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Srinagar
Thursday
April 06 | 2023
Ramadan 15 | 1444
Pages: 12
Price: Rs 02/-

J&K made significant all-round progress, our economy is growing stronger: LG

MPs Panel To Visit J&K

Consultative committee attached to MoRTH to meet at Sonamarg

SRINAGAR, APR 05: Of late, Jammu & Kashmir has emerged as one of the favourite destinations for parliamentary committees for their meetings and study tours. With the budget session set to conclude on Thursday, a parliamentary committee is holding its meeting in the picturesque tourist resort of Sonamarg in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district. The consultative committee of members of the parliament attached with the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways is visiting the J&K Union Territory from April 9 to 11. According to details available with news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the committee headed by Union Minister

JAMMU, APR 05: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha addressed the inaugural session of the 3-day mega event on Panch Pran of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi at University of Jammu, today. The event is being organized by the University of Jammu, in collaboration with the Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, Hindustan Samachar and Cluster University of Jammu. The Lt Governor while talking about Amrit Kaal and Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's Panch Pran said, the Five Resolves – resolve to move the country ahead as a Developed India, eradicating the mentality of slavery, be proud of India's heritage and legacy, strength of unity and solidarity and duties of citizens



towards the nation, will make India a developed country by 2047. In 2047, when we celebrate 100 years of Independence, India will have the world's youngest & most skilled workforce. Today we are the fifth largest economy in the world and in next 25 years, we will be a \$26 trillion economy, observed the Lt Governor. "The great challenge of transforming the country can be achieved by adopting the five resolves and achieving the targets to build a developed nation which our forefathers had envisioned," added the Lt Governor. The Lt Governor called upon the

citizens and all stakeholders to adopt the "Panch Pran" call given by the Hon'ble PM Shri Narendra Modi Ji to move towards the golden era and to build a prosperous & welfare society. "The age-old civilizational values based on 'Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinah' - everyone should be happy and prosperous - will continue to guide us in the making of modern India. Welfare of others is the core philosophy of our cultural heritage that will show the way to prosperity," said the Lt Governor. Amrit Yatra calls for dedication, determination and above all, it calls for faith in the abilities and centuries-old wisdom of inclusivity. Young men and women must work towards harnessing the tremendous capacities of various sectors to shape the destiny of our nation, the Lt Governor added.

NEWS BRIEF

Covid situation under control, being monitored Div Com

SRINAGAR, APR 05: Authorities in Kashmir valley on Wednesday said that the Covid-19 situation is under controlled and is being monitored. Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Vijay Kumar Bidhuri said there is no need to get panicky due to the

India & Bhutan plan to set up first Integrated Check Post along border near Jaigaon

NEW DELHI, APR 05: Prime Minister Narendra Modi and King of Bhutan Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck held a bilateral meeting in New Delhi today. During the meeting, both sides reviewed the entire gamut of bilateral cooperation to further boost their relationship. Briefing media in New Delhi,



Pig population increasing thick and fast in Kashmir, Wildlife experts in shock

SRINAGAR, APR 05: The wild boars which are not natives to Kashmir and culturally and religiously unacceptable to people have resurfaced much to the surprise of Wild Life experts. The CCTV footage shows the presence of scores of wild boars at Dachigam National Park in Srinagar outskirts. Ironically, these wild boars threw a big challenge for the employees at Tulip Garden this year when these entered into the garden forcing the people guarding the garden to go for fencing and keep strict vigil round the clock. One of the employees while confirming the presence of wild boars around Tulip and Botanical gardens of Srinagar said that in coming years, it will be a big challenge to deal with these pigs as their population has been increasing despite the weather conditions that don't suit these animals. A sounder of boars can be seen wandering in Dachigam park and

2 female drug peddlers arrested in Baramulla

BARAMULLA, APR 05: In a continuing effort to combat the drug trade in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, police on Wednesday arrested two female drug peddlers, and seized 113 grams of a substance similar to Charas.

CS reviews progress of vital NH projects

SRINAGAR, APR 05: Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta today chaired



a meeting to review the progress of vital projects of National Highway. During the meeting, threadbare discussion were held on vital projects under execution which included Jaiswal bridge on Udhampur-Ramban section, Ramban flyover and tunnels. It was informed during the

Srinagar house owners asked to furnish details of tenants within 10 days

SRINAGAR, APR 05: District Magistrate Srinagar Wednesday ordered the property owners/landlords to furnish details of tenants putting up in the properties anywhere in the district, within a period of ten days. The order was issued by the district administration after police busted a sex racket in Bagh-e-Mehtab area of Srinagar outskirts

Widespread light rain likely to occur in Kashmir: MeT

SRINAGAR, APR 05: Meteorological department predicts a fairly widespread light rain thunderstorm over Kashmir valley while isolated very light rains are likely to occur over Jammu division during the

2 militants arrested last year escape police custody

SRINAGAR, APR 05: Two militants, who were arrested in 2022 for being involved in an attack on a wine shop, escaped from police custody in Baramulla district of Jammu and Kashmir in the wee hours on Wednesday, officials said. They said a massive hunt has

J&K Police solves blind murder case, 3 accused arrested in Srinagar

SRINAGAR, APR 05: Jammu and Kashmir Police on Wednesday claimed to have solved a blind murder case by arresting three accused persons involved in the heinous crime. A team of Police Station Nowgam, Srinagar made a significant breakthrough in a blind murder case that has been under investigation when they arrested three accused on April 4 who were

Militant hideout busted in Ramban woods: Official

JAMMU, APR 05: Police and army claimed to have busted a militant hideout in Ramban district by recovering bullets. "On April 4, information was received through reliable sources regarding the presence of cache of arms, ammunition and related

Highest ever inflow of about ₹ 9000 Cr into the UT under CSS for FY 2022-23

Also more than 2.6 lakh jobs created under various SE schemes during this period

JAMMU, APR 05: In a major achievement this year, a highest ever funds have been spent under the flagship Central Sponsored Schemes (CSS) by J&K in the previous financial year 2022-23. Moreover an employment for 2,63,595 persons was also generated in



BOTTOM

Budget 2023-24 to strengthen e-Gov ecosystem in J&K

GOVT TO EXTEND E-OFFICE TO ALL OFFICES, CREATE ONLINE CENSUS MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

SRINAGAR, APR 05: The budget for 2023-24 fiscal will further strengthen the e-governance initiatives of J&K government with emphasis on extending e-offices to all offices besides creation of online census management system. J&K's e-Governance policies have shown tremendous improvement elevating the citizen satisfaction level regarding implementation of schemes and programmes being



CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

J&K made.....

The Lt Governor highlighted the efforts to fulfil the resolutions of Hon'ble Prime Minister and to make Jammu Kashmir a major contributor in socio-economic development of the nation.

"J&K has made significant all-round progress and our economy is growing stronger by the month. The recent reforms have begun to unleash the untapped productivity and have succeeded in improving the quality of life for the people," said the Lt Governor.

Several structural reforms and collective efforts of people with the spirit of Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat are playing an important role by spearheading the cause of sustainable development, he added.

Underlining the unprecedented growth registered in various sectors, the Lt Governor said the Physical, Knowledge and Digital connectivity has infused a sense of self-confidence in the society and helping the administration to promote sustainable and equitable development.

Speaking on the accelerated pace of project completion, the Lt Governor noted that 50,627 projects were completed in 2021-22 and in FY 2022-23 we are hoping to cross 70,000 projects. He said the five resolves will ensure rapid economic development and creation of vast network of infrastructure for sustained growth.

ShAjay Kumar Singh, Press Secretary to Hon'ble President of India in his keynote address said that the Hon'ble Prime Minister's Panch Pran will put India in the league of most developed nations in the next 25 years.

Highlighting Hon'ble Prime Minister's five resolves, Sh Singh said the people have to concentrate on their resolves and strength. We must take up the responsibility of fulfilling all the dreams of the freedom fighters by embracing those Panch Pran by 2047 when the country celebrates 100 years of independence. The responsibility of building a developed India lies with each of us, he added.

It is the combination of sociology and psychology added to traditional notion of development that makes the development process more effective and transformative. The Indian model of growth would be radically different from the rest of the developed nations and would have unique features of inclusivity and social justice, he said.

Prof Umesh Rai, Vice-Chancellor University of Jammu, highlighted the key features of the Panch Pran Utsav. The 3-day long event will cover lectures by prominent experts, showcasing of documentaries and exhibitions of cultural heritage, it was informed.

On the occasion, the Lt Governor inaugurated the Panch Pran exhibition and Pledge was administered to fulfil the five resolves of Hon'ble Prime Minister. A Newsletter of Jammu University was also released.

Sh Rajinder Sharma, Mayor, JMC; Prof. Bechan Lal, Vice Chancellor, Cluster University of Jammu; Justice Wasim Sadiq Nargal; Padma Shri Balwant Thakur; Sh Arvind Madrikar, Chairperson Hindustan Samachar, Administrative Secretaries; prominent personalities, senior officers and students were present on the occasion.

MPs Panel.....

of Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari and comprising MPs from Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha is holding its meeting in Sonamarg to discuss a number of issues.

Apart from Gadkari and his deputy V.K. Singh, the committee comprises 21 MPs from Lok Sabha and three from Rajya Sabha.

The issues of implementation of vehicle scrapping policy, review of Bharatmala Pariyojana and new bus ports policy would be discussed during the meeting. Other issue(s) can also come up for discussion in the meeting.

The meeting is expected to be attended by officials from the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways, National Highways Authority of India, National Highway Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited and other agencies.

Meanwhile, the J&K administration has geared up to play host for the meeting. The General Administration Department and the Roads & Buildings Department have appointed a team of officers for the smooth conduct of the visit.

India & Bhutan.....

External Affairs Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra said, the King of Bhutan Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck briefed Modi about the reforms initiatives taken by Bhutan.

He said, Prime Minister Narendra Modi also reiterated India's full support for the socio-economic development of Bhutan. He said, both the countries reviewed their bilateral ties focusing on economic and development partnership, trade facilitation measures and cooperation in trade, connectivity, investment, energy and new sectors including space and startups.

Talking about the outcomes of the meeting, Kwatra said India would step up its support for Bhutan's upcoming 13th five-year plan. He said India will also work to extend an additional standby credit facility and shape long-term sustainable arrangements for the export of agricultural commodities from Bhutan. He said, the country would also work to develop long-term bilateral arrangements for an assured supply of critical commodities like petroleum and coal.

Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra said, both countries are examining and considering setting up the first Integrated Check Post along the India-Bhutan border, which would be near Jaigaon. He said, India and Bhutan will also expedite the proposed Kokrajhar-Gelephu rail

link project through Government of India support in consultation with the Bhutanese side. Kwatra said, this will be historic because it will be the first-ever rail link between India and Bhutan.

Earlier in the morning, Wangchuck paid floral tributes to Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat. National Security Advisor Ajit Doval met the King of Bhutan. After the bilateral meeting, Wangchuck met President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan this evening.

The Bhutanese King is on a three-day visit to India. The King of Bhutan is accompanied by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and External Trade Dr. Tandi Dorji and several senior officials of the Bhutan government.

In a tweet by Dr Jaishankar yesterday, he said, Wangchuck's visit will further strengthen the close and unique India-Bhutan partnership.

Pig population.....

its adjoining farming fields. Pigs are not native to Kashmir but were introduced by Dogra rulers for game hunting. Due to hostile weather, the population of pigs in Kashmir started diminishing and by 1980's wild boars virtually disappeared from Kashmir.

"It was 2013 when we spotted 3 pigs in Dachigam while doing research on Hangul. And today, their population has increased manifold which is surprising," HoD Wild Life SKUAST, Dr Khurshid told news agency Kashmir News Trust.

He said in the Uri area of North Kashmir, wild boars are found as their presence is in other parts of Kashmir forests due to the semi-tropical climate.

In the past wild pigs have been sighted in many areas of North Kashmir, including Uri, Lachipora, Limber, Rafiabad, Rajwar and Balpur. Wild Life Researcher Auqib Rasheed said that the reason for its revival may be multi-factor. "Climate change can be one of the factors. We have been witnessing warm temperatures for the past few years," he said adding that the presence of these pigs is very dangerous for Kashmiri Hangul.

"Pig and Hangul will compete for habitat and food and it will prove disastrous for Hangul. Pigs create havoc in fields and damage crops," he said.

Wild Life experts believe that if the population of wild boars is not curbed, they will prove newer and more difficult challenges to native animals, orchardists, and farmers. These animals have the potential to change the whole ecosystem.

CS reviews.....

meeting that work on these vital projects is being expedited to the fullest extent. CS was informed that Jaisawal bridge will be fully completed by 10th April while the Ramban flyover will be completed around 15th April.

CS directed the concerned to speed up the pace of work so that these projects are completed at the earliest and commuters have a safe and less time consuming journey along Srinagar-Jammu highway.

CS said that these links will not only reduce the travel time of commuters, but will also completely bypass the difficult landslides and shooting stone prone areas along the stretch.

CS also inquired about the shooting stones at the T5 tunnel. He said that the debris due to landslides and shooting stones should be cleared forthwith as soon as it's occurrence. He enjoined upon them to augment resources for maintenance of this road till the works are completed.

