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Rains Drench J&K; More Likely Till April 6

MeT Urges Farmers To Avoid spraying Orchards, Maintain Proper Drainage To Drain Out Excess Water In Fields

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 04: A spell of light to moderate rain drenched Jammu and Kashmir since last evening even as the weather department predicted intermittent precipitation and thunderstorm to continue at most places of Kashmir and at isolated places of Jammu on Tuesday.

A meteorological department official here told GNS that in last 24 hours till 0830 hours today, Srinagar received 5.2mm of rain, Qazigund 4.8mm, Pahalgam 6.5mm, Kupwara 19.5mm, Kokernag 5.0mm, Gulmarg 10.8mm, Jammu 29.0mm, Baniha 24.8mm, Batote 18.8mm, Katra 15.0mm, Bhaderwah 11.8mm and Kathua 9.2 mm.

Turn.....Rains Drench J&K.....Pg 02



PM Modi addresses 5th International Conference on DRI

HT News Network

NEW DELHI, APR 04: Prime Minister Narendra Modi today called upon the world for an integrated approach to deal with the impact of disasters.

Speaking at the 5th edition of the International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, ICDRI-2023, Modi said in a closely connected world, the impact of disasters will not just be local and therefore the response has to be integrated, not isolated.

Modi said that each nation and region faces disasters of different kinds and societies evolve local knowledge related to infrastructure that can withstand disasters. He added that while modernizing infrastructure, such

Turn.....PM Modi addresses.....Pg 02



Majority Of Pak Attempts To Smuggle Weapons, Narcotics Foiled In J&K: ADGP

HT News Network

JAMMU, APR 04: A day after the recovery of a cache of arms near the International Border, a senior police officer on Tuesday said Pakistan is making repeated attempts to smuggle weapons and narcotics but majority of these were foiled by the security forces guarding the borders.

"Pakistan is making repeated attempts to smuggle weapons, improvised explosive devices and grenades (in the recent past) but majority of these attempts were foiled as we have full control of the situation (on the borders)," Additional Director General of Police, Jammu zone, Mukesh Singh told reporters in Samba.

On Monday, security forces recovered three pistols, six magazines, four hand grenades and 48 rounds of ammunition from a packet believed to have been dropped by a Pakistani drone near the International Border in Samba district.

"I want to assure all that all the conspiracies hatched across the border will be foiled," Singh said, adding the shortcomings, if any, will be addressed to make the borders fully secure.

Responding to a question about the possibility of terrorists trying to sneak into this side from Pakistan, he said there have been many infiltration attempts in the past couple of years and all such attempts were foiled.

"Our attempt is to foil their plans (to push terrorists) and we are doing our job," he said.

Singh was in Samba district to preside over a police-public meet as part of the efforts to reach out to the public and

Turn.....Majority of Pak.....Pg 02

NEWS BRIEF

Srinagar-Kargil highway closed due to avalanches

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 04: Srinagar-Kargil national highway has been closed for vehicular traffic following avalanches that were triggered due to snowfall at various places on the Zojila road on Tuesday, officials said. "The highway has been closed for

Turn.....Srinagar-Kargil.....Pg 02

Jmu-Sgr National Highway To Remain Closed On April 7

HT News Network

JAMMU, APR 04: The Jammu-Srinagar national highway will remain closed on April 7 for carrying out repairs in landslide-hit areas of Ramban district, officials said Tuesday.

The 270-km-long highway, which

Turn.....Jmu-Sgr National.....Pg 02

COVID-19: J&K reports 31 fresh cases in last 24 hours

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 04: Jammu and Kashmir Tuesday reported 31 fresh cases of Covid-19, taking the number of active cases to 156 while no death was reported in the last 24 hours.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that among 31 new cases, 29 have been

Turn.....COVID-19: J&K.....Pg 02

SIA raids multiple locations in Kashmir in militancy funding case

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 04: Jammu and Kashmir Police's State Investigation Agency (SIA) is carrying out raids at multiple locations including the residences of two separatists in a case of militancy funding, official sources said.

The raids that began on Tuesday morning were underway in districts

Turn.....SIA raids multiple.....Pg 02

EXPOSED!

Srinagar Police Busted Sex Racket in Bagh-e-Mehtab

Locals appreciate police for exposing sex racket

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 04: Srinagar Police on Monday busted a sex racket in Bagh-e-Mehtab area of central Kashmir Srinagar district.

According to Police official, 2 persons were arrested after police got information about the prostitution racket in a rented accommodation at Bagh-e-Mehtab.

The arrested accused have been identified as Irshad Ahmad Bhat of Pampore, Mohd Shafi Hajam of Karimabad Pulwama.

Officials said, 2 sex workers from Srinagar and 2 customers were also detained for questioning. After the news spread, netizens

Turn.....Srinagar Police.....Pg 02

Centre frames scheme for industrial development of Ladakh with outlay of Rs 3500 crore

Union Commerce Ministry approves, awaits CCEA nod

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 04: In a significant move, the Government of India has framed a scheme for the industrial development of Ladakh Union Territory with a total financial outlay of Rs 3500 crore.

The Union Ministry of Commerce has finalized a scheme for the industrial development of Ladakh on the pattern of a scheme unveiled by it for Jammu & Kashmir in 2021 with a total financial outlay of Rs 28400 crore.

"The cabinet note for the scheme is yet to be approved by the cabinet committee on economic affairs (CCEA)," reads a report of the department-related

Turn.....Centre frames.....Pg 02

RECONSTRUCTION OF FAMOUS GHANTA GHAR IN FULL SWING

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 04: The Jammu and Kashmir



Introduced in 1840's by Maharaja for hunting; Wild boars stage massive comeback in Kashmir

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 04: Brought to Kashmir for hunting purpose in 1840's by the then Maharaja Gulab Singh, Wild boars have staged a massive comeback across the Valley after vanishing in mid-80's completely. Even though experts believe global warming may be the reason for resurgence of the wild animal, they sounded alarm stating the boars can affect the Hangul's habitat besides damaging the crops of every nature.



Talking to news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Wildlife warden Shopain Intisaar Suhail, who has co-authored a publication on wild-boars, are not the native animal. "It was introduced in some areas of Kashmir like Dachigam by the then Maharaja for hunting. Then it started to decline and in mid 80's it became a rare specie. In 2015, it was again sighted. We had found a dead specimen at north Kashmir's area and in South Kashmir, we rescued one."

Turn.....Introduced in.....Pg 02

Eid Prayers Likely To Be Held At Srinagar Eidgah This Year: Waqf Board

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 04: The congregational Eid prayers are likely to be offered at the historic Eidgah here for the first time in three years, the Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board said on Tuesday.

Talking to reporters at the Eidgah after conducting a review of the preparations for the congregational prayers that are offered after the culmination of the holy month of Ramzan, Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board Chairperson Darakhshan Andrabi said if the weather

Turn.....Eid Prayers Likely.....Pg 02

BOTTOM

J&K Govt To Expend Rs 560 Cr On Agriculture, Allied Sectors Under HADP Initiative To Boost Market Ecosystem, Benefit Farmers, Consumers

HT News Network

JAMMU, APR 04: The agriculture and allied sectors in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir are poised for significant growth and boost with launch of a slew of technological advancements and extension programs.

These interventions, incentivized through various schemes and projects, have already led to improve-

ments in quality and quantity of produce in the region.

However, the challenge remains in integrating smallholder produce with market systems that are both effective and transparent. This will ensure that farmers receive a fair price for their goods while consumers get good value for their money. To tackle this issue, Jammu and Kashmir is implementing a project under Holistic Agriculture Develop-



ment Program (HADP) that aims to strengthen the existing market infrastructure and create a robust market ecosystem that caters to the needs of all stakeholders.

Additional Chief Secretary, Agriculture Production Department, Atal Dulloo, emphasized that the proposed project will be segmented into several key areas. These included market reforms,

Turn.....J&K Govt To Expend.....Pg 02

CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

Rains Drench.....

Regarding the forecast, he said, intermittent rain and thunderstorm may continue at most places of Kashmir and at isolated places of Jammu.

On April 5-6, he said, there was possibility of a brief spell of rain at scattered places of J&K towards late afternoon and evening. From April 7-12, he said, mainly dry weather (60-70% chance) was expected in the entire J&K.

The weather department also urged farmers to avoid spraying orchards till April 6 and maintain proper drainage to drain out excess water in fields.

Meanwhile, the MeT official said that Srinagar recorded a low of 6.9°C against 7.9°C on the previous night and it was 0.5°C above normal for the summer capital.

Qazigund, he said, recorded a low of 6.4°C against 5.1°C on the previous night and it was 1.3°C above normal for the gateway town of Kashmir.

Pahalgam, he said, recorded a low of 3.2°C against 3.0°C on the previous night and it was 1.5°C above normal for the famous tourist resort in south Kashmir's Anantnag district.

Kokernag recorded a low of 5.4°C against 5.2°C on the previous night and it was 0.3°C above normal for the place, the officials said.

Gulmarg recorded a low of minus 0.5°C against 0.5°C on the previous night and it was 0.3°C above normal for the world famous skiing resort in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, he said.

In Kupwara town, he said, the mercury settled at 4.4°C against 7.2°C on the previous night and it was 0.8°C below normal for the north Kashmir area.

Jammu recorded a low of 17.1°C against 16.3°C on the previous night. It was 3.9°C below normal for J&K's winter capital, he said.

Banihal, he said, recorded a low of 6.5°C (below normal by 0.5°C), Batote 7.3°C (below normal by 1.6°C), Katra 11.5°C (3.0°C below normal) and Bhardarwah 6.2°C (0.6°C below normal). Ladakh's Leh recorded a low of minus 2.5°C, he added.

PM Modi.....

knowledge needs to be used intelligently and modern technology with local insights can be great for resilience. He further added that, if documented well, local knowledge may become a global best practice!

Modi informed that in just a few years, over 40 countries have become part of the CDRI. He said the conference is becoming an important platform for the advanced economies and developing economies, large and small countries.

The Global North and the Global South are coming together at this forum. He said it is also encouraging that it is not just governments that are involved but the global institutions, domain experts and the private sector also play a role.

The CDRI's theme for this year's conference is related to Delivering Resilient and Inclusive Infrastructure. Talking about the initiatives of the CDRI, Modi said the Infrastructure for Resilient Island States initiative or IRIS benefits many island nations.

He said just last year, the Infrastructure Resilience Accelerator Fund was announced and this 50 million-dollar fund has generated immense interest among developing nations. He added that the commitment of financial resources is key to the success of initiatives.

Speaking about the G20 Presidency, Modi said India is also bringing the world together through its G20 presidency and India has already included the CDRI in many working groups. He said the solutions explored at the conference will receive attention at the highest levels of global policy-making.

The Prime Minister said this is an opportunity for CDRI to contribute to infrastructure resilience, especially against climate risks and disasters.

Majority Of.....

listen to their problems.

"The people raised many issues of concern like drug trafficking, weapon smuggling, illegal mining and bovine smuggling (during the meet). We will have one more meeting in the coming days and chalk out a proper action plan to address all these issues," the ADGP said.

He said the people were appreciative of the police campaign to make Samba a drug-free district.

Singh said the drug smugglers who had fled to other districts amid the crackdown will be identified and arrested.

Srinagar Police.....

appreciated police for exposing the sex racket and appealed to house owners to report the police for verification if they are giving a house on rent.

Taking to news agency Kashmir News Bureau one of the locals from Bagh e Mehtab said, "We are very thankful to the police for their role of exposing the sex racket and we appeal to take strict action against the accused."

"He said, the house owner should report to police for verification if they are giving the house on rent."

Centre frames.....

parliamentary standing committee on commerce, a copy of which is in possession of news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

The Union Commerce Ministry has apprised the committee that the scheme was expected to be launched in 2022-23, but it couldn't be unveiled till now. "The committee has been apprised that initially, it was expected that the scheme will be launched in the year 2022-23 on the basis of which Rs 97.30 crore was demanded under the scheme in budgetary estimates 2022-23. However, scheme could not be launched till now and as per Expenditure Finance Committee(EFC) approval for the scheme, Rs. 2.30 crore and Rs. 97.30 crore is targeted to be utilised in 2022-23 and 2023-24 respectively," the report further states.

In its recommendations, the parliamentary committee has asked the Centre to take steps to make the scheme functional.

"The committee notes that the scheme is yet to be launched and awaiting approval of the Cabinet committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA). The committee, therefore, recommends the Department to take steps to ensure operational readiness of the scheme so that the scheme can be swiftly implemented as and when approved by CCEA," the report further states.

The Committee further recommended to the Union Commerce Ministry to pursue the matter with CCEA and revise the budgetary allocation, if required, based on the approval status of the scheme.

Reconstruction.....

administration has taken the initiative to reconstruct the historic Ganta Ghar as part of plans to mould Srinagar into a smart city. Commissioner of Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Athar Amin Khan, said the renovation is on in full swing and is being done with the latest technology.

"The work of renovation is going on in full swing to make this Ganta Ghar beautiful. It is being renovated with the latest technology. Once renovated, the Ganta Ghar will get new time clocks, new roof decoration, new technology display for important updates and new technology of information where people can see all this information," he said.

Locals appreciated the initiative saying it will attract tourists and boost the economy in the Lal Chowk area.

"Ghanta Ghar is the main attraction for tourists and locals in main Srinagar city. Its reconstruction will enhance tourist inflow, which, in turn, will boost the economy in the Lal chowk area," said a local.

Earlier, on March 31, the Ministry of Urban Development launched the Smart City Mission, wherein 100 cities were selected for renewal and retrofitting to promote cities that provide core infrastructure, provide a decent quality of life to their citizens, and apply smart solutions to improve services and infrastructure.

Major investments valued at around 120 million USD by the government are intended to increase tourism, create infrastructural development, reconstruct and repair of roads, generate employment for local artists, ease the flow of information and for the further beautification of the city.

SMC commissioner Athar Aamir Khan said, "The basic purpose of the Srinagar Smart City Project is to uplift our city. So it becomes better in terms of liveability, economic ability, upgradation of Infrastructure, road improvement, heritage conservation, improvement and rejuvenation of the riverfront. In a broad sense, it is to improve the livability and sustainability of the city."

The largest city and summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, Srinagar is known worldwide for its gardens, lakes, water-fronts, and nature. However, the city has been due for a facelift. Under the Smart City Project, conservation work targeted many famous tourist attractions in Srinagar, such as Shalimar Bagh, and the Mughal Gardens. Local artists have also been approached for the beautification of roadsides in the city.

Modern techniques utilised under the ongoing Srinagar Smart City Project have helped bypass problems brought on by harsh weather conditions, obstructing the development work.

"There used to be a break of one month or forty days in Kashmir. During this time, no concreting work was done. However, we now do concreting work even in unfavourable weather, using admixtures. It has also helped us save a lot of time," Iftikhar Ahmad Kakroo, chief engineer of SSCP, said.

These major investments, conservation and renovation projects, the development of modern amenities and the initiatives undertaken by local artists will make the lives of the 1.35 million people, who call Srinagar home, easier, and further attract tourists. (Agencies)

Introduced in.....

Suhail said that the boars are getting revived in Kashmir. "It's revival can have beneficial as well as adverse impact which needs to be studied thoroughly. Firstly, it's the prey for Leopards but at the same time this animal shares the habitat of Hangul. So how far it can affect the habitat of Hangul needs to be studied," he said.

He said that global warming may be the main reason for the animal's revival in Kashmir.

Aakib Hussain Paul, Project Associate of Research Study on Ecological Aspects of Wild Boars at Dachigam National Park, told KNO that the team led by him conducted a study on the ecological aspect of the Boar's revival in the Park. "We studied the animals food habits and co-related the same with that of Hangul. Hangul and Boars share the same habitat and food. For us, this was an alien specie. In 2013, camera trap image of Boars were found in some parts of Kashmir. Today, we can say that Boar population is growing rapidly in Kashmir," he said. "It was in 1840's when the then Maharaja introduced Boars in Kashmir for hunting and fun purposes."

Paul said that Boars are considered a big threat for habitat degradation. "Our study is still in the process of publication as we haven't covered all aspects so far. We started our study in October last and time period was for six months," he said.

Asked about whether the animal may prove dangerous for the Hangul and other crops in Kashmir, Paul said that Boar is a very dangerous animal and if comes out the park, it can dig up everything. "In apple orchards, it can dig up to the roots and in the open area, it can eat anything even saffron seeds etc. If the animal reaches the streets of Srinagar, it can tear apart everything as food remains littered on streets of the city," he said. Pauls said that since Boars and Hangul share similar habitats that include food and shelter, Hanguls may face a threat from these animals, which, however, needs to be studied further. He urged the government to allow to cover other aspects of the study as well. "It is not enough to cover every aspect in just six months. It needs some more to co-relative what we saw physically with what we see in the laboratory," he said.

Eid Prayers.....

permits, the prayers would be offered at the Eidgah this year.

