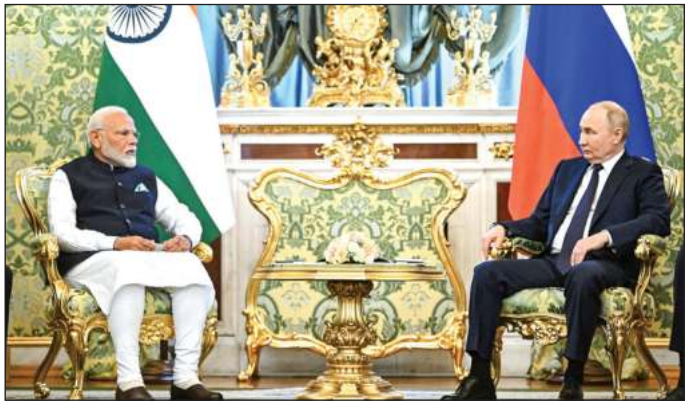


Russia India's 'All-weather Friend': PM

Modi In Moscow, Lauds Putin, Calls For Confluence Over Influence



Press Trust Of India

Moscow: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday made a wholehearted endorsement of India's ties with Russia, describing the old ally as India's "all-weather friend" and lauding President Vladimir Putin for strengthening the bilateral relations over the past two decades of his leadership.

Addressing the Indian diaspora, he said the India-Russia relationship is built on the strong pillar of mutual trust and respect, asserting that their ties were tested time and again only to emerge stronger every time. Modi's high praise of Russia as an ally and Putin's leadership came amid ongoing efforts by the Western world to isolate the Russian leader over the war in Ukraine.

Prime Minister Modi also made a veiled criticism of the "influence-oriented global order" which endured for decades.

"But, what the world needs right now is confluence not influence and no one can deliver this message better than India which has a strong tradition of worshipping confluences," he said.

He said India is being seen as a strong pillar in the "emerging multipolar world order".

"When it speaks of peace, dialogue and diplomacy, then the whole world listens." Modi has often stressed the need for dialogue and diplomacy to end the war between Russia and Ukraine. Commenting on India's ties with Russia, he said he has been for decades an admirer of the unique partnership between the two countries.

"On hearing the word Russia, the first word that comes to the mind of every Indian is India's 'sukh-dukh ka saathi' (all-weather friend) and a trusted ally," he said.

"No matter how low the temperature dips below zero degrees during | More on P10

'Won't Go Unavenged': GOI After Kathua Ambush Kills 5



KO Web Desk

New Delhi: The killing of five Army personnel in a terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district will not go unavenged and India will defeat the evil forces behind it, Defence Secretary Giridhar Aramane said on Tuesday.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh expressed deep anguish over the killing of the soldiers and asserted that the armed forces are determined to usher in peace in the region.

Five Army personnel were killed and as many injured on Monday when a group of

heavily-armed terrorists ambushed a patrolling party in Badnota area in Kathua.

A massive search operation has already been launched to hunt down terrorists responsible for the attack.

"I am deeply anguished at the loss of five of our brave Indian Army Soldiers in a terrorist attack in Badnota, Kathua (J&K)," the defence minister said on X.

"My deepest condolences to the bereaved families, the Nation stands firm with them in this difficult time. The Counter Terrorist operations are underway, and our soldiers are | More on P10

Blood On Mountains Speaks Of Violence

Press Trust Of India

Srinagar: Bloodstains on the road and helmets, bullet shells, vehicles with shattered windscreens and flattened tyres... A day after terrorists ambushed an Army patrol, a wooded mountain road on Tuesday told the story of fierce resistance by troops and a gunbattle that carried on for several hours.

On Monday, five Army personnel were killed and five injured when heavily armed terrorists hurled a grenade and opened indiscriminate fire on two army vehicles around 3.30 pm on the Machedi-Kindli-Malhar mountainous road near Badnota village, about 150 km from the district headquarters Kathua.

It was the fifth

terror attack in Jammu in a month, an escalation in the relatively peaceful region compared to Kashmir Valley officials attributed to attempts by Pakistani handlers to reignite terrorism.

Recapping what had happened, officials said the soldiers displayed courage and resilience despite facing casualties and engaged them for several hours.

The terrorists, believed to be a group of three, are likely to have taken cover of the thick foliage on a hill to surprise the troops who retaliated immediately, responding with gunfire and fighting back till the terrorists disappeared into the dense woods, they said.

The search for the terrorists, which was suspended late | More on P10

KASHMIR SIZZLES AGAIN Rain Likely In Coming Days

Observer News Service

Srinagar: While there was a slight respite from the heat wave in Jammu and Kashmir, the parts of the Valley recorded a bit rise in the mercury on Tuesday with Srinagar, the summer capital of the Union Territory recording a maximum temperature of 34.2 degree Celsius.

As per the details, besides Srinagar, all the other stations too have recorded a slight rise in the maximum temperature today. Qazigund, a gateway of Kashmir, has recorded a maximum temperature of 32.0 degree Celsius while Pahalgam, a famous tourist destination has recorded a maximum temperature of 28.1 degree Celsius.

In Kupwara, the mercury settled at 34.2 degree Celsius while Kokernag recorded 31.0 degree Celsius. Gulmarg, a famous ski-resort, recorded a maximum temperature of 24.0 degree Celsius.

In the Jammu division, the mercury continued to settle around the normal temperatures with Jammu, the winter capital of the Union Territory, recording a maximum temperature of 35.5 degree Celsius.

Banihal recorded 33.0 degree Celsius while Batote, Katra and Bhandarwah recorded a maximum temperature of 28.3 degree Celsius, 32.2 degree Celsius and 35.2 degree Celsius respectively. Moreover, | More on P10

INDIA'S DEVELOPMENT OF THE PAST 10 YEARS was just a trailer, we will see much faster growth in the next 10 years."

Assembly Polls: BJP Considers Strategic Alliances

Agencies

Srinagar: Ahead of the highly anticipated assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) is considering strategic alliances and support for independent candidates to secure a majority and form the government in the erstwhile state.

Speaking to the media on Tuesday, BJP state President Ravinder Raina, stated that the party plans to contest the elections independently but is open to collaborating with like-minded parties and supporting certain independent candidates. This approach aims to consolidate the BJP's vote bank and ensure victory in key constituencies.

"There are some constituencies and areas where independents and like-minded people will be supported by the BJP so that the BJP's vote bank could be utilized for ensuring the victory of that candidate. We want the BJP along with the like-minded candidates to win and we cross the 50 seat mark to form the government," Raina said.

Raina emphasized that the BJP's primary goal is to achieve a majority in the assembly by surpassing the 50-seat threshold. He said that party's election strategies will be tailored to maximize its chances of success, potentially leading to collaborations with independent candidates and like-minded political entities. (KNO) | More on P10

India-Pakistan Thaw Farming Resumes After 12 Yrs Near Zero Line



Agencies

Srinagar: For the first time in 12 years, farming has resumed near the zero line on the India-Pakistan international border in Samba.

Years of fear stemming from frequent firing from Pakistan had forced farmers to abandon their fields along the border. As a result, 800 kanals of fertile land became barren. | More on P10

Families Mourn Their Dead

Rifleman Adarsh Negi spoke to his father over the phone on Sunday. The next day, Dalbir Singh Negi got another call, informing him | More on P10

NIA To Assist JKP In Probe

The National Investigation Agency will assist the Jammu and Kashmir police in its probe into a terrorist attack on an Army convoy in Kathua that left five | More on P10

J&K Medical SRs, Students To Get Weekly Offs, Leave Benefits

Female SRs/PGs Allowed 6 Months Maternity Leave

Observer News Service

Srinagar: In a progressive move aimed at enhancing the well being as well as work-life balance of Senior Residents (SRs)/Tutors and Postgraduate (PG) students, the Health and Medical Education (H&ME) department has ordered one-day weekly-off and 20 days of Casual leaves, including five academic leaves per year for all Senior Residents/Tutors and Postgraduate Students executing their assignments in Government Medical Colleges of J&K.

This significant step has been taken in compliance to National Medical Commission (NMC) and National Board of Education (NBE) norms.

As per the order, for Senior Residents/Tutors, there shall be weekly one-day off (subject to exigencies of work). "In addition, a Senior Resident/ Tutor shall be eligible for Twenty (20) days' Casual Leave. Five (05) days' Academic Leave per year shall be admissible subject to the relevance of the programme to the course" the



order reads. It adds that Female Senior Residents/Tutors shall be allowed Maternity Leave, MTP/Abortion Leave as per existing Government rules and regulations besides male Senior Residents/Tutors shall be allowed Paternity Leave as per existing Government rules and regulations. It further adds that the tenure/course will be extended by the same number of days for which Maternity/Paternity Leave has been availed. Similarly, the order reads that for Post-graduate students in Medical Education, there shall be weekly one-day

off (subject to exigencies of work), adding that PG Students shall be eligible for twenty (20) days Casual Leaves and Five (05) days' Academic Leaves per year subject to the relevance of the programme to the course. It adds that Female Post-graduate students shall be allowed Maternity Leave, MTP/Abortion Leave as per existing Government rules and regulations while as Male Post-graduate students shall be allowed Paternity Leave as per existing Government rules and regulations. It however reads that this shall be subject to the minimum attendance requirement during the course as per NMC norms. It adds that the period of training shall be extended by same number of days for which Maternity/Paternity Leave and total excess Casual Leave, over and above minimum attendance requirement, are availed during the training/course.

Likewise the order reads that DNB PG student shall be eligible to avail a maximum of twenty (20) | More on P10

SC Closes PIL Over Non-Functional Panels In J&K

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday closed the proceedings on a PIL, which claimed non-functional statutory panels exist in Jammu and Kashmir, after being told by the union Territory administration that

these are now functional and the powers of some like the State Human Rights Commission are being exercised by the NHRC.

The top court had earlier issued notices to the Centre on the 2020 PIL, filed by Pune-based lawyer Asim Suhas Sarode, and sought the assistance of Solicitor General Tushar Mehta in deciding it.

It was alleged that statutory panels like the state human rights commission were

not functional in the union territory after the abrogation of Article 370 which accorded special status to the erstwhile state.

The PIL alleged seven panels, including the Jammu and Kashmir State Commission for Women, the state commission for persons with disabilities and the consumer redressal commission are non functional.

A bench comprising Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud and Justice JB Pardiwala on Tuesday took note of the submissions of the solicitor general that the statutory panels are functional and the powers of some of them are now being exercised by central panels owing to the change in the status of the erstwhile state of Jammu | More on P10

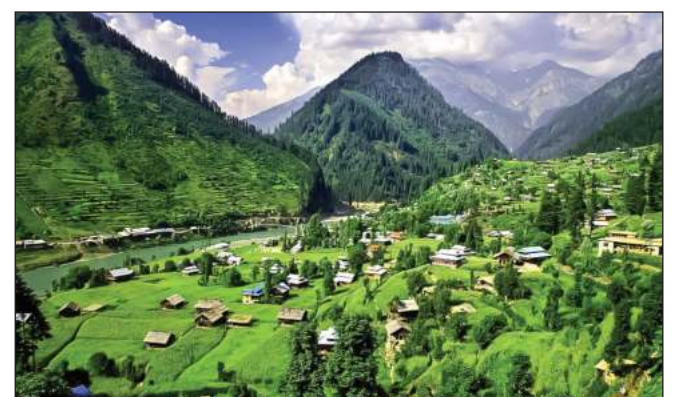
J&K Streamlines Land Acquisition Process District Courts To Handle Disputes Under Central Law

Observer News Service

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor of Jammu & Kashmir Union Territory has designated existing courts of district judges and additional district judges as "the Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Authority" under the central land acquisition law which became applicable to the Union Territory in 2019.

The LG has designated these courts as "the Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Authorities" in exercise of powers vested with him under "The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013."

Under the law, the Authority is vested with powers to resolve disputes relating to land



acquisition, compensation, rehabilitation and resettlement.

According to a notification issued by the Department of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs, all the district judges and additional district judges in each district have been appointed as presiding officers of the concerned Authorities

includes Union Territories as well," the Division Bench said, adding, "We do not subscribe to the view taken by the learned Single Bench in the case supra and we, accordingly, held that the judgment rendered by the Single Bench is not applicable to the instant case."

The Single Bench of the court had held that the person could no longer be put in preventive detention under the PSA by citing acts prejudicial to the

security of the "State" of J&K as Jammu and Kashmir has been "Union Territory" since 2019.

The Division Bench made the observation after counsel for a detainee, challenging dismissal of plea against PSA detention, cited court's Single Bench judgment delivered in case titled Arif Aijaz Shahri Vs. UT of J&K and Ors., saying that there has been "non-application of mind" on the part of the detaining authority insofar as the alleged activities of the detainee have been reflected to be prejudicial to the Security of the | More on P10

CEO, SSCL Reviews Progress Of Ongoing Smart City Works



Observer News Service
During the inspection, the CEO engaged with project officials, engineers, and workers to gain firsthand insights into the challenges and advancements in the smart city project. The CEO commended their dedication and hard work towards realizing the vision of transforming Srinagar into a modern, sustainable, and citizen-friendly city. The Smart City Mission in Srinagar is dedicated to leveraging technology and innovation to enhance the quality of life for its residents. It focuses on establishing a resilient and efficient urban infrastructure, improving public services, promoting sustainable development, and fostering economic growth.

