finding was made by measuring the lingering movement registered by GPS sensors on islands in the wake of a deep earthquake in the Pacific Ocean near Fiji. Published Feb. 22 in Nature, the study demonstrates a new method to measure the fluidity of the Earth's mantle.

"Even though the mantle makes up the largest part of Earth, there's still a lot we don't know about it," said Sunyoung Park, a geophysicist with the University of Chicago and the lead author on the study. "We think there's a lot more we can learn by using these deep earthquakes as a way to probe these questions."

We still know surprisingly little about the Earth beneath our feet. The furthest anyone has managed to dig down is about seven and a half miles before the increasing heat literally melts the drill. Thus scientists have had to use clues like how seismic waves move to infer the different layers that make up the planet, including the crust, mantle, and core.

One thing that has stymied scientists is a precise measurement of how viscous the mantle layer is. The mantle is the layer below the crust. It's made of rock, but at the intense temperature and pressures at that depth, the rock actually becomes viscous -- flowing very slowly like honey or tar.

"We want to know exactly how fast the mantle flows, because that influences the evolution of the entire Earth -- it affects how much heat the planet retains for how long, and how the Earth's materials are cycled over

time," explained Park. "But our current understanding is very limited and includes a lot of assumptions."

Park thought there might be a unique way to get a measurement of the mantle's properties by studying the aftermath of very deep earthquakes.

Most of the earthquakes we hear about on the news are relatively shallow, originating in the top crust of the Earth. But occasionally, there are earthquakes that originate deep within the Earth -- down to 450 miles below the surface. These earthquakes are not as well-studied as shallower ones, because they're not as destructive to human settlements. But because they reach down into the mantle, Park thought they might offer a way to understand the behavior of the mantle.

Park and her colleagues looked at one particular such earthquake, which occurred off the coast of Fiji in 2018. The quake was magnitude 8.2, but it was so deep -- 350 miles down -- that it did not cause any major damage or deaths.

However, when the scientists carefully analyzed the data from GPS sensors on several nearby islands, they found the Earth kept moving -- after the earthquake was over.

The data revealed that in the months following the quake, the Earth was still moving, settling in the wake of the disturbance. Even years later, Tonga is still moving slowly down at a rate of about 1 centimeter per year.

"You can think of it like a jar of honey that slowly comes back to level after you dip a spoon in it -- except this takes years instead of minutes," said Park.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

No Property Tax

Besides the property tax is to be assessed and paid on annual basis.

Elucidating further the Commissioner, Jammu Municipal Corporation, Rahul Yadav informed that the tax is progressive in nature with low tax on smaller assets and is linked to circle rates -- lower the circle rate, lower is the tax liability of the owner. The tax also takes into account factors like age of the property, usage type and construction type etc to arrive on TAV for realistic capturing of value of property.

Cases illustrating such as property tax to be levied on a 35 year old residential house with built up area of 4500 Sft in Gandhi Nagar is assessed to be Rs.5758 for one year. Similarly, a 25 year old residential house in Sarwal with built up area of 2000 Sft will have to pay only Rs1063 as property tax. A 5 year old residential house with built up area of 3500 Sft in Chennai area would be assessed to Rs5374 property tax for one year. Small shops shall have to pay very small amounts with the example of a small shop in the old city area of Jammu with area of about 200 Sft which is only 0-20 years old would be liable to pay tax of only Rs 838 per annum.

In this regard Dr Mehta directed the DCs to create awareness in their areas by giving such real examples of calculation of the tax for different properties in their ULBs of the district. He observed that the misinformation created among people should be addressed by taking them along. He asked them to involve the elected representatives and civil society members in dissemination of the information and actual objectives of imposing this tax here.

On the occasion the Chief Secretary also impressed upon the officers to create awareness among the public for removing misconceptions. He told them to create a helpline for the masses which would disseminate the correct information about this matter. He urged them to come up with a simple 'Property Tax calculator' for people so that they themselves are able to assess the actual amount they are liable to pay.