"This year, the Eid namaz will be offered at the Eidgah.... There is a good atmosphere in Kashmir now and it is the administration's endeavour to have the Eid namaz at the Eidgah," she said.

Andrabi said all arrangements will be put in place so that the prayer is offered smoothly.

"Today, Kashmir wants peace, development and prosperity. Let us not think about the past," she added.

The Waqf board chairperson said the Eidgah is the face of the city and it will be developed and made better with proper facilities.

Eid prayers have not been offered at the Eidgah for the last three years as authorities were apprehensive of law-and-order problems. (Agencies)

J&K Govt.....

infrastructure development, institutional and capacity building, branding, digital marketing, and market research information systems. The project aims to achieve its objectives through an investment of Rs 560 crore, which will be spread over a period of five years.

Dulloo expressed confidence that this project will bring about significant improvements in agriculture and allied sectors in Jammu & Kashmir, providing a boost to the region's economy and benefiting farmers and consumers alike.

The project aims to improve the Terms of Trade (ToT) in favor of farmers, improve efficiency and effectiveness of the market ecosystem and minimize the value loss while maximizing societal welfare. The proposed activities or areas of intervention will strengthen the existing agricultural marketing system in Jammu & Kashmir, bringing long-term dividends across stakeholders, particularly farmer-producers.

The proposed project also envisages significant growth in agriculture and allied sectors through various activities. The market reforms included implementation of an open auction system, a single license for trading in all mandies, and institutionalization of post-harvest infrastructure with the eNAM network. Infrastructure development will involve converting mandies into value chain parks, creating new mandies and installing composting units. Besides, institutional building and capacity development will focus on the formation of Niche Product Marketing FPOs.

Branding activities will include creation of two Agriculture Branding Centers, mapping of existing branding practices, farmers/FPO brand building training and workshops, and integration of branded niche products with the tourism and hotel

industry. Lastly, rural business and service hubs will be established in production areas.

The Directorate of Horticulture, Planning & Marketing will be responsible for on-ground implementation of the project and will serve as the nodal agency for providing unified licensing to potential traders.

The government of Jammu & Kashmir is set to implement this new project that aims to transform the agriculture sector through a multi-faceted approach. This approach includes market reforms, development of infrastructure, and promotion of institutional building and capacity development of Niche Product Marketing FPOs.

Market reforms will bring transparency and fairness in trading practices, genuine price for produce, increase the number of buyers, and fair competition. This will result in an increase in producers' share in consumer rupee. Infrastructure development will create an efficient and effective market ecosystem, minimize value loss, overcome distress sale, improve logistics, adhere to quality standards, ease of doing business, target unattended geographies, waste to wealth, and minimize environmental pollution.

Private entrepreneurs will be responsible for development of infrastructure, including CA stores, grading lines, mini cold stores, reefer vans and pick-up vans. The Directorate of Horticulture, Planning & Marketing will establish composting units at potential mandies, and also create new mandies in collaboration with the respective District Administrations.

The promotion and support of institutional building and capacity development of Niche Product Marketing FPOs will be done in collaboration with allied departments and Agriculture Universities of the UT. The emphasis will be laid on branding of agriculture produce to promote marketing and competitive advantage of Niche crops. This will also result in scale economies in input and output marketing, operations, bargaining power, contract farming, better terms of trade (ToT), self-reliance, and confidence.

The project will also include the identification, capacity building, and promotion of Rural Business & Service Hubs (RBSHs) across all districts of J&K. This intervention will provide quality inputs/services, improve logistics in management operations, improve yield and quality produce, technology outreach, extension of improved varieties and machines, and market information

A dedicated Market Intelligence Cell will be established at SKUAST-K in collaboration with concerned Departments. The establishment of this Cell will result in creation of decision support system, improved marketing strategy by stakeholders, fairness in trading, more competition, and better policy outcomes. Digital marketing will play a pivotal role in doubling farmers income. It will increase the visibility online and enable potential customers to find agricultural business online. The digital marketing strategy will be more effective in case of niche products from UT of J&K to reach the potential customers across the country and globe.

In order to facilitate online marketing of niche based agri/horti/livestock/ fishery/NTFPs, a dedicated web portal may be made operational for online marketing under PPP mode. The portal will be customized for J&K Niche Products for effective marketing strategy.

The proposed project will have both direct and indirect beneficiaries. Direct beneficiaries will include farmers, market functionaries, potential entrepreneurs, employable masses in infrastructure development, and employable masses in value creation. Indirect beneficiaries will include consumers/customers, importers/buyers, outsource sector/industry, and indirect employable masses.

The Government of Jammu and Kashmir has announced a range of incentives aimed at strengthening the state's market infrastructure. Under the initiative, a 50% capital subsidy will be offered for the establishment of 11 Controlled Atmosphere (CA) stores, each with a capacity of 5000 MT, at a unit cost of Rs. 30.00 cr. In addition, a 50% subsidy will be provided for the establishment of 12 hi-tech grading lines, 275 portable grading lines, reefer vans, pick up vans, and mini cold stores. Four mechanized windrow composting units, 16 simple composting units, and four new mandies will also be established at a cost of Rs. 49.00 cr.

The Institutional Building and Capacity Development component of the project will see 55 Farmer Pro-

ducer Organizations (FPOs) established with an investment of Rs. 11.00 cr, and 35 capacity building training programs arranged for FPOs, costing Rs. 1.05 cr. Additionally, two Agriculture and Branding Centers will be established in each division at a cost of Rs. 5.20 cr.

A 50% subsidy will be provided for establishment of 400 Rural Business and Service Hubs, with a ceiling of Rs. 15.00 lakh on each hub. Finally, the infrastructure for digital marketing and market intelligence will be established at a cost of Rs. 11.30 cr. The implementation of these interventions is expected to have a significant impact. The government anticipates that farmers' income will double from 45% to 90%, while the reduction of value loss is expected to be between 20% and 50%.

The off-season availability of fruits and vegetables is also expected to improve. Value creation is anticipated to increase by 25% to 75%, and there will be an increase in income, value output, employment, reduced food wastage, and an efficient decision support system. As a result, this investment is expected to be highly beneficial.

The project will result in several key outputs, including the establishment of 11 CA stores with a capacity of 55,000 MT, 12 hi-tech grading lines, 25 mini cold stores, four new mandies in Samba, Reasi, Kishtwar, and Bandipora, 400 Rural Business & Service Hubs, two Agri Branding centers, and one Market Intelligence Cell. This project is also expected to create 6,000 jobs and 629 enterprises in the next five years.

In conclusion, the government of Jammu & Kashmir plans to implement a project that aims to transform the agriculture sector through a multi-faceted approach. It will bring transparency and fairness in trading practices, create an efficient and effective market ecosystem, promote institutional building and capacity development of Niche Product Marketing FPOs, and improve digital marketing strategies.

Srinagar-Kargil.....

vehicular traffic due to avalanches at Panimatha and Kai-pathri areas following snowfall", he said.

Border Roads Organisation (BRO), responsible for the maintenance of the highway has pressed its men and machinery to clear the highway to make it fit for traffic movement, he added.

"Srinagar Kargil NHW-1 is blocked and traffic halted at Sonamarg due to avalanches at Panimatha and Kai-pathri at Zojila. BRO is on job to clear the road," Kargil police said in a tweet.

Jmu-Sgr National.....

is the only all-weather road link between Kashmir and the rest of the country, was blocked several times due to landslides and shooting stones in the past few months and was in need of repairs.

"Based on the direction passed for undertaking important repairs and maintenance works on highway, April 7 has been declared as a traffic dry day between Nashri to Navyuga tunnel", Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Ramban, Mohita Sharma said.

She said only emergency vehicles will be allowed to ply on the highway to and fro in Ramban section from 6 AM on April 7 to 6 AM on April 8.

COVID-19: J&K.....

reported from Kashmir division and two from Jammu division.

He said that the total number of positive cases in Kashmir have reached to 305,679 including 303,125 recoveries and 2,433 deaths while total number of positive cases in Jammu division have reached to 174,152 including 171,764 and 2,353 deaths

He further said that the total number of active cases in Jammu and Kashmir are 156 including 121 from Kashmir division and 35 from Jammu division.

"Among the fresh 31 cases today, 16 are from Srinagar, 3 from Pulwama, two each from Anantnag, Baramulla, Budgam and Kulgam and one each from two from Pulwama and one each from Kupwara and Ganderbal in Kashmir division and one each from Jammu and Kuthua in Jammu division.

"In last 24 hours, 1125 Covid-19 tests were conducted in the UT while 41 patients have recovered," he said.

SIA raids multiple.....

of Srinagar, Baramulla and Kupwara, they said.

Official sources said the residences of two Hurriyat leaders were searched at Rajbagh and Alochi-Bagh in Srinagar district.

More details about the raids are emerging.



Meet This Kulgam Woman Who Earns Livelihood Through Mushroom Cultivation

Tahira Helps Over A Dozen Women To Start Their Own Units

■ HT News Network

KULGAM, APR 04: A Woman from Qaimoh village in South Kashmir's Kulgam is growing organic mushrooms to earn her livelihood and become financially independent.

By taking to the cultivation at home, Tahira Bashir has ensured Rs 75,000 annual income for her family.

Tahira while talking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said that she received training for the mushroom cultivation through the Agricultural Department in Kashmir and subsequently established her own business venture near her residence.

At her venture, backed by her family has been earning her livelihood as well and she gives credit of her success to the NRLM department.

"I came through different schemes through NRLM that benefited me a lot and also thanked trainers who supported her throughout this journey," she said.

She started mushroom cultivation in a room at her home and



harvested mushrooms locally known as 'Heddar' in her very first attempt.

"After getting a good response in my very first attempt, I approached the agriculture department for more mushroom bags, she said, adding that, through cultivation, I not only earned a livelihood for my family

but I also helped many people in marketing mushrooms," she said.

She said: "I personally did marketing of 5 such units as I also spend my earnings on my necessities and can fulfill my aim to become an educated businessman."

With this business, she said: "I feel financially independent and

many other educated women of the area have got inspired who are set to start this business as well."

But before setting up her own venture, Tahira's experience with her financial conditions drew her to start mushroom cultivation.

She would support her family and would invest her earnings to expand her business.

After sowing mushroom seeds, the crop gets ready in a few weeks. Once the crop is ready, the mushrooms are placed in small boxes with proper packaging. "The packed organic mushroom boxes are sold in vegetable markets between Rs 25 and Rs 50," she said.

She has now helped around a one dozen women in the district to start their mushroom units who are about to start their units now.

Mushrooms have become a famous vegetable in Kashmir, and over the years, Mushroom Yakhni, a delicious curry cooked with yoghurt and spices, has been introduced in Kashmiri multi-cuisine, Wazwan as well, pushing the demands of Mushrooms up.

With the success of Tahira, she has become an inspiration for hundreds of unemployed women and dozens of unemployed women have started joining this field and trying their luck.

She said that this is very easy and safe for unemployed youth especially for girls to start a mushroom unit and earn their own and become independent.

People complain of overpriced mutton during Ramadan

Director FCSCA says shops selling mutton beyond Rs 600/kg will be sealed

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 04: Amid the holy month of Ramadan, people have accused the Food, Civil Supplies and Consumers Affairs (FCSCA) department of failing to regulate the prices of mutton which they say is being sold at Rs 650-700 per kg against the government notified price of Rs 535.

People from various parts of Srinagar told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the mutton shopkeepers are openly selling it at exorbitant rates. They said there is the least inspection by the FCSCA department to check on "illegal profiteering".

"This is the holy month and we are being fleeced by the mutton shopkeepers. The month of Ramadan witnesses extra consumption of mutton but they are making it difficult for us by selling it at Rs 650 and at some places Rs 700 per kg," Touseef Ramzan, a Srinagar resident said.

"Mutton retailers are selling it at Rs 650 per kg, how is that okay when the government's declared price is Rs 535? I often have to argue with the shopkeeper over the rate. Why is the concerned department not doing anything about it?" Touseef asked.

Jan Mohammad, another Srinagar resident, alleged that the department is soft on those who resort to illegal profiteering or overpricing. He said that in some areas, mutton is being sold at Rs 700 per kg.

"There should be a punishment to offenders on the basis of mutton quality grades. Imposing a mere fine won't make any impact; the authorities should suspend their license," he said.

"I have to buy mutton for a patient at home, who needs mutton soup on a daily basis, but the over-charged prices are making it difficult for us," Jan added.

Similar reports were received from other districts of the valley where people have complained of overpricing of mutton by sellers.

Meanwhile, the Director of Food Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs Kashmir department, Dr Abdul Salaam Mir told KNO that he has given strict directions to his enforcement teams to seal the shops that are selling mutton beyond Rs 600 per kg.

"If there are rate violations, people can call us on the toll-free number 18001807106," he said, adding that their department's enforcement teams will intensify the inspection to check on the mutton rates and they will deal strictly with the offenders.

IAF personnel dies as vehicle rolls down into gorge in Ramban

'Last rites conducted with full military honours in Kulgam'

■ HT News Network

RAMBAN, APR 04: An Indian Air Force (IAF) personnel from South Kashmir Kulgam district died after his vehicle rolled down into a deep gorge in Maroog area of Ramban on Tuesday morning, officials said.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that Sergeant, Directorate



of Mechanical Transport (DMT) at Air Headquarters personnel identified as Sarfraz Ahmed Bhat, a resident of Poniwah Kulgam district was travelling in his car when it rolled down into the deep gorge at Maroog.

He said soon after the accident, Police and QRT Ramban volunteers launched a rescue operation and recovered his body.

"The mortal remains of IAF personnel was brought to his home and the last rites were conducted with due military honours," official said.

Pulwama town residents stage protest against installation of smart electric meters

■ HT News Network

PULWAMA, APR 04: Residents of Malikpora in main town Pulwama on Tuesday protested against the installation of smart meters by the Power Development Department (PDD).

As per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the protestors blocked Pulwama-Srinagar road near Khar bridge and demanded that the installation of smart meters should be stopped and those installed should be removed.

Protesters warned that if the government didn't withdraw its decision, every resident of the area would come on the road to protest against the decision. Talking to KNO the protesters said, "We hardly earn Rs 200 to 250 per day, how can we afford hefty electricity bills?"

"Only lower middle class reside in this area. The government must rethink before putting one more burden on us," they said.

The protesters said their families were not in a position to pay the "excessive bills" generated by the devices, so would not allow the department to install the smart meters in their area.

"We already have meters installed in our homes and we are paying regular bills. What is the fun of installing new meters?" a protestor asked.

"Owing to the skyrocketing prices



of essentials, our family budget is already stressed and we won't be able to meet the additional expenses," said another lady.

"Unemployment is at its peak, we have to pay water fee, electricity fee, now property tax and other fee, how can we afford all this," she said.

"No one is rich enough to afford the enormous electricity costs. If meters are installed, we will be unable to afford the bills. We are poor families here, and the majority of our men are daily wagers," said another protestor.

The protesters said that the Covid-19 and uncertain situation in Kashmir had affected the life of a common man who isn't in a condition to bear

the extra brunt.

The protesters, mainly women, appealed to Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to remove the newly installed smart electric meters in the area as the locality cannot afford the high tariff.

Meanwhile, protestors were later pacified by police who assured them that their genuine demands will be taken up with the concerned department.

The process of installing smart meters began in December 2020 to control electricity thefts. The Jammu and Kashmir government has set the target of installing four lakh smart meters in union territory by 2023.

Damaged retaining wall in Old Town Baramulla poses threat to lives, people demand reconstruction

Accuse R&B department of ignoring the 'serious' issue despite repeated pleas

■ HT News Network

BARAMULLA, APR 04: The residents have urged the authorities to reconstruct the retaining wall, damaged four years ago, at Qazi Hamam locality of the Old Town Baramulla in north Kashmir, saying there is every apprehension of any untoward incident due to a landslide. They also

slammed the Roads & Buildings (R&B) department for not paying due attention to the serious issue.

Talking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), several people at the Old Town Baramulla said that the wall that was constructed for the safety of people alongside the Bagh-e-Islam road has been damaged, thereby posing a risk to human

lives. They said the road connects Drangbal and other areas and is prone to landslides and shooting stones because the hills have also got damaged.

They said that despite the issue being brought to their notice, the concerned authorities have failed to reconstruct the damaged retaining wall.

"Knowing the sensitivity of the

area very well, the department is repeatedly offering excuses, either of tendering issue or something else, for the last four years," said Arsheed Ahmed, a resident of Qazi Hamam.

He said just a few days ago, the shooting stones rained, which resulted in the skidding of the left-over wall. "The area is prone to shooting stones and rock sliding.

Even the hoarding installed by the R&B department there advises the people passing through this road to take "self-protection accordingly".

"If anything untoward happens in the area, the R&B department will be responsible," the locals said. A senior official at the R&B department Baramulla told KNO that they will look into the matter.



noticing the police party but was apprehended tactfully. During the search, about 20 grams of Brown Sugar was recovered from his possession. He has been identified as Nisar Ahmad Lone son of Bashir Ahmed Lone resident of Chowkibal Kupwara. He has been shifted to the police station where he remains in custody," police said.