Chief Secretary also directed the authorities to completely do away with the halting of trucks at Nagrota and Qazigund on Srinagar-Jammu National Highway to ensure seamless movement of HMVs by June. He directed the Divisional Commissioner Jammu/Kashmir to frame a plan in this regard in the next week.

He said that the paraphernalia of National Highway is good enough so as not to stop any vehicle unnecessarily.

Srinagar house.....

vide his letter No. 01-23/12741-42 dated: 03-4-2023 and No. CS/01-23/12910-12, dated: 04-04.2023 has reported that Srinagar being a capital city, a good number of people from other places are putting up in the District Srinagar in the rented accommodation. Investigation in multiple incidents of social crime including theft/burglary has revealed that the persons involved in such activities have been staying as tenants in Srinagar city which poses a danger to the ordinary Citizens. On April, 3rd, 2023 an incident of immoral trafficking came to the fore in the Bagh-i-Mehtab area of Srinagar city falling within the jurisdiction P/S Channapora. During the preliminary investigations it has been divulged that accused persons had from outside of District Srinagar and had hired private house in the said area. Further, the house-owner, where the illicit racket was busted, had not conducted tenant verification and whereas, the surfacing of the racket has evoked outrage among the public circles having a tendency to become a law and order issue thus necessitating putting in place measures for stopping such illicit/immoral activities", reads the order.

"Whereas time and again it has also been brought to the notice of undersigned that few incidents of acid attack/eve teasing have occurred in the recent past in the District which are in turn damaging the social fabric of society thus calling for putting the deterrence measures in place. SSP, Srinagar vide above mentioned communication/s has requested that there is an imminent need to conduct verification of tenants

staying in rented accommodations in various parts of the city as there have been instances of social crimes and illicit activities", it reads.

"Whereas, SSP, Srinagar vide above mentioned communication/s has requested that there is an imminent need to conduct verification of tenants staying in rented accommodations in various parts of the city as there have been instances of social crimes and illicit activities. It is necessary that some steps are taken to make the landlords, property owners accountable before renting out or making available their premises to tenants, so that such criminals/anti-social/anti-national elements in the guise of tenants do not succeed in the Commission of crime in the Community." "Whereas, I consider the threat being posed by such anti-social elements as an imminent apprehended danger to public safety and security that warrants immediate preventive measures", the order reads.

"Now, therefore, for the reasons stated in the preceding paras, and in exercise of powers vested in me under various Sections of Cr.P.C, I, District Magistrate, Srinagar do hereby order and require all landlords, owners of properties, attorney holders, persons in-charge of premises in any capacity (hereafter called as building owners) located in the entire jurisdiction of District Srinagar to comply strictly with the following directions: a) All Building Owners shall after the issuance of this order and within ten days of letting/ sub-letting/ renting out his/her house or part thereof to any tenant(s), submit without fail the detailed particulars of the tenant(s) to be signed by both the owner and the tenant(s) to the concerned Police Station, either in person or by registered post addressed to the concerned Station House Officer; b) The Building Owners who have already let/sub-let/rented out their house(s) or part(s) thereof to any tenant on any date prior to issuance of this order, shall within ten days after the issuance of this order submit without fail the detailed particulars of the tenants to the concerned police station; c) All arrangements of letting or sub-letting the property like "paying Guest" tenants etc, shall be covered by this order; d) Every SHO in Srinagar District shall maintain a separate register for such purpose."

"This order shall come into force with immediate effect and it shall remain in force for a period of 60 days, unless withdrawn earlier. Any violation of this order shall invite punitive action under Section 188 of Indian Penal Code, 1860 and other relevant sections of the Cr.P.C", reads the order adding the Senior Superintendent of Police, Srinagar will implement this order.

Widespread light.....

next 24 hours. Light rain coupled with thunderstorm is likely to occur at fairly widespread places of Kashmir and at isolated places of Jammu Division towards late afternoon and evening of Wednesday. The thunderstorm is likely accompanied by gusty winds at a few places, the MeT office said and added the weather is likely to remain dry from April 7 to April 10.

The minimum temperature dipped to below normal all across the Kashmir valley with Gulmarg recording lowest temperature at minus 3.5 degree Celsius and tourist hot spot of Pahalgam in south Kashmir had a low of minus 1.8 degree Celsius on Wednesday, the MeT office said.

Srinagar received 2.9mm of rainfall during the past 24 hours till 0830hours today while, Qazigund 8.8mm, Pahalgam 10.8mm, Kupwara 2.8mm, Kokernag 4.2mm, Gulmarg 7.8mm, Jammu 0.0mm, Baniha 5.4mm and Batote 0.6mm.

Sun appeared to be playing hide and seek as mostly overcast sky prevailed in Srinagar and its adjoining areas after days of intermittent rainfall that triggered wintry conditions all across the Kashmir valley.

Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, recorded a low of 2.7 degree Celsius against 6.9 degree Celsius on the previous night. It was 3.7 degree Celsius below normal during this period of the season. The maximum temperature was also 2.1 degree Celsius below normal against 17.7 degree Celsius. Qazigund on Srinagar-Jammu national highway had a low of 3.6 degree Celsius on Wednesday against 6.4 degree Celsius and it was 1.5 degree Celsius below normal for the gateway of Kashmir.

Pahalgam in south Kashmir recorded a low of minus 1.8 degree Celsius against 3.2 degree Celsius the previous night. It was 3.5 degree Celsius below normal for the tourist hot spot.

Kokernag experienced a low of 3.2 degree Celsius against 5.4 degree Celsius and it was 1.9 degree Celsius below normal for the picnic spot of south Kashmir.

Gulmarg in north Kashmir settled at minus 3.5 degree Celsius against minus 0.5 degree Celsius recorded on Tuesday. It was 2.7 degree Celsius below normal for the famous ski resort.

Kupwara had a low of 1.2 degree Celsius against 4.4 degree Celsius the previous night and it was 2.7 degree Celsius below normal for the frontier Kashmir district, the MeT office said.

J&K Police.....

involved in the heinous crime. The accused have been identified as Sahil Maqbool Najar, his wife Mehak Sahil, and Was-eem Ahmad Sheikh, all residents of Narkara Budgam. These three are also found involved in drug peddling activities as well, police said.

The case relates to an unidentified dead body that was found at village Tengan on March 15, 2023. Later, the deceased was identified as Suhail Rehman Beigh a resident of Karfali Mohalla in Srinagar.

Following his identification and leads in investigation a case under FIR No. 48/23 under Section 302 IPC was registered at Police Station Nowgam.

A team of Police Station Nowgam headed by the Station House Officer Nowgam have been conducting a thorough investigation into the case, making use of available evidence to identify and track down the suspects.

The accused Mohd Waseem Shiekh was arrested for helping the other two accused for disposing off the body by ferrying it in a sumo vehicle from their rented accommodation at Palpora Sonwar to Tengan. The instant Sumo has been identified and seized in the instant Case, they said.

Further investigation of the case is going on, police added.

Budget 2023-24.....

smooth, hassle free journey of passengers. The budget also proposed creation of e-invoice system of GST, GST Data Triangulation and transition of GST IN into GST Prime besides extension of E-Bill system in PWO/MAS to other departments. Besides, 445 services have already been offered in online mode across all the departments and many of them are being integrated with the quality check and feedback-seeking mechanism. These services are also being on boarded on the digital portal of e-UNNAT, Service Plus and Digi Locker platforms for the ease and free access of the general public.

In another milestone towards e-governance, e-way bill would be linked to Fastag and VAHAN for smooth journey of commuters on national highway.

According to an official spokesperson, the government will create single unique helpline to address the concerns of people of J&K.

"Jammu & Kashmir tops among all the Union Territories of India in e-Governance services delivery, which has also enabled the UT to save around Rs 200 crore annually that were used to be incurred in carriage of physical files during the annual darbar move between the two capital cities of Jammu and Srinagar".

J&K has become the first UT in the country to have Good Governance Index and was also first to launch District Good Governance Index for 20 districts of the Union Territory.

In a short span, the government has taken a giant leap in creating user-centric service delivery system and paperless administrative functions through e-Office.

"Technology has redesigned the rules and procedures bringing accountability and transparency in the system and enabling us to provide services more effectively and efficiently," the official added.

Highest ever.....

the UT under different schemes during this period.

The same got revealed after reviewing the overall performance of the UT under different parameters of registering growth and progress during the year 2022-23.

It also came to fore that during the year 2021-22 the total amount received by the UT under CSS was Rs 7655 Cr which got enhanced to Rs 8938 Cr during the previous fiscal registering a growth of nearly 15% for the recently concluded financial year. The figures for 2022-23 are further subjected to reconciliation with RBI and the office of the Accountant General, J&K.

In addition the UT had been successful in providing employment to 2,63,595 persons under different self employment schemes. The number during the year 2021-22 was 2,53,158 which also saw an increase of 10,473 livelihood opportunities for the youth of J&K this year.

The schemes under which the employment opportunities had been created includes 167932 under PMEGP, 35564 under Mission Youth, 34200 under JKRLM, 8457 under JKWDC, 5331 under Handicrafts & Handloom sector, 2834 under Himayat (DDUGKY), 2818 under Sheep Husbandry, 2193 under SC/ST/OBC Corporation, 1576 under NULM, 2668 under Animal Husbandry and Agriculture Production besides dozens of others under different sectors.

With respect to collection of revenue under GST for the month of March, 2023 the J&K registered a growth of 29.42% much more than the States/UTs of Punjab (10.37), Chandigarh (10.09), Delhi (17.72), Rajasthan (15.80), Himachal Pradesh (8.11) and Haryana (16.93).

All these achievements have been possible only due to the efficient mechanism in place after taking plethora of reforms during the past few years besides ensuring transparency and accountability under the LG administration in the UT.

Covid situation.....

more number of Covid cases. "The present cases might be due to some seasonal fluctuations as has been noticed in the past also that are normal and the situation is being monitored there is nothing to worry," Bidhuri told reporters in Srinagar

"If anybody feels having Covid symptoms should not take that lightly rather to go for the testing and adhere to the Covid Appropriate Behavior (CAB)," he added

The Divisional Commissioner Kashmir

said if the cases are increasing the authorities might announce strict measures to prevent further spike.

"But presently there is nothing to worry and appropriate measures are being taken," he added.

Jammu and Kashmir is witnessing an increasing number of Covid-19 cases for the past over one week and on April 3 Directorate of Health Services Kashmir (DHSK) directed all Chief Medical Officers of the Valley to increase the rate of Covid-19 testing and establish flu clinics at all health institutions.

Meanwhile, in view of the surge of COVID cases across the country with increasing cases also reported in Jammu and Kashmir, a comprehensive meeting was conducted at Government Medical College Srinagar under the chairmanship of Prof. Masood Tanvir, Principal Dean GMC Srinagar.

The meeting was attended by heads of various clinical departments and medical superintendents of all associated hospitals of GMC Srinagar during which the medical superintendents gave details about the preparedness regarding availability of beds, oxygen beds, equipment and logistics, operative procedures.

The heads of the department also discussed preventive and precautionary measures to be taken in hospitals. RT PCR and RAT testing escalation among symptomatic patients and cases dated for surgeries and other procedures were also discussed in detail.

It was emphasised to follow and adhere to COVID appropriate behavior, especially in hospital and health care settings.

The hospital administrators were asked to prepare separate areas for COVID cases in respective hospitals with intensive care support also.

2 female.....

In a statement issued, the police spokesperson said that Police under the supervision of Shokat Ali-JKPS, SDPO Uri assisted by DySP Prob. Kubra Nazir, SHO PS Boniyar arrested 2 female Drug Peddlers.

The accused were identified as Fahmeeda resident of Limber & Nazira Begum resident of Bimyat, during naka checking at Chellan Boniyar who were coming from Bimyar towards Chellan and upon seeing the naka party tried to flee from the spot but were apprehended tactfully.

During their personal search 113 grams of contraband Charas like substance was recovered from them and were taken into custody immediately.

Accordingly, Case under NDPS Act registered in Police Station Boniyar and investigations set in motion.

Meanwhile, General People of the area hailed the efforts of Baramulla Police and showed their willingness to support police to eradicate menace of drugs from the society which is the real sign of Police Public relationship.

2 militants.....

been launched by security forces in north Kashmir to nab the duo.

Police said the two accused who were under custody at Police Station Baramulla escaped this morning in the wee hours during Sehri time.

"A case has been registered under relevant sections and efforts are on to nab the accused," a statement by Baramulla police said.

While police did not disclose the identity of the two who fled the police custody, sources identified them as Maroof Nazir Soleh and Shahid Showkat Bala- both residents of Baramulla.

On May 17, 2022, militants hurled a grenade on a newly opened wine shop in a high security zone in Baramulla leaving one civilian dead and three others injured. Two days later, police said they cracked the case and arrested four Lashkar-e-Taiba militants and an associate who were involved in the attack. The two who escaped today, according to sources, were brought to police station Baramulla for questioning a few days ago in a different case.

Militant hideout.....

material in the far flung hilly and forested area of teshil Khari of District Ramban," a police official said in a statement to HT.