SRINAGAR: Today, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Srinagar Smart City Ltd, Dr Owais Ahmad accompanied by the Additional CEO, officers from SMC, Srinagar Smart City, and officials of the other line departments, visited Khayam Chowk and Nowpora to assess the development progress. Expressing his satisfaction with the pace and quality of the ongoing works, CEO Dr. Owais emphasized the need to accelerate progress to ensure the completion of the project. Recognizing the project's significance for the residents of Srinagar, CEO urged all involved agencies to intensify their efforts and strictly adhere to the project

DC Srinagar Chairs DRSC, DLMC Meeting



Observer News Service
ready 14 black spots have been identified in the Srinagar District which are prone to accidents. Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat who is also Chairman of District Road Safety Committee and District Level Monitoring Committee (DRSC/ DLMC) today chaired a meeting at DC office Complex, here. SSP Traffic, Muzafar Ahmad Shah, Additional District Development Commissioner, Zahoor Ahmad Mir, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Syed Ahmad Kataria, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Khalid Hussain Malik, RTO Kashmir, Syed Shahnawaz Bukhari and other senior Officers were present in the meeting. At the outset, the meeting discussed threadbare remedial measures to prevent 'Hit and Run' cases in the district which includes awareness campaigns, proper regulation of traffic, pedestrian friendly roads, erection of signages especially at black spots, illumination at cut spots, removal of encroachments, etc. The SSP Traffic City and Regional Transport Officer Kashmir briefed the chair regarding the statistics of road fatalities and causes. It was informed that al-

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Traders Welfare Association, Neelam Chowk Elects New Body

Observer News Service
SRINAGAR: A new committee of Traders Welfare Association, Neelam Chowk, Shaheed Gunj was constituted on Tuesday and all the issues pertaining to the welfare of the market and that of the shopkeepers were discussed threadbare. The decision to dissolve the old body and to constitute a new one was taken during an emergency meeting of the association and all the members were urged to extend their wholehearted support for the welfare of the market. Meanwhile SF Ahmed, proprietor Lucky Motors

was elected as the forever Chairman of the association while Iftikhar Ahmed Sufi proprietor FS Motors elected as the President. Mohammad Sharif, proprietor New Kashmir Motors was also confirmed to retain the post of General Secretary apart from Accounts and Riaz Ahmed will assist them. Tariq Jameel, owner of Wellington Motors has been designated as the media secretary of the new committee with the commitment to look into the genuine issues of the shopkeepers and bring the same into the notice of the administration for redressal.



THREE ARDUOUS DECADES elapsed before the evening Muharram procession returned to the valley's commercial nerve centre Lal Chowk.. KO PHOTO

Srinagar Gears Up To Embrace World Craft City Recognition

Director Handicrafts Meets Dealers



Observer News Service
SRINAGAR: Following Srinagar's prestigious recognition as a World Craft City, Director Handicrafts and Handloom Kashmir, convened an important meeting at the office conference hall. The participants of the meeting included prominent dealers and showroom owners from the Srinagar-Narbal-Tangmarg-Gulmarg tourist corridor. The Dir stressed the need for transparency and urged the promotion of GI-certified and labeled products. The meeting also served as a platform to discuss and strategize initiatives for promoting and strengthening the handicrafts sector. Emphasis was placed on cultural preservation and finding ways for dealers to help eliminate violations, such as selling machine-made products, misrepresenting origins and using substandard materials. The

department warned that it would be taking strict action against those not adhering to the rules governing the sector. The Dir emphasized that the global recognition is not just an honor but a powerful validation of the artisans' centuries-old legacy. The focus now is to leverage this recognition to expand international exposure for Kashmiri handicrafts, strengthen the economic status of artisans, and safeguard cultural heritage. The department has been lately emphasizing the promotion of genuine handmade products and is working tirelessly to transform Srinagar's recognition into substantial benefits for the local community, ensuring the continued flourishing of Srinagar's handicrafts sector post its declaration as a creative city in the field of Crafts and Folk Arts, in addition to earning the World Craft City tag from the World Crafts Council.

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Commissioner SMC Visits Shalimar, Review Muharram Arrangements

Observer News Service
SRINAGAR: Dr. Owais Ahmed, Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) today conducted a comprehensive review of the Muharram arrangements in Shalimar and adjoining areas of Srinagar City. Accompanied by Joint Commissioners SMC, Executive Engineers SMC, Chief Sanitation Officer SMC and other senior officers of SMC and representatives from various line departments, the visit aimed to assess the preparations and engage with the local community to gather valuable feedback and suggestions. Following constructive discussions during the visit, Dr. Owais issued a series of directives to address key aspects of the arrangements. A primary focus was placed on the necessity of 24-hour Hooper services in the area to ensure cleanliness and hygiene, especially during the ongoing religious observances. Emphasizing the importance of uninterrupted water supply and electricity during Muharram due to increased demand, the Commissioner directed immediate action to guarantee continuous access to these essential services for residents in Shalimar and neighboring areas. Additionally, the repair and maintenance of street lights were identified as a top priority to enhance public safety and security during evening processions and events associated with Muharram. Officials were tasked for promptly resolving any issues related to malfunctioning street lights to ensure well-illuminated surroundings. The proactive approach demon-



Youth Distribute Water To Commuters, Pedestrians

SRINAGAR: Amid the soaring heat and solemn Muharram observances, the youth across various parts of Srinagar have united to distribute water to the passerby in their localities. With temperatures reaching sweltering levels, this initiative was particularly notable in areas including Lal Chowk, Khoja Bazar, Fateh Kadal, Gow Kadal and Khanyar where young volunteers provided much-needed relief to locals. The youngsters, both male and female, recognized the needs of those participating in Muharram observances and took the initiative to ensure water was readily available at key locations. Speaking to KNO, one of the volunteers, Ubaid Ahmad, emphasized the importance of their efforts. "Providing water is a small act of kindness, but it means a lot to those who are fasting or taking part in the processions under the scorching heat," he said adding that "it is our way of paying tribute to the spirit of Muharram, which teaches us about sacrifice and service to humanity." Pertinently, the local residents appreciated the gesture, noting that such acts of community service embody the true essence of the holy month and provide essential relief in the face of intense heat. Notably, Muharram, the first month of the Islamic calendar, holds significant religious importance.

strated by Commissioner SMC highlights the commitment to ensuring the successful conduct of Muharram observances in Srinagar City.

- 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
SHIEKH UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 ✈️

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

PRAYERS	
FAJR	3:44
ZUHR	12:36
ASR	5:35
Magrib	7:48
ISHA	9:27

This Day In History

- 1568 - Battle on Eems: Dutch Water garrison beats Spanish
- 1652 - England declares war on The Netherlands - beginning of the 1st Anglo-Dutch war
- 1778 - American Revolution: Louis XVI of France declares war on the Kingdom of Great Britain
- 1780 - The Comte de Rochambeau and his French force of 7,000 land at Newport, Rhode Island, to join the American Revolutionary War
- 1796 - Carl Friedrich Gauss discovers that every positive integer is representable as a sum of at most three triangular numbers
- 1861 - Lincoln writes to Kentucky's militia and says Union troops will not enter that state
- 1863 - Battle of Charleston, South Carolina (Morris Island)
- 1863 - Battle of Jackson, Mississippi - captured by federals
- 1913 - Romania declares war on Bulgaria

From KO Archives

J&K Next To Bihar In Corruption. TII, CMS Blow Whistle

Observer News Service
SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir is in the news for yet another wrong reason, that it is India's second most corrupt state, next only to Bihar, while Kerala has emerged as the least corrupt state. The startling revelation follows a recent survey titled "The India Corruption Study 2005," conducted jointly by the Transparency International India (TII) and the Centre for Media Studies (CMS). The study sampled about 14,500 respondents from over 150 cities and 300 villages across 20 Indian states and covered about a dozen services, including police, judiciary, education and public distribution system. It has placed the state very low at 19th position, just a shade ahead of Bihar. Apparently, the services surveyed may not have included various engineering disciplines, industries and allied sectors, revenue, agriculture and allied fields, education, healthcare, transport and traffic control. In case they were, Jammu and Kashmir should have had the dubious distinction of being the most corrupt state ahead of Bihar. While the alarming report may not have disturbed the sleep of those at the helm, the revelations must certainly not be music "to die state people's ears. By any stretch of imagination, the scenario is greatly disturbing for a place otherwise groaning under the debilitating impact of numerous other misfortunes, natural as well as man-made. Given the tall promises held out for successive rulers to root it out, the disclosure is all die more amazing. For the only Muslim majority state mat Jammu and Kashmir continues to be in spite of die sustained, and in some degree successful, government-inspired attempts to change its demographic complexion, die revelations are all die more shocking. One is reminded of the story that an old woman refused to believe that a Muslim had lied on something "I can't believe that a Muslim can ever tell a lie", she told her informer. It must have entailed a relentless effort by that known enemy, satan, and his countless visible and invisible followers to erase die most effective deterrent from die Muslim mind i.e. a firm belief in the Day of Judgement, even if its indicators are visible to die naked eye all over. The custodians of religion would need to ponder over die grim situation. Pertinently, it is die government which is squarely responsible for die situation taking a turn for die worse in spite of die pledges die successive rulers made while seeking people's mandate. The incumbent regime is particularly answerable because its promises were much louder not only to eradicate the canker but even to bring the earlier swindlers and scammers to justice. The Peoples Democratic Party, which wrested power from National Conference on die main plank of eradicating corruption, took about three years to identify a presiding officer for die Accountability Commission even as making it visibly functional may take another three years for its major coalition partner, Congress, to make the high-profile body discernibly functional. By now, the chief minister, Mufti Muhammad Sayeed, must have forgotten what he told die people on assuming die high office: that nobody should approach him in matters of recruitment as die process would be made absolutely transparent. 'Not only that he and several of his ministerial colleagues are accused of making backdoor appointments, the coalition partners certainly have a mischief up their sleeves for the ensuing recruitment to over 20,000 vacancies in government departments. This is not the occasion to enumerate all the scandals that surfaced over the recent years in which the government's Conduct has been suspect, even to the extent of overt and covert complicity. Instances are galore to suggest the present rulers are worse than their predecessors. (Kashmir Observer, 10 July, 2005)

Iran President-Elect Reiterates Support For Hezbollah

Agencies

Tehran: Iran's president-elect Masoud Pezeshkian on Monday reaffirmed the Islamic republic's support for Lebanon's Hezbollah group and condemned Israel's actions against Palestinians.

The statement, issued to Hezbollah's chief Hassan Nasrallah on the IRNA official news agency, was one of the first foreign policy comments from Pezeshkian since his victory in Friday's presidential election runoff.

Tehran provides financial

changed near-daily fire over Lebanon's border, triggering global alarm about the potential for all-out war as fighting escalates.

Earlier Monday, Iran's foreign ministry spokesman Nasser Kanani said Tehran "will not hesitate to support the Lebanese nation" and Israel "must be aware of the consequences of any adventurous action in the region, especially towards Lebanon."

Reformist Pezeshkian defeated ultraconservative Saeed Jalili, a former nuclear negotiator, in the election which was brought forward after the death of presi-



and military support to Hezbollah, which was created at the initiative of Iran's Revolutionary Guards after arch-foe Israel overran Beirut in 1982 during Lebanon's civil war.

In a reference to Hezbollah and allied groups, Pezeshkian said: "The support of the resistance is rooted in the fundamental policies of the Islamic Republic of Iran."

He said he was confident the "resistance movement" would stop its arch-foe Israel's "warmongering and criminal policies" in Gaza, where Israel has for nine months been at war with Hezbollah's Palestinian ally, Hamas.

Since the war in Gaza began, Hezbollah and Israel have ex-

changed near-daily fire over Lebanon's border, triggering global alarm about the potential for all-out war as fighting escalates.

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dent Ebrahim Raisi in a helicopter crash.

After the vote, Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz said the election result was a "clear message of demand for change and opposition" from the Iranian people.

On Saturday Nasrallah congratulated Pezeshkian on his election victory and emphasised Tehran's role as a "strong" supporter of regional "resistance" groups.

The Shiite Muslim movement is a key part of the Axis of Resistance - an alliance of pro-Iran armed movements that oppose Israel and the United States.

The alliance also includes Yemen's Huthi rebels and fighters in Iraq, as well as Hamas.

Organ Transplant Racket Involving Bangladeshis, Doctor Among 5 Held

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: At least six people, including a Delhi-based doctor, have been arrested in connection with an alleged organ transplant racket running across Bangladesh and the Delhi-NCR region, police officials said today.

Acting on a tip-off, the Delhi Police Crime Branch had been working on the case for two months. A majority of the donors and recipients are from Bangladesh brought to India on the basis of the fake documents for the surgeries, officials said.

The woman doctor, now working as a kidney transplant surgeon in a well-known hospital in southeast Delhi, was allegedly involved in the surgeries of some people from Bangladesh between 2021 and 2023, the officials said. She allegedly conducted the surgeries in a Noida-based private hospital where she was a visiting consultant. Also arrested are an assistant of the doctor and four others, including three Bangladeshi nationals.

The arrests took place over the last two weeks.



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90% Gazans Displaced Amid War With Israel, Says UN

Agencies

United Nations: UN humanitarian agencies have said 90 per cent of Gazans were displaced, some multiple times, as more evacuations were ordered and poor or no security hampers aid and fuel deliveries.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said on Monday that the Israeli military instructed on Sunday and Monday tens of thousands of people living in 19 blocs of apartments in Gaza City to evacuate immediately.

On Sunday, some residents were ordered to evacuate to western Gaza City, while the order on Monday included areas that people had fled to a day earlier and instructed them to evacuate to shelters in Deir al Balah, Xinhua news agency reported.

"The two directly affected areas encompass 13 health facilities that were recently functional, including two hospitals, two primary healthcare centres and nine medical points," OCHA said, adding that 13 out of 36 hospitals in the Gaza Strip are only partially functional.

The office said that with nine out of every 10 people estimated to be displaced in Gaza, new waves of displacement are mainly affecting people who have already been displaced multiple times, only to find themselves forced to flee again under shelling. They were forced to reset their lives repeatedly with-

out any of their belongings or any prospect of finding safety or reliable access to essential services.

"People, especially children, spend long hours queuing to collect water each day," OCHA said.