Accordingly, police said that cases under relevant sections of law have been registered at respective police stations and further investigations have been initiated. "Community members are requested to come forward with any information regarding drug peddlers in their neighbourhood. Persons found indulging in drug peddling will be dealt strictly under law," police said.

Preparations for special summary revision of electoral rolls-2023 reviewed at Kupwara

HT News Network

KUPWARA, APRIL 04: On the directions of Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Dr. Doifode Sagar Dattatray, who is also District Election Officer (DEO) Kupwara, a meeting of EROs and AEROs to review Special Summary Revision (SSR) of Electoral Rolls-2023 was held today at Mini meeting hall of the DC office complex under the Chair of Additional Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Gh. Nabi Bhat. Additional Deputy Commissioner Handwara, (ERO) Nazir Ahmad Mir, Dy. District Election officer Mehraj Din Wani, ACR Kupwara, Ajaz Ahmad Bhat and all Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (Tehsildars), Officials from District Election Authority Kupwara and



other concerned were present in the meeting.

At the outset, the ADC took a detailed review of the action plan for smooth and successful conduct of the Special Summary Revision (SSR) of Electoral Rolls-2023 to register all eligible electorates in all Assembly segments of the Kupwara District.

On the occasion, the ADC was given a detailed over-

view about the exercise and it was given out that the Special Summary Revision (SSR)-2023 with April 01, 2023 as the qualifying date is commencing from April 05 with the publication of Draft Electoral Rolls and culminate on May 10, 2023 with the Publication of Final Electoral Rolls.

Giving activity wise details, the meeting was also informed that date of

Publication of Draft Electoral Rolls of all Assembly Constituencies of Kupwara is 05-04-2023, while period of filing claims and objections for Additions, Deletions, Corrections and Transposition is from 05-04-2023 to 20-04-2023.

It was also informed that 2 Special Camps for Electoral Registration will be organised at all the Polling Stations.

DC Srinagar chairs District Level Consultative Committee Meet Finalizes Panchayat wise camp schedule for saturation under Jansuraksha Schemes (PMJJY/PMSBY)

HT News Network

SRINAGAR APRIL 04: In order to achieve saturation under Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) in all Panchayats of the District, a meeting of District Level Consultative Committee (DLCC) was held today under the Chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammed Aijaz Asad here at Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex.

Besides, Additional District Development Commissioner, Zahoor Ahmad Mir, the meeting was among others attended by Chief Planning Officer, Mohammad Yaseen Lone, Programme Officer, ICDS, Zeenat Ara, Assistant Commissioner Development, Syed Farooq, Lead District



Manager, Abdul Majid, the meeting was attended by concerned Zonal/Sectoral Officers, representatives of Banks and financial institutions operating in Srinagar.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner finalized the Panchayat wise action plan regarding three-month long saturation campaign rolled out by the Department of Financial Services (DFS), Ministry of Finance from April 01, 2023 to June 30, 2023 to saturate all the eligible beneficiaries under

Jansuraksha schemes including Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY).

On the occasion, the DC asked the concerned all Zonal/Sectoral Officers, representatives of Banks and financial institutions to gear up for the saturation campaign and ensure active involvement of PRI members to cover all eligible beneficiaries under the scheme in all 21 Panchayats

of the District. The DC also finalized the Panchayat wise camp schedule for saturation under PMJJBY and PMSBY in Srinagar District to be organized jointly by the banks with active participation of the District Administration and other allied Departments to ensure that benefits of the two Jan Suraksha schemes PMJJBY and PMSBY reach the masses.

The DC stressed upon the Officers of all line Departments to utilise their field functionaries for identification and mobilisation of the Scheme beneficiaries for cent percent enrolment. He further asked the Lead District Manager to distribute pamphlets among the people regarding awareness of the scheme.

The DC also asked the ADDC to hold periodical meetings with members of Panchayat Raj Institutions.

Jal Jeevan Mission Stakeholders Conference held in Bandipora.

HT News Network

BANDIPORA, APRIL 04: The Project Management Consultancy Mission Directorate, Jal Jeevan Mission, J&K, in collaboration with District Administration, District Jal Jeevan Mission, Bandipora conducted a day-long mega handholding cum awareness program at Conference Hall, Mini Secretariat, Bandipora.

The programme witnessed an overwhelming participation of various stakeholders viz. Pani Samiti members, Sarpanches, field staff of Rural Development



Department (Panchayat Secretaries), Jal Shakti Department (PHE), DPMU Staff, Implementation Support Agency (ISA) representatives, Anganwadi/ASHA workers, water testing lab staff, and FTK Trained Women from vari-

ous panchayats.

The inaugural session of the program was presided over by the District Development Commissioner, Chairperson District Jal Jeevan Mission, Bandipora, Dr. Owais Ahmad. Additional Deputy Commissioner/

Nodal Officer-Coordination M A Hakak, Joint Director, Planning, Mr Imtiyaz Ahmad, Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti, Mr. Fida Hussain Rizvi and other officers of various departments were present on the occasion.

The DC, during his address, highlighted the various aspects of Jal Jeevan Mission and enumerated the steps being undertaken for ensuring clean and safe drinking water to every household of the District. He also appreciated the role played by PRIs and Pani Samiti members in over-all implementation and execution of JJM projects.

DC Ganderbal reviews COVID-19 situation in district Stresses for CAB awareness among masses

HT News Network

GANDERBAL, APRIL 03: In view of increasing trend in COVID cases being reported in the Union territory of J&K, Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Shyamir today convened a meeting to review current COVID-19 situation besides assessing preparedness for tackling the pandemic in the district.

CMO Ganderbal briefed the meeting regarding status of COVID-19 in the district and informed that as such no COVID case is active in the district although there is an upward trend in daily positive cases being reported in other districts of the UT.

The DC directed the Health department Ganderbal to remain vigilant and prepare themselves for any emerging situation. He asked them to activate

flu clinics and focus should be on increased testing of all Severe Acute Respiratory Illness and Influenza like Illness cases.

He also exhorted upon the need for enforcement of Covid Appropriate Behavior (CAB) including wearing of masks in hospital premises by patients, health professionals and health workers in order to curb the infection from spreading.

The DC laid main thrust on generating mass aware-

ness about CAB adding that although there is no need to panic but precaution at early stage is must to combat the COVID infection.

He asked EO Municipal Council Ganderbal to start making announcements on CAB within the limits of Municipal Council and people should be encouraged to wear face mask during visiting crowded places besides the comorbid and elderly persons should also avoid overcrowded places.

FATEH KHAWANI

With sorrow this is informed that Waheeda Jabeen Wife of Late Akhtar Hussain Shah Resident of MIG Colony Bemina Srinagar left for heavenly abode two days 3rd April 2023. Congregational Fatiha prayers (Fatiha Khwani) will be observed On 5 April 2023 at Magbara Braykujan Habbakadal Srinagar opposite Batamaloo Aastan at Sharp 11 am.

From : Manzoor Ahmad Bhat Farooq Ahmad Bhat 9796597100

PUBLIC NOTICE

I am applying for new Fresh PESTICIDES LICENSE if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may contact with Plant Protection Officer (ppo) Lal Mandi Srinagar within seven days from the date of publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained

FAROOZ AHMAD GANAYI S/o GH QADIR GANAYI R/O DUNGARA DOWLATPORA Tehsil ...KREERI Distt ...BRARAMULLA

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of DEE Class Contract card from Block office wagoora . if anybody having any objection in this regard He / She contact with concerned authorities within aperiod of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Name: HILAL AHMAD MAGRAY S/o: ALI MOHAMMAD MAGRAY R/o- WATERGAM BLOCK..... WAGOORA TehsilWAGOORA Distt ...BARAMULLA

PUBLIC NOTICE

I Manzoor Ahmad Bhat S/O Abdul Gani Bhat R/O Nishat Srinagar intends that my vehicle Bearing Registration No JK01S1 0544 Tata Nano Chasis No 24549 Engine No 25543 Model 2012 Has been Seized by the J&K POLICE NEAR ZANAKADAL SRINAGAR ON 26 March 2023. Now I Applied for its release of my vehicle.

If any body have any objection he may contact office of Deputy Commissioner Tasil South Srinagar Within a period of 3 days .After that no Objection will be entertained .

Manzoor Ahmad Bhat S/O Abdul Gani Bhat R/O Nishat Srinagar Mob No 6006058158

DDC Chairperson Pulwama holds Council meeting; asks Officers, council members to maintain synergy

HT News Network

PULWAMA, April 4 2023: The Chairperson District Development Council, Pulwama, Syed Bari Andrabi today held the meeting of Council to discuss the development scenario of the district.

Among others, the meeting was attended by DDC Vice Chairperson, Chief Executive Officer with District Development Council Pulwama (Additional District Development Commissioner), Dr Sheikh Ab Aziz, DDC Members, BDC Chairpersons and Members, CPO Pulwama, ACD, Superintending Engineer (SE) R&B, SE KPDCI, EX-EN KPDCI, EX-EN PHE, DSEO Pulwama, CMO Pulwama, CEO Pulwama, PRIs besides all District

and Sectoral officers.

The CEO of the council welcomed all the members of the council and apprised them all about the objectives of the meeting.

At the outset, DDC Chairperson Bari Andrabi apprised the Council about the guidelines for the formulation of the plans under the District Capex budget 2023-24. He sought the details of ongoing developmental works and reviewed the financial and physical progress achieved till date.

Chairman stressed on the availability of a District Profile with the DDC institution for the overall and sustainable development of the District.

Addressing the meeting, he said the Council is committed to ensure



equal development of all blocks and a development plan for 2023-24 has been formulated keeping

in view the importance of the work for welfare of the people.

Chairperson stressed upon the

DDC members and BDC Chairpersons to formulate the plan as per the approved ceiling conveyed by the Finance department besides plan formulation under the Area Development Fund of DDCs, BDCs and PRI grants was also discussed.

He asked the members to ensure the formulation of the plan in consultation with Sarpanchs and Panchs and in close coordination with the officers. He advised the Council to project technically feasible works and other projects which benefit maximum people and could be completed in stipulated time frames.

The chairman also said that for the first time, proportionate funding to all three tiers of PRIs is being ensured to cater to the development aspirations of the people.

DM Baramulla Chairs 6th NCORD meet at DDAC Singhpora

HT News Network

BARAMULLA, APRIL 04: The District Magistrate Baramulla (DC), Dr Syed Sehrish Asgar today convened 6th meeting of the District Level Committee of Narcotics Coordination (NCORD) at Drug De-addiction center Singhpora here.

Principal Government Medical College Dr (Prof) Ruby Reshi, Senior Superintendent of Police Sopore Shabir Nawab; Additional Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Dr Zahoor

Ahmad Raina, Assistant Commissioner Revenue Peerzada Mumtaz Ahmad, Chief Medical Officer, Dr Bashir Ahmad Malik, Chief Education Officer Balbir Singh Raina, District Social Welfare Officer Nissar Ahmad Wani and other members of the Committee were present in the meeting.

On the occasion, DM discussed various issues related to menace of drug addiction, areas of concern, age group of addicts, hot spots of drug peddling, abuse, besides, cultivation of illicit poppy and cannabis in the District. She said that collective efforts are needed to curb the drug menace and all stakeholders shall have to work in tan-



dem to enhance the rehabilitation of persons involved in drug abuse.

Dr Syed Sehrish emphasised on conducting awareness camps in schools and colleges on mass scale to sensitize the youth about hazards and ill effects of consuming drugs.

The DM asked officers of all line departments to make coordinated efforts to contain the drug peddling and break the supply chain besides taking stringent action against the persons involved in this dangerous trade. Dr Syed Sehrish said, in order to combat this rising societal problem, multi-pronged rehabilitation, counseling and guidance policy is being implemented on ground to monitor drug abuse and take remedial measures to curb the menace.

District Police Kulgam in collaboration with health department organised medical camp for Jawans at DPL Kulgam

Farooq Rather

Kulgam : April 04, 2023 For the betterment of Jawans kulgam police is taking into action all the measures and facilities. To continue such measures today a medical camp was organized at District Police Lines Kulgam by district police Kulgam in collaboration with district administration (health department). The camp was organised to provide basic as well as specialist health care services along with laboratory investigation and drugs to the police personnel of district kulgam. The specialists from health department were also present in the camp for the medical assistance and diagnosis to the jawans and also offered counseling and health awareness to the officers and officials about different ailments.



The medical camp was held under the supervision of SP Kulgam Shri Sahil Sarangal-IPS who was accompanied by DySP DAR Kulgam Shri Rajinder Singh-JKPS. Besides other officers/officials of Kulgam police were also present on the occasion.

Later SP Kulgam felicitated the medical staff with

appreciation certificates for their efforts in making the camp a success. The medical camp was held under the supervision of SP Kulgam Shri Sahil Sarangal-IPS who was accompanied by DySP DAR Kulgam Shri Rajinder Singh-JKPS. Besides other officers/officials of Kulgam police were also present on the occasion.

DC Doda calls meeting to discuss Covid-19 preparedness

HT News Network

DODA, APRIL 04: With reports of new cases of Covid-19 in Jammu and Kashmir, Deputy Commissioner, Vishesh Mahajan called a meeting with senior officials to discuss the district's preparedness for Covid-19. The DC has asked people to remain vigilant and report for testing if they experience flu-like symptoms. However, he assured that there is no need for worry as no cases have been reported in the district.

The DC was apprised that the district is fully prepared to tackle any situation with more than 100% vaccination against Coronavirus. Health institutions have sufficient stock of medicines and equipment, including Rap-



id Antigen Test (RAT) kits and oxygen generation plants at Government Medical College Doda, Sub-District Hospital (SDH) Bhandarwah and SDH Gandoh. The Health Department has oxygen cylinders and concentrators across the district and dedicated wards,

ventilators and staff to serve Covid patients at GMC Doda. The DC has asked the Health Department to intensify testing, especially for those with co-morbidities or old age. Officials and the public are advised to wear face masks in public places. The Education

Department has been asked to conduct health checkups for children in schools. Sub-Divisional Magistrates (SDMs), Sub-Divisional Police Officers (SDPOs), Tehsildars and Station House Officers (SHOs) have been asked to keep a plan of action ready in case of a surge in Covid cases.

The meeting was attended by Senior Superintendent of Police, Abdul Qayoom; Additional District Commissioner Doda, Dr RK Bharti; ADC Bhandarwah, Ch. Dilmir; Chief Planning Officer Doda, Suresh Kumar; Assistant Commissioner Revenue (ACR) Doda, Sanjeev Kumar; Head of Department Microbiology GMC Doda, Chief Medical Officer, besides other district officers and health functionaries.

DC Kishtwar inaugurates the Digital Skills Training under DigiSaksham at ITI Kishtwar

HT News Network

KISHTWAR, APRIL 04: A six-day digital skills training in MS Excel and Python started on Monday at Industrial Training Institute (ITI) Kishtwar. The training is being organised under DigiSaksham, a joint digital skill initiative by Microsoft and the Ministry of Labour & Employment, supported by the District Administration, District Employment and Counselling Centre (DE&CC) (Model Career Centre MCC - Kishtwar) and ITI Kishtwar.

The training workshop was inaugurated by Deputy Commissioner, Dr Devansh Yadav, in the presence of the ITI Principal, Mandeep Dogra; Employment Officer, Waseem Khan, Project Manager TMI, Shaikh Imran and Trainer, Rajni.



Around 100 candidates from across the district are participating in the six-day training. These candidates will be certified by Microsoft and the Ministry of Labour and Employment and will receive career guidance and placement opportunities.

During the session, DC

Kishtwar talked about the benefits of this training programme and encouraged participating youth to maximise its benefits through teamwork. Principal ITI addressed the youth and talked about the benefits of the training. A trainer from Microsoft briefed guests and trainees about the pro-

gramme and said it is being organised for the first time in any district of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

The training is free of cost to increase employability of unemployed aspiring youth. It provides best-in-class learning content from Microsoft and trainees will receive industry-recognised certifications. Linkages will be established with the IT industry to provide job opportunities to youths in metro cities through National Career Service (NCS). Around 100 candidates from across the district are participating in the six-day training. These candidates will be certified by Microsoft and the Ministry of Labour and Employment and will receive career guidance and placement opportunities.

RSETI Kishtwar concludes 'Travel and Tourist Guide' training program for youth

HT News Network



KISHTWAR, APRIL 04: The Rural Self Employment Training Institute (RSETI) Kishtwar concluded a "Travel and Tourist Guide" training program for youth in collaboration with the District Administration under the SANKALP Scheme. The event was presided over by Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar, Dr. Devansh Yadav, who interacted with trainees and encouraged them to promote tourism. The program provided a comprehensive understanding of the region's history, culture and tourist attractions. Trainees were taken on a field trip to Jai Valley Bhandarwah for hands-on experience. District Commissioner emphasised the role of tourism in economic development and motivated trainees to act as ambassadors for the region's tourism industry. The DC encouraged trainees to leverage social media by creating video vlogs and other content showcasing the district's tourist attractions. Dr Yadav recognised the potential of social media in attracting a wider audience and promoting the district's tourism industry globally. Trainees were exhorted to take responsibility and implement lessons learned during the training program for sustainable community development.