Acting swiftly on the input, the official said, a joint search operation of Police and 23 RR of Army was launched and suspected hideout locations were searched which continued till evening during which the suspected militant hideout was busted. He said recoveries include 256 number 7.62 MM Cartridges, 36 7.62-MM Empty Cartridges, 5 AK-47 Magazine, 34 9-MM Cartridges, one 9-MM Empty Cartridge, two 9-MM Empty Magazine, two Pika ammunition, 6 Pika Empty Cartridges, one Pika Belt, one 52-MM Mortar, four Detonators, two-ft Cordex, one Knife, one Lantern, one Kerosene Lamp, one Tape Recorder, one Walkman with headphone, five Audio Cassette, one Itar, one Watch, two Old Bags, one LMG Ammunition Belt Box and two identity Cards.

"In this regard, a case FIR no. 77/2023 u/s 7/25 Arms act and Sec 4 Explosives substances act has been registered at police station Banihal and investigation has been taken up," the official added.



80% Loans Under Stand Up India Scheme Sanctioned To Women Entrepreneurs

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 05: The Government has sanctioned loans of more than 40,600 crore rupees to over 1.8 lakh women entrepreneurs under the Stand Up India Scheme. Speaking on the 7th anniversary of the Stand-Up India Scheme, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said, it is a matter of pride and satisfaction that more than 1.8 lakh women and SC/ST entrepreneurs received loans under the scheme. She said the scheme has created an eco-system which facilitates and continues to provide a supportive environment for setting up green field enterprises through access to loans from bank branches of all Scheduled Commercial Banks.

The Minister added that the Stand-Up India Scheme has proved



to be an important milestone in promoting entrepreneurship among SC, ST and women. Ms Sitharaman said that Stand-up India Scheme has touched numerous lives by ensuring access to hassle-

free affordable credit to the unserved, underserved segment of entrepreneurs.

Stand Up India Scheme was launched on 5th April, 2016 to promote entrepreneurship amongst

women, Scheduled Castes (SC) & Scheduled Tribes (ST) categories. It is designed to help them in starting a greenfield enterprise in manufacturing, services or the trading sector and activities allied to agriculture.

Union Minister of State for Finance Dr Bhagwat Kisanrao Karad said the Stand-up India scheme is based on the third pillar of the National Mission for Financial Inclusion, namely "Funding the unfunded". Dr Karad said it is also a matter of immense pleasure that more than 80 per cent of loans given under this scheme have been provided to women. The scheme has created an eco-system which facilitates and continues to provide a supportive environment for setting up green field enterprises through access to loans from bank branches of all Scheduled Commercial Banks.

Fasting during Ramadan helps to kick the butt, say Doctors

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 05: Smoking can have an adverse impact on health and smokers are at higher risk of developing lung cancer. But Ramadan is a hope for smokers to quit smoking as it can generate a will power among them, doctors said.

Dr Fayaz Ahmad Bhat Assistant Professor Department of General Medicine at SKIMS Soura told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that besides having enormous health benefits, fasting is the best opportunity for smokers to quit cigarette smoking.

He said that diabetic patients, who wish to keep fast, must take special care as it is not advisable for them to take long food breaks and taking some frequent meals after certain durations helps in maintaining their blood glucose level smoothly.

"Diabetic patients must check blood sugar levels frequently during fasting. If someone feels symptoms of hypoglycemia, an instant blood sugar test should be done to prevent any untoward complication, he added. "Diabetic patients could have slow absorbing foods, which have low glycemic index, before you begin the fast. These types of food keep your blood glucose level more stable and smooth during the course of the fast." Dr Fayaz said.

He said that diabetic patients must avoid long



brisk walks while they are fasting to avoid hypoglycemia and dehydration, however they can go for a walk once they break their fast in the evening.

He said that patients suffering from chronic diseases must consult their treating doctor before starting fasting as many decompensated heart liver and kidney disease patients have to take diuretic medicines leading to frequent urination which can lead to dehydration.

He said that the general population who are on fasting must stay hydrated, take enough proteins, eat fibre rich diet, and eat foods containing essential micronutrients like iron, calcium and vitamin B12.

Dr Irfan from GMC Srinagar said that Ramadan is the best opportunity for people to leave bad habits like smoking as fasting develops a sense of patience in the person.

Ramadan is an opportunity to make significant changes in one's lifestyle and develop the resolve to make healthy living choices, he said.

"The diet should be simple and not differ too much from one's normal everyday diet. It should contain foods from all the major food groups - like fruits and vegetables; bread, other cereals and potatoes; milk and meat; fish and dairy food alternatives; foods containing fat and foods containing sugar," he added.

Overeating can not only harm the body, but it also interferes with a person's spiritual growth during the month, he said.

Tobacco is a gateway to drug addiction: Dir Health

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 05: Consuming tobacco is the main cause of drug addiction and quitting smoking can help in curbing drug addiction, Directorate of Health Services Kashmir said on Wednesday.

Talking to reporters on the sidelines of the National Tobacco Control Programme at Banquet Hall Srinagar, DHSK Dr Mush-taq Ahmad Rather, as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said that drug addiction is on the rise and they will be able to make people quit smoking to curb drug addiction to a large extent.

"Divisional commissioner has directed all stakeholders including school and college Principals to constitute committees and impose fines on those who are violating government orders," he said.

"We have already issued notification to make education Institutes tobacco free and if we will control the young generation from smoking, then it will be a big success," he added.

"In the last few years, there has been a



change on the ground that hardly anybody smokes now in public places and such incidents are declining", Rather said.

"We are ready to tackle any situation as we have managed all waves of Covid-19 very well so far," he said.

Cases are on rise but there is no need to panic and people must take precautions, he said, adding that mock drill to check covid-19 preparedness in Kashmir will be done on April 10.

SED under fire for delayed distribution of textbooks to schools

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 05: The School Education Department (SED) has come under heavy criticism over delays in the distribution of textbooks to schools across the Valley.

As per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the Department is yet to distribute the textbooks to schools despite the commencement of the new academic session two weeks ago.

The delay in distribution of textbooks has left the parents and teachers worried about its impact on students' learning.

The officials attribute the delay in distribution of textbooks to the change of academic session from November to March while the parents and the teachers in schools argue that the department had ample time to keep the supply of textbooks ready for distribution in schools.

"Earlier, the new session would start in November but now the session started in mid-March and the department got more than three months time to print the textbooks as per the demand in the schools," said a school teacher wishing not to be named.

The parents have also expressed their displeasure over the delay in the distribution of the textbooks in the schools saying that the move will have a significant impact on students' learning and will only exacerbate the existing educational inequalities in



schools. "The department needs to take urgent action to resolve this issue and ensure that students have access to the textbooks as early as possible," said Muhammad Ishaq, a parent from Shopian.

Amid the criticism from all stakeholders, the JK Board of School Education (BOSE) recently notified the schedule for distribution of textbooks to education zones across Kashmir.

As per the schedule, the distribution started from May 5 and will be supplied to education zones of Kulgam and Shopian districts. As per the schedule, the textbooks will be distributed to education zones of Srinagar and Baramulla in April ending while the textbooks will be distributed to education zones of Kupwara and Anantnag district in the month of May.

"After the textbooks will be delivered to different zones of the districts. The books will be supplied to each cluster of the zones following which the textbooks will be supplied to schools and then distributed among

students," a school teacher said.

The teacher said that by following the schedule the students in most of the school will have access to the textbooks in June and when almost half of the session will be over.

"The students have been left at the receiving end as the department did not prioritize to ensure textbooks are supplied to schools on time," the teacher said.

The Chief Education Officers (CEOs) put the blame on JKBOSE authorities saying that they submitted their requisition to the Board on time but the delay was in printing and supply done by the Board.

Meanwhile an official at JKBOSE admitted the delay in distribution of textbooks to schools saying that there were various factors responsible for it.

"There was a delay in procurement and also transportation of textbooks from Jammu to Srinagar takes time. But we will ensure that the textbooks are supplied to schools in the shortest possible time," the official said.

District administration Srinagar directs landlords to furnish details of tenants within 10 days

"Violation of order to attract action under IPC"

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 05: In a significant move, the district administration Srinagar on Wednesday directed landlords to submit details of their tenants within 10 days to the concerned police station.

An order issued by the deputy commissioner Srinagar, Aijaz Assad, a copy of which is in possession of news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) directs house owners to furnish details of tenants to police within period of 10 days.

"All building owners shall after the issuance of this order and within ten days of letting/subletting/renting out his/her house or part thereof to any tenant(s), submit without fail the detailed particulars of the tenant(s) to be signed by both the owner and the tenant(s) to the concerned Police Station, either in person or by registered post addressed to the concerned Station House Officer," reads the order.

Those who have already rented out their house(s) prior to issuance of this order, shall within ten days submit the detailed particulars of the tenants to the concerned police station, the order states.

"All arrangements of letting or subletting the property like 'paying guest' tenants etc., shall be covered by this order," the order further adds.

The order comes after SSP Srinagar Rakesh Balwal wrote to DC Srinagar that "there is an imminent need to conduct verification of tenants staying in rented accommodations in various parts of the city as there have been instances of social crimes and illicit activities."

The police probe in several social crimes found that the persons involved were staying as tenants in Srinagar city.

The DC has also directed that every SHO in Srinagar district shall maintain a separate register for such purpose. "This order shall come into force with immediate effect and it shall remain in force for a period of 60 days, unless withdrawn earlier," the order states.

The government has said that violation of the order would attract action under the Indian Penal Code (IPC). "Any violation of this order shall invite punitive action under Section 188 of Indian Penal Code, 1860 and other relevant sections of the CrPC. Senior Superintendent of Police, Srinagar will implement the order," the DC's directive states.

It is pertinent to mention that a prostitution racket run from a rented accommodation at Bagh-e-Mehtab was busted by J&K police on Tuesday.

The owner of the house was also booked under section 3 of Immoral Trafficking prevention act 1956 (ITPA).

Traditional 'Zool' festival observed at Kashmir's revered shrine in Aishmuqam

■ HT News Network

AISHMUQAM, APR 05: Hundreds of devotees thronged the holy shrine of Kashmir's noted saint Sakhi Zainuddin Wali (RA) in Aishmuqam and performed the traditional 'Zool' ritual. Locals from Aishmuqam told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), in view of Ramadan, locals observed Zool for a short time.

"We performed a zool ritual at our residence, while some performed outside cave and most of the people visited the shrine and cave during the day," he said, adding that hundreds of people continue to throng the shrine. The ritual is performed by devotees as a mark of respect for the saint as it is held to mark the beginning of agricultural activity after a prolonged winter season.

The Sufi saint is believed to have settled

in Aishmuqam and is said to have gone into deep meditation inside the cave and battled a demon that was petrifying the villagers.

To celebrate his victory, people assemble every year and light up their wooden torches and oil lamps.

More than hundred staircases, leading to the shrine, are also lit up by the devotees on the occasion.

"People enter the cave mausoleum seeking the blessings to end their miseries," said a devotee, Shakir Ahmad.

For the thousands of pilgrims who gather at Aishmuqam, the annual torch festival also symbolizes the end of the long winter and the beginning of the new sowing season.

People from different communities visit the shrine to spread the message of communal harmony and brotherhood, added Shakir.

PURANLAL MISHRA IS NO MORE

KULDEEP MISHRA BEREAVED



With profound grief and sorry we announce the sad demise of Father of Chief of Operations and foreman at Lubaab Publications, offset printing press of daily English Newspaper Headlines Today, Mr Kuldeep Mishra who passed away at a hospital in Gaziabad on Monday evening.

Puranlal Mishra, a retired Govt Employee was not keeping well from last couple of weeks and finally breathed his last at Aarogya Hospital Gaziabad. Last rites of Puranlal Mishra were performed on Tuesday evening at a Ghat in Farokhabad UP. A sizeable number of people from all walks of life participated in the last rites of Puranlal Mishra.

The deceased was father of Deepak Mishra the Resident Editor of Meerut Edition of Amar Ujala. The deceased is survived by his Wife Munni Devi Mishra and three sons Deepak Mishra, Kuldeep Mishra and Pankaj Mishra.

BEREAVED

Munni Devi Mishra (wife)
Deepak Mishra (son)
Kuldeep Mishra (son)
Pankaj Mishra (Son)
Vaibhaw Mishra (Grand son)

DHSK organises workshop for Implementation of National Tobacco Control Prog, COTPA-2003

Div Com Kashmir pitches for blanket ban of smoking at public places; says no mercy for people involved in drug trafficking activities

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MARCH 05: The Directorate of Health Services of Kashmir today conducted a Divisional Level Workshop of various key stakeholders for implementation of National Tobacco Control Programme (NTPC) and Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act, (COTPA)-2003 at Banquet Hall, Srinagar.

The Workshop was inaugurated by Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri and was attended by DIG, Central Kashmir, Dir Health Services Kashmir, Mushtaq Ahmad Rather, Dir Colleges, Dir School Education, RTO Kashmir, Deputy Director



Information Kashmir, officers from SMC, State Taxes Deptt, Drug & Food Control, ULB, RDD, National Health Mission, Health Department and members of NGOs Voluntary Health Kashmir & Health Association Kashmir.

Speaking on the occasion, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir underlined the need to ensure a ban on

smoking at public places including schools, colleges, hotels, buses, markets and stressed on spot imposition of fine on the smokers.

He said teachers should sensitize students about the harmful impact of smoking on the health and mind of youth and the ill-effect on society. Meanwhile, he said that substance use has taken a dangerous situation

in Kashmir and maintained there shall be no mercy for those involved in drug peddling. He also showed concern that if the drug nexus is not curbed effectively then it would have dangerous repercussions.