"Access to emergency health care is also a challenge, particularly given limited communications coverage to contact emergency services, high transportation costs to reach hospitals (\$26 roundtrip) and the long walking distance of at least 3 km to reach the nearest medical point."

In northern Gaza, the aid partners especially highlighted the lack of safe shelters for up to 80,000 IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons) who were forced to hastily flee from Shuja'iyyeh and other parts of eastern Gaza City following evacuation orders in late June. Many were found sleeping amid solid waste and rubble, with no mattresses or enough clothing, and some had sought shelter in partially destroyed UN facilities and residential buildings.

The Israeli military designated these same areas as evacuation zones, forcing many of the same families, including young children and the elderly, to go through successive waves of displacement over the past two weeks, the office said.

OCHA said that insecurity, damaged roads, the breakdown of law and order, and access limitations continue to hamper movement along the main humanitarian cargo route between Kerem Shalom crossing and Khan Younis

and Deir al Balah.

"This has resulted in critical shortages of fuel and aid commodities to sustain humanitarian operations, in addition to increasing the risk of spoilage and infestation of stranded supplies (especially food) due to extremely high temperatures," the office added.

The humanitarians said the Food Security Sector (FSS) reports that the shortages forced partners to provide reduced food rations in central and southern Gaza in June and undermined their ability to keep bakeries and community kitchens running.

According to OCHA, only seven out of the 18 bakeries supported by humanitarian partners remain operational in Gaza, all in Deir al Balah, and six bakeries already working at partial capacity have now been forced to completely cease operations due to the lack of fuel.

The office said that in the absence of cooking gas and a stable flow of food supplies, community kitchens are also struggling to operate, resulting in a reduced number of cooked meals prepared throughout Gaza. As of the end of June, about 600,000 cooked meals prepared in 190 kitchens were distributed daily to families across the strip, compared to more than 700,000 in the first half of June.

OCHA said it meant that displaced households rely on burning wood and plastic from furniture and waste to cook, exacerbating health risks and environmental hazards.

Israel's "Targeted Starvation Campaign" Causing Gaza Children Deaths: UN Experts

Agencies

Gaza: UN rights experts on Tuesday accused Israel of carrying out a "targeted starvation campaign" that has resulted in the deaths of children in Gaza.

"We declare that Israel's intentional and targeted starvation campaign against the Palestinian people is a form of genocidal violence and has resulted in famine across all of Gaza," 10 independent United Nations experts said in a statement.

The UN has not officially declared a famine in the Gaza Strip.

But the experts, including the UN special rapporteur on the right to food Michael Fakhri, insisted there was no denying famine was

under way.

"Thirty-four Palestinians have died from malnutrition since 7 October, the majority being children," said the experts, who are appointed by the UN Human Rights Council, but who do not speak on behalf of the United Nations.

Their statement was immediately slammed by Israel's mission to the UN in Geneva, which charged that "Mr. Fakhri, and many so-called 'experts' who joined his statement, are as much accustomed to spreading misinformation, as they are to supporting Hamas propaganda and shielding the terrorist organisation from scrutiny".

The UN experts meanwhile listed three children who had re-

cently died "from malnutrition", after a number of others were said to have starved to death in northern Gaza earlier this year.

Fayez Ataya, who was barely six months old, died on 30 May 2024, and 13-year-old Abdulqader Al-Serhi died on June 1, 2024 at the Al-Aqsa Hospital in Deir Al-Balah," they said.

Nine-year-old Ahmad Abu Reida died just two days later "in the tent sheltering his displaced family in Al-Mawasi, Khan Younis," they said.

"With the death of these children from starvation despite medical treatment in central Gaza, there is no doubt that famine has spread from northern Gaza into central and southern Gaza," they said.

How Bangladesh's traffickers are targeting Rohingya women at refugee camp

Agencies

DHAKA: A rising number of Rohingya women in Bangladesh are being targeted by human traffickers who offer them an escape from deteriorating conditions in the world's largest refugee camp.

Nearly 1 million Rohingya people are living in squalid conditions in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar, which Amnesty International described as "inhumane" last year. Refugees are not allowed to leave the fenced area and are trapped inside with limited food, water and electricity.

Thousands have been trying to flee the overcrowded Bangladeshi camp in recent years, hoping to seek a better life elsewhere, often with the help of human trafficking networks.

"Human trafficking is undoubtedly a problem here. From the government's side, we are trying to combat this," Mohammed Mizanur Rahman, Bangladesh's refugee relief and repatriation commissioner, told Arab News on Tuesday.

"Women and children are being trafficked in many cases, and this is derived from absolute frustration and penniless situations."

Some 569 Rohingya — out of almost 4,500 — died or went missing in 2023 while trying to relocate to another country through deadly sea crossings, often on rickety boats, the highest figure in nine years, according to data from the UN Refugee Agency.

Many are taken to Malaysia and Indonesia, with Jakarta blaming human traffickers for the increasing number of Rohingya entering the country by boat late last year.

Rahman said that many women take the perilous sea journeys "with the aim of getting married to a Rohingya man" who may have relocated to a country in South-east Asia.

He said: "Most of the Rohingya living in Malaysia are male. They get married to Rohingya girls living in the camps through (contact by) mobile phones. Later, the male sends money to bring the wife to Malaysia."

In such cases, the Rohingya involved would "make contact with the human traffickers" to circumvent their lack of legal documents to travel.

Rahman added: "In this process, sometimes they become successful, and sometimes they end up in abusive situations. Sometimes they die by drowning at sea."

The predominantly Muslim Rohingya people — referred to by the UN as the "world's most persecuted minority" — have faced decades of persecution in Myanmar.

More than 730,000 Rohingya fled to neighboring Bangladesh in 2017 after a brutal crackdown by the Myanmar military, which the UN said amounted to genocide.

The Rohingya in Bangladesh have faced restrictions on movement and work in the years since, forcing them into being idle amid growing uncertainties over their future, dwindling international aid and languishing attempts for a dignified repatriation. Dhaka-based migration expert Asif Munir told Arab News: "There's no permanent solution in sight in the camp-life situation; this has created frustration among the camp population."

Dengue Can Seriously Affect The Brain, Nervous System, Say Doctors

Agencies

New Delhi: Although dengue is known to cause mild flu-like symptoms, the mosquito-borne viral illness has profound neurological implications that are often overlooked, said experts today.

Amid the monsoon in India, dengue cases have spiralled in various parts of the country, including Karnataka, Kerala, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Delhi and Maharashtra.

According to the latest data from the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD), there have been 246 dengue cases in the national capital till June 30 this year. During the same period in 2023, Delhi saw only 122 cases, 143 cases in 2022, 36 cases in 2021, and 20 cases in 2020.

"While primarily known for causing flu-like symptoms, dengue has profound neurological implications that are often overlooked," Dr Praveen Gupta, Principal Director & Chief of Neurology at Fortis Hospital Gurugram, told news agency IANS.

"Neurological manifestations of dengue, though less common, include encephalitis, meningitis, and myelitis. These conditions arise from the virus crossing the blood-brain barrier, leading to inflammation and infection of the brain and spinal cord," he explained.

Patients with severe dengue may experience headaches, altered mental status, seizures, and even coma. The virus's neurotropic nature means it can directly infect neural cells, causing damage and inflammation. Furthermore, the immune response triggered by the infection can exacerbate these neurological issues, making management complex.

Dengue is a vector-borne disease transmitted by the bite of an infected Aedes mosquito. It is endemic to more than 100 countries and affects about 400 million people globally every year.

Dengue fever escalates significantly during the monsoon season due to increased mosquito breeding. During monsoon, stagnant water and higher humidity create ideal conditions for the Aedes mosquito to thrive, leading to a spike in dengue cases.

"Dengue can affect many parts of the human body, including the nervous system. When it affects the nervous system, the presentation will be like a brain fever. Patients could have altered consciousness levels and difficulty in talking, stroke, seizures or fits and could have bleeding in the brain also due to low platelet counts," Dr Srikantha Swamy, Lead Senior Consultant, Neurology, Aster RV Hospital Bengaluru, told news agency IANS.

NEWS MAKERS

Russian President Vladimir Putin on Monday night welcomed Prime Minister Narendra Modi at his official residence at Novo-Ogaryovo for a "private engagement" during which he praised the visiting Indian leader for the work he has done for the country's progress.

"I would like to congratulate you on your reelection as prime minister. I think this is not an accident, but the result of your work over many years," Putin told Modi as they held an informal meeting in a residence outside Moscow.

"You have your own ideas. You are a very energetic person, able to achieve results in the interests of India and the Indian people," Putin said. "The result is obvious." "India firmly ranks as the world's third-largest economy," Putin was quoted



You're Very Energetic Person
Putin Heaps Praise on Modi

as saying by the state-run Tass news agency.

Putin said Prime Minister Modi has devoted his entire life to serving his people and they can feel it.

As the two heads of state held an informal meeting

over a cup of tea at the official residence outside Moscow, Modi recollected the recent elections in his country, saying that "the people of India gave him a chance to serve the Motherland." "You have devoted your en-

tire life to serving the Indian people, and they can feel it," Putin replied.

"You are right, I have only one goal: It is the people and my country," the prime minister said with a smile, the Tass report said.

Later, President Putin and Prime Minister Modi took a stroll around Putin's residence in Novo-Ogaryovo.

"The Russian leader showed his Indian guest around the residence and gave him a drive in an electric car. Most of the time they spoke via interpreters. However, when they left the garden they had a brief tete-a-tete conversation, probably in English," according to a separate Tass report.

In a post on X, Prime Minister Modi expressed his gratitude to President Putin for hosting him at Novo-Ogaryovo.

Woman Kills Child, Self After Hubby Refuses To Take Her Out

Palghar: A 23-year-old tribal woman allegedly killed her 4-year-old daughter and then died by suicide following a fight with her husband in Maharashtra's Palghar district, police said on Tuesday.

The incident took place on Monday at Sisne village in Dahanu area.

The woman's husband, a fisherman, used to be frequently away from the family, an official from Kasa police station said.

He returned home on Sunday and went out with his friends.

His wife was annoyed as he had not taken her with him and this led to a quarrel between them, the official said.



On Monday, the woman allegedly strangled her daughter to death and later hanged herself from the ceiling of her house, he said.

After being alerted by

neighbours, police rushed to the spot and initiated a probe into the incident.

The bodies were sent for a post-mortem, the police added.

AMARNATH YATRA

Over 20,000 Pilgrims Visit Cave Shrine Daily

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The 52-day Amarnath Yatra has seen a daily increase in the number of pilgrims, with more than 20,000 performing the pilgrimage since it began on June 29 from the twin tracks of Baltal-Sonamarg and Nunwan-Pahalgam.

Officials said that 230,759 pilgrims have so far performed the Amarnath Yatra, with 23,743 yatis having performed darshan at the holy cave situated at an altitude of 3,888 meters in south Kashmir's Anantnag district.

They said the 12th batch of 5,433 pilgrims, drawn from different parts of the country, left for the twin base camps of Nunwan-Pahalgam in Anantnag district and Baltal-Sonamarg in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district in a cavalcade of 213 light and heavy vehicles under tight security measures from Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas early Tuesday morning.

The batch including 4,203 men, 1,117 women, 18 children, 83 sadhus, and 12 sadhis (fe-

male sadhus). Among them, 1,971 preferred the shorter Baltal track, while 3,462 opted for the longer and traditional Nunwan-Pahalgam track.

Officials said the pilgrims who reached the twin base camps of Baltal and Nunwan on Monday left for the holy cave early Tuesday morning, while the yatis who departed from Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas this morning reached their respective base camps by the evening and will leave for the holy cave early Wednesday morning.

Extensive security arrangements have been made this year along the nearly 300 km Jammu-Srinagar highway, at the twin yatra routes, the two base camps, and the cave shrine to ensure a smooth and incident-free yatra.

Over 124 langars (community kitchens) have been set up along both routes, at the transit camps, and at the cave shrine. Over 7,000 sevadars (volunteers) are serving the yatis during this year's Yatra. Helicopter services are also available for the yatis on both routes.

SANJY-2024: LG Visits Nunwan, Chandanwari Base Camps



Observer News Service

PAHALGAM: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Tuesday visited the Nunwan and Chandanwari base camps and reviewed the arrangements for the ongoing holy yatra of Shri Amarnath Ji.

The LG interacted with the pilgrims, and enquired about their pilgrimage experience. At the Base Camps, the LG

also interacted with the service providers, doctors, sanitation workers, administrative and security officials and took appraisal of various services like lodging, langar, power and water supply, sanitation, health, traffic and security management, and other facilities to the pilgrims. He directed all concerned departments and service providers to take every possible measure for the safe and smooth conduct of the Yatra.

Syed Fakhruddin Hamid, DC, Anantnag briefed the LG on the facilities available to the Yatis arriving at the Base Camps.

The LG was accompanied by CEO, Shrine Board Dr MK Bhandari, VK Birdi, IGP Kashmir; VK Bidhuri, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir and other senior officers of District Administration, SASB, Police and Army.

Kashmir Records Over 69,000 Vehicle Registrations In 2023-24

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Kashmir has recorded over 69,000 vehicle registrations during the fiscal year 2023-24, with Srinagar leading with over 26,000 registrations, the highest among all ten districts of the valley.

According to data available, out of these 69,000 vehicle registrations, over 28,000 were for motorcycles and scooters, making them the most registered type of vehicle in Kashmir.

Among the districts, Shopian recorded the lowest number of vehicle registrations with 2,551.

The data further reveals that



Srinagar registered over 26,000 vehicles, including over 11,000 motorcycles and scooters, and 8,500 private vehicles. Across the region, the year saw over 22,000 private vehicle registrations and 575 bus and mini-bus registrations.