It was also mentioned that the economy of J&K has been doing well and the unemployment rate as per GoI data has shown a healthier trend. The per capita income of people of J&K is amongst better States/UTs.

Dr. Mehta emphasised on the fact that people should be made aware that it is not permitted to direct ULB resources for any other purposes. The property tax paid by people shall be used in their own areas. The accumulations of the tax money will be collected by the ULBs, retained by them and used for their development needs exclusively. The tax to be collected from the people shall be spent only for their betterment, improving their quality of life.

Regarding its implications it was said that the Property Tax is to be levied annually and can be paid in two equal installments. Further, 10% rebate can be availed by early payment of the Property Tax.

The payment of property tax shall also facilitate common people in availing various facilities and services through their concerned local bodies with the expenditure of funds collected by levying this tax.

Put Property Tax

occupants of state land.

Speaking to reporters in Anantnag district of south Kashmir, Azad said the economic situation in J-K over the last 35 years has become "bad" because of militancy.

"Our unemployment, inflation has increased manifold. Our tourism, handicraft, horticulture, has suffered a great deal and the people of J-K, including businessmen, transporters, shopkeepers, have suffered losses.

"There is no person from Lakhanpur to Tangdhar who has not suffered losses. So, in such a situation, when we are taking land from them, increasing electricity charges, we are not in a position to pay property tax," he said.

The former J&K chief minister said in the last four years, since Article 370 was abrogated and J-K changed to a UT in 2019, and also due to the Covid outbreak, the backs of people have been broken.

"Ration supply has decreased from 35 kgs to five kgs. So, the people have not got any respite. They do not have any income, so how will they pay tax? Our people do not have any problem paying tax, but first, there should be income. We know tax will benefit us, but, people should have that power to pay tax first, that money first.

"Right now, they do not have money to sustain themselves, where will they pay tax? So, I will appeal to the government to hold it for four-five years till our economic situation gets better," he said.

"Let our tourism run smoothly for five-six years, our horticulture produce go to the market, our handicraft be exported, then perhaps we will be in a position to pay tax," Azad added.

He said the government should have sympathy with the people and not form policies while sitting in offices, but by having discussions with the people.

The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Tuesday issued a notification for imposition of property tax in the union territory which will come into effect from the next financial year.

On the anti-encroachment drive to retrieve state land, Azad said the drive should be stopped. He also asserted that his government will re-implement the Roshni Scheme.

"It (anti-encroachment drive) should be stopped. If I form the government, then we will implement the Roshni scheme once again," he said.

The Roshni Act, officially known as Jammu and Kashmir State Land (Vesting of Ownership to Occupants) Act, 2001, was enacted during the regime of the then CM Farooq Abdullah. The law granted ownership of encroached land to encroachers to raise funds for different power projects of the government.

However, the law was implemented with few modifications in the tenure of Azad as chief minister from 2005-2008.

In 2014, the Comptroller and Auditor General's (CAG) report pointed out that many political persons from different parties had been benefited under the Act.

In November 2018, then governor Satya Pal Malik repealed the Act. On October 9, 2020, the High Court of J-K and Ladakh declared the Act "illegal, unconstitutional and unsustainable", and ordered a CBI probe.

Later, the government decided to retrieve such land.

Asked about Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge's comment that the Congress will lead a coalition government in 2024, Azad said, "Let us see it when 2024 comes".

Jammu Lawyers decision, Bar members said.

They strongly condemned the imposition of property tax, saying the people of J and K are already reeling under financial distress owing to the "wrong policies" of the administration.

The LG administration is making repeated assaults on the people of J-K, they said, appealing it to immediately withdraw the decision.

Admin Expects

the first time in J&K," Principal Secretary, Housing and Urban development department, H Rajesh Prasad, told reporters here.

He said that the step is for making municipal corporations and other bodies financially self-reliant. "It is a step for the benefit of the people."

"Better municipal services are expected to attract more investment and encourage more people to set up business in J&K. Revenue from property taxes will be used to improve infrastructure, build new parks, playgrounds, and maintain existing facilities," he said.