Div Com said that an intensive campaign has been run on social media and mainstream media against drug menace.

He directed for organising gainful activities to keep youth away from negativity. Dir HSK Mushtaq Ahmad while welcoming guests said that the aim of the workshop is to bring key stakeholders on a single platform and to sensitize them for effective implementation of NTPC & COTPA-2003 and to chalk out a comprehensive policy.

ADDC Anantnag presided over the Block Diwas at Bijbehara

Says Block Diwas is an initiative to bring governance at doorsteps

HT News Network

ANANTNAG, APRIL 05: Additional District Development Commissioner, (ADDC) Bashir Ahmad Wani today presided over the block Diwas held at Bijbehara block in Mini Secretariat Bijbehara.

The PRIs & general public put forth their demands and issues before the ADC which include stopping of sand excavation at source point of Jablipora canal which will hamper the flow of irrigation water supply to canal besides demanded new panchayat Ghar for Jablipora, sanitation of Pazalpora and adjacent areas, restoration of Pandith Hamam Majid road, proper power supply during sehri and iftiyar, removal of encroachment on Zirpora



Veeri road, guage for Ardwanallah to be used during floods, restoration of Chandpora Cheenigund road, restoration of drain at Ganie Pora, removal of encroachment of edigah Sangam Natipora etc.

ADC while addressing the gathering said that district administration is taking every effort to address the issues of the general and genuine nature. He said that mass participation and positive response of people

is the indicator of the fact that block Diwas fulfilled its goal.

He gave on spot direction to concerned departments for redressal of issues projected in Block Diwas. He thanked the people for their participation and turning the programme into an interacting cum participatory event. The programme was attended by BDO Bijbehara block Tehsilidar, PRI members and other officers of line departments besides the large number of locals.

It is pertinent to mention here that Block Diwas was also held in block Anantnag which was presided over by District programme officer POSHAN (ICDS). Concerned officer assured participants that their grievances shall be addressed while resolving some of the issues on spot.

DEO Pulwama reviews preparations for smooth conduct of Special Summary Revision of Electoral Rolls-2023

HT News Network

PULWAMA, APRIL 05: As the Election Commission of India (ECI) has ordered a Special Summary Revision (SSR) of Electoral Rolls-2023 in Jammu and Kashmir, a review meeting of District Election Authority was held under the Chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner Pulwama, Baseer-ul-Haq Choudhary, who is also District Election Officer (DEO) here on Wednesday at Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Awantipora, Zafar Ahmad Shawl, Assistant Commissioner Revenue



Pulwama Aijaz Ahmad Shah, Assistant Commissioner Development Pulwama, Deputy District Election Officer, all Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) and Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (AEROs), Election Naib Tehsilidar Pulwama, other concerned were present in the meet-

ing. At the outset, the DEO 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 04 Assembly segments of the Pulwama District.

It was given out that April 01, 2023 is the qualifying date for Special Summary Revision (SSR)-2023 which is commencing from April 05 with the publication of Draft Electoral Rolls and shall 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 Integrated Draft Electoral Rolls of all Assembly Constituencies of Pulwama is 05-04-2023, while period of filing claims and objections for Additions, Deletions, Corrections and Transpositions is from 05-04-2023 to 20-04-2023.

Block Diwas held across Bandipora district

DC Bandipora chairs Block Diwas of Alooosa and Arin

HT News Network

BANDIPORA, APRIL 05: The District Administration Bandipora on Wednesday organised Block Diwas under Jan Abhiyan for the Aspirational Block Arin and block Alooosa at Conference Hall of Mini Secretariat Bandipora.

The programme was presided over by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Dr. Owais Ahmed and was attended by ADDC Bandipora, Ali Afsar Khan; DDC Member Arin, Gh Mohiuddin; JD Planning, Imtiyaz Ahmad; Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, BDOs, CEO, Executive Engineers



of PHE, R&B, District officers, PRIs and General public.

The locals and PRIs present on the occasion flagged-off various developmental issues pertaining to their area and also highlighted efforts of District Administration in carrying out

works of various developmental projects in the area.

The demands raised by PRIs include Nayabat for Kudara and Surrender areas, accommodation for panchayats, opening of bank branches, receiving station, issues related to dispensaries, Anganwadi

centers, and transportation for students and the general public.

The locals also appreciated the coordination between elected representatives and District Administration which resulted in development of the area on various fronts.

Apart from other issues, people stressed on bringing the Wullar lake on tourism map, upgradation of PMGSY roads, availability of pure drinking water and ration, availability of subject teachers in Schools, Solid Waste management in Panchayats, renovation of water bodies, macadamization of roads and filling of potholes besides highlighting.

Subject-Grant of Registration of the proposed Travel unit under the name & style "M/s Patthan Holidays Situated at Branwari Dudhwan Kupwara..

PUBLIC NOTICE

Whereas, I Mr./Ms Saqib Mushtaq Khan S/o Mushtaq Ahmad Khan R/o Batpora Haihama Kupwara, Kashmir intends to apply in the department of Tourism for Registration of my proposed Travel Unit under the name and style "M/s Patthan Holidays situated at Branwari, Dudhwan Kupwara, Kashmir under Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011-12.

Whereas, I will submit State Subject/Domicile Certificate, Qualification Certificate, Pan Card, Experience Certificate (Minimum 05 Years), Character Certificate (Police Department), Bank Statement (Minimum Balance 10000), Site Plan, Affidavit, Rent Deed duly attested by Sub-Register, Printing Material (Letter Head/Visiting Card), Photograph of the Unit (Indoor and Outdoor) and Two Passport size Photographs to the Department of Tourism as per prescribed checklist prior to Registration of my unit as an Excursion Agency.

Now as per J&K Registration of Tourist Trade Act 1978/82/2011/12 before my case is processed for registration by the Competent Authority, the matter is hereby notified for information of general Public/Financial Institutions/Bank/Organisation, etc for objection, if any and the same should reach to the Deputy Director Tourism Reglstation (e-mail Id:- ddtreg123@gmail.com) within a period of 7 days from the publication of this notice in leading local newspaper/newspapers of the Valley. No objections beyond a period of 7 days shall be entertained.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my 8Th pass certificate session 1991-1992. Now i am applying for its duplicate if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may contact Principal Govt Hr Sec School Sheikhpura within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

JAVEEDA AKHTER
D/O AB AHAD SOFI
R/O SHEIKHPORA KREERI

DC Pulwama presides over Handholding cum Awareness Prog of JJM

HT News Network

PULWAMA, APRIL 05: The Project Management Consultancy Mission Directorate, Jal Jeevan Mission, J&K, in collaboration with District Administration, District Jal Jeevan Mission, Pulwama conducted a day-long mega handholding cum awareness program at Auditorium (GDC Pulwama).

The programme witnessed overwhelming participation of various stakeholders including Pani Samiti members, Sarpanches, field staff of Rural Development Department (Panchayat Secretaries), Jal Shakti Department (PHE), District Project Management Unit JJM Staff, Implementation Support Agency (ISA) Gramin Vikas Trust representatives, Anganwadi/ASHA workers, water testing lab staff, and FTK Trained Women

from various panchayats.

The inaugural session of the program was presided over by the District Development Commissioner & Chairperson District Jal Jeevan Mission, Pulwama, Baseer-ul-Haq Choudhary (IAS), in the presence of Superintending Engineer/ Nodal Officer, Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti, Nisar Ahmad and other officers of various Departments.

DC in 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 in various panchayats of the District and further emphasized on them to play a proactive role in the support

and capacity building activities being conducted by ISA partners and Jal Shakti Department so as to ensure smooth functioning of the schemes once they are functional.

The Chairperson also impressed upon stakeholders to play their role in conservation of water and water bodies in their respective area.

Nizam Mansoor, Team Leader, Project Management Consultancy, also conducted a session wherein he highlighted the various aspects of water management and overall conservation measures and the importance of Jal Jeevan Mission for ensuring clean tap water to every household. He also highlighted that the mission aims to provide fresh tap water supply to every household in the District at a rate of 55 liters per capita per day, and various train-

ings have been conducted to ensure the mission's effective and timely completion.

Another session was conducted by Rakesh, Technical Expert from Project Management Consultancy, where he presented a detailed overview of various parameters of JJM and explained in detail the role and duties of various stakeholders. He also presented success stories and documentaries of achievements made under Jal Jeevan Mission across the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir to motivate the stakeholders to play their role with dedication and in mission mode.

He also explained the data entry mechanism and other indicators of the JJM dashboard/website.

In another session, Live demonstration of Water Testing on Field Testing Kits was presented by Water Testing Staff before the

stakeholders in order to train them and also various aspects/parameters of water testing & quality were discussed in detail.

Superintending Engineer also spoke on the occasion and highlighted the series of steps undertaken by the district for successful implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission in the district including the formulation of Water Security Plan, Conduct of Water Survey, formulation of District Action Plan and also emphasized on encouraging local communities to take over the rural water supply system for operation and maintenance, and help the administration so that the "Har Ghar Nal se Jal" mission is successful. He also briefed that various JJM Schemes have been approved in the district and presently going on at full pace and works are targeted for completion during this year itself.

DC Bandipora convenes meeting of political parties to discuss special summary revision

HT News Network

BANDIPORA, APRIL 05: Deputy Commissioner Bandipora Dr Owais Ahmad on Wednesday convened a meeting of representatives of all political parties in the district to discuss the ongoing Special Summary Revision 2023.

The meeting was attended by the District Panchayat Officer, Assistant Commissioner Development Deputy Elections officer and other senior officers of the district.

During the meeting, the representatives of the political parties were apprised that as per the directions of the Election Commission of India, the special summary revision is being carried out to update the electoral rolls.

The political parties were informed about the process and were briefed about the robustness of the electoral process and demonstrated how transparency has been introduced at every step of the process.

Officers briefed the representatives of political parties regarding updation of the data via Form 6, 6A, 6B, Form 7 and Form 8.

It was informed that form 6 is exclu-



sively for registration of new electors, Form 6A for inclusion of name in electoral roll by an overseas elector, Form 6B for capturing Aadhaar no. by existing electors, Form 7 for objection to proposed inclusion/deletion of name in existing electoral roll with a slight modifications that a provision of attaching death certificate has been incorporated and Form 8 for correction in electoral roll, shifting of residence (within or outside constituency), replacement of EPIC and marking of a person with disability.

Seeking their cooperation in the mission to improve the health of the electoral roll, political parties were informed that citizens can very easily verify and make changes/corrections in their electoral details through online mode.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR, FINANCE DEPARTMENT

(www.jkdat.nic.in)

PUBLIC NOTICE

Subject:- Finalization of Draft Jammu and Kashmir Accounts Inter-Organizational (Ministerial) Service Recruitment Rules.

Jammu and Kashmir Subordinate Accounts Inter-Organizational (Ministerial) Service Recruitment Rules are under consideration of the Standing Committee constituted for the purpose in ARI and Trainings Department. As advised by the Standing Committee, the Draft Recruitment Rules are required to be put in public domain for inviting objections of stakeholders concerned within fifteen (15) days. It is, therefore, notified for the information of all concerned that the Draft Jammu and Kashmir Subordinate Accounts Inter-Organizational (Ministerial) Service Recruitment Rules are available on the official website of the Department (www.jkdat.nic.in) for inviting objections. The objections, if any, may be submitted in the office of Director General, Accounts and Treasuries, J&K, Kachi Chawni Jammu/Haft Chinar Srinagar or emailed at dat.jk@nic.in within a period of fifteen (15) days from the date of issuance of this notice. In the event of non-receipt of objections within the prescribed period of time, it shall be presumed that there is no objection from the concerned stakeholders and thereafter further course of action will follow.

DIPK-122/23

Sd/-
(Mahesh Dass),
Director General,
Accounts and Treasuries,
Finance Department.

Jal Jeevan Mission Stakeholders Conference held in Doda

HT News Network

DODA, APRIL 05: The Project Management Consultancy Mission Directorate, Jal Jeevan Mission, in collaboration with the District Administration and District Jal Jeevan Mission Doda, conducted a day-long handholding and awareness programme at Town Hall Doda. The programme aimed to enhance awareness and knowledge of stakeholders about the mission's goals and importance as well as their roles in its successful implementation.

The inaugural session of the programme was presided over by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Dr Ravi Kumar Bharti. Sajal Srivastava, Team Leader of Project Management Con-



sultancy, conducted a session highlighting various aspects of water management and conservation measures. He emphasised the importance of the Jal Jeevan Mission in ensuring clean tap water for every household. During the programme, Srivastava presented a detailed overview of various parameters of the Jal Jeevan Mission and

explained in detail the roles and duties of various stakeholders. He also presented success stories and documentaries of achievements made under the Jal Jeevan Mission across Jammu and Kashmir to motivate stakeholders to play their role with dedication in mission mode. He also explained the data entry mechanism and other indicators of the Jal

Jeevan Mission dashboard/website.

In another session, a live demonstration of water testing on Field Testing Kits was presented by water testing staff to train stakeholders. The Executive Engineer spoke about the steps taken by the district for successful implementation of the Jal Jeevan Mission. The programme also focused on various aspects of water such as rainwater harvesting, artificial recharge, water quality, water-borne diseases, water saving, water handling and drinking water source augmentation/sustainability. The programme saw overwhelming participation from various stakeholders including Pani Samiti members, Sarpanches, field staff.