Dr Sheikh Ajaz Bashir Assumes Charge As Director Colleges J&K

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Prof. Sheikh Ajaz Bashir Tuesday assumed the charge of Director Colleges J&K.

Prof. Bashir shall continue to hold the charge of Nodal Principal Kashmir Division Colleges and Principal Amar Singh College Srinagar in addition to his own duties.

After assuming charge, Prof. Bashir took a meeting with the officers and officials to assess the status of higher education sector in J&K. He remarked that the department is committed to fostering a conducive environment for learning and development, promoting innovation in teaching methodologies and enhancing the overall educational experience for stu-



dents across colleges in Jammu and Kashmir.

He added that the department will strengthen academic programs, promote research culture and ensure the holistic growth of students.

Having Ph.D in Electronics, Prof. Aijaz Bashir has been a prominent academician and administrator. He is also the member of prestigious Higher Education Council of J&K and has served Higher Education

J&K Power Sector Sees Progress

AT&C Losses Drop, But Challenges Remain

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The power sector in Jammu and Kashmir has significantly improved the aggregate technical and commercial (AT&C) losses of its power DISCOMS during the last two years.

The losses, which stood at a high of 63% in the financial year (FY) 2021-22, have dropped to 41% in FY 2023-24, officials said.

They attributed the progress to the projects undertaken under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme (RDSS).

However, the target under the prestigious scheme is still a distant dream of the Union territory.

The RDSS, with an outlay of about Rs. 2,118 crore over five years (FY 2021-22 to FY 2025-26) for the union territory of J&K, aims to enhance the operational efficiency and financial sustainability of distribution companies (DISCOMS) across the country.

One of the key targets of RDSS is to reduce AT&C losses to pan-India levels of 12-15% by FY 2024-25 and to bring down the gap between Average

Power Pilferage Dipped In Kashmir: Officials

SRINAGAR: In Kashmir valley, thousands of domestic consumers haven't paid their electricity dues for more than two years, officials said on Tuesday.

Top official of the Power Development Department (PDD) said that domestic or residential consumers in the Kashmir region were the major defaulters.

The official said, "Primarily, domestic or residential consumers are the major defaulters. Out of 11.7 Lakh consumers we have 9.9 are domestic consumers. Out of these consumers, nearly 40 percent are smart and conventional metered consumers. Rest almost 60 percent of consumers are flat rated consumers."

"From the domestic consumers section, we call those defaulters who don't pay electricity bills for three consecutive months and their bill exceeds Rs 12000," he said.

The official further said, "KPDCL disconnect their smart meter connection. For flat rated consumers, we also disconnect them by other ways in accordance to our Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)."

"By and large, nearly 91 percent of our consumer base is domestic.

This year so far we have disconnected more than 11,000 electricity connections out of which 8600 were domestic and 2500 were commercial and others were hoteliers and industrialists," the official said.

About the power pilferage, the official said that from the past 5-6 months, power pilferage has reduced. "Many consumers are desisting now from power pilferage activities."

He said, "In Kashmir valley, hundreds of thousands electricity consumers are defaulters. They haven't paid bills for more than two years."

Meanwhile, PDD Principal Secretary Rajesh Prasad said, "In past couple of months, the losses in the Kashmir region have reduced by nearly 10 percent. This development took place after the installation of smart meters."

On asking about the bill issues of many smart meter consumers, Prasad said, "There are very few chances of technical glitch and issues. However, if any consumer if facing any issue related to bill variation must contact the PDD consumer services."

age Cost of Supply (ACS) and Average Revenue Realized (ARR) to zero by the same fiscal year.

The scheme also targets improvements in the quality, reliability, and affordability of power supply through a financially sustainable and operationally efficient distribution sector.

One of the central interventions under RDSS is the implementation of prepaid smart metering.

In J&K, the scheme aims to install 22 lakh prepaid metres during its tenure.

CS Takes Stock Of Progress Made On Construction Of Highways Across J&K

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo Tuesday held a detailed meeting with representatives of various executing agencies like NHAI, NHIDCL, BRO, Beacon and Project SAMPARK to take stock of progress made so far in laying out of vast network of National Highways across the length and breadth of Jammu and Kashmir.

The meeting was also attended by senior functionaries from J&K government including ACS, Forests; Principal Secretary, APD; Di-

by resolving court cases, land disputes handing over of land and other issues faced by them in smooth execution of these projects.

Moreover, the Chief Secretary took project wise appraisal of progress made so far. He enquired about the possible date of completion of work on each phase of these projects.

Regarding the different phases of Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway, it was apprised that the project has been distributed in several phases and work on each



visional Commissioner, Kashmir/Jammu; Secretary, R&B; Secretary, Revenue; Deputy Commissioners; Chief Engineers of PWD, besides other concerned officers.

During this meeting, the Chief Secretary impressed upon the concerned executing agencies to improve their performance with regard to showcasing physical progress on ground.

He observed that frequent change in timelines is not good sign and should be corroborated with clear justifications. He maintained that such unilateral change in deadlines should be avoided in future.

Dulloo directed the concerned Divisional and District administrations to regularly monitor the pace of work on these important road projects for their timely completion. He also urged them to extend full assistance to the concerned executing agencies

phase is going on simultaneously. It was given out that some phases of this project including Balsua-Hiranagar, Hiranagar-Vijaypur, Vijaypur-Kunjwani and Kunjwani-Sidhra would be completed before September, 2025.

As far as the work on Ring Road Jammu is concerned, it was revealed that the work has largely been completed with just few minor works and a tunnel to be finished now. It was given out that the same would be completed by June, 2025.

Giving details about the incomplete phases of the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway (NH-44), it was divulged that the work on all the tunnels is going on and would be completed by June, 2026. It was further informed that the Banihal Bypass would be accomplished in the month of September this year and other viaducts by June, 2025.

28 Panchayats of Bandipora Declared TB Free

Observer News Service

BANDIPORA: District Tuberculosis Control Society Bandipora today organized a felicitation ceremony at the Mini Secretariat Bandipora to honor the Mid-Level Health Providers (MLHPs) and Panchayat Secretaries of 28 panchayats that have successfully achieved TB-free status.

The event was organized to recognize the remarkable efforts of local health workers and panchayat secretaries in eradicating tuberculosis from their concerned panchayats.

Speaking on the occasion, Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC)

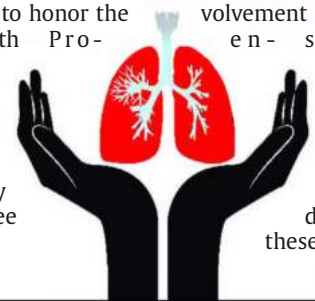
Bandipora, Mohammad Ashraf Bhatt, highlighted the importance of continuing and intensifying awareness campaigns.

He stressed that sustained efforts and community involvement are crucial in ensuring that tuberculosis is eradicated from every nook and corner of the district.

Bhatt said, declaration of these 28 panchayats as TB free

inspires as an other areas in the district to intensify their efforts in the fight against tuberculosis.

"We must continue to work together to ensure that no one in district Bandipora suffers from this preventable and curable disease", he added.



Kathua Ambush: Politicians React With Anguish, Concern

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: President Droupadi Murmu on Tuesday termed the terrorist attack on an Army convoy in Jammu and Kashmir a "cowardly act" and said it deserved condemnation and firm counter-measures.

Five Army personnel were killed and as many injured on Monday when a group of heavily-armed terrorists ambushed a patrolling party in the Badnota area in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir.

This terror attack was the fifth in the Jammu region in a month. In a post on X, Murmu said, "My sympathies are with the families of the bravehearts who laid down their lives in this ongoing war against terror in its all forms. I pray for the speedy recovery of those injured."

"The attack on a convoy of Army personnel in Kathua district of Jammu and Kashmir by terrorists is a cowardly act that deserves condemnation and firm counter-measures. My sympathies are with the families of the bravehearts who laid down their lives in this ongoing war against terror in its all forms. I pray for the speedy recovery of those injured," the



President said.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday said he was "deeply anguished" over the death of five Army personnel in a terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district.

Singh said counter-terror operations are underway and the soldiers are determined to "usher in peace and order" in the region.

"I am deeply anguished at the loss of five of our brave Indian Army soldiers in a terrorist attack in Badnota, Kathua (J&K)," the defence minister said on X.

"My deepest condolences to the bereaved families, the nation stands firm with them in this difficult time. The counter

terrorist operations are underway, and our soldiers are determined to usher in peace and order in the region," he said.

"I pray for a speedy recovery to those who sustained injuries in this dastardly terror attack," Singh added.

The killing of five army soldiers in a militant attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district is alarming, National Conference leader Omar Abdullah said on Tuesday while accusing the union territory's administration of being lax towards the security situation.

The attack took place on Monday when a group of heavily-armed terrorists ambushed a patrolling party in Badnota area in Kathua. A

massive search operation is underway to nab the terrorists behind the ambush in which five people were also injured.

"It is very unfortunate. I think no criticism of this attack is strong enough. To lose five brave army soldiers in the line of duty in one attack is something we should all be alarmed by," Abdullah told PTI Videos.

The NC vice president and former chief minister of the erstwhile state of J&K said the administration needs to be more vigilant.

"We have been saying time and again that militancy is a problem in J&K and you can't wish it away. This government had convinced itself that somehow August 5, 2019 is the solution to all the problems, including violence and terror, but clearly that's not the case," he said referring to the day Article 370 was abrogated and the state downgraded into the union territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

"I think the administration in J&K needs to be more vigilant, I think they are showing rather lax tendency with regard to the security situation and hopefully attacks like this won't happen again," Abdullah added.

Terror Incidents Show Govt's 'Strategic Failure': Congress

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The Congress said on Tuesday that Jammu "becoming the centre of terror incidents" reflected the "strategic failure" of the Modi government and demanded that the Centre should take the country into confidence on steps it was taking to deal with the situation.

The opposition party also called for a befitting reply to Pakistan in the wake of the rising terror incidents in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Congress' assertion came a day after five army personnel, including a Junior Commissioned Officer, were killed and as many were injured when heavily armed terrorists ambushed a patrolling party in the remote Machedi area of J&K's Kathua district.

Addressing a press conference at the AICC headquarters here, Congress leader Deepender Hooda said this attack is highly condemnable.

He said the government should suo motu give a statement on the steps it is taking in the wake of the

recent terror attacks in the state.

"Even before this, in December 2023, four of our soldiers were martyred in Rajouri. There was an encounter in Kulgam, in which two of our soldiers were martyred."

"There was a terrorist attack in Doda on June 26. On June 9 also, a terrorist attack was carried out on a bus," Hooda said, listing the recent terror attacks in J&K.

Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi has asserted that the solution to the persistent terror attacks should be strict action, not empty promises, Hooda said.

"Figures show that the number of civilians and security forces personnel martyred in terrorist incidents in the Jammu region has doubled since January 2023," he said.

The centre of terrorist incidents has now shifted from the Kashmir valley to Jammu and this "reflects the strategic failure" of the Modi government, he said.

The Modi government is not serious about the ground situation in Jammu and Kashmir and instead is

more busy presenting its narrative to the country, he alleged.

"Whenever the Modi government introduces any scheme, it links it to terrorism and says that terrorism will be eradicated. When demonetisation took place in the country and the Article 370 was removed from Jammu and Kashmir, even then there was talk of elimination of terrorism. But now the government should think about the situation that has arisen," he said.

Pakistan has reached the brink of becoming a "failed state" and yet it is daring to do this, Hooda said, adding that now it is the time to give a befitting reply to Pakistan.

"As a responsible opposition, we are with the government for the security of the country," he said.

The Congress on Monday condemned the terror attack on Army personnel in Kathua and said no amount of whitewashing, fake claims, hollow boasts and chest-thumping can "erase the fact that the Modi government remains a disaster" for security in the Union Territory.

KASHMIR OBSERVER®

Wednesday | 10-07-2024

Assembly Poll Promise

In a fresh indication that the Assembly election in Jammu and Kashmir could be around the corner, BJP chief and Union Minister JP Nadda on Saturday stressed the importance of preparing for the exercise. Addressing an extended working committee meeting of the party's J&K unit at Purkhoo in Jammu, Nadda highlighted the development work undertaken in the region since Prime Minister Narendra Modi came to power.

The BJP's extended working committee adopted a resolution expressing confidence that the party will form the government in the union territory on its own, based on the Lok Sabha election results. The resolution mentioned the party's lead in 29 out of 36 Assembly segments in the Jammu division, indicating a promising outlook for the upcoming elections.

The focus now shifts to ensuring that the Assembly elections are conducted as directed by the Supreme Court, highlighting the importance of adhering to the September deadline to uphold democratic processes in the region.

The Supreme Court has already directed the central government to hold the Legislative Assembly elections by September 30. The completion of delimitation and voter list revisions has set the stage for these elections, with the number of Assembly seats increased from 107 to 114, including 24 for Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. The Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly will now have 90 seats, with the new Vaishno Devi and Katra constituencies in Reasi district among them.

Of these 90 seats, 43 are in the Jammu region and 47 in the Kashmir Valley. Nine seats have been reserved for Scheduled Castes and seven for Scheduled Tribes, ensuring representation for marginalized communities.

The people of Jammu and Kashmir are also hopeful that the new government will soon restore statehood, as promised by prime minister Narendra Modi during his recent visit to Kashmir. It was on June 19, 2018, that the BJP withdrew support to the J&K coalition government headed by the then Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti, paving the way for Governor's rule in the then state. Later, former J&K Governor, Satya Pal Malik, dissolved the assembly in November. This was followed by the abrogation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status on August 5, 2019, and the downgrading of the state into a union territory. The position of the Governor was reduced to that of Lieutenant Governor. Over five years have passed since then without assembly elections and any sign of restoration of statehood. Now, there are hopeful signs that these elections will finally be held. The reestablishment of a local government will be a critical step towards self-governance and political stability.