Additional District Commissioner (ADC) Kishtwar Inderjeet Singh.

Everyone should know Law being a responsible citizen: Chief Justice Inaugurates Legal Aid Defence Counsel System at ADR Centre

HT News Network

SAMBA, APRIL 4: Chief Justice, High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh (Patron-in-Chief, Jammu and Kashmir Legal Services Authority), Justice N. Kotiswar Singh, today inaugurated Legal Aid Defence Counsel System at ADR Centre, Samba, in presence of Justice Tashi Rabstan, Executive Chairman, Jammu and Kashmir Legal Services Authority.

Chief Justice and others also planted trees in the premises of ADR Centre.

Chief Justice inspected all the courts situated in the District Court Complex, Samba and issued directions in respect of different matters. He also interacted with Judicial Officers, Bar Members and staff, listened

to their grievances and passed appropriate directions.

Later, Chief Justice presided over an awareness programme held on "Expanding Horizons of Access to Justice and Role of Legal Services Authorities" at Conference Hall, Mini Secretariat, Samba.

Chief Justice, in his presidential address, deliberated upon the importance and meaning of preamble of Constitution of India. He sensitised the student participants about the true spirit behind the Preamble of Constitution of India. He also briefly highlighted the provisions of Jammu and Kashmir Legal Services Authority Act, 1987.

While discussing the role of Para Legal Volunteers, Justice Tashi Rabstan in his special address shared with gathering as to how the Para



Legal Volunteers working under District Legal Services Authorities can act as bridge between a common

man and various departments and also how can they help the poor and needy people in providing free legal

assistance through District and Tehsil Legal Services authorities.

Principal District & Sessions Judge (Chairman, District Legal Services Authority), Samba, Sonia Gupta, welcomed the dignitaries and Hitesh Sharma, Panel Lawyer, DLSA, Samba, presented vote of thanks.

Besides, Anuradha Gupta, District Development Commissioner, Samba also spoke on the occasion.

On the occasion, Ritu Sambyal, Assistant Professor, Bhargava Degree College, Samba and Danish Tak, student of BALLB Semester 3rd Dogra Law College, Bari Brahmana also delivered their respective discourses on the subject. They were presented with appreciation trophy.

DC Kathua discusses anti-drug measures during District NCORD meeting

HT News Network

KATHUA, APRIL 04: Deputy Commissioner, Rahul Pandey chaired a meeting of the District Level Committee under the Narco Coordination Centre (NCORD) to discuss anti-drug measures in the district.

The meeting discussed issues related to drug addiction, areas of concern and hotspots of drug abuse, and measures taken by law enforcement agencies. The DC stressed on mapping vulnerable spots in the district and providing awareness to community members. The DC asked Chief Education Officer Kathua to launch an awareness campaign in schools and for proper counselling of parents during parent-teacher meetings.

To counter over-the-counter sale of psycho-



tropic drugs, the DC directed Assistant Controller Drugs to check CCTV recordings at chemists

and maintain vigilance.

The DC called upon Additional District Commissioners and Sub-Divisional Magistrates to ensure enforcement in their jurisdictions and identify illegal cultivation of poppy and other illicit drug crops through a team comprising officers from Agriculture, Revenue and Police departments. The DC also asked Chief Medical Officer to direct Block Medical Officers to share data regarding drug addicts reported in routine OPDs and during treatment in emergency wards.

It was apprised by Senior Superintendent of Police Kathua that the police department has taken up awareness drives in educational institutions as part of their anti-drug measures.

Besides other district officers, the meeting was attended by Assistant Drug Controller.

New multi-storey bus stand, car park to be built in Doda

HT News Network

DODA, APRIL 04: A new multi-storey bus stand and car park is set to be built in Doda within 18 months. Construction work has already begun and is being supervised by a team of engineers. The project is being monitored daily to ensure it is completed on time.

Deputy Commissioner, Vishesh Mahajan revealed the information during an inspection of the town with Senior Superintendent of Police, Abdul Qayoom. Mahajan said that the project will decongest the town, improve traffic management, boost economic activity and enhance its beauty.

The Public Works Department, Traffic Police, Motor Vehicles Department, Municipality and District Police are all working to make the project a success. The DC urged the public to bear with any inconvenience and cooperate with authorities so that the project can be completed as soon as possible. The DC also issued instructions regarding cleanliness in the town, traffic management and transport facilities. Temporary bus stops have been created at Bharath Road and other routes at the entrance of the town, with defined fares for auto-rickshaws.

The DC also issued instructions regarding cleanliness in the town, traffic management and transport facilities. Temporary bus stops have been created at Bharath Road and other routes at the entrance of the town, with defined fares for auto-rickshaws.

Doda: DC reviews National TB Elimination Programme

HT News Network

DODA, APRIL 04: The Union government has launched the National Tuberculosis Elimination Programme (NTEP) with the objective of eliminating TB from the country by 2025. In this regard, a review meeting was called by Deputy Commissioner, Vishesh Mahajan, who is also chairman of the District TB Control Society for erstwhile Doda (Doda, Kishtwar, Ramban), with senior functionaries of the health

department.

The DC was given a comprehensive brief of NTEP by the District TB Officer who informed that the erstwhile district has achieved 69% in Tuberculosis Unit-wise TB notification during 2022. Out of 18850 symptomatic patients tested, 738 were found positive for TB.

The DC stressed on increasing TB testing through microscopic and molecular tests and eliminating TB from the erstwhile district by the end of 2023. He emphasised random testing at jails, madrasas, educa-



tional institutions and Nari Niketans and compulsory testing of patients with co-morbidities, recent surgeries and symptomatic patients. Block Medical Officers (BMOs) were

instructed to ensure microscopic testing at each health centre with a trained technician.

The DC directed BMOs to achieve targets for TB Suspect Examination Rate and TB Notification Rate by the end of June 2023. The next review meeting will be held on 1st July to assess progress and fix responsibility for any shortfall in reaching targets.

The DC also reviewed the Nikshay Poshan Yojna and Nikshay Mitra scheme and encouraged officers and the general public to adopt TB

patients to help the District TB Society eliminate TB from society.

The meeting was attended by district officers including Additional District Commissioner, Chief Planning Officer, District Programme Officer Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), Chief Education Officer, Chief Medical Officers Doda, Kishtwar and Ramban; District TB Officer Kishtwar, In-Charge District TB Officer Doda, District Information Officer Doda, Block Medical Officers and other concerned officers and officials.

Training program for Booth Level Officers held in Ramban

HT News Network

RAMBAN, APRIL 04: A day-long training program on Special Summary Revision for Booth Level Officers (BLOs) of Ramban Assembly Constituency was held at Conference Hall Maitra. The program was held under the aegis of District Election Officer, Mussarat Islam.

Deputy District Election Officer, Lal Chand interacted with the participants and explained the Special Summary Revision process. He informed that the Election Commission of India has initiated various measures to fine-tune the electoral rolls and ERO-NET is being used for making error-free voters list. Chand exhorted BLOs to focus on the registration of new eligible voters who have attained the age of 18 years or more on April 1, 2023.

DC Rajouri inspects BGSBU Road, Dhanidhar Filtration Plant

HT News Network

RAJOURI, APRIL 04: Deputy Commissioner, Vikas Kundal visited the Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University (BGSBU) Road and Filtration Plant Dhanidhar to inspect the progress of ongoing projects.

Accompanied by a team of officers, Deputy Commissioner visited the 8 km long BGSBU Road that connects Sheema Chowk to BGSBU University. The project, with a total cost of 26 crores, is being executed by the PWD

Rajouri division and is expected to benefit around 10,000 people by providing better connectivity.

During the inspection, Vikas Kundal took note of the shifting of utilities by the Jal Shakti and PDD sectors and directed the Ex-En Jal Shakti Rajouri and PDD Rajouri to shift the utilities within the shortest possible time. He urged officers to expedite progress on the project and ensure its timely completion.

While visiting the Filtration Plant at Dhanidhar the Jal Shakti Superintending Engineer informed him that the plant has



a total capacity of 6 lakh gallons per day and two of its three filtered beds had been inoperable for more

than fifteen days. However, both beds have resumed normal operation due to the dedicated efforts

of the Jal Shakti Department.

Deputy Commissioner emphasised the need to maintain proper schedules while supplying water to the general public and directed officers to make dedicated efforts to ensure clean and hassle-free drinking water supply.

Among those who accompanied the DC during his visit were Chief Planning Officer, Mohammad Khurshid; Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Imran Rashid Kataria; SE PWD (R&B) Kamal Kishore; SE Jal Shakti, Bhram Jyoti Sharma; Ex-En PWD (R&B) Rajouri, Maqbool Hussain.

EDITORIAL

Now Sex Racket Busted in Srinagar

Recently, Srinagar witnessed a shocking revelation when a prostitution racket was busted by the police. This is not the first instance of such a racket being discovered in the region, but it is particularly concerning given the conservative and traditional nature of the society that we live in. The consequences of such a menace can be far-reaching and devastating; socially, culturally and emotionally and must be addressed with urgency.

The prostitution racket that was busted in Srinagar reportedly involved a number of women who were brought in from other parts of the country as well as locals, within the City were forced into the sex trade. These women were allegedly lured with false promises of employment or marriage, and were then trapped in a cycle of debt and exploitation. Some went with consent too. It is a sad reality that human trafficking and sexual exploitation continue to plague the world, and this latest case in Srinagar is just one example of how vulnerable people can be targeted and abused.

The consequences of such a racket can be devastating. For the women involved, the impact can be long-lasting and traumatic. They may suffer physical and emotional abuse, and may be left with lasting psychological scars. The stigma attached to sex work can also make it difficult for them to reintegrate into society once they are rescued or escape. The consequences for the wider community are also significant, with the social fabric of the area potentially being eroded by such activity.

The fact that this racket was discovered and shut down is a positive step, but more needs to be done to prevent such activity from taking place in the first place. This includes better awareness-raising campaigns to help people understand the risks of trafficking and exploitation, and greater support for vulnerable individuals who may be at risk of falling prey to such rackets. It also means taking a tough stance against those who profit from human trafficking, including the individuals who run such rackets and the clients who use their services.

To prevent such rackets from emerging, there needs to be a broader shift in societal attitudes towards sex work. The criminalization of prostitution in many parts of the world only serves to drive the industry underground, making it more difficult to regulate and monitor. A more nuanced and progressive approach is needed, which recognizes the reality that many people choose to work in the sex industry and seeks to ensure their safety and well-being, while also cracking down on exploitation and trafficking.

This could involve a range of measures, from decriminalizing sex work to providing better support services for those who want to leave from this menace. It could also involve working more closely with sex workers themselves, to understand their needs and to empower them to advocate for their rights. By taking a more proactive and supportive approach, it may be possible to prevent the emergence of prostitution rackets such as the one recently discovered in Srinagar.

To sum it up, the recent prostitution racket bust in Srinagar highlights the serious and far-reaching consequences of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. While it is encouraging that the authorities were able to intervene and shut down the operation, more needs to be done to prevent such rackets from emerging in the first place. This requires a shift in societal attitudes towards sex work, as well as greater support and protection for vulnerable individuals. By taking a proactive and compassionate approach, it may be possible to prevent such rackets from emerging in the future and to promote a safer and more just society for all.



IRFAN ATTARI KASHMIRI

Drug abuse is a significant problem in many parts of the world, and the Kashmir region is no exception. In recent years, the issue of drug abuse in Kashmir

tion. Additionally, the ongoing conflict and political instability in the region have created a sense of hopelessness and despair among the population, which also contributes to drug abuse.

Recent incidents, such as the case of a drug-addicted son allegedly strangling and killing his elderly mother in the Dangerpora area of Sopore in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, have further highlighted the urgent need to address this issue. This tragic incident serves as a stark reminder of the consequences of drug abuse and the need for immediate action to combat the problem.

The easy availability of drugs due to the proximity

lem in Kashmir and have implemented various initiatives to address it. These initiatives include awareness-raising campaigns, rehabilitation programs, and support for individuals and families affected by drug abuse.

However, the problem remains prevalent in many parts of the region, and more needs to be done to address it. It is essential to improve economic opportunities and employment prospects in the region, which can help to reduce the social and economic factors that contribute to drug abuse. There also needs to be more investment in drug treatment and rehabilitation services, including medication-assisted treatment, counseling, and mental health services.

Several NGOs such as the Foundation for Youth Web, Drug Free Kashmir, and Tehreek-e-Naujawan are also playing a crucial role in combating drug abuse in Kashmir. These organizations are working tirelessly to create awareness about the dangers of drug addiction and provide support to those struggling with drug abuse.

Drug Free World India, a global non-profit organization that provides education and resources to help young people make informed decisions and live drug-free lives, is supporting these organizations in their efforts to make Kashmir drug-free. The organization is providing its courses free of cost to these NGOs to help them educate young people about the dangers of drug abuse.

Through these efforts, the NGOs are reaching out to the youth of Kashmir and creating awareness about the consequences of drug addiction. By providing support and guidance to vulnerable groups, they are helping to prevent drug abuse and create a healthier and drug-free society.

The role of these NGOs is crucial in addressing the problem of drug abuse in Kashmir, and their efforts should be supported and encouraged by the government and civil society. By working together, we can hope to create a drug-free Kashmir and ensure a brighter future for the youth of the valley.

In conclusion, drug abuse is a significant problem in Kashmir that requires a comprehensive and collaborative response from government, civil society organizations, and community members. By addressing the root causes of drug abuse and providing support and treatment to those affected, we can work towards a drug-free future for the region.

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Kashmir becoming drug hub of India Valley currently at number two position among top drug abuser states in country

has become a growing concern, affecting individuals and communities across the region.

The problem of drug abuse in Kashmir is complex and multifaceted. The region's proximity to major drug trafficking routes has made it a target for drug traffickers, who use the region as a transit point to smuggle drugs into neighboring countries. The availability of drugs such as heroin, cannabis, and prescription drugs has increased in recent years, leading to a rise in drug abuse among the population.

One of the major reasons for the high prevalence of drug abuse in Kashmir is the lack of economic opportunities and employment. Many young people in the region are unemployed, and some turn to drug use as a way to cope with their boredom and frustra-

of the border with Pakistan and the lack of job opportunities have made the youth in Kashmir particularly vulnerable to drug addiction. The consequences of drug abuse are not limited to just physical and mental health but also have significant social and economic implications for the families of drug addicts.

The social stigma attached to drug abuse in Kashmir is another significant challenge. Many people who struggle with addiction are reluctant to seek help due to the shame and social isolation associated with drug use. This stigma also prevents community members from discussing the problem openly and seeking solutions to address it.

The government and civil society organizations have recognized the severity of the drug abuse prob-



MUSAIB RAFIQ

Job seekers face challenges from lack of job opportunities, high unemployment rates and layoffs. Working from home online has become a popular trend, but it has also led to an increase in fraudulent schemes. Scammers often target unsuspecting victims, promising simple online jobs such as data entry or live phone calls. They demand a bond to pay for their services, then disappear, leaving victims without work or money. India's unemployment rate rises to 8.30% in December 2022 as scammers target desperate jobseekers. These scammers are not limited to India as they have been reported in the Middle East as well. They often have fake websites and profiles that look legitimate, making it difficult to distinguish a real offer from a scam scheme. Easy money can make you lose money!

A woman living in Vizag was defrauded of Rs 5 lakh in early January, according to the Vizag Cyber Crime Police.

According to media reports, a resident of Visalakshi Nagar received a phone call from an unknown number promising him a good salary by working from home. After initially rejecting the offer, the alleged fraudster deposited Rs 100 into her bank account to gain her trust. Later, he agreed to work and got 00 rupees in his account after asking him to like and share videos on YouTube. After several tasks, the lady was redirected to another page and asked to pay Rs 5,000. He was told that he would receive a commission of 30% on paying the required amount, thereby earning a total of Rs 70,200. Again, I paid 88,000 rupees. 2,50,000 and Rs.1,50,000 represent commission.

Once all the payments are made, the victim is also asked to make another payment to withdraw the amount they



deposited. I came to know about it and lodged a complaint with Vizag cyber crime police. The case is being further investigated.

Stolen dreams and money

In December, a 27-year-old resident was tricked by two men running a recruitment agency under the pretense of working in Azerbaijan, police said Saturday.

An official said the complaint was registered at the Kapurpaudi police station. The accused reportedly promised to find him a job as a mobile crane operator in Azerbaijan and asked him to pay Rs 95,000 for various expenses.