Div Com Jammu, ADGP review action plans to tackle drug menace

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 05: Divisional Commissioner, Ramesh Kumar and Additional Director General of Police, Mukesh Singh reviewed measures to curb drug abuse in districts of Jammu division during a video conference meeting with all Deputy Commissioners and Senior Superintendents of Police held today.

During the meeting, various issues related to drug addiction were discussed, including areas of concern, age groups of addicts and hotspots of drug use. The concerned Deputy Commissioners and SSPs apprised them of the situation in their respective districts and the measures



taken by the district administration to control the drug menace. The Div Com instructed the DCs to identify drug-prone areas and launch awareness campaigns. He stressed the need for a massive awareness campaign across all districts of the division, involving people from all walks of life including school children, youth, PRI representatives, social/religious organisa-

tions and the target public. He urged for hosting symposiums, seminars and workshops in educational institutions to raise awareness about drug addiction and its ill effects on society. During the meeting, SSPs informed about the steps taken to curb drug abuse and enforcement in their districts. They reported on the number of FIRs registered in their respective

districts and informed that registration of vehicles involved in drug peddling were also cancelled and seized.

The ADGP directed the SSPs to maintain a database of all arrested drug peddlers and ensure strict surveillance in vulnerable areas. He asked them to step up vigil against drug proliferation and consumption and intensify awareness against such addictive substances.

Ramesh Kumar asked the DCs to intensify awareness campaigns across their districts. Deputy Commissioners and SSPs gave their suggestions to curb drug abuse while Div Com, Ramesh Kumar and ADGP, Mukesh Singh directed DCs and SSPs to share their respective district's action plans to curb the drug menace.

DSEJ releases calendar for student counselling, psychosocial support

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 05: To ensure the emotional well-being, child protection and career development of students, the Directorate of School Education Jammu has issued a counselling calendar for the new academic session 2023-24.

The calendar prepared by the Counselling Cell of DSEJ follows the guidelines of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. It also aligns with the School Health Programme and Manodarpan, a Ministry of Education initiative. These initiatives aim to ensure the physical and mental health of students. They also focus on child protection, value education and career development.

The calendar features month-wise well-being themes such as adolescent education, life skills, emotional well-being, value education, child protection, substance abuse, career guidance and examination stress management. Teacher counsellors will use joyful and interactive methods to teach these themes. The calendar also includes significant days and national helplines for psychosocial support.

Director School Education Jammu, Dr Ravi Shankar Sharma has directed all Chief Education Officers and School Complex Heads to instruct heads of schools from elementary to senior secondary level to implement the calendar. In addition, the Counselling Task Force consisting of District and Zonal Counselling Coordinators has been instructed to oversee its implementation on the ground.

"Addressing the mental health and psychosocial needs of children can lead to a decrease in psychosocial issues impacting children such as drug abuse, bullying, juvenile delinquency, truancy and dropout," opined Dr Romesh Kumar, Head of the Counselling Cell at the Directorate of School Education Jammu.

Dr Anju Bala reviews SC welfare policies in Samba

HT News Network

SAMBA, APRIL 05: Member of the National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC), Dr Anju Bala chaired a meeting with district and sectoral officers at the conference hall of the Deputy Commissioner's office in Samba today.

Dr Bala met with various delegations of the Scheduled Castes (SC) community, including former ministers, District Development Councils (DDCs), Block Development Councils (BDCs), Sarpanches, Bar members and civil society members to discuss issues facing the SC community.

The meeting was attended by Director NCSC, SK Singh, Deputy Commissioner Anuradha Gupta, Senior Superintendent of Police, Benam Tosh and other district officers.



Dr Bala reviewed various schemes benefiting the SC community and discussed progress in pending cases under the Prevention of Atrocities against SCs. She also discussed challenges in implementing programmes and policies effectively. Dr Bala took a comprehensive sector-wise review

and discussed modalities followed by institutions to extend benefits to the SC community under various schemes, including Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), Job Cards, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), Janani Suraksha Yojana

(JSY), Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY), Ujjwala Yojana and Jan Dhan Yojana.

Emphasising the need for generating awareness and education to empower marginalised communities, Dr Bala directed officers to conduct regular visits and hold awareness camps in rural areas. Officials were asked to take prompt action to address concerns raised by the SC community and ensure timely redressal of grievances. Dr Bala urged officials to conduct regular monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes for the welfare of the SC community and ensure effective implementation.

Dr Bala emphasised the need to continue working towards an inclusive and just society through empowerment and awareness of the SC community.

Later, she also flagged off an awareness van from the conference hall on the Jal Jeevan Mission. The van aims to spread awareness among people about the judicious use of water and the preservation of water resources and bodies. Dr Bala reviewed various schemes benefiting the SC community and discussed progress in pending cases under the Prevention of Atrocities against SCs. She also discussed challenges in implementing programmes and policies effectively. Dr Bala took a comprehensive sector-wise review and discussed modalities followed by institutions to extend benefits to the SC community under various schemes, including Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), Job Cards, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY), Ayushman Bharat.

Special Summary Revision-2023, DEO Ramban flags off IEC van

HT News Network

RAMBAN, APRIL 05: The district administration has stepped up efforts as part of the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation programme (SVEEP) for the upcoming Special Summary Revision (SSR) in 2023. On the occasion, District Election Officer Ramban, Mussarat Islam flagged off an IEC van that will conduct awareness activities throughout the district about the SSR 2023.

DEO Islam emphasised the importance of raising awareness about SSR in all areas and urged young people who have reached the qualifying age of 18 to register as voters through offline or online mode. The IEC van will cover the district to inform and educate the public about SSR, with a focus on eligible youth.



Eligible and registered voters are urged to visit their respective polling stations, where the Draft Photo Electoral Rolls will be published, to file their claims and objections for updating.

Claims and objections can be submitted from April 5 to April 20.

Two special camps will also be held on April 9 and 15, 2023, to target eligible youth. Booth Level Officers (BLOs) will be present at their respective polling stations during these camps, providing necessary forms for registration.

Under the guidance of Mussarat Islam, Draft Photo Electoral Rolls have been published at all polling stations of both Assembly Constituencies of District Ramban, in accordance with the directions from the office of Chief Electoral Officer Jammu and Kashmir.

Present on the occasion were Deputy District Election Officer Lal Chand, Electoral Registration Officer (ACR-R) Giasul Haq, Election Naib Tehsildar Mohan Lal, and other officers and officials from the department.

DC inspects progress of work on development projects

HT News Network



REASI, APRIL 05: Deputy Commissioner Babila Rakwal conducted an extensive tour of various blocks in Reasi to inspect the progress of developmental works being executed by the Public Works Department (PWD). The Deputy Commissioner inspected progress on various projects including the construction of an MMV workshop at ITI Reasi, a boundary wall at High School Ghair, an approach road to ITI Reasi, a link road from Geeta Nagar to Mari and a road near the district hospital to Vijaypur.

The Deputy Commissioner enjoined the Executive Engineer, Public Works Department (R&B) to expedite progress and ensure that the roadworks are completed with alacrity so as to provide the general public with the benefits of connectivity. She further directed for regular monitoring of the project's progress with particular emphasis on the quality of workmanship.

Weekly Block Divas, DC Jammu listens to public grievances at Nagrota

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 05: Deputy Commissioner, Avny Lavasa presided over the weekly Block Divas programme at Nagrota today, where she received first-hand accounts of public grievances.

Delegations from various panchayats and individuals apprised her of the problems they face in their daily lives. The primary issues raised pertained to the irregular supply of water and electricity, revenue, land



compensation, road connectivity, availability of drinking water, cleanliness and sanitation. The DC issued immediate directions to the concerned officers for the prompt redressal of their grievances. She assured those present that issues of public importance would be brought to the attention of higher authorities and that all pending matters and public service delivery slackness would be thoroughly reviewed. She also urged officers to work diligently to achieve their targets and ensure that benefits reach rural communi-

ties. Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Piyush Dhotra, block-level officers, PRI members and a large number of people were in attendance at the programme. Subsequently, the DC chaired a meeting of the Regional Transport Authority (RTA) Jammu to discuss matters related to public transport within the district. As chairman of RTA Jammu, she called for effective traffic regulation near educational institutions and government offices. Regional Transport Officer Jammu Pankaj Bhagotra and other concerned officials.

Nowshera Forest Division conducts forest fire mock drill at Sunderbani Forest Range

HT News Network

RAJOURI, APRIL 05: The Sunderbani Forest Range of the Nowshera Forest Division conducted a forest fire mock drill at Bindi Top under the guidance of Conservator of Forests (West Circle Rajouri), Vivek Verma today. During the drill, all components of forest fires were discussed in detail and staff were trained on various first aid processes such as bandaging for fractures, snake bites and wild animal bites. Staff were also trained on the preparation of emergency structures using local materials and the use of various fire equipment. Divisional Forest Officer Nowshera, Satyendra Maurya said that mock drills are conducted to sensitise front line staff about equipment.

SMVD Narayana Hospital performs 03 more Cochlear Implant Surgeries sponsored by Shrine Board

HT News Network

Katra, April 5: A Cochlear Implant Surgery can bring about massive positive change in the life of a congenitally deaf child. SMVDNSH is the only Hospital in the entire UT where Cochlear Implant Surgeries are regularly performed; with the majority of the past

surgeries having been sponsored by the Shrine Board, in keeping with its philanthropic approach to the society. As yet another clinical feat, a few days back, the ENT Department of SMVDNSH performed 3 more successful Cochlear Implant Surgeries, which too were sponsored by the Board. The beneficiaries were young children aged



4-6 years having profound hearing loss and since they couldn't hear, they weren't able to speak either. Notably, all beneficiaries were from a very poor background.

Parents of the beneficiaries expressed their vehement gratitude to the Board / Hospital stating that they had lost all hopes of their ward ever getting this expensive surgery. They

also indebted the Board to come at their rescue as their wards now usher to the world of sounds.

The surgeries in reference were performed by the ENT team led by Dr. Rohan Gupta (Consultant ENT) with the support of anaesthesia team led by Dr. Pankaj Gupta (HOD Anaesthesia) and overall guidance rendered by Dr. Sunil Kotwal.

EDITORIAL

Abrupt Surge in COVID-19 Cases across J&K

Are we Prepared to Face another Wave???

The recent surge in Covid-19 Cases across India in general and J&K in particular has raised concerns among health officials and citizens alike. The valley, which was relatively unaffected during the first wave of the pandemic, is now seeing a sharp and sudden rise in the number of fresh cases, leading to an increase in the burden on the healthcare system as it had been in the first of its waves.

According to reports, the daily cases in Kashmir have increased by more than four times in the past two weeks, with the positivity rate also increasing substantially. This sudden surge has caught the administration off guard, and it is struggling to keep up with the demand for medical resources.

Director Health has also assured preparedness as Jammu and Kashmir braces for COVID-19 surge.

The situation has been further complicated by the ongoing political turmoil in the valley, which has led to a breakdown in the healthcare infrastructure. Hospitals are already overstretched due to the incessant political instability, and the sudden increase in Covid-19 cases has only added to their woes.

The administration has been quick to react, and several measures have been taken to contain the spread of the virus. A strict lockdown has been imposed in several areas, and people have been advised to stay indoors unless absolutely necessary. The government has also increased the testing capacity in the valley and is aggressively tracing contacts of positive cases.

However, the situation remains precarious, and more needs to be done to tackle the surge in cases. One of the major challenges facing the administration is the lack of adequate medical resources, including oxygen cylinders, hospital beds, and essential medicines. The government must act fast to address this issue and ensure that the healthcare system is equipped to handle the growing demand.

Moreover, there needs to be a concerted effort to educate the public on the importance of following Covid-19 protocols, such as wearing masks, maintaining social distance, and washing hands regularly. With the majority of the population still not vaccinated, it is essential to ensure that people are aware of the risks associated with the virus and take necessary precautions to protect themselves and their loved ones.

The recent surge in Covid-19 cases in Kashmir should serve as a wake-up call for the administration and the public at large. It is imperative to take immediate action to contain the spread of the virus and prevent it from spiraling out of control. The government must ensure that adequate medical resources are available to those who need it, and the public must take responsibility for their own health and safety.

To sum it up, the surge in Covid-19 cases in Kashmir is a cause for concern, and it is essential to take immediate action to address the issue. The administration must work tirelessly to ensure that the healthcare system is equipped to handle the growing demand, and the public must take responsibility for their own health and safety. Only by working together can we overcome this crisis and emerge stronger.

Nadeem Yasin: The Young Achiever Promoting Kashmiri Talent and Social Welfare through Social Media



IRFAN ATTARI

Social media has become a powerful platform for people to express themselves and share their ideas and experiences with the world. Among the many individuals who have leveraged this platform to make a positive impact is Nadeem Yasin, a resident of Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir, India. Nadeem is the man behind the largest social media page in the region, the 'Lol Page of Kashmir,' which has garnered a massive following for its unique content and its focus on promoting Kashmiri talent and helping the poor through social media.

Nadeem's journey as a social media influencer began a few years ago when he started the 'Lol Page of Kashmir' on Instagram. The page initially started as a platform to share funny memes and jokes with his friends, but it quickly gained popularity among the youth of Kashmir, who were starved for a platform to showcase their talents and creativity. Nadeem's page became a space for artists, musicians, photographers, and writers to share their work and reach a wider audience.