Adverse Effects of Tourism on Kashmir

A threat to iconic scenic locations and a review of solutions to combat it

Sahir Ul Sehar

“
At different times of the year, a destination becomes more popular due to specific weather patterns or vacation schedules. This narrows down a massive influx of tourists to a two- to three-month period. Off-season travel reduces this strain by distributing visitor spending and local revenue across a longer time frame

Last year, when even during the harshest period of Chillai Kalan, Gulmarg was devoid of any traces of snowfall the impact of over tourism came to the fore. Official statistics indicate that in 2023, Gulmarg welcomed an incredible 1.65 million tourists, setting a record. However, this flood of visitors to Kashmir raises important concerns about the problems facing the region's ecosystem, natural landscapes and local inhabitants. Numerous locations in Kashmir have a high volume of visitor arrivals, which is wreaking havoc on the local ecosystem.

The phrase "over tourism" was introduced only over ten years ago to draw attention to the increasing amount of tourists — a trend which leads to negative impact on cities, landmarks, and natural landscapes. The discussion about what constitutes "too many" tourists has raged on as traveller numbers around the world begin to rise again following the COVID-19 pandemic.

We could essentially encapsulate the idea in a single question. Is this location being impacted by more visitors than it can sustain or the locals can handle? The phenomena of an excessive number of people overwhelming a tourist attraction is known as overtourism.

This definition, though, is too simplistic. This issue is frequently oversimplified to mean that there are too many tourists. Even while it could be an underlying sign of excess, it ignores the multitude of other causes that could be involved. In its most basic form, overtourism arises when visitor demand surpasses the ability of host communities of a place to accommodate them. All too frequently, the tourism supply chain drives demand without considering the capacity of destinations or the knock-on impacts on the welfare of nearby people.

Overtourism may appear to be little more than a hassle at first glance. Places that are crowded and popular with plenty of people. There are, however, additional serious drawbacks to overtourism if you dig further. The effects from this visitor inflow on the surrounding environment and local population are detrimental.

Certain places are so popular that they are crammed with people. Busy shopping streets or his-



torical locations where tourists have to elbow through the mass. In addition to making the traveller's experience less enjoyable, it makes sure that locals have difficult access to and departure from the location.

Archaeological sites are extremely vulnerable to erosion. The sites may sustain harm from an excessive number of visitors wandering around. There's a greater likelihood of people ignoring the specified paths when there are more people around. In the absence of regulation and protection, archaeological sites may sustain degradation that causes them to lose their historical significance and appeal.

Additionally, local pricing rises in tourist destinations with high visitor traffic, primarily due to the supply and demand in tourism. Due to exorbitant costs, locals frequently leave the area, which diminishes the place's originality.

Travel places that experience significant levels of overtourism are severely polluted, mostly plastic, including single-use bags and water bottles. A lot of places are unable to provide adequate recycling and garbage sorting facilities. Thus, plastic is frequently burned or ends up in the environment. Travellers who fly or drive to the destination also raise the local carbon footprint.

Overtourism is a significant problem, but it may be avoided with the right steps. You might want to avoid a place if overtourism is already a problem there. The world is full of amazing locations to see that aren't teetering on the brink of ruin.

Travelling to places where tourism is low is one of the most effective ways to stop over tour-

ist. Look for less-travelled areas or places that truly invite visitors.

Travel during the off season.

At different times of the year, a destination becomes more popular due to specific weather patterns or vacation schedules. This narrows down a massive influx of tourists to a two- to three-month period. Off-season travel reduces this strain by distributing visitor spending and local revenue across a longer time frame.

Gated tourism.

Some natural places have found that gated tourism is one of the greatest solutions for overtourism. This system introduces new rules that restrict admissions in specific locations or for specific durations. This could occur by limiting access to a location to specific times of the year or by instituting a payment-based reservation system.

Be an eco-friendly, responsible traveller.

This solution becomes significant when considering overtourism, since rising visitor numbers result in rising trash quantities that local communities must manage. You may contribute to lessening the strain on this front by making efforts to reduce the garbage you generate when travelling and encourage others to follow suit.

As conscientious travellers, we have the ability to contribute to the global shift away from overtourism and towards more sustainable travel practices.

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



Investment Needs a Trusted Shop, Not Emotions

Did you know?

Irshad Mushtaq

Looking to buy shares, ETFs, mutual funds, or plan your finances? Just like shopping for everyday items or choosing services, it's crucial to find a trusted shop or provider.

When it comes to making financial investments, emotions should take a backseat to informed, rational decisions. Just as you wouldn't choose to shop at a store based on feelings alone, your approach to buying shares, mutual funds, or ETFs should be grounded in trust and solid information.

The Perils of Emotion-based Investing

Emotional investing often leads to impulsive decisions based on market whispers, social media trends, or the fear of missing out (FOMO). These emotions can drive overreactions to market volatility, leading to buying high and selling low—essentially a recipe for financial loss. Instead, approaching investment with a calm, collected mind-set can save you from these pitfalls.

The Need for Trustworthy Sources

To mitigate the risks associated with emotional investing, it is crucial to rely on trustworthy and reputable sources for your financial decisions. Here's why:

1. Credible Information: Trustworthy sources provide credible and well-researched information, which forms the foundation for sound investment decisions. This includes financial news from established platforms, expert analyses, and comprehensive research reports.

2. Professional Guidance: Financial advisors, certified analysts, and investment firms have a fiduciary duty to act in your best interest. Leveraging their expertise can help in developing a well-diversified and strategically sound investment portfolio.

3. Stable Strategies: Long-term investment strategies, such as dollar-cost averaging and diversified portfolios, are often advised by professional sources. These strategies help in managing risks and ensuring steady growth, as opposed to emotionally driven, short-term decisions.

Steps to Make Informed Investment Decisions

1. Do Your Research: Before making any investment, take the time to research and understand the asset you are interested in. Look into the past performance, the current market conditions, and future growth prospects.

2. Consult Professionals: Seek advice from financial advisors or investment professionals. Ensure that they are credible and have a good track record.

3. Diversify Your Portfolio: Spread your investments across different asset classes to mitigate risks. A diversified portfolio can help balance the potential ups and downs of individual investments.

4. Stay Updated: Keep abreast of the latest financial news and market trends. This will enable you to make timely and informed decisions based on evolving market conditions.

Conclusion

Investment decisions should be made with a clear head and reliable information, steering clear of emotional impulses. Just as with choosing a trusted shop for your shopping needs, a trustworthy source is paramount for your investing journey. By diligently researching and consulting reputable sources, you can build a robust and resilient investment portfolio that stands the test of time.

Learn from the insights of writer and investor, founder of MI Securities and Business Partner at Sharekhan! Reach out to him at Irshad@bp.sharekhan.com for valuable knowledge on financial matters



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Housing For All: A Rural-Urban Approach

To orchestrate a harmonious future, meticulous housing planning is imperative in the symphony of urban development. Proper housing planning should extend to rural areas, conserving abundant agricultural land, a critical natural resource. Sustainable resource management resonates through judicious land allocation and eco-conscious dwelling practices. Robust housing with minimal ecological impact necessitates discouraging rampant urban expansion into productive suburban lands, considering not only present needs but also anticipating future demands in our ever-changing world. This holistic housing approach can transform cities, suburbs, and rural areas into living ecosystems where humans coexist harmoniously with nature. A clarion call for stakeholders—government, private developers, housing boards, and citizens—to converge, composing a symphony commit-

ted to a more resourceful tomorrow.

Arable land, vital for food production, faces constant threat from rampant urbanization. Rising population demands intensified residential spaces, but without proper planning, fertile land converts to housing. In UT Jammu and Kashmir, particularly Srinagar city, the alarming loss of fertile land to urbanization is exacerbated by the profit-driven interests of land mafias and private property dealers. Unplanned colonies by unregistered property dealers often receive favors for essential infrastructure development, attracting residents in need of housing facilities. However, government or housing board colonies lag in civic amenities, discouraging citizens from choosing well-planned options.

For instance, the J&K Housing Board's Ompora colony in Budgam is ecologically sound, being unirrigated and upland, with minimal flood threats. Unfortunately, authorities'

apathy toward civic amenities in such colonies drives citizens toward unplanned, private colonies on fertile lands with better infrastructure. The Ompora housing colony, meticulously planned with dilapidated roads and drains, exemplifies the need for transforming government colonies into model settlements. Authorities should focus on providing better amenities, roads, drainage, electrification, and drinking water to make these colonies preferred destinations.

Addressing Ompora's Challenges: A Resident's Perspective

Being a resident of Ompora Housing Colony, I witness firsthand the significant challenges our community faces, grappling with a lack of essential amenities crucial for our well-being. Issues such as well maintained roads and drains, an unreliable supply of pure drinking water, inconsistent electricity, the absence of a dedicated marriage hall, inadequate fire and emergency

services, the need for a well-equipped hospital, and the absence of a police station demand urgent attention. These deficiencies not only impede the colony's potential as a preferred destination but also necessitate immediate action from authorities.

The urgency lies in transforming Ompora into a model housing colony for the region. Authorities must address these fundamental needs promptly to enhance our quality of life. Integrating these essential amenities will not only meet the immediate needs of residents but also contribute significantly to the overall success of sustainable housing initiatives in the area. It is crucial that these issues are prioritized and resolved, ensuring that Ompora becomes a shining example of well-planned, well-equipped, and thriving housing for the benefit of all its residents.

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CRICKET

THE UNYIELDING OBSESSION

Faria Bhat

Cricket, a sport that originated in the 16th century in the fields of England, has evolved into a global phenomenon. From the dusty pitches of India to the pristine grounds of Australia, cricket has a unique ability to captivate millions. But why is cricket so famous, and why are people so obsessed?

Historical Roots and Colonial Legacy

The widespread popularity of cricket can be traced back to its colonial roots. The game originated in England during the 16th century, evolving from earlier bat-and-ball games played in the country's southeast. By the 18th century, cricket had become a well-organized sport with established rules and widespread appeal among English society.

As the British Empire expanded in the 19th and early 20th centuries, cricket spread to its colonies, becoming a symbol of British culture and a tool for social cohesion. Countries like India, Pakistan, Australia, South Africa, and the West Indies, part of the British Empire, adopted the sport and integrated it into their own cultures. British officials, military personnel, and settlers introduced cricket to these regions, establishing clubs and organising matches, often to assert colonial dominance and reinforce social hierarchies.

In India, for instance, cricket was initially played by British elites and Indian royalty, but it gradually permeated all levels of society. By the early 20th century, local cricket clubs had formed, and inter-community matches became a popular feature of urban life. Establishing the Ranji Trophy in 1934 further institutionalised the sport in India, leading to a robust domestic cricket structure.

In the Caribbean, cricket became a unifying force among the islands of the West Indies. Despite their diverse cul-



tures and languages, the shared passion for cricket helped foster a regional identity. The West Indies team, representing multiple nations, became a symbol of excellence and pride, especially during their dominance of international cricket in the 1970s and 1980s.

Australia and South Africa also embraced cricket, integrating it into their national identities. Australia's first Test match against England in 1877 began a fierce and enduring rivalry known as the Ashes. South Africa, despite the interruptions caused by apartheid, has maintained a strong cricketing tradition, with its reintroduction into international cricket in the 1990s being a significant moment in the sport's history.

Even after gaining independence, these nations continued to embrace cricket with fervour. The historical con-

nection created a strong foundation, and cricket became more than just a sport; it was a link to their colonial past and a means of forging a new, independent identity. This deep-rooted connection to history and culture has played a significant role in cricket's sustained popularity, making it a beloved and integral part of life in many former British colonies.

Cultural Significance and National Identity

In many countries, cricket is more than just a game; it is an integral part of their cultural identity. In India, for instance, cricket is often referred to as a religion, with players like Sachin Tendulkar worshipped as demigods. The sport is a unifying force, bringing together people from diverse backgrounds and regions. The passion for cricket transcends social,

economic, and linguistic barriers, fostering a sense of national pride and unity. This cultural significance makes cricket an enduring obsession for millions.

Drama and Unpredictability

Cricket is an exciting and unpredictable game. Matches can quickly change direction, which keeps fans engaged. Exciting moments like the last ball, tense chases, and hat-tricks make cricket thrilling. Each match is unique and creates lasting memories for fans.

Star Power and Hero Worship

Cricket stars are larger than life; their charisma spills beyond the playing arena. For instance, legends such as Sir Donald Bradman, Viv Richards, Imran

Khan, and contemporary icons like Virat Kohli, Ben Stokes and AB De Villiers have made cricketing themselves household names. On-field exploits combined with off-field identities have earned them an ardent following. This hero worship directed towards these cricketing greats fuels obsession among followers who passionately keep track of their performances, both good and bad. At the same time, they try to identify with them when they have performed poorly.

The Evolution of Formats

The Development of Formats Cricket has showcased unbelievable adaptability and flexibility. The game changed completely with One Day Internationals (ODIs) and Twenty20 (T20) cricket. Cricket is now more open to all kinds of people in terms of its formats, particularly those popular among younger people. This is because T20 cricket has been dubbed a "hit it out the park" form of cricket as it encourages players to go for big hits and quick results. Our fast-paced lifestyle today means that the evolution of formats in cricket allows it to remain relevant and exciting.

Global Reach and Media Coverage

The advent of television and digital media has played a crucial role in popularising cricket worldwide. Live broadcasts, in-depth analysis, and extensive media coverage have brought the sport into the living rooms of millions. The proliferation of social media platforms has further amplified cricket's reach, allowing fans to engage with the game and their favourite players in real-time. Cricket's global reach, coupled with the accessibility provided by modern media, has created a massive and engaged fan base.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF MUHARRAM AND WHAT TO DO

LAMISA KHAN

Muharram marks the start of the Islamic calendar. The Islamic year consists of 12 months and lasts for around 354 days depending on the lunar cycle. It is known as the month of remembrance, when many significant events in Islamic history took place.