Since property tax is to be levied annually and can be paid in two equal instalments "it will not be a burden for the people" he said.

Prasad said municipal bodies have generated revenue of Rs 115 crore against operational expenditure of Rs 850 crore, which goes towards paying salaries and maintenance expenses.

He termed property tax one of the "essential pillars" of municipal financing world over.

"Tax rates in UT of J&K are notified in such a way that tax implications are progressive in nature with minimum implication to small businesses and Households," Prasad said, adding it is for the first time the Union Territory is introducing this tax and at a lower rate than its neighbours.

As it happens, Jammu and Kashmir is one of the last states or UT in India to levy a property tax, he said.

"Property Tax is linked with stamp duty tax of the area. So property valuation of different areas is captured differently with property in the old city area, or Sarwal, will be subject to lower property tax compared to upscale areas like Gandhi Nagar.

"Further, weightage to age of property, use type and construction type etc is used to arrive on Annual Taxable Value in a more comprehensive manner," Prasad said.

He said that under the new tax formula, residential houses with an area of up to 1,000 sqft will be exempt from property tax, while residential property with built up area of up to 1,500 square feet too will be given concession in relief for LIG and MIG category houses.

DSEK Orders

"You are requested to instruct the school heads of your district to complete the process of examinations up-to March-20 2023 so that the classwork of new classes can be started immediately," DSEK said.

Pertinently the modus operandi of the examinations has already been communicated to CEOs and DIETs by SCERT J&K.

As already reported, the Term End exams for

Classes 1st to 7th and 9th in district Srinagar will be held from the second week of March as per the old pattern.

Officials further said that the date sheet and the assessment of these classes would be done by the respective authorities of the school.

District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) Principal Srinagar, Tahira Hilali said, "This year the exams would be held as per the old pattern and from next session, we will conduct the exams as per the New Education Policy (NEP)."

"The examination shall be conducted at school level as per past practice," the DIET principal said--(KNO)

'Make 6 Years

"The ministry has directed state governments and UT administrations to align their age to admission with the policy and provide admission to class 1 at the age of six years and above," the official added.

The Supreme Court had last year observed that children should not be sent to schools at a very young age keeping in mind their psychological and mental health.

The MoE officials said the most important factor at the foundational stage is the availability of qualified teachers who are especially trained in the age and developmentally-appropriate curriculum and pedagogy.

The ministry has also advised states to initiate the process of designing and running a two-year diploma in preschool education (DPSE) course in their respective jurisdiction.

"The course is expected to be designed by the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) and run or implemented through District Institute of Education and Training (DIETs) under supervision and hold of SCERTs," he said.

How Indian

Russia took everyone by surprise. Jiji along with several hundred students took an excruciating journey from Sumy to western borders after the war broke out in Ukraine.

The students were evacuated to India through 'Operation Ganga' conducted by the Indian government.

More than 17,000 Indians, mostly students, were evacuated from the war-hit Ukraine under the mission.

Several Indian medical students were left with no choice after their evacuation from Ukraine and have taken transfers to universities in other countries to continue their studies. Many have gone to Russia, Serbia, Uzbekistan, and other European countries.

"The period after coming to India was very uncertain. We thought the war would end soon and we will be able to return. However, months passed and our student coordinator was also not giving straight answers," said Jiji.

Students have taken transfers to other universities through the academic mobility programme.

Last year in September, the Ministry of External Affairs and the National Medical Council (NMC) issued a notice through which the NMC would accept completion of their remaining courses in other countries (with the approval of the parent university/institution in Ukraine).

Jiji would complete her study in July 2023. "There are around 150 students in Russia that I

know who are from Ukraine. We took a transfer. We came in October when there was no hope left," she said.

A few of her acquaintances have also gone back to Ukraine but she believes hers was the best decision to come to Russia.

"Financially and credibility-wise also, I feel this was the best option. Students who have gone back to Ukraine are still struggling as they are facing several kinds of issues like water shortage and power cuts," Jiji said.

Asked whether she feels safe in Russia, she replied in affirmation.