As the page's popularity grew, Nadeem realized that he could use his platform for a greater purpose. He started using his page to highlight the struggles of the poor and marginalized communities in Kashmir and to encourage his followers to donate to charitable causes. Nadeem and his team have been actively involved in raising



funds for various initiatives, such as providing medical aid to needy families, sponsoring the education of underprivileged children, and supporting women's empowerment initiatives.

Nadeem's work has not gone unnoticed, and he has received numerous accolades for his contribution to society. In 2020, he was awarded the 'Social Media Influencer of the Year' award by the Foundation for Youth Web (FFYW) (the Largest Youth based Organization In Kashmir) for his outstanding work in promoting local talent and helping the underprivileged.

Despite the success of his page, Nadeem chose to remain anonymous and did not reveal his identity to his

followers. However, in recent times, he has decided to come out in the open and reveal his real face to the world. This decision was met with overwhelming support and admiration from his followers, who saw him as a young achiever who had made a significant impact in the lives of many people.

In conclusion, Nadeem Yasin is a shining example of how social media can be used for a greater purpose. His 'Lol Page of Kashmir' has become a platform for promoting Kashmiri talent, raising awareness about social issues, and helping the less fortunate. Nadeem's work has inspired many young people in the region to use their skills and talents to make a positive impact in their communities. He is a young achiever who has shown that with dedication and perseverance, one can make a real difference in the world.

Nadeem Yasin's 'Lol Page of Kashmir' has not only helped promote local talent, but it has also become a platform for emerging celebrities in the region. Many artists, musicians, and writers have gained fame and recognition through the page's reach, which has allowed them to showcase their skills to a wider audience.

In fact, some of the most prominent celebrities in Kashmir today owe their success to Nadeem's page. These individuals were initially discovered by Nadeem and his team, who recognized their talent and gave them a platform to showcase their skills. Today, these individuals are household names in the region, and their success is in no small part due to Nadeem's efforts.

It is worth noting that Nadeem started the 'Lol Page of Kashmir' in

2016, at a time when the region was facing unrest and turmoil. Despite the difficult circumstances, Nadeem's page became a beacon of hope and positivity, spreading happiness and laughter through its content.

Nadeem's work has been truly remarkable, especially considering that he did not have any significant support or background to start with. However, his dedication and commitment to helping others have not gone unnoticed, and he has now received full support from the Government of India for his initiatives.

Nadeem's journey as a social media influencer has not been without its challenges. At the start, he did not receive support from his family, who were skeptical about his choice of career. However, Nadeem was undeterred, and he continued to pursue his passion for social media and helping others.

As his page gained popularity and recognition for its unique content and social welfare initiatives, Nadeem's family began to see the impact he was making in the lives of many people in Kashmir. They gradually started to support his endeavors and recognized the value of his work in promoting local talent and raising awareness about social issues.

Today, Nadeem's family is proud of his achievements, and they are his biggest supporters. They have seen firsthand how his efforts have helped improve the lives of many people in the region, and they stand behind him in his mission to make a positive impact in society.

Nadeem's story is a testament to the power of perseverance and dedication in pursuing one's dreams. Despite facing initial opposition, he continued to follow his passion and work towards making a positive impact in his community. His success today is not only due to his hard work and commitment but also the support of his family, who have seen the value of his efforts and stand behind him in his mission to make a difference in the world.

In conclusion, Nadeem Yasin's 'Lol Page of Kashmir' is a testament to the power of social media in promoting talent, raising awareness about social issues, and helping the less fortunate. Through his hard work and dedication, Nadeem has become a young achiever and a role model for many people in the region. He has shown that even in the most challenging circumstances, one can make a positive impact in the world.

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Stop communal frenzy in Country



POONAM I KAUSHISH

What is with us Indians? Why are we so blasé about violence? Why do hooligans always get the better of us? As for our polity, their vacuous outpourings of angst or grief are just that. Vacuous. Why are we so hypocritical? Questions which bombard like staccato gunshots when we talk of Hindu-Muslim violence. Alongside how our polity is swiftly sinking into the marshy cesspool of bloodied religious intolerance.

Tragically, the Ram-Rahim wheel seems to have turned a full circle and communalism is once again the cause célèbre this week. The latest to earn this ignominy are 7 States: West Bengal, Bihar, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Telangana, Karnataka and UP which were rocked with violence during Ram Navami celebrations after clashes broke out between Hindus-Muslims. Leaving a trail of blood with over 60 dead, 80 injured and 150 arrests, several vehicles and shops gutted resulting in Section 144 being imposed banned gatherings of four or more persons.

Trust stormy petrel West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee to allege, "BJP not Hindus was deliberately taking out rallies, playing songs on loudspeakers and people were seen with arms in Hooghly district's minority areas without permission. Why will there be Ram Navami processions for five days? One can organise several rallies on the day it is celebrated. We will have no objection."

Countered the BJP the police were lackadaisical and refused to take action, Administration least bothered and waited till things went out of hand as goons control TMC. It demanded a NIA probe with Union Home Minister Amit Shah asserting "rioters will be hanged if we come to power in Bihar and Bengal.

Clearly, we are watching cut-throat communalism at work. Whereby, our netas have made creed the tour de force of Indian politics whereby the electoral incentive to use religion is too strong as it has electoral salience and appeal. Thus, in a milieu of competitive democracy which blots pledges of development, if politics based on religion ensures convergence of electoral booty and has

better chances of polarising voters via processions and vicious speeches serenading Ram-Rahim inducing raw emotions of hostility and hate, so be it.

Who cares if it is destructive, stokes communal violence and sows seeds of rabid communalism? And no matter the nation is getting sucked into the vortex of centrifugal bickerings. Questionably, what do such incidents achieve? Zilch. Only the aam aadmi became targets. All forget that violence does not achieve anything and neither does insult of a creed.

Indeed, communal politics would be good if it ensured better quality of life for members of a particular community. But, it invariably turns into hate politics. This has been India's experience over many decades and its consequences has been disastrous.

Undoubtedly, this ping-pong over who's communal is scary. When selfish vote-banks politics dictate our polity's political ideology, attitude and stance is fashioned according to the electorate's diktat then all stand tarred by the same brush.

Recall, in a landmark judgment 2017 Supreme Court's 7 judge Constitution Bench said, "No politician can seek vote in the name of religion or caste. If a candidate and their agents etc were found seeking votes in the name of religion or caste, it would be considered a corrupt practice under Section 123(3) Representation of People's Act and if found guilty a candidate could be disqualified.

Of course, these guidelines are observed more in breach and the role of religion in politics has endured, if not grown stronger. Given Hindu-Muslim hostilities were a repeat of incidents last year too during Ram Navami festivities across several States.

As this repeated finger pointing between Hindus-Muslims reveal that all Parties boast its Political Terrorist. For power, they will go adopt diabolical machinations to create a communal divide. There is no desire to uphold equal respect for various faiths. Instead unashamedly use religion to increase their so-called popularity with voters.

Consequently, they want the present show to go on. Forgetting the State is neither anti-God nor pro-God. Be it Allah, Ram or Jesus. It is expected to treat all religions alike. But so caught up are all in their frenzied pursuit of political nirvana through separatism, that they confuse themselves and people – and, history itself. Converting religions gush into political slush!

Where do we go from here? Pander to rabid rabble rousers? Pandert to the politics of vote banks? It all depends on whether the Government is willing to get rid of its excess baggage of isms. Importantly, no quarter should be given to those who fan hatred among people and communities. Be it a Hindu fundamentalist or a Muslim militant. All are destroyers of the State, which has no religious entity. Thus, our moral angst cannot be selective but should be just, honourable and equal.

Undoubtedly, no matter what the provocation, the rule of law cannot be made to go for a toss. Nothing justifies violence or the call to commit violence in direct contravention of the law. If a Hindu has anger against his Muslim brethren or vice-versa they should take up the legal battle against them.

Said Nehru, "The combination of politics and religion, resulting in communal politics, is a most dangerous combination, and must be put an end to". Alas, Parties and successive Governments have failed to draw a distinction between politics and religion.

The time has come to rid India from the stranglehold of religious prejudices and separate religion from the State else we will become another Iran or Saudi Arabia. Remember, the State is apolitical and has no religion except the Constitution. In the present political scenario if only our polity could segregate religion from politics the problem of communal violence would end.

To combat this will require iron political will, a compact between all Parties on no use of religion for vote-bank politics leading to communal violence and strict enforcement of legal deterrents. Unfortunately, India's current fragmented political arena holds out little hope for such an eventuality.

The Ram Navami incidents should be yet another lesson to our polity to understand that by inciting Hindus-Muslims against each other they are only serving their vested interests. Communalism thrives on one community's hate for the other along-with playing up the psychosis of retaliation.

In the ultimate our petty-power-at-all-cost polity needs to think beyond vote-bank politics and desist from playing the communal card for vote bank gains, look beyond the perilous implications of their decisions wherein the country is being pushed towards brazen communalism and delink religion from politics.



VIJAY GARG



Agriculture has the power to remove unemployment

The way the country saw the migration of migrant laborers back home during the Corona epidemic, the report of the Periodic Labor Force Survey that came after that shows that the number of agricultural laborers has increased by 3 percent, this count was 42.5 percent in the year 2018-19 increased to 45.5 percent in 2021-22. The agriculture sector, which has been deliberately kept poor all these years, still holds the potential of gross value added (GVA) worth Rs 40.66 lakh crore. This The data shows the strength and resilience of the sector. If nothing else, if only price parity is created in the agriculture sector i.e. higher price guarantee, the agriculture sector would do much better, both in production and value-addition. Due to keeping the prices of agricultural products low, it is obvious that the income from agriculture sector is less visible. Instead of accepting this fact, it is cleverly given an impression by arguing that 'since the share of agriculture sector in the total income of the country is only 19 per cent, the burden which The cost of carrying to maintain the district should be drastically reduced. This vicious argument is a repetition of an out-of-date economic thinking, which is bent on pushing farmers out of farming. Mainstream economists continue to advance a global economic conspiracy that is eager to sacrifice agriculture to make economic reforms viable. It has to change. Let us first understand the Gross Value of Output (GVO). If the average price of a commodity increases, then its gross value also increases. Devel-

oped countries use this equation to chastise India that it is violating the terms of the WTO agreement. With the increase in the minimum purchase price of wheat and rice, rich developed countries determine the total value of a product by multiplying the output by the price. Then calculate from this how much India gives relief to the farmers by going above the fixed limit of giving 10 percent subsidy under the Aggregate Measurement of Support formula. other words In s, they calculate what share of the total value of output India provides as support to the agriculture sector. The point is that if the production remains the same and the price goes up, then its GVO will also go up. But, because we keep agricultural product prices low, GVO also stays down. At present, the farm-hand price of the commodity is generally lower, even 20-30 per cent less than the announced minimum support price. wheat and rice, and to a lesser extent cotton, apart from a few pulses and a few vegetables Price remains low. I know that the gross price of the product is determined by taking the average of the current price in a few mandis,

then adding some other expenses to it. It is logical that if the market price is relatively high, which is not less than the declared minimum support price, then the GVO will also be relatively high. In 2014-15, the Karnataka government gave farmers a bonus of Rs 450 per quintal on tur dal, resulting in record procurement. In the process, the income of the tur dal producer increased by Rs.22,500.additional increase. Imagine if the prices of tur dal had increased to such a level across the country, the GVO of this particular commodity would have been much higher. Similarly, the current minimum purchase price of wheat, which is Rs 2125 per quintal this year, if it is implemented across the country with legal guarantee, not only Punjab-Haryana farmers but the farmers of the entire country will be able to get a higher price. This would automatically count the GVO of wheat production quite high. If there is a proportionate increase in the prices of the remaining crops, the same thing will happen to them.also applies. Another measure that economists apply is Gross Value Added (GVA). The difference between GVA and

GVO is that the cost of growing the crop and the cost of raw materials have to be subtracted from GVO. For the year 2021-22, the National Statistics Department (NSO) has calculated the GVO from agriculture, forestry and fisheries at Rs 50.71 lakh crore. In view of the fact that the GVA-GVO ratio of the agriculture sector is the highest in the country i.e. 80.19 percent, even the land-property, business and Even more than the financial services, hotels and business sectors, this explains how high the productivity of the agricultural sector is. Some economists think that because the consumption of industrial goods to produce agriculture is lower than the global average, such as fertilizers, pesticides and farm-implements, and production data is based mostly on land sources, the GVA of agriculture remains high.. What happened after that? If agriculture is producing so much productivity with little use of external industrial inputs, imagine if, starting with all 23 crops, Higher and guaranteed price of the commodity by legally implementing the minimum purchase price, then the picture of Indian agriculture will change com-

pletely and it will become the main axis of economic development. Globally, the world is now moving towards a food system transformation aimed at reducing greenhouse emissions from agriculture. For this, there will be a need to move towards an agro-ecological farming system that uses less external resources. Mainstream economists must know that The Biodiversity Mechanism has called for cutting pesticide use by two-thirds by the year 2030. There is a lesson for them here. In any case, what is crystal clear is that the share of agriculture in the national income has remained low mainly because farmers have been denied their dues all these years. If the GVA of agriculture is coming out the most in the country, then I do not understand the logic when economists look down upon agriculture as a burden on the Indian economy. the facts are That is, it is agriculture which is giving strength to the economy like a rock. Even when the country's economy registered a contraction of 24 per cent in the first quarter after the corona lockdown, agriculture was the only sector that did exceptionally well. In fact, it is the continued good performance of agriculture that has kept the hopes alive. A vibrant farming system has so much courage that it can absorb the employment crisis facing the country. In fact, agriculture is a trouble-shooter rather than a burden. Today when 45.5 percent of the total population in the country If a person is engaged in the agriculture sector, the emphasis needs to be on making farming livelihoods economically viable and profitable. Deliberately depriving the agriculture sector of public investment, not guaranteeing minimum purchase price to farmers and not creating a reliable market system has been made the need of the hour. To solve this, there is a need to overturn the existing economic thinking.