"Verily, the number of months with Allah is twelve months (in a year), so was it ordained by Allah on the Day when He created the heavens and the earth; of them four are Sacred. That is the right religion, so wrong not yourselves therein" (9:36)

Whilst traditions may vary between different Islamic sects, it is common to fast on the ninth and tenth day of the month following the Sunnah of the Prophet. Observing fast on the Day of Ashura is a penitence of a year of sins.

The Prophet said: "Fasting the day of Arafah I hope Allah will expiate thereby for the year before it and the year after it, and fasting the day of Ashura I hope Allah will expiate thereby for the year that came before it." [Muslim]

"The prayer of the fasting person will not be refused." [Al-Bayhaqi, Saheeh]

As many of us fast during Muharram, we should take this opportunity to make dua and renew our intentions for the year ahead. Muharram is a time of ends, change and new beginnings. We often are afraid of change and uncertainty but it is



important to remember that Allah (SWT) is the best of planners and we should embrace the future with faith in him.

Change itself can be difficult for us to face but it is a reminder that attachment itself can be a challenge for the heart,

from matters related to relationships, to money to materials things or even plans we may have for our lives. We should learn to trust in Allah's plans.

What you can do?

1. Fasting expiates sins.
2. Charity: Giving sadaqa especially in the form of spending on the family.

3. History: Many talks and lectures around Muharram will focus on the history of Ashura, it also helps to provide context which in turn can bring you closer to Allah.

4. Acceptance: With change, acceptance is a large part of the journey. Spend time reflecting after Salah on changes that are taking place in your life or looking at concepts like Qadr and Tawaakul which help to understand that our life is in Allah's hands.

5. Reading the Quran: If you are unable to fast, reading a transliteration of the Quran or doing Dhikr in solitude or with a group can really help you to feel the months blessings, remember any gathering for the sake of Allah will also be filled with barakah and the Angels will join you.

Abu Hurairah and Abu Sa'id Al-Khudri (May Allah be pleased with them) reported: The Messenger of Allah (sallallahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

"When a group of people assemble for the remembrance of Allah, the angels surround them (with their wings), (Allah's) mercy envelops them, Sakinah, or tranquility descends upon them and Allah makes a mention of them before those who are near Him." [Muslim].

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Government of Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir Office of the Chief Agriculture Officer, Anantnag

Subject- Provisional Selection list of Krishi Udyamis (KU) (Agricultural entrepreneurs) advertised vide notification no 01 Dated 01.03.2024

Notification No. 12 of 2024 Dated: 05-07-2024

Whereas, the Government of UT of Jammu and Kashmir launched Holistic Agriculture Development Programme with 29 projects for Agriculture and Allied sectors in the year 2023 aimed at revolutionizing agricultural practices in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir. Whereas, under this visionary programme, the establishment of Kisan Khidmat Ghars represents a crucial step towards enhancing agricultural outreach and providing comprehensive services to farmers at grassroots level. Whereas, one project "Innovative Extension Approaches for revitalizing Agriculture in J&K" (Project No.20) has been dedicated for establishing Kisan Khidmat Ghars in each district serving as a one-stop service centers strategically located at the panchayat level. Whereas, during Phase-I establishment of KKGs at 500 locations (250 Jammu & 250 Kashmir) have been proposed by the Directors of Jammu and Kashmir vide their letters: Agri/Dev-KKG/2023-24/5294-95 dated: 22.01.2024 and Agri/Dev-92/KKG/23-24/7405-06 Dated 23.01.2024 respectively. Whereas, Mission Director Holistic Agriculture Development Programme vide letter No. E-7358056/Plan-2/2/2023 dated: 07.02.2024 approved engagement of 2000 Krishi Udyamis (KU) (Agricultural entrepreneurs) in the UT of J&K to operate the KKGs through deputy Commissioners of the respective district. Whereas, 47 No. of KKGs have been sanctioned to be established at the preidentified sites in phase-I of the programme for which 47 Krishi Udyamis (KU) (Agricultural entrepreneurs) will be engaged. Whereas, District Development Commissioner Anantnag Vide order No. 47-DDCA of 2024 dated: 15-02-2024 issued vide endorsement No. DDCA/Agri/12111-12 Dated: 15.02.2024 nominated Chief Agriculture Officer as Nodal Officer for implementation of Kisan Khidmat Ghars (KKGs) under HADP in the District. Whereas, District Development Commissioner Anantnag Vide letter No. DDCA/HADP(Agri)/2023-24/12709-15 Dated: 29.02.2024 constituted District Level Selection Committee (DLSC) for selection of Krishi Udyamis (KUs) in Kisan Khidmat Ghars (KKGs) in District Anantnag. Whereas, District Level Selection Committee (DLSC) through unanimous decisions vide communication No. ADDC/ANG/ 2023-24/1155-63 Dated:04.03.2024 assigned Chief Agriculture Officer Anantnag, the task of floating an advertisement notification for engagement of 47 Krishi Udyamis (KUs). Whereas, Advertisement notice for engagement of Krishi Udyamis (KU)/ (Agricultural Entrepreneurs) has been issued vide Advertisement notification No. 01 Dated 01-03-2024 under endorsement No- DDCA/2024/HADP-KKG/12759-63 Dated 01.03.2024 with last date for receipt of complete applications by 22.03.2024. Whereas, the selection process was halted at the advent of Lok Sabha Elections-2024 due to imposition of Modal Code of Conduct w.e.f. 16.03.2024 to 05.06.2024. Whereas, the M.C.C has been lifted with the completion of elections and the selection process of Krishi Udyamis have been started accordingly. The applications received have been verified and merit list of the applicants stands framed. Whereas, the said selection committee after careful scrutiny prepared the provisional selection list for engagement of 40 Krishi Udyamis in accordance with merit and eligibility of candidates. The selection committee approved the provisional selection list vide No.ADDC/ANG/2024-25/1993-2002 Dated: 05.07.2024

Now, therefore, provisional selection list of 40 Krishi Udyamis ranking at S No. 01 in each KKG Location advertised vide notification No. 01 Dated 01.03.2024 is hereby notified as per Annexure "A" to this notification. It is further notified that:

- i. The selection list shall be subject to outcome of writ petitions if any, pending in the court of law.
ii. The list shall be subject to the outcome of any objection against the candidates as figuring in this list. Objection if any shall reach to the office of Chief Agriculture Officer Anantnag within weeks time.
iii. The selection of candidates has been made on the qualification certificates/documents submitted by them and if at any stage, it comes to the light that the candidate has submitted false information or has secured selection on submitting fake documents/certificates, the selection shall be liable for cancellation at any stage.

Chief Agriculture Officer Anantnag (Member Secretary Selection Committee, KUs)

No. CAO/KKG/2024-25/2707-18 Date:08/07/2024

list of candidates who have applied as Krishi Udyamis (KUs) in response to advertisement notification No 01 Dated 01.03.2024 (annexure "a" of notification no 12 of 2024 dated 05-07-2024)

Table with columns: No. of KKG, Location of KKG, Block, No. of Applicants, Ranking of Applicant as per Merit, Name of candidate, Parentage, Gender, Residence, Points for female candidate, Points for Domestic of Local Panchayat (25 Points), Points for Govt. Graduation (Science +25 points) & for Graduation in Agri & Allied Courses +45 points, Points for PG in (Science/Agri. & Allied (10 points)), Points for Diploma in Agr./BHT/ BAT etc. (15 points), Points for Diploma in Computer (15 points), Total Points.

Table with columns: No. of KKG, Location of KKG, Block, No. of Applicants, Ranking of Applicant as per Merit, Name of candidate, Parentage, Gender, Residence, Points for female candidate, Points for Domestic of Local Panchayat (25 Points), Points for Govt. Graduation (Science +25 points) & for Graduation in Agri & Allied Courses +45 points, Points for PG in (Science/Agri. & Allied (10 points)), Points for Diploma in Agr./BHT/ BAT etc. (15 points), Points for Diploma in Computer (15 points), Total Points.

Table with columns: No. of KKG, Location of KKG, Block, No. of Applicants, Ranking of Applicant as per Merit, Name of candidate, Parentage, Gender, Residence, Points for female candidate, Points for Domestic of Local Panchayat (25 Points), Points for Govt. Graduation (Science +25 points) & for Graduation in Agri & Allied Courses +45 points, Points for PG in (Science/Agri. & Allied (10 points)), Points for Diploma in Agr./BHT/ BAT etc. (15 points), Points for Diploma in Computer (15 points), Total Points.

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DIPK-2653/24 dated: 09-07-2024

Chief Agriculture Officer Anantnag (Member Secretary Selection Committee, KUs)

CS Calls For Holistic Development Of New Tourist Destinations



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR- Chief Secretary Atal Dulloo Tuesday chaired a meeting to assess the proposal of Tourism department to be taken up with Union Ministry of Tourism for funding by World Bank.

The meeting was attended by the ACS, Forests; Commissioner Secretary, Tourism; Secretary, Revenue; Director Tourism, Jammu/Kashmir; DG Budget besides other concerned officers.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary had an overview of proposal framed by the department to be taken up with Union Ministry of Tourism and World Bank for their funding over a period of next 4-5 years.

Dulloo impressed upon the officers to choose destinations from both the Divisions that are currently less treaded and have potential to be developed on their unique strengths.

He advised that these destinations along with other nearby lesser known destinations should be developed as a circuit.

He called for inclusion of activities related to adventure, nature, leisure, pilgrimage or eco-tourism in this plan.

He also enjoined upon the concerned to focus on promotion of destinations that would address the problems of overcrowding in the existing, popular destinations. He also asked for focusing on high-end and niche tourism.

Commissioner Secretary, Tourism, Yasha Mudgal, during the meeting threw light on the main features of this proposal. She highlighted that it is going to lay focus on the already developed infrastructure available in the vicinity besides the status of bed capacity, surface and air connectivity, communication network, medical, sanitation and other common amenities along with that of the creation of master plan in such areas.

It was also revealed that this envisaged plan is going to look into the identification of zones that could be developed for hospitality, fun, pleasure, adventure or eco-tourism activities.

Banking Sector In Good Financial Health To Support Growth: RBI Dy Guv

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI: The banking sector, which is at a decadal high in terms of financial parameters, is all set to support the growth of the Indian economy, Reserve Bank deputy governor Swaminathan J said on Tuesday.

Addressing a conference of statutory auditors and chief financial officers of commercial banks and all India financial institutions here, the deputy governor also said the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has undertaken several initiatives to enhance the effectiveness of the auditing process.

These include structured meeting mechanisms between supervisory teams and auditors, introducing exception reporting, streamlining processes for the appointment of auditors, and other measures designed to safeguard the independence of auditors.

"Auditors must apply due rigour in their audit processes to mitigate any potential for divergence, under-provisioning, or non-compliance with statutory and regulatory requirements. Further, a critical aspect of the auditor's role is the careful evaluation of internal financial controls over financial reporting," he said.

By maintaining meticulous standards and adherence to regulatory guidelines as well as auditing standards, auditors can minimise the need for supervisors to intervene, Swami-



nathan added. While highlighting expectations from auditors to help ensure robust financial oversight and regulatory compliance, he said they can play a significant role in identifying and promptly reporting incipient vulnerabilities to both the bank management and the RBI.

"I would like to mention that today the banking sector is at a decadal high in terms of all financial parameters that we monitor, and the sector is well poised to support the growth of the Indian economy. But we have a shared responsibility to ensure that the same is sustainable over the years," he said.

Therefore, the deputy governor said today's conference underscores the indispensable partnership between the auditors, CFOs and financial sector regulators in safeguarding the integrity and stability of our financial institutions.

He also emphasised the need to uphold the highest standards of transparency, diligence, and professionalism to foster trust among stakeholders and ensure the continued resilience of our banking system.

PM Modi To Meet Economists Ahead Of Union Budget On Thursday

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will on Thursday meet eminent economists to elicit their views and suggestions for the upcoming Budget, a senior government official said.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is scheduled to present the Budget for 2024-25 in the Lok Sabha on July 23.

Besides economists and sectoral experts, the prime minister's meeting will also be attended by Niti Aayog Vice Chairman Suman Bery and other members.

This will be the first major economic document of the Modi 3.0 government, which, among other things, is expected to lay the road map for making India a developed nation by 2047.

President Droupadi Murmu, in her address to the joint sitting of Parliament last month, had indicated that the government would come out



with historic steps to accelerate the pace of reforms.

She also said the Budget will be an effective document of the government's far-reaching policies and futuristic vision.

Sitharaman has already held discussions with various stakeholders, including economists and captains of Indian industry, on the forthcoming Budget. Several experts have urged

the government to provide tax relief to the common man to boost consumption and come out with steps to check inflation and accelerate economic growth.

The economy has recorded a growth rate of 8.2 per cent in 2023-24.

Earlier in February, Sitharaman came out with an interim budget for 2024-25 in view of the Lok Sabha elections.

Govt May Relax 45-Day Payment Rule For MSMEs In Budget

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- The government may relax the requirement of making payments to MSMEs within 45 days of buying goods and services to check large corporate from looking at other sourcing avenues, sources said.

The announcement to this effect could be made in the Budget likely to be presented on July 23.

The government is considering suggestions regarding changes to Section 43B(h) of the Income Tax Act made by MSMEs during pre-Budget consultations, sources said.

The government in last year's Budget added a new clause under Section 43B of the Income Tax Act to address the challenge of delayed payments faced by MSMEs in the country.

According to Section 43B(h) of the Income Tax Act, introduced through the Finance Act 2023, if a larger company does not pay an MSME on time -- within 45 days in case of written agreements -- it cannot deduct that expense from its taxable income, leading to



potentially higher taxes.