After payment, his work invitation and ticket were found to be forged. The accused allegedly closed the office and fled after making the payment. Officials said police investigation revealed that 25 job seekers were defrauded of a total of Rs 2.2 lakh.

In another report, the Visakhapatnam police busted a scam ring in the name of online part-time jobs on December 29. According to Nouakchott News Agency reports, police have arrested six people in the case, namely Suman Sah, Subham Singh, Deepak Sargra,

After payment, his work invitation and ticket were found to be forged. The accused allegedly closed the office and fled after making the payment. Officials said police investigation revealed that 25 job seekers were defrauded of a total of Rs 2.2 lakh

Ranveer Chauhan, Mitu La Jat and Vikas Pasitha. Birwa gang youths in Rajasthan are said to have played an important role in the gang.

Police said the gang robbed a total of 78 people and 2.5 million rupees. They also confiscated 30 mobile phones, 20 SIM cards, 26 ATM cards, 37 bank cheques, 56 fake stamps and eight folders with fake company names.

The police revealed, "They made SIM cards based on the fingerprints of people who came for Aadhar and cheated them."

The Strange Case of Fake Government Websites

Fraudsters have created a fake Jharkhand government website that posts job applications for Jharkhand Public Service Commission (JPSC) qualified people.

Candidates are invited to apply for the 7,756 vacancies for the post between 13 December 2022 and January 2023.

After identifying the website as fake, the Jharkhand government said victims should be held accountable if they were scammed.

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Right Choice Of Career Options In Folk Art



VIJAY GARG



India is a nation of many traditions. The long rules of emperors from different corners of the world brought different art forms with them. This gave rise to a unique culture where you can find the combination of ancient as well as modern art forms. You can find the cave paintings in Ajanta-Ellora to the modern art of M.F.Hussain. Not only paintings, you can find this diversity in music, story-telling, sculpture and so on. Earlier, this field was not considered to be a viable career option. The reason was obvious. It was not profitable. But with internet connecting the world, these art forms are reaching every nook and corner of the world. People want to know more about it. Tourists are willing to scrape a portion of their money to know more about these art forms. The rich collectors are eyeing good pieces. So, if you have talent and a knack to know what the market demands, you can reach heights in this field. The most important aspect of excelling in this field is having a strong grasp of the theme of the art. Every art form carries a centralized theme. As for example, the famous Mithila or Madhubani paintings predominantly depict the marriage of Lord Rama and Sita. Unless you familiarize yourself with the basic concept, it will be difficult for you to experiment with the art form.

Career Opportunities and Job Prospects in Folk Art

Painter: There are hundreds of folk or local paintings in India. Other than the famous ones, there are still hundreds waiting to be discovered. If you have the prior training in some form of painting, it will be easier for you to study the new ones in a better way. Many universities like BHU, Rabindra Bhar-

ti etc. are well-known for their fine arts department. You can also work solo in learning new painting styles. A painter needs to have business skills as well as good communication skills. This is important because you will have to entertain different type of people during your professional life. Many may not be familiar with the intricacies of paintings. While many may be pretty informed. Having the above skills will help you in creating a name for yourself. A painter's salary depends upon his/her artwork's value. You can work with different firms specializing in creating customized paintings. You may also pen your own studio. Your salary can be minimal in the beginning and soar high with expertise and more new elements in your paintings.

Musician: Just like the paintings, each region has its own unique music. You can work as a folk musician. They are in huge demand these days. Most state governments, as well as district administrations, are holding folk festivals annually. You get to show your talent here. Also, there are many reality shows and talent hunts that allow you to reach more people. You can even start your own youtube channel. As a matter of fact, every Indian region has a good percentage of people living overseas. The folk music makes connects them to their motherland, even in the film industry, there is a craze for music with local flavours. As a musician, you can work with different bands or take out your own album. You can also be a performing artist in different events.

Curator: A curator oversees the gathering, storage, and show of artworks, historical record, digital files, or artefacts, relying upon the dimensions of the organization, curators could also be accountable for operating with artists, collectors, donors, or different organizations to accumulate artwork; documentation and storage; original analysis and publication; an art show of works. Historically, curators work for museums, libraries, and different arts organizations. However, in recent years this role has distended to incorporate business curators managing

company record and art collections, curation for instructional establishments, charity or personal assortment curators, government curators operating with public areas, and freelance, freelance curators.

Museum Director: These days, a number of museums are coming up focussing on folk art. You can also make your career as a museum director. You basically need to have a management degree with sound knowledge of museum maintenance and running. Most of the government-run museums need directors to have a post-graduate degree in archaeology and museology. But this may not be the case with the private museums. Though the above-mentioned degrees are definitely the ones suitable for this role. If the museum is not government-funded, then you should be well-versed in the ways of fundraising, promotions and also an extension of the collection. You should know how to manage the artworks, organize shows to attract visitors and also promote among them. The salary will be around 40k/month in the government museums. The salary in private ones depends solely upon its reputation and revenue.

Art Restorer: There are many folk artworks that have degraded or damaged over time. An art restorer is needed to get them back to their original state. This position is a mix of scientist and an artist. You should have the scientific mind to understand the original composition of the artwork. Also, you need to be artistic enough to lend it the form that does not damage its original essence. In most of the cases, this role is a team effort comprising of a scientist, art expert, and a restorer. You must have noticed that some paintings are made from oil pastels and some from watercolours. If you are required to restore them, you need to have the same chemical composition as the restoration material. The salary in this field is good but the initial investments are also high.

Art Authenticator: This position is mainly relevant to the paintings. Artworks of the well-known painters can fetch millions of dollars. So, there is a whole black market that deals in forgery. It is actually very difficult

for an untrained eye to spot the difference. If you have the American TV series "white collar", then you must be in awe of the character of Neil Caffrey. The art forgers are very clever in lending a painting original look and also perfect ageing. So, the role of art authenticators is of utmost responsibility. Art authenticators are appointed by museums as well as private collectors to ensure the originality of the procured art piece. The salary depends completely upon your knowledge and also the clients. If you work for the government museums, you will have something around 40-50k/month. The private collectors and auction houses are known to pay the really big sum to the established authenticators.

Teacher: Most Indian universities are now focussing on popularizing folk art. If you have the required degree and are NET qualified, you can be a lecturer in the colleges. Most of the central universities have courses for fine arts, dramatics, and music. You can get your education there. Also, you can work in conjunction with the local theatre groups to get to know more about the culture. As a teacher also, you can research and further explore an area's folk art. This field needs more dedicated teachers who are willing to unearth the hidden gems of Indian art. Nowadays, even the schools are promoting folk art. Many schools employ teachers who can train their students in the local art form. Salary in this field can vary between 10k/month-60k/month.

Entrepreneur: You can also be an entrepreneur in the folk arts. Currently, the local artists are paid meagre amounts for their artworks that are ultimately sold at high prices. Many music artists never get a chance to showcase their talent. As an entrepreneur, you can omit the role of middlemen and directly benefit the artisans as well as the buyers. You can set up an agency that deals in the resale of sculptures, paintings, and other local craft items. Or you can work towards popularising the local music and tales. The financial outcomes in this field depend completely upon the revenue you manage to generate. However, before venturing into this field, you must be mentally pre-

pared to handle the initial failures. Not every craft form is commercially viable from the beginning. Slight modifications and too much advertisement are needed. And, this is yet an unexplored field. So, the competition is minimal but the infrastructure is also down to zero.

Photographer: You can also venture into the field of folk arts as a photographer. When art pieces are clicked at perfect angles and light, they do create a mesmerizing effect. You can work with the entrepreneurs or as a freelance. Basically, your job will be to market the products with your snaps. It will be a part of your job to travel extensively and discover more about the different art forms. If you work in conjunction with some agency, you will be paid per snap. If you work freelance, each photo can fetch you hundreds. But your snaps need to be unique and should show the art in an attractive form. Don't we all love the photographs of Kathakali dancers with their eyes zoomed in? That is the effect which a perfect photo can generate.

Blogger: Folk art is yet to establish itself as a viable career option. It is ironic that in a nation with so many art forms, it is yet to catch the eyes of the people as a career. In absence of an organized workforce and work culture, the artisans are mostly exploited. As a blogger, you can highlight the difficulties faced by the artists. You can enlighten more people about the art form. The Internet is the medium that can make millions of people known to an art from a small village. If you have a flair with the words and know how to address issues, you can start working as a folk art blogger. You can include photos, videos and also interviews with the artists. With a good number of followers, you will have a salary of around 50k/month.

We hope that these career options will encourage you to take this off-beat career option. You will have an undiscovered path to walk on. Not only that, you will actually be able to help your fellow countrymen by popularizing their art form.

Vijay GarG Retired Principal Educational Columnist Malout Punjab



M S NAZKI



This Is A Tribute To An Indian Soldier!

Once, a friend of mine when both our father's were in Shillong (Meghalaya) studying in the same school in the lavish and expansive flushing meadows of St. Edmunds asked me? Why do you read books?

At that time I was not conversant well in English because a child from Jammu, though at that time in St. Edmunds was going to have a torrid time in the school!

It was the recess time when three boys came to me and one of them was my friend! One was from Mizoram Lalaram Thanga, the other was from Naga hills (cannot remember his name (he was good but his favorites were the Naga Chillies and that time I did not know what exactly they were)! They are deadly as far as the tongue goes! He stuffed five or perhaps six of them into my mouth and the third one Subanshu Jyantia said, "Let us box and fight!" He was my friend as we had met at home dinner in his father's house in Assam Regimental Center!

Kids from Jammu and Kashmir do not take a step back when it comes to fighting! I knew the chillies had taken a heavy toll on me but still I did not refuse the duel!

I just told him let us fight!
 He was the first to launch the punch and it was on my solar plexus! And I was breathless! It was here my friend told me to get up and fight! The next punch was from my side and he (Subanshu had his nose bleeding)! The taste of the chillies had gone!

Now I was worried, what next?
 Subanshu got up and just said, No issues pal, just a friendly bout, 'I hit you and you went breathless and you bloodied my nose'!

That was a start to a friendship of sorts! The journey from childhood to adulthood had begun!

That bout in the down slope of beautiful pine trees had begun the same!

I told my Dad that nothing much happened! But mothers catch on!

For six days I did not go to the school and neither did Shubhanshu, It Was Sunday (to be exact Palm Day in the church of St Edmunds? And the students had to be present)! We were the Sunday before Jesus was crucified when he rode into Jerusalem on the foal of a donkey as the long promised Coming King. It is recorded in all of the Gospels as a watershed event which set in motion the crisis of that Passover Week. But that is during the childhood I learnt!

That day I saw that someone I knew sits next to the desk from where we watched the story and a fabulous lecture and it was full of episodes? She was from Loreto Convent, just ahead of St. Peter's Shillong and then uphill as we reached the loveable school adorned by all!

The enmity was to brew on further? But as a child, not bad looking I had decided that once I would reply back!

But I also knew that childhood fights should be



taken in their stride! It was almost all over when suddenly a slap landed on my face!

It was again on Sunday that it was about to finish! The reason was that it was now another party to be given away to my father!

It was of Zeenu's brother and a kid who slapped me was none other than her brother! That was the last time, I took a slap because I Knew many would be coming up on other's faces in the future to arrive!... That's a soldier's life if he does not forget although forgiveness is a part of decent life!.....20 years later I was to meet Zeenu and this time the slap on my face was of someone else's hand! But a..... one which I love till today! But my friend with whom we sat and always called (KUL) she has not forgotten! Why she does not know but how she does definitely!

There is suspense in everyone's life, in my friend's life there are many!

Ever since independence we men in Olive Greens have been fight for the fact that we have to fight for the fact that the country remains united and we are still doing that and doing things that no one else cannot do! We are secure because there are certain humans who lie in barracks not knowing as to what is going to happen the morning tomorrow! It could be great but it could also be the worst possible mishap in life! This is what an officers and soldier's life is all about!

Incidents happen and for yourself you have to prove that you are someone different! Though I'm relating this story, the incident I'm talking about is of Rangiya days where one evening (it was at Changsari), we had gone for dinner to a nearby unit! My (Major Kulbir)

For six days I did not go to the school and neither did Shubhanshu, It Was Sunday (to be exact Palm Day in the church of St Edmunds? And the students had to be present)! We were the Sunday before Jesus was crucified when he rode into Jerusalem on the foal of a donkey as the long promised Coming King. It is recorded in all of the Gospels as a watershed event which set in motion the crisis of that Passover Week. But that is during the childhood I learnt!

wives and Zeenu were great friends!

Now further twenty years onwards, I (people fondly call me as Major but I'm a minor (nothing but Kulbir)) was to proceed to Lucknow, obviously for a journalistic errand! After walking over the gigantic flyover from platform number eight to platform number one the walk was not easy and the sight of the trains moving up and down the parallel lines with several tangent lines every child loves seemed exciting! I also in my childhood loved trains but the engines were 'Black coal and Steam ones' though the Diesel ones were also making their presence felt! This was Lucknow Railway Station!

Everyone has a stint (I, the writer too, had many years spent but max in the exquisite food of the Langars), but always stood as a man who stands.

Not out (cricket terminology) but I knew that I will be saying that 'Not lost as yet, twenty years later! On that breakfast morning someone told me that on an Ildi- Sambar breakfast at that time a modernized restaurant at Lucknow Railway Station!

She recited the story of chillies (Naga), the boxing fight (bare fisted, but the blow of the kids that do not hit hard (tolerable as you can regain the breath), the friendship (at that time we were small) and now we were at a party! I just said, (the fuse is not off as yet Zeenu, you have two daughters and so do I have! My one is off and married, the second one is doing MSC Zoology? Zeenu interrupted, 'none of them are as far as I'm concerned? Here was the time my wife made her massive entry felt! 'Kya Hua?' Immediately three of them entered smilingly! Shrew, Red Riding and the little one Cinderella! One birthday was that day but whose? Never was I told but it was by someone? I never knew whose it was..... but I was told by the eldest of Shubanshu but at that time the dinner was over.....! My friend was a Martyr! That is how and why and for what an Indian soldier stands for! That is our bread and butter! This is a tribute to an Indian soldier!

World needs integrated approach to deal with disasters: PM Modi

HT News Network

New Delhi, Apr 4 (UNI) Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday called upon the world for taking a "integrated approach" to deal with the impact of disasters and said "Infrastructure must leave none behind and serve the people even during times of crisis".

"In a closely connected world, the impact of disasters will not just be local. Disasters in one region can have a big impact on a completely different region. Therefore, our response has to be integrated, not isolated" he said at the 5th edition of the International Conference on Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, ICDRI-2023. He noted that in just a few years, over 40 countries from advanced and developing countries, large or small or from global South or Global North have become part of the CDRI. He found it encouraging that apart from governments, global institutions, private sectors and domain experts are also involved.



Modi underlined the intelligent use of local knowledge of building infrastructures that can w i t h - s t a n d disasters. "Modern technology with local insights can be great for resilience. Further, if documented well, local knowledge may become a global best practice," the Prime Minister said. Mentioning India's G20 presidency, the Prime Minister informed about inclusion of the CDRI in many working groups. "The solutions you explore here will receive attention at the highest levels of global policy-making," he said.

Referring to the scale and intensity of the recent disasters like the earthquakes in Türkiye and Syria, the Prime Minister concluded by underlining the importance of CDRI's work and its importance. Noting the inclusive intent of some of the CDRI initiatives the Prime Minister mentioned the Infrastructure for Resilient Island States initiative or IRIS which is benefitting many island nations. Talking about the Infrastructure Resilience Accelerator Fund that was announced last year he said "This 50 million dollar fund has generated immense interest among

developing nations. "The commitment of financial resources is key to the success of initiatives". The Prime Minister outlined some priorities for discussion for disaster resilience infrastructure in the context of this year's theme of 'Delivering Resilient and Inclusive Infrastructure'. He said "Infrastructure is not only about returns but also about reach and resilience. Infrastructure must leave none behind and serve the people even during times of crisis." The Prime Minister stressed the need for a holistic view of infrastructure as social and digital infrastructure are as important as transport infrastructure. Modi said CDRI arose from a global vision that in a closely connected world, the impact of disasters will not just be local. Therefore, "our response has to be integrated not isolated", he said. Noting that in just a few years, over 40 countries from advanced and developing countries, large or small or from global South or Global North.