Several Russian universities have welcomed Indian students from Ukrainian medical universities.

They put hoardings and banners welcoming them. They also posted photos of Indian students on their official Instagram pages.

One of the posts read: "150 Indian students from Ukrainian medical universities took transfers in Northern State Medical University."

R B Gupta, president of the Parent's Association of Ukraine MBBS Students (PAUMS), claimed that around 2,500 students have gone back to Ukraine, and nearly 4,000 have taken transfers to other countries including Serbia, Russia and Uzbekistan.

"Those who have taken transfer are mostly fifth and sixth-year students as practicals are necessary. Around 3,000 students are still in India and taking online classes. While around 500 have changed streams also," he claimed.

Gupta, who for the last one year has been spearheading the campaign demanding one-time accommodation of evacuated students in MBBS colleges in India, said he has no hope that any help would come from the government side.

Gupta said his son, who is in his third year of MBBS, has taken transfer to a Serbian university after waiting for several months.

Ameen, 23, is in the last year of his MBBS and has taken transfer to a university in Uzbekistan.

Reflecting on the last year, Ameen, who goes by his first name, said: "It was hectic in terms of mental pressure regarding our studies. Mostly because we were uncertain about our online degree from Ukraine." Ameen came to Tashkent on December 10 to resume his study. He is pretty content with his decision to transfer.

"I decided to study in Uzbekistan because of the academic mobility programme. At the time, that was the only safe option according to NMC guidelines for Ukraine returnee students," he said.

Asked whether the transfer programme was heavy on his family's pocket, he said: "We had to pay extra fees for the continuation of the mobility programme but the university fee hasn't changed that much."

"Mobility is actually a choice. We can either go to Ukraine, study online or choose mobility. We have to pay 1,500 dollars extra for this. But you can be sure that you are getting enough practical classes," he added.

Among those who are still in India taking online classes is Kanishk, a second-year student. He is still uncertain whether to opt for transfer or go back to Ukraine.

"I am not sure. Right now I am taking online classes. We had a pretty rough year. Nobody is helping us. We are somehow managing through online classes. You can't learn to treat people through online classes," he pointed out.

Russia's Sports Exile Persists 1 Year After Invading Ukraine

Agencies

KYIV: One year after the invasion of Ukraine began, Russia's reintegration into the world of sports threatens to create the biggest rift in the Olympic movement since the Cold War. Russia remains excluded from many international sporting events, but that could soon change. Next year's Paris Olympics are fast approaching and qualifying events are under way. The International Olympic Committee is working to bring athletes from Russia and ally Belarus back into competition, but not everyone agrees.

If Russian athletes are to return to competition, the sports world must resolve two key issues that became clear in the days after the invasion: How can Russian athletes return without alienating Ukrainians? And what can be done about the Russians who support the war?

As the first battles raged, the Ukrainian fencing team refused to compete against Russia at a tournament in Egypt, holding up a sign reading: "Stop Russia! Stop the war! Save Ukraine! Save Europe!"

A year later, one of the biggest obstacles to a Russian return to sports is Ukraine's insistence it could boycott rather than risk handing its enemy a propaganda success or further traumatising Ukrainian athletes affected by the

war. Other European countries have also spoken of boycotting the Olympics if Russians are allowed to participate.

The last major Olympic boycotts came four decades ago when the United States and more than 60 allies skipped the 1980 Moscow Games. The Soviet Union and its allies retaliated by boycotting the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics.

The actions of specific athletes are a separate issue. Russian gymnast Ivan Kuliak taped a "Z" symbol to his chest, mimicking a marking used on the country's military vehicles, while standing on the podium next to the Ukrainian winner at an event in Qatar last March. He was banned for a year.

The IOC now says it will not support the return of any Russian athlete who has "acted against the peace mission of the IOC by actively supporting the war in Ukraine," but hasn't defined what that means in practice.

Sports organisations took swift action last year in response to the Russian invasion. A day after tanks rolled into Ukraine, Russia was stripped of the right to host the Champions League final in men's soccer and the Russian Grand Prix in Formula One. After four days, the IOC recommended excluding Russian and Belarusian athletes from events "to protect the integrity of global sports competitions and for the safety



of all the participants."