MSMEs fear that due to this provision, large buyers could cold-shoulder MSME suppliers and start buying either from those MSMEs that are not registered with Udyam or from non-MSMEs.

The amendment was brought in for MSMEs to get timely payment, but there are a lot of fear were raised by them, sources said, adding that they feared that large corporate, in bid to safeguard their interest, can shift their sourcing requirement to bigger firms or ask their vendors to give up

their MSME registration to do business with them.

Earlier in May, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had said the changes, if any, to the rule will have to be done in the full Budget in July under the new government as per the representations submitted by MSMEs.

The MSME sector accounts for 30 per cent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP) and the second largest employer after agriculture. The share of exports from products specified for MSMEs constituted 45.56 per cent of the country's total exports.

MFNI For Limiting Indebtedness Up To Rs 2 Lakh Per Borrower

Press Trust Of India

KOLKATA- Micro-credit indebtedness per borrower should be limited to Rs two lakh, while the number of lenders to a debtor should also be restricted to a maximum of four, MFNI, a self-regulatory organisation of the industry, said on Tuesday.

With nearly 80 per cent of the micro-loans having a tenure of 18 months or more, a limit of Rs two lakh will effectively mean lesser repayment obligation for a borrower, Micro-finance Industry Network



(MFNI) said in a statement.

The industry body also said that assessing a borrower's household income and loan repayment obligations is an important part of underwriting. This ensures that a debtor is "not overstretched and is to honour loan repayments on time".

MFNI also urged credit information companies to

improve the quality of data available for underwriting.

The indebtedness is the responsibility of microfinance lenders, said the industry body, adding that it has taken steps to facilitate responsible lending and promote a steady and calibrated sector growth.

The microfinance sector serves borrowers below an annual income of Rs three lakh.

Supported by conducive regulations, the sector now has a gross loan portfolio of Rs 4.33 lakh crore and covers nearly 7.8 crore borrowers, the industry body said.



Domestic Air Passenger Traffic Momentum To Continue This Year: Report

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI -The momentum in air passenger traffic is expected to continue and airlines' net loss is projected to be Rs 3,000-4,000 crore in the year ending March 2025, both trends similar to the previous financial year, a report said on Tuesday.

In June, the domestic air passenger traffic was estimated at 132.8 lakh, around 3.7 per cent lower than seen in May but about 6.3 per cent higher compared to the year-ago period.

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Rating agency Ica said the outlook for the country's aviation industry is stable amid the continued recovery in domestic and international air passenger traffic, with a relatively stable cost environment and expectations of the trend continuing in FY2025.

"The momentum in air passenger traffic witnessed in FY2024 is expected to continue into FY2025, though further expansion in yields from the current levels may be limited," it noted.

According to its report, the pace of recovery in industry earnings is likely to be gradual

owing to the high fixed-cost nature of the business and the net loss is expected to be Rs 3,000-4,000 crore this fiscal as seen in the previous financial year.

While mentioning about supply chain issues, Ica said it is estimated that 24-26 per cent of the total fleet of Indian airlines in operations was grounded by March 31, 2024.

"Considering the bulk recall of the engines globally by P&W and other existing issues with the original equipment manufacturer's (OEM's) engines, the testing by P&W is likely to take longer, around 250-300 days.

"This will result in increased operating expenses towards the cost of grounding, increased lease rentals due to additional aircraft being taken on lease to offset the grounded capacity, rising lease rates and lower fuel efficiency (due to replacement by older aircraft taken on spot lease), which will adversely impact an airline's cost structure," the report said.

However, healthy yields, high passenger load factor (PLF) and partial compensation available from engine Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) would help absorb the impact to an extent.

Mcap Of BSE-Listed Firms At Record High Of Rs 451.27 Lakh Cr

Press Trust Of India



NEW DELHI: The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms on Tuesday hit a fresh lifetime high of Rs 451.27 lakh crore on a day when the BSE Sensex reached a record closing level.

The 30-share BSE benchmark climbed 391.26 points or 0.49 per cent to settle at a new closing peak of 80,351.64. During the day, it jumped 436.79 points, or 0.54 per cent, to hit a new lifetime high of 80,397.17.

The market capitalisation of BSE-listed firms hit an all-time high of Rs 4,51,27,853.30 crore (USD 5.41 trillion). Investors' wealth also went up Rs 1.56 lakh crore on Tuesday.

"After consolidating in the last few days, markets bounced back to make fresh high amid buying seen in index heavyweights," said Siddhartha Khemka, Head - Retail Re-

search, Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd.

Among Sensex components, Maruti Suzuki India jumped 6.60 per cent amid reports that the UP government waived registration taxes on hybrid cars as part of its initiative to promote environmentally friendly vehicles in the state.

Mahindra & Mahindra, ITC, Sun Pharma, Titan, Tata Motors, and Nestle were the other big gainers.

Reliance Industries, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Bajaj Finance, and JSW Steel were among the laggards.

Among the indices, auto jumped 2.17 per cent, consumer durables (2.01 per cent), realty (1.23 per cent), consumer discretionary (1.21 per cent), healthcare (1 per cent), and utilities (0.76 per cent). Telecommunication, capital goods, and teck were the laggards.

Gold Falls By Rs 100 To Rs 73,310 Per 10 G; Silver Rises Rs 180

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- Gold prices fell by Rs 100 to Rs 73,310 per 10 grams in the national capital on Tuesday amid weak global cues, according to HDFC Securities.

The precious metal had settled at Rs 73,410 per 10 grams on Monday. However, silver prices jumped by Rs 180 to Rs 94,450 per kg from Rs 94,270 per kg in the previous session.

"Gold prices traded lower ahead of the Fed member speech and US inflation data. The silver prices at domestic as well as global front traded higher tracking strong base metal and risk-on moods," Dilip Parmar, Research Analyst at HDFC Securities, said.

Silver prices are expected to outperform the yellow metal in the near future, Parmar added. On the overseas front, spot gold at Comex traded at USD 2,362 per ounce, down USD 11 per ounce against the previous close.

"With new government and political development in Iran, the US mentioned about some progress regarding the ceasefire talks on Monday weighing on the metal.

"Any update from Israel or elsewhere will be crucial for further volatility in prices," Manav Modi, Senior Analyst, Commodity Research at Motilal Oswal Financial Services Ltd (MOFSL), said.

Traders will also keep an eye on more cues on US interest rates from testimony by Federal Reserve Chair Jerome Powell and key inflation data due through the week, Modi added.

Awareness Programme On 'JK Govt's Start-Up Schemes 2024' Held

Observer News Service

RAMBAN- IIC of Government Degree College, Ramban, in collaboration with Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI), organized an Entrepreneurship awareness Programme to educate students about the JK Government's Start-up Schemes 2024.

The Programme aimed to create awareness among students about the various opportunities and benefits provided by the government to support entrepreneurship and innovation.

District Nodal Officer, JKEDI Ramban Mohammad Numan and Assistant Faculty Sajad A Lone, were the resource persons who enlightened the students about various startup schemes launched by the government, incubation centers, and different types of funding available to them for starting their businesses.

The programme was organized under the overall supervision of Principal of the College, Prof. Archana Kaul, who appreciated the initiative and committed to organizing such events in the future.

Along with students, the programme was attended by faculty members of the college, including Prof. Satish Kumar, Prof. Raj Kumar Gupta, Prof. Sanjay Kumar Cartel, Dr. Romesh Chander, Prof. Rabinder Kumar, Prof. Ram Parkash, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmad Mir and Dr. Anuj Gupta. The whole event was coordinated by Prof. Arjun Gupta.

Improve Registration Numbers In PACS, FPOs: DC Srinagar

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR- A meeting of the District Cooperative Development Committee (DCDC) was held Tuesday under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat here at the Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex.

At the outset, the Deputy Registrar Cooperative Srinagar, Abida Nabi through a PowerPoint presentation gave a detailed overview of District profile along-with agenda points and action taken on them which were circulated by the Ministry of Cooperation.

The DC issued instructions to improve registration numbers in Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS) and Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs). He also directed other allied Departments to work in convergence mode with the Cooperative Department.

Dr Bilal further asked for recommendations and feedback from other allied Departments to further strengthen the Cooperative sector. He assured cooperation and every possible support to the Department for its better functioning.

Among others, the meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer, Deputy Registrar Cooperative, Assistant Director Fisheries, District Agriculture Officer, Lead Bank Manager and others concerned.

Dir Agri Visits SM Farm Padgampora

Observer News Service

NANTNAG- Director Agriculture Kashmir Chowdhury Mohammad Iqbal Tuesday visited Seed Multiplication Farm Padgampora Anantnag and took stock of the Progress on the implementation of different programs in the Farm.

He visited different sections of the Farm and reviewed the various interventions adopted there. Speaking on the occasion Dir Agriculture said that the departmental farms are the assets with the department and have an inevitable role to play amid the changing global agriculture scenario.

Our immediate goal is to achieve the self-reliance in seed requirement of different Agricultural crops in the region and the departmental seed Multiplication Farms are the main resources to reach this ambitious goal, he added.

Director asked the concerned officers/ the technical experts to work on a mission mode so that all the set targets for the current year could be reached successfully.

Earlier, he visited different areas of Anantnag and Pulwama districts and took stock of the agriculture scenario and inspected different field crops.

He held meetings with the farmers at many places and received feedback regarding the different centrally sponsored schemes CSS, flagship programmes run by the department. He asked farmers to avail benefits under different projects of holistic agriculture development program HADD.

CONTD. FROM FRONT PAGE

Russia India's

Russian winter, India-Russia friendship has always remained in 'plus' and been full of warmth. This relationship is built on the strong foundation of mutual trust and mutual respect," Modi said.

He said he had a special appreciation for "his friend" Putin for steering the India-Russia friendship to greater heights over the last two decades.

As prime minister, he said it was his sixth visit to Russia and the two leaders have met 17 times during this period.

"All these meetings have added to our mutual trust and respect," he said, praising Putin for helping the evacuation of Indian students during the war. He expressed gratitude to the Russian leader and Russian citizens for this.

To the applause from the audience, he announced that India will open two new consulates in Russia to boost travel and trade between the two countries.

Recalling the celebrated Hindi song 'Sar pe laal topi Rusi, phir bhi dil hai Hindustani' picturised on Raj Kapoor, he said it may be an old number but its sentiments remain evergreen.

He also mentioned Mithun Chakraborty, another Indian actor who earned a big following in Russia, as he spoke about the deep cultural ties between the two countries.

Modi said India was undergoing a transformation and the pace of development over the past 10 years has taken the world by surprise. Even the world now acknowledges what he used to say during his poll campaign that the 21st century belongs to India, he added.

The fast pace of India's development will write a "new chapter" in the world's progress, he said.

He said India was changing as it believes in the strength of its 140 crore citizens who are now dreaming of turning their resolve of 'Viksit Bharat' into reality.

"Today's India is brimming with self-confidence, unlike the situation before 2014 when the country was sunk in despair, and this is our biggest capital," Modi said.

In this context, he mentioned India's win in the T20 World Cup and added that India's teams in different sports were giving a historic performance.

"The youth India of today does not concede defeat till the last ball and the last moment," he said, adding that the country is sending a strong team for the Paris Olympics and its athletes will show their mettle.

"When people like you bless us, even the biggest goals can be achieved. You all know that today's India achieves whatever goal it sets its mind to," he said.

He said it was in his DNA to challenge all the challenges and India will write a new chapter of global growth in coming years.

Modi said it was exactly a month ago that he took oath as prime minister for the third consecutive term when he had made the resolve to work at thrice the strength and speed to fulfil the aspirations of the country.

"Our government envisions making India the world's third-largest economy, build three crore homes for the poor and turn three crore poor women in villages to 'lakhpati didi'," the prime minister said amid chants of 'Modi, Modi' and 'Modi hai toh mummy hai'.

He said India was the country which sent Chandrayaan to a place on the moon where no country has gone before and has given the work the most reliable model for digital transactions.

"India's development of the past 10 years was just a trailer, we will see much faster growth in the next 10 years," Modi asserted.

The Indian diaspora takes pride in the country's achievements, he added.

'Won't Go Unavenged'

determined to usher in peace and order in the region," he said.

"I pray for a speedy recovery to those who sustained injuries in this dastardly terror attack," Singh added.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha also said that perpetrators of Kathua terror attack will be punished soon. He also expressed deepest condolences to bereaved families of martyrs. In his message the Lieutenant Governor said: "I salute the bravery of our army personnel, who lost their lives in a dastardly terror attack in Kathua. Deepest condolences to bereaved families of martyrs. Coordinated counter-terror operations are underway and the perpetrators of this attack will be punished soon."

Defence Secretary Aramane too expressed his "profound grief on the loss of five Bravehearts" in the attack and extended deepest condolences to the bereaved families.

"Their selfless service to the nation will always be remembered and their sacrifice will not go unavenged and India will defeat the evil forces behind the attack," he said.

Aramane's remarks were shared on 'X' by a spokesperson of the defence ministry.

Blood On Mountains

Monday because of heavy rain, resumed on Tuesday with joint search parties of the Army, police and CRPF launched from various directions, including Kathua, Udhampur and Doda.

The Army's elite para-commandos and sniffer dogs joined the search operation while drones and helicopters were also pressed into service for surveillance, officials said.

Amid the telltale signs of the violence, were the two vehicles, parked about 300 metres away from each other. Given the state of the road, officials said they were probably not going at too much speed and came under fire while they were taking a turn.

Villagers also played a crucial role in the operation, joining rescue efforts to evacuate the casualties. There were anti-Pakistan protests in several areas as agitated villagers took to the streets to condemn the terror attack.

"A civil bus passed the road about 10 minutes before the attack. We heard a loud explosion and initially took it as a tyre burst but the subsequent heavy firing made us realise that an encounter has started," Puran Chand Sharma, a villager who runs a shop just a few metres from the scene, told PTI.