Vijay Garg Retired Principal Educational Columnist Malout Punjab

Many personalities but all with tortured minds!

Drug addiction is nothing but a one way ticket to surefire death!



M S NAZKI



I will begin this one with a few lines that are undoubtedly horrific and terrible if one starts to think about what goes on in an addict's mind! So here I go, 'why do I take a blade and slash my arms? Why do I drink myself into a stupor? Why do I swallow bottles of pills and end up in a sort of coma having my stomach pumped? Am I seeking attention? Showing off? The pain of the cuts releases the mental pain of the memories, but the pain of healing lasts weeks. After every self-harming or overdosing incident I run the risk of being sectioned and returned to a psychiatric institution, a harrowing prospect I would not recommend to anyone. So, why do I do it? I don't. If I had power over the alters, I would stop them. I don't have that power. When they are out, they're out. I experience blank spells and lose time, consciousness, and dignity. If I, Farooq, wanted attention, I would have completed my medical studies and started to climb the academic career ladder. Flaunting the label 'doctor' is more attention-grabbing than lying drained of hope in hospital with steri-strips up your arms and the vile taste of liquid charcoal absorbing the chemicals in your stomach.'

Again as usual I have a couple of incidents to tell in this story! This is from Jammu and it all began from Samba! Since I knew the family so going to each other's homes was not an issue! On one such visit on one of the many Sunday's which I have seen in life so far, I was to find out that my cousin 'Babbar was in the missing zone'! I asked my Aunt (Bua in Dogri parlance) as to where Baby (his nickname)! Aunt did not reply but my cousin sister Beenu did. 'He must be in his room and sleeping'! Sleeping till twelve in the afternoon was not at all digestible as far as I was concerned! My uncle had just retired from the Indian Army and I had joined in and was on a short leave. Uncle and I had a couple of Harvard's Beers with some great roasted potatoes with black salt and the pomegranate sauce with plenty of mint and chilies! At about two just before lunch I could hear howling and scowling from Babbar's Room! I wanted to rush up but sister Beenu stopped me, with a cruel one liner, 'no need going up stairs, this is a routine now'! My question to her was 'if he is sick then the doctor's yard should be his next destination'! The reply stunned me, 'you cannot take animals to human hospitals'! I could see tears rolling down her eyes and when she told me that he had become a drug addict, I stood numb! Two months later he died and I was somewhere in Sikkim, Yakla to be precise!

So folks, 'get high on love, not drugs'! I have not forgotten by brother Babbar and neither can I high 'A handsome young boy who was reduced to a skeleton, the bulging biceps reduced to the size of shrunken Lady's Fingers, the muscular thighs reduced to beanstalks and that handsome face absolutely crum-



bled as if the skin would peel off and the skull bones would burst apart! That is what drugs do!

To be honest the mentality and behavior of drug addicts and alcoholics is wholly irrational until you understand that they are completely powerless over their addiction and unless they have structured help, they have no hope! That by and large has caused their life to end! The drug lords want it that way. But who are the drug lords?

A drug lord, drug baron, kingpin or narco-trafficker is a type of crime boss, who is in charge of a drug-trafficking network, organization, or enterprise. Such figures are often difficult to bring to justice, as they are normally not directly in possession of something illegal but are insulated from the actual trade in drugs by several layers of staff. The prosecution of drug lords is therefore usually the result of carefully planned infiltration into their networks, often using informants from within the organizations. When a group of independent drug lords collude with each other, in order to improve their profits and dominate the illegal drug trade, they form an organization called a drug cartel. Incidentally they are heavily operating in J&K and the below given information will give you a fair idea as to what is happening in the Union territory!

According to the National Survey on Extent and Pattern of Substance Use in India carried out by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment through the National Drug Dependence Treatment Centre (NDDTC) of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) New Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir has almost one million drug addicts.

The Ministry referred to a survey which revealed that around 108,000 males and 36,000 females were

found to be using cannabis, 534,000 males and 8,000 females were using opioids, and 160,000 males and 8,000 females were using various sedatives.

The Ministry also stated that a significant number of males and females were addicted to cocaine, Amphetamine-Type Stimulants (ATS), and Hallucinogens in the region.

'Every time I draw a clean breath, I'm like a fish out of water'.....An addict who meets me!

'The second addict I'm going to relate to you is about a young man from RS.Pura. He was wonderful on the keyboards of the computer and I had a chance to work with him in one of the premier newspapers in Jammu. After about six months of association together we parted ways but kept on meeting as he went on to open up his own cyber café! But then as the time passed by we never met! It was in the year 2019, late in December, I went to RS Pura for a journalistic errand as I call it! I met some old friends with whom I played cricket in Bana Singh stadium! I asked about my friend who used to do the typing work as I could only write the stories! There I came to know that he was very sick! My immediate reaction was that how could that be possible? The reply was a mum one from my friends, a couple of them who at that moment stood with me! I visited his home and I saw him sitting in Bermuda shorts and a blue jumper. To my horror I found out that he was not the same boy, smart, healthy and tough! He was a bare skeleton and seeing his legs I could make out that the needles had punctured him as puss oozed out of them! I asked him what was the matter? He replied back by saying that I'm an extreme case of diabetes! Suddenly his wife walked in with a tray with tea and cookies! We sipped the tea together and had

those delicious coconut cookies full of sugar! Then I asked his wife, 'if he is a diabetic then it means he is a patient, then why are you giving him sugar which is poisonous for his health?' The reply was a stunner? He is not a diabetes patient? Here I came to know and realized what had happened! He had needed his way to this stage! That was the last time we had tea together as he died four months later! Drugs had taken away yet another life!

The details:

- The Ministry's figures on drug-addicts in Jammu and Kashmir may be underestimated as the survey was conducted several years ago and the drug problem has since become more widespread in the region.
- 46 Addiction Treatment Facilities (ATFs) have been established across the country, only 10 are currently operational in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Additionally, the Ministry supports the establishment of Integrated Rehabilitation Centres for Addicts, of which there are 340 in the country but only one in Jammu and Kashmir.
- Similarly, out of 40 Community-based Peer-led Intervention (CPLI) Centres established so far, only two are operating in Jammu and Kashmir.
- Furthermore, the Ministry has set up 71 Outreach and Drop-in Centres (ODICs) across the country, with three currently operating in the UT of J&K.
- The Ministry also supports the establishment of District De-addiction Centres (DDACs) in districts without IRCA, ODIC, and CPLI centres, of which there are currently five in Jammu and Kashmir out of a total of 15 supported by the Ministry.
- The Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) had destroyed 288 acres of land in J&K in 2018, 1123 acres in 2019, 893 acres in 2020, 292 acres in 2021, and only 88 acres in 2022. However, given that poppy is grown on a significant portion of land in the Kashmir valley, the figures suggest that no significant progress has been made in its destruction.
- On the other hand, cannabis destruction has increased with 37 acres destroyed in 2018, 295 acres in 2020, 523 acres in 2021, and 443 acres in 2022, but the performance of NCB is still not satisfactory considering the large area of land used for growing cannabis in Kashmir valley.
- However, activists say the figure of drug addicts could be higher, attributing the spike to persistent poverty, unemployment, and decades of political and armed conflict that has left few families unscathed in the region disputed between India and Pakistan.
- The central government informed the parliament recently that there are nearly one million drug addicts in Kashmir, using cannabis, cocaine, opioid, sedatives, amphetamine-type stimulants, and hallucinogens.
- The drug addiction had sparked a crime spike, recalling how an addicted son in a north Kashmir village allegedly killed his mother recently.

Finally I will end this story by saying that it is disappointing because for an addict it takes away a lot of the thrill of killing himself or herself when people are looking for you and you're disappointing them, because it is a lot of fun when you're out there killing yourself! Just think it over!

China Doubles Down Day After India Rejects 'Renaming' Of Arunachal Areas

HT News Network

Beijing: After India outrightly rejected China's attempt to rename places of Arunachal Pradesh, Beijing on Tues-



day claimed its "sovereignty" over the region.

In a regular press conference, China's Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said, "Zangnan (Arunachal Pradesh) is part of China's territory. In accordance with relevant stipulations of the administration of geographical names of the State Council, competent authorities of the Chinese government have standardised the names of some parts of Zangnan. This is within China's sovereign rights."

Ministry of External Affairs official spokesperson Arindam Bagchi on Tuesday asserted that Arunachal Pradesh will always be an integral part of India.

Mr Bagchi issued the statement after China's Ministry of Civil Affairs came up with the names of 11 places in Arunachal Pradesh, which it referred

to as "Zangnan, the southern part of Tibet." In response to media queries regarding China renaming some places in Arunachal Pradesh, Arindam Bagchi 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."

He further said, "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."

Meanwhile, the United States "strongly opposes" China's attempts to advance a claim over Indian territory, Arunachal Pradesh by renaming localities, the White House said on Tuesday.

This is another attempt by the Chinese claim on us, Indian territory. So the United States, as you know, has recognised that territory for a long time and we strongly oppose any unilateral attempts to advance a territory claim by renaming localities. And so, again, this is something that we have long stood by a few things,"

White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said.

China released names of 11 places in Arunachal Pradesh in Chinese characters, Tibetan and pinyin according to the rules on geographical names issued by the State Council, China's cabinet, Global Times reported.

The ministry announced the names of 11 places on Sunday and also gave precise coordinates, including two residential areas, five mountain peaks, two rivers and two other areas. China's Ministry of Civil Affairs also listed the category of places' names and their subordinate administrative districts, as per the news report.

According to the Global Times report, this is the third batch of geographical names announced by the ministry in Arunachal Pradesh. As per the news report, the first batch of the standardized names of six places was issued in 2017, and the second batch of 15 places was released in 2021.

In December, last year, the Union government said it has seen reports of China attempting to rename some places in Arunachal Pradesh "in its own language" and asserted that the border state has been and will always be an integral part of India."

In response to a media query on reports that China has renamed some places in Arunachal Pradesh in its own language, Mr Bagchi said China had also sought to assign such names in April 2017. "We have seen such reports. This is not the first time China has attempted such a renaming of places in the state of Arunachal Pradesh.

Supreme Court Cancels News Channel Ban, Blasts Centre Over "Sealed Cover"

HT News Network

New Delhi: A media outlet cannot be muzzled just because it criticises the government, the Supreme Court said on Wednesday, as it lifted curbs on a Malayalam news channel, ordered by the centre on "national security" grounds.

The court said that the channel MediaOne's criticism of the government's policies and actions cannot be construed as anti-national or anti-establishment, and that an independent press is essential for a vibrant democracy.

Scrapping an order by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting that refused to renew the channel's broadcast licence for want of security clearance, the Supreme Court pulled up the Home Ministry for raising national security claims out of "thin air".

"National security can't be raised to deny people their rights... it was raised by the Home Ministry in a cavalier manner in this case," the court led by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud said, overruling the Kerala High Court which had upheld the centre's decision. The judges said the centre

had failed to show any material facts or evidence to justify its decision to impose

cannot be a ground to revoke the licence of a TV channel.



the broadcast ban on MediaOne, which was one of the few channels that reported extensively on the anti-Citizenship Amendment Act protests in 2020 and the riots in Delhi that it spawned.

"There is nothing to show terrorist links. National security claims cannot be made on the basis of thin air. It is seen that none of the material is against national security or threatens public order," the court said.

The court observed that the government cannot be allowed to have a stand that the press must support the government. It said criticism of the government

Coming down heavily on the centre's attempt to keep its rationale under wraps, and file them under "sealed cover", the court said, "Sealed cover proceedings cannot be adopted to avoid the harm caused by public immunity proceedings. We are of the opinion that public immunity proceedings are a less restrictive means to safeguard the public interest."

"There cannot be a blanket immunity to the government for disclosure of information to the other parties in a proceeding before the court... All investigation reports cannot be termed secret as these affect the rights and liberty of the

citizens," the Supreme Court said.

MediaOne, which had several run-ins with the BJP-led government at the centre, had gone off the air last year on January 31 after its name was removed from the list of permitted channels by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting.

On March 15 last year, the Supreme Court had put the Kerala High Court order, which had backed the centre's decision, on hold. "There is nothing to show terrorist links. National security claims cannot be made on the basis of thin air. It is seen that none of the material is against national security or threatens public order," the court said.

The court observed that the government cannot be allowed to have a stand that the press must support the government. It said criticism of the government cannot be a ground to revoke the licence of a TV channel.