An all time record cargo handling in 2022-23 at SMP, Kolkata after 1870

HT News Network

Kolkata, April 4 (UNI) In its 153 years history, Syama Prasad Mookerjee Port, Kolkata (SMP Kolkata), including Kolkata Dock System and Haldia Dock Complex, for the first time, has handled 65.66 million ton of Cargo in 2022-23, recording an all time high throughput which is a 12.87 Per cent increase from the previous record of 58.175 million ton moved in 2021-22. In 2022-23, SMP, Kolkata recorded highest ever growth of Traffic of 7.5 million ton done, in comparison to previous years, which is the highest quantum growth achieved in its history. SMP, Kolkata had earlier surpassed the Ministry's target of 61 MMT collectively and individually both at its twin dock systems, viz. HDC (44.50 MMT on 3.3.2023) and KDS (16.50 MMT on 22.03.2023). P.L. Haranadh said increasing cargo throughput was driven by various measures undertaken by the port to improve productivity, safety, business development capacity utilization, etc. It is worth mentioning that SMP, Kolkata got elevated from 6th position to 5th



position in cargo handling among all the major ports of India for the year 2022-23. Cargo handled at HDC is 48.6 MMT and KDS is 17.05 MMT, thus surpassing the previous year's throughput with growth rate of 13.37 per cent and 11.47 per cent, respectively. SMP, Kolkata handled highest ever railborne cargo (34.6 MMT) for the financial year 2022-23. aranadh further stated that the port registered strong financial performance in 2022-23 by posting net surplus of Rs. 304 crores i.e. net surplus improved by 150 per cent compared to the previous years. To augment capacity of the port, SMPK is stressing on the PPP Projects in a big way. During the financial year 2022-23, the port has awarded 3 major

projects with investment of Rs. 730 crores through PPP Mode. These three projects are expected to increase capacity by 6.7 MMT. The port has to reduce the congestion of port and increase of the capacity. Accordingly, the SMPK is planning to develop extended port gate system at Balagarh with an investment at about Rs. 445 crores, out of which around Rs. 343 crores will be invested through PPP. SMPK plans to develop the land parcels owned by it in a systematic way. The detailed master plan is being prepared by SMPK which will be completed by June, 2023. SMPK has already floated EoI for developing a multi-modal logistic terminal near port on about 60 acres of land

which is only 2 km from Kolkata Dock. These projects would facilitate warehousing, cold storage, Truck Terminal, Rail and Road connectivity, etc. SMPK is targeting to start Night Navigation of the vessels destined to/originated from Kolkata Dock System, in association with Antwerp Port, Belgium and IIT Chennai. It plans to bring small vessels upto 100 m by August, 2023 and all vessels by March, 2024 which will reduce turn around time of the vessels substantially increasing the capacity of the port. Haranadh expressed his gratitude to Sarvananda Sonowal, Minister of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Santanu Thakur, State Minister and Shripad Naik, State Minister and Sudhanshu Pant, Secretary, PSW, for their continued guidance and support which helped SMPK achieve highest ever cargo growth. He congratulated all the officers, staff and unions, PPP Operators, Stevedores, Stakeholders, etc. for working like a team to produce the spectacular performance. Haranadh also thanked Indian Railways, Department of Customs,

7 Tourists Dead In Massive Sikkim Avalanche, Rescue Operations Underway

HT News Network

Guwahati: Seven people, including a child and a woman, have been killed and many others are feared trapped under snow after a massive avalanche near Sikkim's Nathu La mountain pass today.

"23 tourists rescued till 4 PM including 6 from deep valley and shifted to nearby medical facilities of Indian Army. Unfortunately, seven persons have succumbed," the Army said in a statement.

Approximately 5-6 vehicles along with 20-30 tourists on way to Nathu La are feared to have been stuck under the snow, said the Army.

The avalanche struck around 11.10 AM at 15th Mile in Jawahar Lal Nehru road connecting Gangtok with Nathu La when at least 150 tourists were in the area. Nathu La Pass, at a height of 4,310 metres (14,140 feet) above sea level, is situated on the border with China and is a major tourist destination.

Home Ministry Seeks Report On Violence In Bengal Since Ram Navami: Sources

HT News Network

New Delhi: The Union Home Ministry has sought a report on the Ram Navami violence from the Bengal government, sources said today amid the huge political controversy triggered by clashes in two districts since Thursday.

Union Home Minister Amit Shah had dialled Governor CV Ananda Bose earlier to assess the situation and is believed to have been briefed on the issue.

The Calcutta High Court has also sought a report on the violence after the state BJP filed a petition seeking probe by the National Investigation Agency.

On Friday, several vehicles were set on fire and shops ransacked as clashes between two groups broke out in Howrah during a Ram Navami procession.

Fresh violence was reported from the area the next day despite the deployment of police and riot control force. The police had to use tear gas shells as a mob went on a rampage, throwing stones and attacking media persons. Later, more than 30 people were arrested.

Last night, violence was reported from neighbouring Hooghly district. Stone throwing by a mob near a level crossing in Rishra led to suspension of train services for about 3 hours.

Sukhbir Badal demands Rs 50,000/acre compensation for farmers

HT News Network

Chandigarh, Apr 4 (UNI) Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD) president Sukhbir Singh Badal on Tuesday demanded that Bhagwant Singh Mann government must release Rs 50,000/acre compensation to farmers whose wheat crop has been destroyed by recent rain and hail storms. Badal in a series of tweets asked, "What is he (Mr. Mann) waiting for?" SAD president said there was complete destruction of crops in 20 lakh hectares adding that this was corroborated by agri experts. Badal, referring to media reports, alleged that the revenue officials have been directed not to give maximum damage awards to farmers and added that this effectively means AAP.

BJP Targets Congress After 'Fake' Candidates' List For Karnataka Emerges On Social Media

HT News Network

Bengaluru: The BJP on Tuesday dismissed as "fake" a purported list of candidates for the May 10 Assembly elections in Karnataka that is in circulation on social media, and alleged that it was a "lie manufactured in the Congress factory". The ruling party has not yet released the list of candidates, and is likely to come out with one after its Parliamentary Board meeting on April 8. The "fake" four-page list of candidates for 81 constituencies is in circulation on social media with the claim that it had been released by the Central Election Committee of the BJP on Tuesday after a meeting chaired by party national president JP Nadda. However, the party issued a statement quoting its national general secretary and Karnataka in-charge Arun Singh as saying that the list is fake. "Another lie from the Congress' factory of lies. While the process of selecting the BJP candidates is in progress, this list is a fake one," the BJP state unit tweeted. BJP national general secretary and Chikkamagaluru MLA CT Ravi too tweeted, "CONgress Fake News



Factory is circulating an alleged list of @BJP4Karnataka candidates on Social Media. Kannadigas know that we have not finalised our candidates for upcoming Assembly Elections. Fearing its defeat, CONgress has resorted to its usual cheap tactics against BJP!" Earlier in the day, Karnataka Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said the process of selecting candidates for the Assembly polls was being held democratically, and it would be completed smoothly, with the list being announced after the party's central leadership finalises it on April 8. Asked by reporters if there would be surprise candidates in the fray from the BJP, he said: "Certainly, there is a plan for new experiments in certain constituencies.

Kamal Nath, Shashi Tharoor Question Rahul Gandhi's Disqualification

HT News Network

Indore: Congress leaders Kamal Nath and Shashi Tharoor on Tuesday questioned the disqualification of party leader Rahul Gandhi as a Lok Sabha member following his conviction in a defamation case.

The two were talking to the media after participating in a seminar on "Protection and Upliftment of the Constitution" organised by the Madhya Pradesh unit of the All-India Professional Congress here.

Mr Nath noted that the trial for criminal defamation was conducted in Gujarat over a statement made by Gandhi in Karnataka four years ago. He wanted to ask the lawyers present at the seminar whether the action taken against Mr Gandhi was "bona fide or mala fide" (taken with good or bad intent), the Madhya Pradesh



Congress chief said. Mr Tharoor said that Mr Gandhi, in his statement at the election rally in Karnataka, had named three-four people, and it did not convey the meaning that all people with the surname 'Modi' are thieves. "Both the interpretations of Gandhi's statement should have been understood, and if at all any minimum punishment was to be awarded, he could have been given a warning that he should not repeat such action and the case

should have been closed," he said. But the court awarded Rahul Gandhi two years' jail term which was the maximum punishment for the offence and that was why he was disqualified as an MP, Mr Tharoor said, adding that this was a very bad development.

The Thiruvananthapuram MP also said that the statement in question had been made at an election rally where a lot of things are said. "People say many things in an election speech.

Cong takes swipe at Govt over China renaming places in Arunachal

HT News Network

New Delhi, Apr 4 (UNI) The Congress on Tuesday launched a scathing attack at the BJP-led government at the Centre over reports claiming that China has renamed 11 places in Arunachal Pradesh, and said the North-Eastern state is an integral and unalienable part of the country. "China has dared to 'rename' our areas in Arunachal Pradesh for the third time. Arunachal Pradesh is, and will remain an integral part of India. The country is facing the consequences of Modi ji giving a 'clean chit' to China," Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge wrote in a tweet in Hindi, attacking Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Echoing a similar sentiment, Congress general secretary in-charge of Communications Jai Ram Ramesh said, "A top Chinese diplomat recently claimed that the India-China border situation is now 'stable'. But China's provocations

and transgressions continue. It has now released a third set of

Almost three years later, Chinese forces continue to deny our

added, "Arunachal Pradesh has always been and remains an

not disturbed in any way." Earlier, the Ministry of External Affairs in a statement said, "We have seen such reports. This is not the first time China has made such an attempt. We reject this outright."

"Arunachal Pradesh is, has been, and will always be an integral and inalienable part of India. Attempts to assign invented names will not alter this reality," it said. Arunachal Pradesh shares a 1,080 km border with China. The Congress on Tuesday launched a scathing attack at the BJP-led government at the Centre over reports claiming that China has renamed 11 places in Arunachal Pradesh, and said the North-Eastern state is an integral and unalienable part of the country. "China has dared to 'rename' our areas in Arunachal Pradesh for the third time. Arunachal Pradesh is, and will remain an integral part of India. The country is facing the consequences of Modi ji giving a 'clean chit' to China," Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge wrote in a tweet.



Chinese names for places in Arunachal Pradesh, having done so earlier in 2017 and 2021." "This is the price we continue to pay for PM Modi's clean chit to China in June 2020, and his eloquent silence on Chinese actions.

patrols access to the strategic Depsang Plains to which we previously had unimpeded access. And now the Chinese are attempting to undermine the status quo in Arunachal Pradesh," the MP said in a statement. He

integral and unalienable part of India. The people of the state are proud and patriotic citizens of India. There should be no doubt whatsoever on the collective resolve of India, and of all Indians, to ensure that these realities are

PM Modi Holds Talks With Bhutan King Amid Concern Over Doklam Remarks

HT News Network

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi today held talks with Bhutanese King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck focusing on ways to bolster bilateral engagement in a range of areas including economic cooperation.

Bhutan's King began his two-day visit to India on Monday amid some concerns in New Delhi over China's attempts to expand influence over Thimphu.

Certain remarks by Bhutan Prime Minister Lotay Tshering on the Doklam tri-junction were seen by many as the Himalayan nation cosying up to Beijing though Bhutan maintained that there is no change in its stance on the border dispute.

It is learnt that the talks between PM Modi and King Wangchuck were focused on ways to expand bilateral ties.

The Bhutanese King was received at the Delhi airport by External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, in a special gesture reflecting the importance New Delhi has attached to the visit.

On Monday evening, Mr Jaishankar called on the visiting dignitary and said the King's vision for Bhutan's future and for strengthening the unique part-



Partnership with India is deeply appreciated.

Bhutan is a strategically important country for India and the defence and security ties between the two sides have witnessed significant expansion in the last few years.

The strategic ties witnessed an upward trajectory in the last few years in the backdrop of a 73-day face-off between Indian and Chinese troops in Doklam tri-junction in 2017.

The Doklam plateau is considered an important area for India's strategic interest. The standoff at Doklam tri-junction in 2017 began after China tried to extend a road in an area that Bhutan claimed belonged to it.

India had strongly opposed the construction as it would have impacted its overall security interests. The India-China face-off was resolved following several rounds of talks.

In October 2021, Bhutan and

China signed an agreement on a "three-step roadmap" to expedite negotiations to resolve their festering boundary dispute.

Bhutan shares an over 400-km-long border with China and the two countries have held over 24 rounds of boundary talks in a bid to resolve the dispute.

In a recent interview, the Bhutanese Prime Minister had said that China has an equal say in resolving the border dispute in Doklam.

India has consistently been Bhutan's top trading partner, and remains the leading source of investments in Bhutan. Bhutan's King began his two-day visit to India on Monday amid some concerns in New Delhi over China's attempts to expand influence over Thimphu. Certain remarks by Bhutan Prime Minister Lotay Tshering on the Doklam tri-junction were seen by many as the Himalayan nation cosying up to Beijing though Bhutan maintained that there is no change in its stance on the border dispute.

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Chinese balloon able to transmit 'intelligence': report

HT News Network

IN the latest development on the Balloon-Saga chapter the Chinese balloon was able to gather intelligence and send it in real-time back to Beijing while it was flown over sensitive military sites in the US, NBC news reported on Monday.

The report revealed that two current senior US officials and one former high-level administration cited that China had succeeded in flying balloon multiple times over sensitive military sites in the US.

According to the Guardian newspaper, it was the size of three school buses and has capabilities to collect intelligence before it was shot down on Feb 4 by the US air force from an F-22 plane.

"The intelligence China collected was mostly from electronic signals, which can be picked up from weapons systems or include communications from base personnel, rather than images", NBC's cited the officials as saying.

1 Killed, 30 Injured After Passenger Train Derails In Netherlands

HT News Network

Amsterdam: At least one person was killed and 30 injured, many seriously, when a passenger train carrying about 50 people derailed in the Netherlands early on Tuesday after hitting construction equipment on the track, Dutch emergency services said.

Rescue teams were seen ferrying away the injured in pre-dawn darkness at the scene of the accident at Voorschoten, a village near The Hague. The accident happened around 3:25 a.m. (0125 GMT), the emergency services said. A fire department spokesman told Dutch radio that 19 people were taken to hospital. Others were being treated on the spot, the emergency services said. The front carriage of the night train from Leiden city to The Hague derailed and ploughed into a field after the accident, ANP news agency said. The second carriage was on its side and a fire broke out in the rear carriage but was later extinguished, it said. There were conflicting reports about the cause of the accident. Earlier reports had said the passenger train had collided with a freight train. Dutch Railways (NS) spokesman Erik Kroeze said a freight train was involved in the accident but could not give details.

Dutch Railways said in a tweet that trains between Leiden and parts of The Hague were cancelled due to the accident.

US Teacher, Shot By 6-Year-Old Student, Sues School For \$40 Million

HT News Network

An elementary school teacher from Virginia, US, who was shot by a 6-year-old student, is suing the school authorities for ignoring multiple warnings and failing to avert the mishap. The teacher has filed a \$40 million lawsuit against the Richneck Elementary School's former principal and assistant principal among others, reported The Washington Post.

Abigail Zwerner, in her lawsuit, alleged that teachers and school employees informed Assistant principal Ebony Parker thrice that the student had a gun. The 25-year-old claimed that she also warned Mr Parker, who resigned after the shooting, that the boy was in a "violent mood" and had threatened to beat kindergarten kids. Upon hearing that information, Assistant Principal Parker had no response, refusing even to look up at Plaintiff when she expressed her concerns, the suit claimed. According to Ms Zwerner, the first-grade boy had a "history of random violence" and once tried to strangle a kindergarten teacher. The lawsuit highlighted that two days before the incident, the boy broke Ms Zwerner's phone and used inappropriate names for her and others. Besides Ebony Parker, the case has also been brought against principal Briana Foster-Newton, the Newport News School Board, and former superintendent George Parker III, reported CNN.

"Couldn't Bear To See Indian-Hindu...": Student's Charge At UK University

HT News Network

London: An Indian student has claimed that he was disqualified from the London School of Economics (LSE) Students' Union elections as a result of a deliberately orchestrated smear campaign because of his Indian and Hindu identity. Karan Kataria, who is from Haryana and is studying for a postgraduate law degree at the leading university in London, said he was motivated by the support of his peers to contest the post of General Secretary of the LSE Students' Union (LSESU). However, he was disqualified last week over what he believes are baseless allegations and without being given a chance to fully state his case. "Unfortunately, some individuals could not bear to see an Indian-Hindu leading the LSESU and resorted to vilifying my character and very identity in what was clearly in line with the alarming cancel culture which is uprooting our social communities," said Mr Kataria. "When I started my postgraduate studies at LSE, I sincerely hoped to strive for and further fulfil my passion for student welfare. But my dreams were shattered.

China warns meeting of Tsai, McCarthy will 'further damage' Sino-US ties

HT News Network

China has warned that an upcoming meeting between Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen and US House Speaker Kevin McCarthy will "further damage" relations between Beijing and Washington.

The Wednesday meeting in California will "greatly hurt the national feelings of 1.4 billion Chinese people" and undermine "the political foundation of China-US relations," a Los Angeles consulate spokesperson said in a statement, adding it would "further damage China-US relations."

McCarthy, a Republican, earlier confirmed he would meet Tsai in California, defying warnings from China that he was "playing with fire."

Tsai plans to stop over in the United States on her return from Central America, where she has met the leaders of Guatemala and is visiting Belize before meeting McCarthy.

On Monday, McCarthy's office said the "bipartisan" meeting would take place at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, just outside Los Angeles.