The Russian men's national soccer team was in the World Cup playoffs at the time, hoping to qualify for last year's tournament in Qatar, but Poland refused to play them. Russia was then excluded from the competition — four years after hosting the 2018 tournament and reaching the quarterfinals.

As the Paris Olympics come into view, the IOC has shifted its emphasis to what it says is its duty to avoid discriminating against anyone based on nationality, and to create a

path for Russians and Belarusians to compete as neutral athletes without national symbols. Safety concerns might be avoided, the IOC says, if Russia and Belarus were to compete in events in Asia, including Olympic qualifiers at the Asian Games in China.

The IOC points to tennis, where the men's and women's professional tours have allowed individual Russians and Belarusians to compete without national symbols. Belarusian player Aryna Sabalenka won the Australian Open last month.

Even in tennis, though, Russia and Belarus are excluded from national team competitions like the Davis Cup and Billie Jean King Cup, and they were also barred from playing in last year's Wimbledon tournament.

Russia and its athletes have been at risk of being banned at each Olympics since the steroid-tainted 2014 Sochi Winter Games. Previously, it was because of Russian state-backed doping and then the country's attempt to cover up evidence of that scandal.

Ukraine is fiercely opposed

to allowing Russians back into world sports, and especially next year's Olympics. Ukraine says more than 220 of its athletes have been killed in the war, and hundreds of sports facilities lie in ruins. It points to precedents like the exclusion of Germany and Japan from the 1948 Olympics following World War II.

"If, God forbid, the Olympic principles are destroyed and Russian athletes are allowed to participate in any competitions or the Olympic Games, it's just a matter of time before the terrorist state forces them to play along with the war propaganda," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy told a summit of sports ministers and officials from more than 30 countries this month.

That summit produced a joint declaration full of skepticism for how the IOC's proposed neutral process could work, with particular concern about whether the many Russian athletes with ties to the military could compete. The IOC said on Tuesday it found those questions "constructive" but that the nations did not address its concerns about possible discrimination.

The clock is ticking for the IOC to find a solution for Russian and Belarusian athletes to have the opportunity to qualify for the Olympics. Qualifying has already begun in many sports and will start soon in

others.

While Russians have been largely excluded over the last year, Ukraine's athletes have had some notable successes on the world stage. Oleksandr Usyk, who took up arms in defense of Ukraine shortly after the invasion, returned to boxing and defended his heavy-weight title against Anthony Joshua in August. High jumper Yaroslava Mahuchikh won a world championship silver medal in Oregon and Maryna Bekh-Romanchuk won the European triple jump title.

The Ukrainian men's soccer league resumed in August — with some games interrupted by air-raid warnings — and Shakhtar Donetsk held its own in the group stage of the Champions League with a win over German club Leipzig and a draw against Spanish powerhouse Real Madrid.

In a statement on Wednesday marking the one-year anniversary of the invasion, the IOC didn't mention its efforts to reintegrate Russia and Belarus, but said the Olympics could promote "peaceful competition" between athletes from the likes of North and South Korea, or Israel and Palestine.

"Peace-building efforts need dialogue," the IOC said. "A competition with athletes who respect the Olympic Charter can serve as a catalyst for dialogue, which is always a first step to achieving peace." (AP)

Srinagar's First 24/7 Snooker Club Opens In Nowshera



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A first of its kind snooker club, Infinity Club and Café, was thrown open to the public in an inauguration ceremony on Thursday.

The ceremony saw Tanvir Sadiq, Chief Spokesperson National Conference, inaugurate the Infinity Club and Café in presence of a host of dignitaries, including prominent Radio Jockeys, social activists and prominent citizens.

Located at the Mill Stop area of Nowshera, the club remains open round the clock and offers unparalleled service to its customers. Matching all the international standards, the club is equipped with three snooker tables manufactured by international brands. It also has a foosball, carrom board, ludo and other games to keep the players engaged in case all the snooker tables are booked. Besides it, the club also offers massage service to the visitors on nominal charges.