The heavy firing continued till 5 pm followed by intermittent firing for another one hour.

"About 12 villagers were at my shop. We hid ourselves inside to avoid getting caught in the crossfire. After the firing stopped, we rushed to help evacuate the casualties," he said.

Vijay Kumar, another local, said this is the first terror incident in the village since cross-border terrorism broke out in Jammu and Kashmir over three decades ago.

"We have not noticed any movement of terrorists in our area having over 100 families," he said. In his view, the terrorists might have reached in the bus that had passed by a short while before bullet fire rang out.

Kathua Senior Superintendent of Police Anayat Ali Choudhary, who reached the spot hours of the incident, is camping at Lawang-Machedi along with other officers to supervise the anti-terrorist operation.

"Efforts are on to track down and neutralise the terrorists. The joint search parties have fanned out from all sides and it is a matter of investigation how the terrorists reached the area," a police official said.

Director General of Police R R Swain is personally overseeing the anti-terrorist operation in the dense forest area, connected to Basantgarh in Udhampur district where several encounters have occurred in the past.

On April 28, a village defence guard was killed in an encounter with terrorists in Panara village of Basantgarh.

According to officials, this route could be used by terrorists to reach the hinterland after they managed to sneak in from across the border.

The Jammu region has been shaken by a series of recent ambushes and terror attacks, particularly in the border districts of Poonch, Rajouri, Doda, and Reasi.

On June 9, for instance, terrorists attacked a bus carrying pilgrims from the Shiv Khori temple in Reasi district, claiming the lives of nine persons and injuring 41 others.

Earlier in May, terrorists ambushed an Indian Air Force (IAF) convoy in Poonch district, killing a soldier and injuring several others.

Kashmir Tigers, a shadow outfit of the banned Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM), has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Rain Likely in

Director Meteorological department, Dr Mukhtar Ahmad said, there is a possibility of brief spell of rain and thundershower at scattered places of Jammu division and isolated places of Kashmir division till tomorrow.

He added that from July 11 to July 12, a spell of light to moderate rain and thundershower is expected at scattered to fairly widespread places while a brief spell of rain and thundershower is expected at isolated to scattered places on July 13 and July 14.

Families Mourn

about his son's death in the terror attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua.

The phone call on Monday evening left the family in Thati Dagar village of

Uttarakhand's Tehri district in a state of shock.

He was among the five soldiers from Uttarakhand killed in a terror attack on an Army convoy in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua on Monday. It was the fifth terror attack in the Jammu region within a month.

In Pauri, Rifleman Anuj Negi's mother and wife fell unconscious upon receiving the news of his death. The scene was similar at Havildar Kamal Singh's home who has left behind his mother, wife and two daughters aged eight and four years.

The 32-year-old Singh, who had just completed 10 years in service, had come home in Papadi Naudanu village two-and-a-half months ago to get his youngest daughter admitted to school, a local told PTI.

His father Kesar Singh died a few years ago.

Adarsh Negi (25), a farmer's son, was the youngest of the three siblings. He had left his college studies midway to fulfil his dream of serving the country by being in the army.

Dalbir Singh Negi said his son studied up to class 12 at Government Inter College in Piplidhar and then joined Garhwal University to do BSc. He left his studies to join the Garhwal Rifles, he said.

"I spoke to him last on July 7 over the phone. He had come home in February and returned on March 26 to join duty," Dalbir Singh Negi said, fighting back his tears.

In Pauri's Dobariya village, friends and relatives flocked to Anuj Negi's home to console his mother and wife, but in vain.

The only son of his parents, Anuj Negi (26) got married in December last year. He rejoined duty four months after tying the knot, said Subhash Chandra Jakhmola, the gram pradhan of the nearby Jamri village.

After doing his intermediate, Anuj Negi joined the Garhwal Rifles about five years ago and his mother had distributed sweets in the village, Jakhmola said.

Uttarakhand Assembly Speaker and Kothdwar MLA Ritu Khanduri expressed grief over the death of the soldiers and said the country stands with their families.

Khanduri said she is the daughter of an army man and can the pain of the bereaved families. "The armed forces will give a fitting reply to the terror attack," she said.

Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami, Cabinet ministers Premchand Aggarwal and Ganesh Joshi placed a wreath on the coffins of the five martyrs as their mortal remains were brought to the Jolly Grant airport here.

"Five brave soldiers of Uttarakhand attained martyrdom during the cowardly terrorist attack in Kathua, Jammu and Kashmir. This is a moment of great pain for all of us," Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said in a statement.

"Our bravehearts made the supreme sacrifice for their motherland in keeping with the rich military tradition of Uttarakhand," he said, adding their "sacrifice will not go in vain.

Terrorists, who are the enemies of humanity and guilty of this cowardly attack, will not be spared at any cost, he said, adding the people who sheltered them will also have to face the consequences.

NIA To Assist

personnel dead and as many injured, officials said on Tuesday.

A team of National Investigation Agency (NIA) officials has been sent to Kathua in Jammu region to extend all possible support to the police in its investigation, they said and made it clear that the probe agency has not registered a case to investigate the terrorist attack.

Five Army personnel, including a junior commissioned officer, were killed, and as many were injured when a group of heavily armed terrorists ambushed a patrolling party on the rugged Machedi-Kindli-Malhar mountainous road near the Badnota village in Lohai

Malhar, approximately 150 km from the Kathua district's headquarters.

It was the fifth terror attack in the Jammu region within a month.

A massive search operation was underway on Tuesday to track down the terrorists behind the deadly attack on an Army patrol party in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district, as Director General of Police R R Swain flew to the area to oversee the operation on the ground.

The bodies of the five soldiers killed in the attack have been handed over to the Army after postmortem and were airlifted to their homes for last rites, officials said.

Accompanied by ADGP Anand Jain, DGP Swain conducted an aerial survey of the area and reviewed the ongoing operations, they said.

The scope of the search operation has been expanded to encompass large areas in the adjoining districts of Udhampur and Kathua, including Basantgarh, Seoj (a high-altitude area in Udhampur), and the upper reaches of Bani, Daggar, and Kindli in Kathua district.

Special forces of the Indian Army's 'Para' unit have been deployed to conduct surgical operations against the terrorists in specific areas, the officials said.

Ground search teams are being supported by helicopter and UAV surveillance. Additionally, sniffer dogs and metal detectors are being utilized, with a particular focus on dense forest areas in the region.

The officials said that a joint cordon and search operation, involving the Army, police and CRPF, was launched in Machedi, Badnote, Kindli, and Lohai Malhar areas, with a significant area placed under cordon.

The bodies of the five soldiers were airlifted following postmortem examinations conducted at the Sub District Hospital in Billawar, Jammu and Kashmir.

Additional Deputy Commissioner of Billawar, Vinay Khosla said that the bodies were handed over to the Army and subsequently airlifted.

He further said that out of eight injured soldiers brought to the Billawar hospital, six were shifted to the Pathankot military hospital by the Army.

The officials indicated that currently three to four groups of terrorists, mostly foreign militants, are active in the region, adding they have observed an increase in the presence of foreign militants in the Kathua-Udhampur-Doda belt and the Poonch-Rajouri-Reasi belt in recent times.

Five Army personnel, including a junior commissioned officer, were killed, and an equal number were injured in the ambush by heavily armed terrorists in the remote Machedi area on Monday.

According to sources, three to four terrorists, mostly foreigners, are believed to have executed the ambush. They appear to be linked to the same group which was involved in Basantgarh attack in which village defence guard Mohd Sharief was killed in an encounter with terrorists on April 28 in Panara village.

The attack mirrored a similar pattern to the Bimbher Gali-Mendhar terror incident involving an Army truck on April 21, 2023, where five soldiers lost their lives. The terrorists initiated firing on the vehicle's wheels, followed by bursts of gunfire targeting its front and left sides.

The sources said that the condition of the road and the slow speed of the truck in the area likely facilitated the attack.

Investigations into the weaponry and ammunition used in the attack are currently ongoing.

In June, security forces had observed movement of a group in the upper reaches of Bani, Daggar, and Kindli areas of Kathua district, leading to subsequent search operations.

The scope of the search operation has been expanded to encompass large areas in the adjoining districts of Udhampur and Kathua, including Basantgarh, Seoj (a high-altitude area in Udhampur), and the upper reaches of Bani, Daggar, and Kindli in Kathua district.

Special forces of the Indian Army's 'Para' unit have been deployed to conduct surgical operations against the terrorists in specific areas, the officials said.

J&K Medical SRs,

days' Casual Leave in a year excluding regular duty off Gazetted holidays as per Hospital/Institute calendar/policy. It reads that Female DNB PG students shall be allowed Maternity Leave, MTP/ Abortion Leave as per the Government rules and regulations, which are applicable to DNB Training Institute while as a Male DNB PG students shall be allowed Paternity Leave as per the Government rules and regulations, applicable to DNB Training Institute.

"Further, any changes in the guidelines/norms of NMC and NBE for leaves to Senior Residents/Tutors & PG Students of Government Medical Colleges and DNB PG Students shall apply ipso-facto", the order also reads.

Speaking on the development, Secretary Health and Medical Education, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah said that Maternity Leaves and Casual Leaves for SR's and PG's is aimed at a women friendly work ecosystem in the health and medical education department. He added that after consultations with stakeholders in the Medical Education, and realizing the genuineness of their demands, we have decided to permit these leaves, in consonance with the norms of the regulatory bodies.

Highlighting on the broader intent behind this significant step, Dr. Abid said that being one of the toughest courses in the world with vast syllabus coupled with relentless schedules imposed on PG Students, these leaves entitlements were long due. "MD/MS courses being very demanding, the new leave rules will make the situation better and reduce the toll on physical and mental health of PG Students who along with Senior Residents are critical for quality patient-care in our Medical Colleges", he said.

As part of major reformatory agenda of the Health & Medical Education Department other measures are also on the anvil.

Pertinently, the Health & Medical Education in a slew of measures in the recent past has introduced several policy initiatives. These initiatives include restructuring of faculty structure on old GMCs and amendment in Medical Education Recruitment Rules as per NMC norms, uniform policy guidelines for selection of Senior Residents/ Tutors.

A spokesperson of H&ME Department revealed that the Department while recognizing the criticality of SRs and PGs for quality patient-care in GMCs, is in the process of setting up a robust grievances redressal mechanism and stringent anti-ragging measures to ensure congenial environment to enable them perform their assignments more efficiently.

'State' Includes

State and not the Union Territory of J&K. The counsel had submitted that after the application of J&K Re-Organization Act of 2019, the J&K no more remained a State but was converted into two Union Territories, therefore, the detaining authority ought to have applied its mind and detained the detainee for the acts "prejudicial to the Security of the Union Territory of J&K."

Subsequently, the court dismissed the appeal and upheld its judgment by virtue of which challenge to PSA detention order passed by District Magistrate Kulgam 29-08-2023 was overturned.

"From the above discussion coupled with the law as taken note of hereinbefore, this Court is of the view that the grounds of detention formulated by the detaining authority and the record supplied by the respondents (authorities) does not suffer from and legal infirmity," the court said, adding, "The detention order appears to be on sound logic for the reason that the detaining authority, before passing the order, has applied its mind to draw subjective satisfaction to order preventive detention of the detainee by curtailing his liberty."

SC Closes PIL

and Kashmir.

The law officer said the powers of three commissions out of the seven are being exercised by the central panels and the rest are functional in the union territory.

He also referred to the affidavit of the law, justice and parliamentary affairs department of Jammu and Kashmir in support of his submissions.

"We will close the case," the bench then said.

"It has been submitted that with the passing of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Bill, now the laws applicable to UTs are made applicable to the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir...moreover, the central government is vested with the power to direct that the central commissions to function as state commissions," the bench said.

It disposed of the PIL, saying that in view of the present position, the plea has become infructuous and no further directions are required to be issued.

The petitioner had made the DoPT (Department of Personnel and Training), the National Human Rights Commission and the Law Commission of India parties to the PIL.

In August 2019, the Centre bifurcated Jammu and Kashmir into two Union territories and abrogated the provisions of Article 370 of the Constitution which accorded special status to the erstwhile state.

The Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Bill was introduced in the Rajya Sabha on August 5, 2019 and passed the same day. The Lok Sabha cleared it the next day.

District Courts

Chief Justice of the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.

As per the law governing functioning of these Authorities, any person interested who has not accepted the land compensation award has to write to the collector to refer the matter to the Authority.

"Provided that the collector shall, within a period of thirty days from the date of receipt of application, make a reference to the appropriate Authority," the law states.

The Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 became applicable to J&K UT from October 31, 2019. Before 2019, J&K had its own land acquisition law.

Farming Resumes

However, with the renewed efforts of the Border Security Force (BSF), 500 kanals have been leveled and made suitable for cultivation, with ongoing efforts to prepare the remaining 300 kanals.

Reports inform that Agriculture Department officials visited the site to distribute free seeds to farmers, encouraging them to resume farming activities. Previously, crops such as wheat and sesame were grown in these areas. BSF personnel, who monitor the border, provided security and assistance, helping farmers plow their land safely.

Farmers said that there was a time when the land beyond the fencing was left uncultivated due to the constant threat from Pakistani Rangers. The fear, they said, of being shot

at while working in the fields led many farmers to abandon their land, rendering it barren.

Officials emphasized that the resumption of farming would bolster the local economy and empower farmers. They noted that the ceasefire agreement and proactive measures by the district administration have created a conducive environment for agriculture. Farmers now feel secure enough to return to their fields.

With encouragement and support from the district administration and security forces, farmers are regaining confidence. The construction of a dam on the zero line has further enhanced their sense of security. The district administration's directive has led to an organized effort to contact farmers and promote urad cultivation. Seeds have been provided, and sowing has commenced on the reclaimed 500 kanals of land—(KNO)

27th year OF PUBLICATION

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