He had originally planned to follow the example of his predecessor as speaker, Democrat Nancy Pelosi, who visited Taiwan in August.

That visit prompted China to conduct its largest-ever military exercises around the island—a self-governing democracy Beijing claims as part of its territory.

McCarthy's decision to meet Tsai in the United States was viewed as a compromise that would underscore support for Taiwan but avoid inflaming tensions with China.



However, Xu Xueyuan, the charge d'affaires of China's embassy to the United States, told reporters last week that Washington risked "serious confrontation" no matter whether US leaders visited Taiwan or the reverse.

"The US keeps saying that transit is not a visit and that there are precedents, but we should not use past mistakes as excuses for repeating them today," she said.

China claims the self-ruled island as part of its territory to be retaken one day, and under its "One-China" principle, no country may maintain official ties with both Beijing and Taipei.

On Monday, China's consulate in Los Angeles said: "McCarthy is ignoring the broad support of the international community for the One-China principle, ignoring the lessons that should have been drawn from previous mistakes."

"There is no doubt that he will make the same mistake again, further damage China-US relations, but it will only strengthen the strong will and determination of the Chinese people" to achieve "reunification" with Taiwan, they added.

Egypt's Sisi visits Saudi Arabia amid economic crunch, regional realignment

HT News Network

Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el Sisi visited Saudi Arabia, Saudi state news agency SPA reported on Monday, as Cairo seeks financial inflows to ease pressure on its currency and bolster a faltering economy.

The visit comes amid a major diplomatic realignment in the region, with moves by Saudi Arabia and Egypt to ease tensions with Syria, Iran and Türkiye.

Oil-rich Saudi Arabia has long provided financial support to Egypt but recently signalled it would no longer provide such backing without conditions attached, which observers think may have sparked a rare media clash between the two countries.

Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, the kingdom's de facto ruler, met on Sunday with Sisi at the Saudi Red Sea city of Jeddah, where they discussed bilateral ties and regional developments, SPA reported.

Other Saudi and Egyptian officials, including Saudi national security adviser Musaad bin Mohammed al Aiban and Egypt's intelligence chief Abbas Kamel, attended the meeting, it added. Friendly investments

Saudi Arabia and its some Gulf allies have repeatedly come to Egypt's help since Sisi led the ouster of the former president Mohamed Morsi a decade ago.

When Egypt's financial difficulties were exposed and exacerbated by the fallout from the war in Ukraine last year, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar



made deposits in Egypt's central bank and pledged major new investments.

But those investments have been slow to materialise, putting new pressure on the Egyptian pound in recent weeks despite the currency's losing nearly half its value against the dollar since March 2022.

Egypt signed a \$3 billion rescue plan with the International Monetary Fund in December that targeted \$9.7 billion in foreign direct investment in the financial year ending in June 2023. Egyptian president's effort to seek financial help from the oil-rich kingdom comes as his country's currency faces new pressure after already losing nearly half its value against the dollar since March 2022.

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France's Macron heads to China for delicate talks on Ukraine and trade

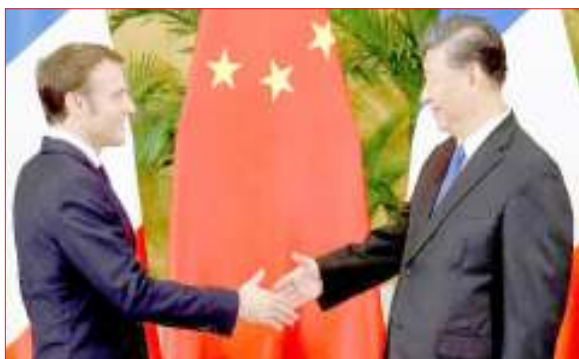
HT News Network

WASHINGTON: French President Emmanuel Macron will muster all his diplomatic acumen and political acumen on a three-day state visit to China where the war in Ukraine will be front and center, along with tough talks on trade.

Macron, who last traveled to China in 2019 before the COVID-19 crisis, is to start his trip on Wednesday.

He is expected to warn China against sending weapons to Russia and instead ask that the country use its influence to support peace efforts.

Beijing claims to hold a neutral stance in the war,



but has also stressed its "no-limits friendship" with Russia. China's President Xi Jinping last month met with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow.

A top French official acknowledged that Paris is not expecting to see a major shift in the position of China's, which has refused to

criticise Russia for its actions in Ukraine.

Paris and Beijing may find a point of convergence following Putin's recent announcement that his country plans to deploy tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus. China, without naming Russia, made clear its opposition to the planned deployment. Macron will also seek to involve China deeper in global discussions on climate-related issues, as things are getting more complicated for him at home.

The 45-year-old leader has in recent weeks faced strong opposition among ordinary French citizens and lawmakers to his plan to raise the legal retirement age from 62 to 64.

Finland to become 31st Nato member, says Stoltenberg

HT News Network

BRUSSELS: Finland's flag will be hoisted outside Nato headquarters on Tuesday (today) when it becomes the newest member of the Western alliance, Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg said. "Tomorrow we will welcome Finland as the 31st member," Stoltenberg told reporters on the eve of a historic meeting of Nato foreign ministers in Brussels.

Russian President Vladimir Putin's all-out invasion of Ukraine last year upended European security and pushed Finland — and its neighbour Sweden — to drop decades of non-alignment and seek to join Nato's protective umbrella.

Objections from Türkiye and Hungary held up Helsinki's bid for months, and are still blocking Stockholm, before the parliament in Ankara cleared the final obstacle for Finland with a vote last week. Completing the ratification in well under a year still makes this the fastest membership process in the alliance's recent history. Now all that is left are the last highly choreographed formalities at Nato headquarters in Brussels. Finland's foreign minister will hand over the formal accession papers to US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, the keeper of Nato's founding treaty, and the country's blue-and-white flag will be raised alongside those of its new allies.

Dir Fisheries reviews preparation for rolling out HADP for Kashmir

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APRIL 04: Director Fisheries, Mohammad Farooq Dar today chaired a review meeting on CSS/PMMSY & CAPEX budget 2022-23 and preparations for roll out of Holistic Agricultural Development Plan (HADP) for Kashmir Division.

The meeting was attended by Joint Director Fisheries (South) Kashmir, Chief Project Officer, Kokernag, and all District/Project offi-

cers of Kashmir Division. During the meeting, the Director reviewed the achievements made during the year 2022-23 under various schemes both in CAPEX and CSS/PMMSY. He expressed satisfaction on the progress made by the Department and emphasized on the need to continue the momentum. Director Fisheries highlighted the major achievements of the Department, in Kashmir Division achieved during the year 2022-23 which includes



under UT CAPEX/ PMMSY Trout Raceways, Carp Ponds, Large RAS (water efficient technology), Medium RAS, Biofloc, Feed Mill and Trout Hatchery.

Dir also stressed on the need for sustainable development of fisheries in the region and directed the officials to work towards achieving this goal. He urged the officers of the Department to continue its efforts towards improving the livelihoods of the people associated with the fisheries sector. He highlighted the importance of HADP and stressed upon the officers for the effective implementation of HADP for economic growth and prosper-

ity of the fish farming community. The Director Fisheries sought feedback from the officers and he appreciated the officers on the successful implementation of the schemes on ground and assured them of support/ cooperation in future as well. Further, he directed to make necessary arrangements for successful orientation programme of farmers under HADP commencing from last week of April, 2023. He highlighted the importance of HADP and stressed upon the offi-

cers for the effective implementations of HADP for economic growth and prosperity of the fish farming community. The Director Fisheries sought feedback from the officers and he appreciated the officers on the successful implementation of the schemes on ground and assured them of support/ cooperation in future as well. Further, he directed to make necessary arrangements for successful orientation programme of farmers under HADP.

J&K Govt to expend Rs 560 cr on agriculture, allied sectors under HADP Initiative to boost market ecosystem, benefit farmers, consumers

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 04: The agriculture and allied sectors in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir are poised for significant growth and boost with launch of a slew of technological advancements and extension programs. These interventions, incentivized through various schemes and projects, have already led to improvements in quality and quantity of produce in the region. However, the challenge

remains in integrating smallholder produce with market systems that are both effective and transparent. This will ensure that farmers receive a fair price for their goods while consumers get good value for their money. To tackle this issue, Jammu and Kashmir is implementing a project under Holistic Agricultural Development Program (HADP) that aims to strengthen the existing market infrastructure and create a robust market ecosystem that caters to the needs of all stakeholders.



Additional Chief Secretary, Agriculture Production Department, Atal Dulloo, emphasized that the proposed project will be segmented into several key areas. These included market reforms, infrastructure development, institutional and capacity building, branding, digital marketing, and market

research information systems. The project aims to achieve its objectives through an investment of Rs 560 crore, which will be spread over a period of five years. Dulloo expressed confidence that this project will bring about significant improvements in agriculture and allied sectors in Jammu & Kashmir, providing a boost to the region's economy and benefiting farmers and consumers alike. The project aims to improve the Terms of Trade (ToT) in favor of farmers, improve efficiency and effectiveness of the market ecosystem and minimize the value loss while maximizing societal welfare. The proposed activities or areas of intervention will strengthen the existing agricultural marketing system in Jammu & Kashmir, bringing long-term dividends across stakeholders, particularly farmer-producers. The proposed project also envisages significant growth in agriculture and allied sectors through various activities.

Bilal Parry felicitated with a doctorate for peace activism

HT News Network



New Delhi in a significant development, Kashmir's eminent young activist, the World Peace Institute of United Nations (WPIUN) Monday felicitated Bilal Ahmad Parry with an honorary doctorate degree during a function in New Delhi. Pertinently, the World Peace Institute of United Nations (WPIUN) is one of the leading international-level distance education centers in India that provides quality education in various disciplines. On Monday at an impressive function in New Delhi, eminent youth peace activist Bilal Ahmad Parry (29) was awarded the Doctorate in the "Peace and Social" stream. On the occasion, considering his contribution in peace activism Dr. Bilal Ahmad Parry was also felicitated and appointed National Vice President of the World Peace Institute of the United Nations. Pertinent to mention here, under the banner of the Jammu and Kashmir Development Foundation (JKDF) Dr. Bilal Parry has tirelessly worked for peace activism in Kashmir since his teenage.

Union Secretary releases JaKeGA annual report 2022-23

HT News Network



JAMMU, APRIL 04: Union Secretary, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Alkesh Kumar Sharma, today released the first annual report 2022-23 of Jammu and Kashmir e-Governance Agency (JaKeGA), IT department. CEO JaKeGA, Abhishek Sharma, Director NIELIT, Shameem Khan, JaKeGA team and officials of IT department were present on the occasion. Union Secretary appreciated the efforts being taken up by the UT administration to promote digital governance in the region. He interacted with the batch of officers undergoing Cyber security training at NIELIT, officers of JaKeGA and Information Technology Department. Speaking on the occasion, Abhishek Sharma informed that this report highlights some of the innovative digital initiatives undertaken successfully by JaKeGA in the year 2022-23.

CUK holds awareness prog on 'skill and entrepreneurship development'

HT News Network

Ganderbal, April 3: Central University of Kashmir (CUK), under the auspices of National Innovation and Start-up Policy (NISIP)-IIC and Deptt of Biotechnology, in collaboration with District Skill Committee, Ganderbal conducted a one-day awareness programme on "Skill and Entrepreneurship development" at its Green campus here Monday. The event was organised as part of the G-20 university connect. Addressing the gathering, Dr. Abid Hamid Dar, Head, Deptt of Biotechnology and Coordinator NISIP-IIC, briefed the participants about various measures initiated by the varsity in fostering an entrepreneurial ecosystem by starting various courses relevant to skill development and innovation. Prof. M Yousuf, Dean, SLS, Sciences emphasized on the significance of skill based courses like mush-



room cultivation, high density horticulture, medicinal botany, vermicomposting etc. in development of an entrepreneurial mind-set. Mr. Abdul Rouf Khan, District Skill Committee, highlighted the importance of Entrepreneurship and presented various success entrepreneurial stories in J&K over the last few years. He discussed the role of plastic recycle, aquaponics, medicinal crops, hydroponics, mushroom cultivation in generating various economic and employment opportunities. He shared the "Idea Pitching Challenge" recently launched under the Youth Entrepreneurship Festival, Ganderbal that has cash prizes of up to Rs. 50000 to awardees. Mr Hafeez Hackla, Matha Gandhi National Fellow, at the District Skill Com-

RDD schemes reviewed at Kupwara

HT News Network

KUPWARA, March 4: On the directions of District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kupwara, Dr. Doifode Sagar Dattatray, a review meeting was held at ACD complex Kupwara under the Chair of ACD Kupwara, Hilal Ahmad Mir. The meeting was attended by all BDOs, AEEs, JEEs and Dealing Assistants of different schemes. ACD took a detailed review of different schemes being executed under the RDD sector in all Blocks of Kupwara District. On the occasion, the ACD directed the Officers and field functionaries to re-double their efforts to ensure cent percent saturation of all the deliverables in the District so that targets are achieved well in time with tangible results on the ground and people are benefited. The ACD stressed the officers and field functionaries to carry forward the tempo of work with added zeal and dedication to sustain the achievements.

Skill Development Courses Commence at CDI and IICT

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APRIL 04: The Director Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir on Tuesday inaugurated three Skill Development Programmes (SDP) at Craft Development Institute and Indian Institute of Carpet Technology, Baghi-Ali-Mardan, Nowshera, Srinagar. The Skill Development Programmes have been started in three different areas vis-à-vis Papier-Machie, Carpet Weaving, Cutting and Stitching. The programmes are aimed at providing training to candidates especially young women in order to hone their skill set for setting up gainful self-employment ventures as per the market demand. The aim of the programmes is to help te candidates to be self-reliant and facilitate their capacity building so that they shall be able to explore sustainable livelihood opportunities. The Short Term Training Programme which has started today at Craft Development Institute in pattern making, cutting and stitching shall be of 3 months duration with an intake capacity of 12 candidates and has been sponsored by the Department of Handicrafts and Handloom, Kashmir. Another specialist programme which has commenced today at the Craft Development Institute in Papier-Machie shall be of 6 months duration with an intake capacity of 40 candidates and has been sponsored by National Council for Promotion of Urdu Language (NCPUL) in association with Handicrafts and Carpet Sector Skill Council (HCSSC).

J&K WDC Anantnag Organises awareness camp on Poshan activities under Poshan Pakhwada

DR. AB QAYOOM

ANANTNAG, APRIL 04: J&K Women Development Corporation Anantnag Organised Awareness Camp on Poshan Activities under Poshan Pakhwada today at Government Women's College Anantnag in which a large number of women from different fields of life participated. The programme was sponsored by National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation (NMDFC), Ministry of Minority Affairs. The theme of this year's Poshan Pakhwada 2023 is "Nutrition for All: Together Towards a Healthy India". The programme was aimed to raise awareness about the importance of nutrition and promote healthy eating habits.

District Officer, WDC Anantnag, Shabir Ahmad Wani welcomed the guests and discussed the achievements and schemes of Women Development Cooperation Anantnag. On the occasion, speakers spoke about the importance of women rights & duties, women nutrition, health and other women related issues. Describing the Poshan Pakhwada as "an innovative scheme devised by the central government for the welfare of the women and children," Secretary DLSA Anantnag, Mir Wajahat, who was the Chief Guest on the occasion, said that since law gives equal opportunities to all the citizens irrespective of caste, colour, religion & sex, therefore women folk should not be discriminated and given equal opportunities in all fields. He added that women folk



should be encouraged in all fields of life and girls from the beginning should be treated on equal lines with boys. Principal Women College Anantnag, Dr. Irfan Majid who

was the Guest of Honour on the occasion said that though women have proved their mettle in all fields of life, still more needs to be done in terms of women safety at work places to avoid discrimination. She advocated for equal opportunities for both boys and girls. District Social Welfare Officer Anantnag, on the occasion said that the Social Welfare department aims to organise awareness programmes in all parts of the district to empower women folk, besides it would provide all possible support to WDC Anantnag. Among others who spoke on the occasion include HoD Department of Education, GDC Women Anantnag, Parveena Bandy, besides experts from the Social Welfare department and health department.

Medical Myths: All about lung cancer

Because November is Lung Cancer Awareness Month, the latest edition of Medical Myths tackles lung cancer. Among a range of misunderstandings and mistruths, we cover pollution, surgery, risk factors, and talcum powder.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in 2018, there were 218,520 new cases of lung cancer and 142,080 related deaths in the United States.

Globally, in 2020, lung cancer was the second most common cancer after breast cancer, with 2.21 million Trusted Source cases. It was responsible for 1.8 million deaths.

Although prevalent, lung cancer is commonly misunderstood. To help us get to the truth of the matter, we enlisted the help of Dr. Fred R. Hirsch, executive director of the Center of Excellence for Thoracic Oncology at Mount Sinai's Tisch Cancer Institute, in New York City. He is also the Joe Lowe and Louis Price Professor of Medicine, Hematology and Medical Oncology at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai.