As for the café, Infinity offers a range of hot and cold beverages, including a variety of mocktails. A range of mouthwatering

fresh pizzas by Infinity is another attraction at the club.

"The infinity club and café aims to serve its customers round the clock. We want to offer unblocked, unhindered access to our customers according to their choice and taste," Abrar Ali, the founder said.

"In winters when everything comes to a freeze, Infinity should serve as a warm and cozy place for our youngsters. We don't want snow to bury their sporting spirit," he added.

The club has also reserved a space for majlis sitting for more relaxing experience to enjoy the overall atmosphere of the club.

The sports lovers too have welcomed Abrar's new venture and termed it a comfy-zone for the youth.

"The youth of Kashmir are stressed due to multiple reasons. And indoor spaces like snooker clubs serve as a meeting ground for youth to listen to each-other, share ideas of life," Mir Mohsin, a sports lover said.

"I have gone to dozens of snooker clubs in Srinagar but Infinity is altogether different. The interiors of the club, the ambience are just amazing," he added.

Senior Asian Wrestling Meet Moved Out Of India

Press Trust of India

NEW DELHI: In a big setback to the efforts done by the oversight committee formed to run day-to-day affairs of Wrestling Federation of India (WFI), the United World Wrestling has shifted the Senior Asian Wrestling Championships from New Delhi to Astana, Kazakhstan.

The tournament was slated to be held in India from March 28. However, now it will be held from April 7 to 15.

The UWW took this extreme step after taking cognizance of the pending sexual harassment and financial irregularity com-

plaint filed against WFI president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh.

"The United World Wrestling has moved the Asian Championships to Astana, Kazakhstan. The tournament, originally scheduled to be held in New Delhi, India from March 28 to April 2, will now take place in the Kazakhstan capital between April 7-15 with final dates to be confirmed," the UWW said in a statement on Thursday.

"UWW was forced to change the host of the continental championships due to the recent developments in Indian wrestling and a pending inquiry by the Indian sports ministry against the Wrestling Federation of India," the statement further said.



Stokes Won't Mind Sacrificing IPL Final For England Duty

Press Trust of India

WELLINGTON: World's premier all-rounder Ben Stokes won't allow Indian Premier League (IPL) come in the way of national duty, saying he would prefer to fly back and lead England against Ireland in the build-up Test ahead of the high-stakes Ashes series even if his franchise misses the final.

Stokes had missed the last edition of the world's most popular T20 tournament but is set to wear the yellow Chennai Super Kings (CSK) jersey this season, starting March 31.

The IPL final is slated for May 31 while England take on Ireland in the one-off warm-up Test from June 1. CSK play their first game of the season against Lucknow Supergiants on April 3.

"Yes, I'll play," Stokes said when asked if he would play for England even if CSK qualify for the title clash.

"I'll be making sure that I give myself enough time to get back and play that game (against Ireland)."

There has been a debate in international cricket whether players are preferring private



leagues over national duty.

Stokes said he can't say about the choice of his England colleagues. Joe Root, Jonny Bairstow, Jofra Archer, Mark Wood and Harry Brook all have IPL contracts.

"I think it's a little bit too far ahead to say for others, but one thing I've got to look at is we've got the Ashes after the Ireland Test, so I'll probably get round the individuals and ask them what they want to be ready for the Ashes," Stokes said.

"Those five games are obviously the big ones of the sum-

mer and you've got to think about what lads want, but you also have to think about if something was to happen in that game and we lose someone for the Ashes.

"It's just one of those where you have to weigh up the options of what the individual person actually wants out of that week versus do we really need to play that one? Because I'm obviously right in saying that series is bigger than that game against Ireland."

The five-match Ashes will begin on June 16 in Birmingham.

Women's T20 WC: India Falter As Australia Reach 7th Straight Final

Press Trust of India

CAPE TOWN: India wilted under the pressure of a knock-out game yet again after skipper Harmanpreet Kaur's freak run out as defending champions Australia entered their seventh successive Women's T20 World Cup final with a five-run win here on Thursday.