1. Only smokers develop lung cancer

As Dr. Hirsch explained to Medical News Today, "That is not correct, and unfortunately, it's a very hurtful myth and causes stigma."

According to the CDC, around 10–20% Trusted Source of people with lung cancer in the U.S. never smoked or have smoked fewer than 100 cigarettes in their lives.

Every year, around 7,300 deaths Trusted Source from lung cancer among nonsmokers are from secondhand smoke, the CDC reports, and a further 2,900 are from radon exposure.

2. There is no way to reduce the risk

"There are several ways to reduce lung cancer risk," explained Dr. Hirsch. "First and foremost is smoking prevention and smoking cessation."

For anyone who is trying to give up smoking, here are some evidence-based tips to help.

Dr. Hirsch also described the importance of limiting exposure to secondhand smoke, which is sometimes called passive smoking. According to the CDC:

"Nonsmokers who are exposed to secondhand smoke at home or at work increase their risk of developing lung cancer by 20–30% Trusted Source."

"Other smoking products are also considered to be a potential risk for lung cancer development," Dr. Hirsch said.

"Lung cancer screening with a low-dose CT scan in high-risk populations, such as people who are 50 years old with a history of smoking a pack a day for 20 or more years, reduces lung cancer mortality by more than 20%."

"Other risk factors include radon exposure," Dr. Hirsch continued. "Thus, measuring radon in your home is important. [In addition,] certain lifestyle behaviors are considered potential risk factors, and

exercise and avoiding obesity is important."

3. Only older adults develop lung cancer

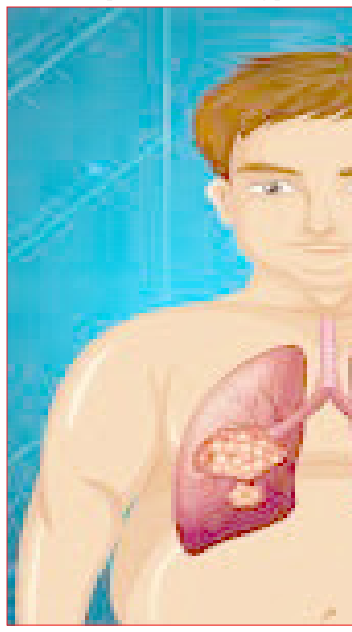
"No, that is not true," Dr. Hirsch confirmed. Although more than half Trusted Source of people diagnosed with lung cancer are older than 65, "More and more younger individuals below the age of 50 are getting lung cancer, particularly a r l v o n w o m e n."



4. Living in a polluted city is worse than smoking for lung cancer risk

There is good evidence that pollution generated by traffic increases the risk of lung cancer. For instance, the authors of a meta-analysis Trusted Source that investigated this conclude:

"Exposure to nitrogen dioxide, nitrogen oxide, sulfur dioxide, and fine particulate matter were positively associated with a risk of lung cancer. Occupational exposure to air pollution among profes-



sional drivers significantly increased the incidence and mortality of lung cancer."

However, comparisons between

pollution and smoking are harder to make. "Living in polluted cities is a risk factor, but no one knows for sure whether it is worse than the use of tobacco products, and the combination might be even worse," explained Dr. Hirsch.

5. 'I've smoked for years, there's no point stopping now'

Simply put, according to Dr. Hirsch, "Smoking cessation reduces the risk of lung cancer."

"No, lung cancer surgery does not make lung cancer spread," Dr. Hirsch told MNT.

He then explained why it is important to have early surgery and the measures taken to prevent any spread.

"Lung cancer surgery is advised in early stage lung cancer." At this stage, he explained, it can cure the cancer. "If a tumor is large or has loco-regional dissemination," he continued, "adjuvant therapy, such as chemotherapy or immunotherapy before surgery, will further reduce risk of having cancer cells in the blood."

6. Smoking cannabis does not increase lung cancer risk

"We believe cannabis represents a risk factor," explained Dr. Hirsch, "but we need more long-term studies. Epidemiological evidence for an association between cannabis and lung cancer is limited and conflicting."

One of the difficulties in studying this association, he explained, is that people who smoke cannabis often smoke tobacco, too. This makes teasing apart the

Learn what to eat, how to manage side effects, and habits to avoid during chemotherapy for lung cancer with our 3-day series.

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7. If you have lung cancer, you may as well continue to smoke

This is not true. Alongside the myriad benefits of quitting smoking, "People with lung cancer who quit smoking have a better prognosis," confirmed Dr. Hirsch.

8. Lung cancer surgery makes the cancer spread

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Dr. Hirsch added that clinical research has shown that this approach prolongs survival and reduces the risk of dying.

9. Breathing in talcum powder increases lung cancer risk

According to Dr. Hirsch, "Talcum has not been associated with

slightly higher risk in people who are involved in talc mining and processing, but it is not clear whether it is because of the mineral or other things underground known to cause lung cancer, such as the radioactive gas radon."

10. If I had lung cancer, I would have symptoms

"Unfortunately, that is not always the case," Dr. Hirsch explained. "Lung cancer can be detected in totally asymptomatic cases or in individuals with slight respiratory symptoms."

He explained that this is one reason why lung cancer screening in high-risk people is so important. He pointed out that even in nonsmokers there may be an advantage to screening, but studies have not confirmed this yet.

"Studies with lung cancer screening in never-smokers are ongoing," he said, reiterating that catching lung cancer early increases survival rates.

11. Lung cancer is always terminal

Thankfully, this is also false. According to Dr. Hirsch, when healthcare professionals detect lung cancer early, it "has a cure rate of more than 60%."

He continued: "Even lung cancer diagnosed in more advanced disease today has a much better potential for long-term survival in certain situations. Progress in therapy and outcomes for patients with advanced lung cancer that has specific genetic mutations, which can be targeted Trusted Source by specific therapies, has been tremendous over the last decade."

12. Antioxidant supplements protect against lung cancer

"Because antioxidants play an important role in protecting our cells from DNA damage that could include cancer-causing mutations or other genomic abnormalities, several clinical studies have been performed, but unfortunately, most failed to demonstrate any conclusive protection against lung cancer in a clinical setting," Dr. Hirsch told us.

"There are a few studies indicating that several dietary antioxidants, like carotenoids and vitamin C may protect against lung cancer, but the results overall are somewhat ambiguous. More specific studies in well-defined smoking populations are needed as well as studies of 'dosages' of antioxidants."

13. Smoking is the only risk factor for lung cancer

Smoking is perhaps the most well-known risk factor for lung cancer, but it is certainly not the only one. Other risk factors include a family history of lung cancer, exposure to air pollution, exposure to radon, exposure to asbestos, previous radiation to the chest, and chronic lung disease.

NEWS Health Ministry finds eye drop of standard quality' after CDC flagged concerns: Report

Days after the United States' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) linked Chennai-based Global Pharma Healthcare's



eyedrops o the likelihood of a highly drug-resistant bacteria, the Union Health Ministry found the samples to be of 'standard quality', reported NDTV. Even the Tamil Nadu Drugs Control Director PV Vijayalakshmi had said earlier that they found 'no contamination' in samples of eyedrops. Earlier, the New York Times, citing the US CDC, reported that three deaths, eight cases of blindness and dozens of infections had been traced to eyedrops under the brand name EzriCare Artificial Tears.

According to the US FDA, the use of contaminated artificial tears increases risk of eye infections which may result in blindness or death.

Following this, the drugmaker initiated the recall of 50,000 tubes of eye ointment in the US market.

The US FDA, stating the reason for recalling of the drugs mentioned that its analysis found unopened tubes to be contaminated with bacteria. Located about 40 km south of Chennai, the Global Pharma Healthcare in February had stopped the production of the eyedrops following the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued a warning over its use. While in February, Tamil Nadu drugs regulator claimed that it found 'no evidence of deviation' at the Chennai plant. As per details, the bacteria that US regulator is concerned about -- pseudomonas aeruginosa -- may cause infections in the blood, lungs or wounds. The drug is normally used as a protectant against irritation or to relieve dryness of the eye

Metformin: Can this diabetes drug prevent long COVID? Doctors explain possibility after Lancet study

Can Metformin, a widely-used clinical drug for controlling Type 2 diabetes, prevent long COVID in patients? According to a recent study published as a pre-print in The Lancet, researchers found that there was a 42 per cent lower chance of being detected with long Covid among people who had taken this oldest and most commonly used anti-diabetes drug. Treatment with Metformin during acute COVID-19 infection prevented over 40 per cent of long Covid cases, says the study.

Although the drug has shown promise as a therapeutic option for cancer and ageing, can it be considered for pandemic protocols? Noted endocrinologist Dr Shashank Joshi says it's early days yet. "The study looks attractive but this is experimental evidence. Metformin is still not in any standard of care," he says. Metformin has been shown in earlier studies to prevent the COVID virus from multiplying in a test tube, and this antiviral action is what adds to its protective ability. The drug inhibits a protein called MTOR that the virus uses to assemble itself before becoming a new set of viruses outside the cell. "Currently, long Covid is an emerging entity.

Intermittent fasting: Is it all it's cracked up to be?

Intermittent fasting is a term used to describe a variety of eating patterns that have alternating periods of fasting — abstinence from foods — and eating.

The fasting period may last from 12 hours per day to several consecutive days, with a consistent, recurring pattern over the course of a week.

The main types Trusted Source of intermittent fasting are:

modified fasting or the 5:2 diet — this protocol involves fasting for 2 non-consecutive days of the week, and eating normally for 5 days

alternate-day fasting — fasting days are alternated with days where foods and beverages are consumed normally, without restrictions

time-restricted eating — a type of intermittent fasting that limits the "eating window" to 4–12 hours, including a daily fasting period of 12–20 hours. Persons eat to satiety during their eating windows without caloric restrictions.

Of these, time-restricted eating Trusted Source is the most popular, and may be what most people refer to when they mention intermittent fasting.

The 16:8 pattern — eating during an 8-hour window and fasting for 16 hours each day — may be the most recommended time-restricted eating pattern.

The circadian rhythm

Much of the research on intermittent fasting and time-restricted eating considers the impact of fasting on the body's natural circadian rhythm.

The circadian rhythm Trusted Source, also called the circadian clock, represents the 24-hour cycle of metabolism in the body, including control of the sleep-wake cycle, blood pressure, mood regulation, and hormonal balance, to name a few.

It is influenced by light and darkness over the course of the day, eating behaviors, and the timing of meals.

A growing body of research Trusted Source suggests that eating for lengthy periods in the day, ranging from 12–15 hours, may disrupt the circadian rhythm and increase the risk of chronic diseases including heart disease, cancer, and type 2 diabetes.

Thus, a major goal of fasting, specifically time-restricted eating, is to reduce the time spent eating in the day by extending the overnight fasting period.

The study of the relationship between circadian rhythms and food timing is called chrono-nutrition Trusted Source.

Benefits

Many of the benefits of intermittent fasting are attributed to daily fasting periods of no less than 12 hours, although some research suggests that a minimum of 16 hours of fasting may be required.

Generally, during 12–36 Trusted Source hours of uninterrupted fasting,

the liver glycogen stores become



depleted, overall metabolic processes are altered, and positive health effects are observed.

Here are some of the science-backed benefits of intermittent fasting.

1. Improved cholesterol levels

Findings across animal and human research Trusted Source show favorable changes in cholesterol levels.

Intermittent fasting has the potential Trusted Source to reduce total cholesterol, triglycerides, LDL chole-

sterol or "bad" cholesterol, and increase HDL cholesterol or "good" cholesterol.

Elevated total cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, and triglyceride levels are risk factors Trusted Source for heart disease.

2. Blood sugar control

Intermittent fasting can improve blood sugar control Trusted Source by reducing insulin resistance, and increasing insulin sensitivity.

This results in lower Trusted Source fasting blood sugar and glycated hemoglobin — HbA1c — levels.

In fact, experimental research in adult males with type 2 diabetes showed the potential for intermittent fasting as a therapeutic approach that may reduce the need for insulin therapy.

3. Changes in body composition

Changes in body weight and composition Trusted Source are among

the most studied effects of intermittent fasting.

Several studies have shown that weight loss of between 3–7% body weight in an average of 8 weeks was achievable through intermittent fasting. Research also noted that this method could result in fat loss.

Fasting in a 14:10 pattern Trusted Source — an eating window of 10 hours and a daily fast of 14 hours — can act on the risk factors of metabolic syndrome, including by reducing waist circumference, body fat percentage, and visceral fat.

Intermittent fasting can thus ease metabolic syndrome, a set of risk factors that increase the risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

4. Other health benefits

A 2015 review Trusted Source of 2,650 adult females indicated that reducing calorie intake in the evenings, and fasting for longer periods at night, may lower inflammation.



Shreyas Iyer to have back surgery, out of IPL 2023 and WTC final

MUMBAI: India batter Shreyas Iyer will undergo surgery on his injured back and will therefore miss the entire 2023 IPL, and the World Test Championship (WTC) final in June.

ESPNcricinfo has learned that Iyer, who's Kolkata Knight Riders' full-time captain at the IPL, will be travelling overseas for the surgery and is expected to be out for at least three months before he resumes training.

The recurring lower-back injury also forced him out of the final Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy last month, before ruling him out of the ODI series against Australia that followed. Before that, he had

experienced problems due to the same injury in December, following India's tour of Bangladesh.

It is understood that on both occasions he experienced swelling in his lower back, due to issues stemming from a bulge in one of the discs in his spine which has resulted in an impinged nerve. The nerve runs along the right leg and has caused shooting pain in Iyer's calf, which has compounded his mobility issues. It is also understood that he had been given injections to help numb the pain in his back. Nitish Rana was named interim Knight Riders captain in Iyer's place ahead of IPL 2023.

Dhoni: No-balls and wides are hurting CSK 'really bad'

NEW DELHI: MS Dhoni isn't happy about the number of no-balls and wides his fast bowlers have bowled in Chennai Super Kings' two IPL 2023 matches so far. In their second game itself, against Lucknow Super Giants on Monday night, Super Kings' quicks sent down 13 wides and three no-balls.

"We are bowling too many extra deliveries," he said after the 12-run win on Monday night at Chepauk, and even mock-threatened his bowlers that "they will have



to be ready to play under a new captain".

Deepak Chahar, the experienced name in the pace attack, bowled five wides (including three in a row in the 17th over) in the game against Super Giants, but didn't concede any extras in the first game, which Super Kings lost to Gujarat Titans. The two less-experienced quicks, Tushar Deshpande and Rajvardhan Hangargekar, have been consistent in giving away extra deliveries: Deshpande has a tally of five wides and four no-balls over two games, and Hangargekar six wides and one no-ball. No-balls, of course, come with free hits, and oppositions have slammed two fours and a six off those so far. "It's the fast bowling that needs to slightly improve, and they need to bowl according to the conditions. Maybe, even if it's on the flatter side, have fielders and try to bowl in the areas where you are pushing the batsmen to hit over the fielders," Dhoni said in the post-match presentation on Monday. "Especially what is important is: keep an eye when we're batting, keep an eye what the opposition bowlers were doing, so it gives you an idea of what can be done, what can be my plan according to the strength I have or the pace I have."

Olympian Sunisa Lee says kidney issue ended Auburn season

AUBURN: Olympic gymnastics champion Sunisa Lee said a kidney issue cut short her college career, but she still has her sights set on the Paris Games next year.

Lee, who already had announced plans to leave college and resume training at the elite level this spring, missed the end of the regular season, the Southeastern Conference championships and the NCAA regional because of what Auburn described as a "non-gymnastics health issue." She revealed Monday in a post on social media that it was related to kidney problems.

"It's been challenging to end my Auburn career early, but I am thankful for all the love and support," Lee wrote. "I will not stop pursuing my dreams for a bid to Paris in 2024."



Brazil volleyballer suspended for online abuse of Lula

SAO PAULO: Olympic volleyball gold medalist Wallace de Souza was suspended for one year by Brazil's Olympic Committee on Monday for online abuse of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva.

The committee's ethics council agreed unanimously to suspend de Souza "due to the anti-ethical action of promoting and stimulating violence" on social media.

He's been suspended from club activities since Jan. 31 after he conducted a social media poll asking whether Lula deserved to be shot in the face. De Souza is a staunch supporter of former President Jair Bolsonaro, a far-right leader and pro-gun activist.

Lula beat Bolsonaro in October elections and returned on Jan. 1 to the job he held from 2003-10.

The Olympic committee ruling also sidelined de Souza for 90 days from national competitions, which forces him out of the knockout stages of Brazil's top-flight volleyball league. He plays for Cruzeiro, one of the favourites for the Brazilian Superleague title.

De Souza helped Brazil win gold at the Rio de Janeiro Olympics in 2016 but he's

already retired from international competitions.

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"Whoever builds a mosque, desiring thereby Allah's pleasure, Allah builds for him the like of it in paradise." [Bukhari]

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