India's shoddy fielding and catching allowed Australia to post a challenging 172 for four after Meg Lanning opted to bat in the semifinal.

At 28 for three, India were down and out but Harmanpreet (52 off 34) and Jemimah Rodrigues (43 off 24) produced a counter-attacking 69-run stand off just 41 balls to bring the team back in the game.

India needed a very gettable 39 off last 30 balls with five wickets in hand but as it has been the case in the past, the team came up short to finish at 167 for eight.

India had lost to five-time champions Australia in the previous World Cup final and more recently in the CWG final



last year.

Another loss in a knock out game extended India's long wait for a world title.

At 28 for three, India were down and out but Harmanpreet (52 off 34) and Jemimah Rodrigues (43 off 24) produced a counter-attacking 69-run stand off just 41 balls to bring the team back in the game.

Harmanpreet, who was a doubtful starter for the do-or-die game due to high fever, got going with a crisp six over long on off Jess Jonassen.

Rodrigues looked in sublime touch from the get go, dispatching Ashleigh Gardner for consecutive fours off her first two balls. Her inside out lofted drives over extra cover off the spinners were the highlight of her innings.

At 93 for three in 10 overs, India were very much on course for a famous win. Jemimah and Harmanpreet's ominous stand ended when the former tried to guide a slow bouncer Darcie Brown but ended up edging it to the wicketkeeper.

Yorkshire Confirm Data Related To Racism 'Irretrievably Deleted'



Press Trust of India

LONDON: The Yorkshire County Cricket Club has confirmed that documents related to allegations of racism and its responses to those charges had been "irretrievably deleted", which could be prejudicial to the interest of the game in the country.

Pakistan-born cricketer Azeem Rafiq, who played for Yorkshire for more than 10 years, had claimed that racism at the club had left him on the brink of suicide. He later deposed before the Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee (DCMS) in the UK, detailing his ordeal when he was at the club and how institutional racism was rampant there.

Yorkshire removed a majority of its coaching and management staff in the aftermath of the allegations and Lord Kamlesh Patel took over as chairman of the country side and brought about a number of significant changes to counter racism.

"It has been reported in a

number of news outlets that, in relation to the Cricket Discipline Commission (CDC) inquiry, the Club has admitted a charge of deletion of data and documents," read a statement issued by Yorkshire on Thursday following an uproar in the media over the deleted files.

"After 5 November 2021, it was discovered that emails and documents, both held electronically by the club and in paper copy, had been irretrievably deleted from both servers and laptops and otherwise destroyed.

"The CDC proceedings are ongoing and, as such, we are limited as to what we can say at this time. After a thorough independent investigation it was established that the deletion and destruction of documents date from a time period prior to the appointment of Lord Patel and relate to the allegations of racism and the club's response to those allegations."

Yorkshire added that it was not certain why and how the deletion happened and who was responsible for the act.

Saudi Enters Female Team At ITF Event For 1st Time

Press Trust of India

COLOMBO: Saudi Arabia is entering a female team for the first time at an International Tennis Federation tournament — this week's Asia/Oceania pre-qualifying event for the Billie Jean King Cup Juniors in Sri Lanka.

Saudi Arabia and Brunei are making their Billie Jean King Cup Juniors debuts in the tournament this week, for players 16 years and under, that will determine which teams qualify for the main junior event to be decided later this year.

"This is an amazing experience, and it is so empowering," Areej Farah, captain of the four-player Saudi team, said in an interview for the ITF's website.

"Taking part in this event is a big step for women's tennis in



Saudi and we are all very proud to represent our country and do our best."

Saudi Arabian player Dania Alzuhair said her team's appearance is "groundbreaking."

"Saudi Arabia has a goal of expanding the number of women in sports, and being a part of that just makes us feel so lucky," Alzuhair said.

The United States won the Billie Jean Cup Juniors title for the seventh time last November in the final of the 16-team finals tournament at Antalya, Turkey, beating defending champions Czech Republic.



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