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Workers, Farmers Hold Rally In Delhi Against Centre's Policies

HT News Network

New Delhi: Several left wing trade unions held a rally here in Ramleela ground today with hundreds of workers and farmers in a show of solidarity against the BJP-led central government's alleged disregard of their basic needs and loss of livelihoods. The Masdoor-Kisan Sangarsh rally was held by the Centre of Trade Unions (CTU), All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS), and All India Agricultural Workers Union (AIAWU). The leaders speaking at the rally warned the government that the rally was an indication of the surging anger of the workers of the country, an official statement from the collective said. Hundreds of workers, farmers, and agricultural workers from different parts of the nation, including Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, UP, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Kerala, Karnataka, Assam, Tripura, Manipur, Gujarat, participated in the rally, the statement said. The workers demanded from the government policies that allow access to education, healthcare, and a dignified life for them and their children, it said.

Nitish Kumar Blames "Ruler And Agent" For Bihar Clashes

HT News Network

Patna: As Bihar recovers from a spate of communal violence that erupted during the Ram Navami festival last week, Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Wednesday appeared to blame the BJP, his former ally and the ruling party at the national level, for fomenting the clashes. Mr Kumar, who leads the Janata Dal (United) party and heads a coalition government with the Congress and the Rashtriya Janata Dal, targeted Union Home Minister Amit Shah and other BJP leaders over the violence, suggesting they were orchestrated to polarise voters ahead of state elections next year. "There was no administrative laxity. The riots were orchestrated deliberately and those behind the incident will be known soon. Just wait, door-to-door searches are on... it was all done by one who is ruling and their agent," the Chief Minister said. While "ruler" was seen as a reference to the BJP, the "agent" barb was aimed at Asaduddin Owaisi, the president of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimin (AIMIM), a Muslim party that has been expanding its base in Bihar.

Lok Sabha adjourned amid Oppn uproar on Adani issue

HT News Network

New Delhi, Apr 5 (UNI) Lok Sabha was adjourned for the day on Wednesday amid Opposition ruckus over the Adani issue. The Lower House was adjourned shortly after it resumed at 1400 hours. As soon as the Presiding Officer Rama Devi resumed the proceedings of the House, members of the Opposition holding placards trooped into the and shouted slogans demanding a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) probe into the Hindenburg Research report over Adani Group. The Hindenburg Research report alleged the Adani Group had engaged in stock manipulation and accounting fraud schemes over the course of decades. The Presiding Officer got important papers laid on the Table of the House, and The Coastal Aquaculture Authority (Amendment) Bill, 2023 was also introduced, before she adjourned the Lower House till 1100 hours on Thursday.

Opposition's Case Against "Misuse Of Agencies" Rejected By Supreme Court

HT News Network

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Wednesday refused to consider a petition by 14 opposition parties that accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government of abusing its power and using central investigating agencies to harass and intimidate its political rivals.

The petition, filed by senior advocate Abhishek Manu Singhvi on behalf of the opposition parties, claimed that there was a "drastic and exponential increase" in the number of cases registered by the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) against opposition leaders since 2014 when PM Modi came to power.

Mr Singhvi cited statistics to show that the ED had registered 6 times more cases in the last seven years than in the previous decade, but had a conviction rate of only 23 per cent. He also alleged that 95 per cent of the ED and CBI cases were against opposition leaders from across the country and that this was a clear indication of political vendetta and bias.

However, Chief Justice of India DY Chandrachud expressed doubts about the valid-



ity and feasibility of the petition. He asked Mr Singhvi whether he was seeking immunity for opposition parties from investigation and prosecution, and whether they had any special rights as citizens.

Mr Singhvi clarified that he was not asking for any blanket protection or exemption for opposition leaders, but only for a fair and impartial application of the law. He said that the government was misusing its agencies to weaken and demoralise the opposition and that this was detrimental to democracy and the rule of law. He also argued that the government was violating the "triple test" laid down by the Supreme Court for arresting accused persons, which requires reasonable grounds, necessity and proportionality.

Congress disrupting parliament to stay politically relevant: Jyotiraditya Scindia

HT News Network

New Delhi, Apr 05 (UNI) Union Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia on Wednesday slammed the Congress party for disrupting the proceedings of Parliament and said they are doing this just to stay "politically relevant". "It is shameful that the Congress is playing with this country's democracy and it is heading to a new low," he said here at a press conference.

"This is not a fight for democracy but an individual," Scindia said, adding that Rahul Gandhi is not the first one to be disqualified from Lok Sabha. "Jayalithaa and Azam Khan were disqualified in the past, but why is there so much hue and cry? Why are people wearing black clothes," Scindia asked. Attacking Rahul Gandhi over his disqualification he said "It's



not for the first time that someone is disqualified from the Parliamentary membership".

He added that "the way outcry is being made right now over the disqualification is unparalleled and shameful" Scindia's comments come as Congress continues to hold massive protests against the disqualification of Rahul Gandhi. Alleging that Rahul

Gandhi is trying to pressurise the country's judiciary, the Minister said Congress is trying to project Rahul Gandhi's personal legal fight as a fight for democracy, adding this is not a fight for democracy but for an individual. "The way he went to appeal, halted the transportation, causing inconvenience to the public and what not. Is this the Gandhian principle.

PM Modi reaffirms deep commitment to unique ties of friendship with Bhutan

HT News Network

New Delhi, Apr 5 (UNI) Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during his interaction with Bhutan King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, reaffirmed India's deep commitment to the unique ties of friendship and cooperation with Bhutan and reiterated continued and full support to its socio-economic development based on the priorities of the Royal Government and as per the vision of the King. According to the Joint Statement issued on Wednesday following the talks between the two leaders on Tuesday, "Guided by the philosophy of Gross National Happiness, and in consonance with the priorities of the people and Royal Government of Bhutan, both sides recognized that the long-standing Bhutan-India development partnership, is reflective of strong ties of friendship and cooperation based on trust and mutual understanding." The Indian side agreed to step up support for Bhutan's

13th Five Year Plan which was welcomed by the Bhutanese side. The Bhutanese side also noted with satisfaction the timely flow of funds from GOI to ensure smooth and uninterrupted progress of projects under the 12th Five Year Plan with about 90 percent of India's committed plan assistance to Bhutan already released, the joint statement said.

The Bhutanese side expressed appreciation to the Indian side for extending Standby Credit Facility at reduced interest rate and extended settlement period, and for providing an additional currency swap support of USD 200 Million. The Indian side agreed to positively consider Bhutan's request to extend an additional Standby Credit Facility (SCF) for a period of five years. Under Hydropower cooperation, it said the two sides have a productive arrangement whereby Bhutan receives steady stream of revenue from the sale of power from hydropower plants which have been jointly developed, and India benefits from the assured

supply of energy. The role of hydropower projects in helping the Bhutanese economy during



the COVID-19 induced global economic slowdown was noted in this context. Both sides reviewed various elements of bilateral hydropower cooperation and expressed satisfaction that projects totalling 2136 MW, which have been jointly set up, are functioning well. Both sides also welcomed the recent hand-

hu HEP to Bhutan. In terms of ongoing projects, both sides reiterated their com-

mitment to find a technically sound and cost-effective way forward for Punatsangchhu-I HEP (Punatsangchhu-I is a 1.2GW run-of-the-river hydroelectric power project under construction in the Wangdue Phodrang district of Bhutan. Due to a landslide, the project has been stalled and costs have escalated.) Both sides expressed satisfaction with

the progress in construction of the 1020 MW Punatsangchhu-II HEP and looked forward to its commissioning by early 2024. Both sides noted agreed to expeditiously conclude the tariff protocol. On the periodic revision of tariff of Chukha HEP, the Bhutanese side welcomed India's offer to revise the tariff to Rs. 3 per unit, which represents a 17% increase. The Bhutanese side thanked India for enabling the import of power from India to meet Bhutan's energy deficit during the winter months. The Indian side agreed to positively consider Bhutan's request for sale of power into the Indian Energy Exchange from the 64 MW Basochhu HEP. Both sides reiterated the importance of cooperation in hydropower sector and the urgent need to review and finalize modalities for new projects including Sankosh HEP. The Indian side assured consideration on Bhutan's request for access to financing and market for power sale for new and upcoming hydropower projects in Bhutan.

Iran appoints first UAE ambassador since 2016 as Gulf relations improve

HT News Network

Tehran: Iran said on Tuesday it had appointed an ambassador to the United Arab Emirates for the first time since 2016, amid a realignment of relations between Gulf states and Iran.

The move comes after the UAE in August moved to upgrade ties and said it was returning its ambassador to Tehran.

The UAE downgraded relations with Iran after Saudi Arabia severed ties with Iran in January 2016 after Iranian protesters stormed the Saudi embassy in Tehran following Riyadh's execution of a prominent Shiite cleric.

In a step change to years of hostility between Iran and Saudi Arabia that had threatened stability and security in the Gulf and helped fuel conflicts in the Middle East from Yemen to Syria, Riyadh last month said it would re-establish relations with Tehran in a China-brokered deal.

The UAE, which has business and trade ties with Iran stretching back more than a century, started re-engaging with Tehran in 2019 after attacks in Gulf waters and on Saudi energy sites.

The UAE's Dubai emirate has long been one of Iran's main links

to the outside world. Iran's newly appointed ambassador Reza Ameri had served as

prochement amid a China-brokered deal.

The meeting between Prince

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Top Saudi, Iranian diplomats to meet in China

Meanwhile, the top envoys for Saudi Arabia and Iran will meet in Beijing on Thursday, an Iranian official and a Saudi-owned newspaper said, as the two regional rivals work to hash out the next steps of their diplomatic rap-

Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud and his Iranian counterpart, Hossein Amirabdollahian, will be the first formal meeting between Saudi Arabia and Iran's most senior diplomats in more than seven years.

"The top envoys agreed to meet on April 6 in Beijing as the deal was facilitated by China," a senior Iranian official told Reuters.

Choosing China "came as an extension of Beijing's positive role

Saudi-owned Asharq al-Awasat newspaper cited an unidentified source in Riyadh as saying.

The resumption of the relations that was announced last month and arrangements for the exchange of ambassadors will be discussed in the meeting, it added.

Iran said on Tuesday it had appointed an ambassador to the United Arab Emirates for the first time since 2016, amid a realign-

Fire destroys clothes market in Dhaka

HT News Network

DHAKA: Hundreds of Bangladeshi firefighters battled an inferno that raged through a popular clothing market in the capital Dhaka on Tuesday and blanketed the city's oldest neighbourhoods in black smoke.

No fatalities have been reported so far, but shop owners and fire officials told reporters that the famous Bongo Bazar and three adjacent markets had been almost completely gutted in the dawn fire.

Tempers flared as the morning wore on with a group of shop owners hurling rocks at firefighters, angered by the time it was taking to bring the blaze under control.

"We dispersed them," police spokesman Faruq Ahmed said, adding that around 450 officers had been deployed to keep order and stop looting.

Fire services chief Main Uddin told reporters that 600 firefighters from across the city brought the blaze under control after battling it for more than six hours, while hundreds of spectators watched from a nearby overpass.

"An enthusiastic crowd and a lack of water" along with high winds had made it difficult to combat the fire, he said.

Afghan Taliban restrain UN's women staff from working

HT News Network

KABUL: Afghan women who are United Nations employees have been blocked from work in eastern Nangarhar province, the UN mission said on Tuesday, warning Taliban authorities its aid programmes are impossible without its staff.

In December, Taliban officials ordered all foreign and domestic NGOs to stop women personnel working across the crisis-stricken nation.

Several suspended their entire operations in protest, piling further misery on Afghanistan's 38 million citizens, half of whom are facing hunger according to aid agencies.

After days of wrangling, it was agreed women working in the health aid sector would be exempt from the decree. UN staff, including those in the aid sector, were never beholden to the ban.

But on Tuesday the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) said "female national UN staff have been prevented from reporting to work" in the eastern province of Nangarhar.

Taliban government spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said he was seeking information on the matter.

Imran makes cover of Time, but supporters not happy

HT News Network

WASHINGTON: The renowned Time magazine on Tuesday published a cover story on former prime minister Imran Khan in its latest edition, putting his picture on the title page with the caption: 'The Astonishing Saga of Imran Khan.' The article caught the attention of PTI leaders as well, and former information minister Fawad Chaudhry immediately put it on his Twitter account, along with a picture of the title page. It's an article like most articles in Western magazines are; containing some praise and some criticism, analysing the current political situation in Pakistan and projecting the future, both for Pakistan and Mr Khan.

The magazine also did a Zoom interview with Mr Khan, but instead of a Q&A format, it used quotes from the interview throughout the article, some to highlight his achievements and some to back claims of his failures. Some quotes were also used to back their projections, both positive and negative for Pakistan and Mr Khan. But Mr Khan's supporters did not like this approach and, as they often do with Pakistani publications, unleashed their wrath on the magazine and the author, Charles Campbell. Time's commentary "does not (go) beyond the West's binary, myopic and fallacious view of the Muslim world," wrote a PTI supporter, Maaz Ud Din, on his Twitter account. "This article is a perfect example of pathetic Orientalism."

UK minister under fire for singling out Pakistani men

HT News Network

LONDON: British Home Secretary Suella Braverman's remarks that British-Pakistani men "hold cultural values at odds with British values" have been criticised by political commentators and children's charities as "inflammatory" and akin to initiating "race wars".

Ms Braverman came under fire when, during a Sky News interview about plans to tackle child sexual abuse, she spoke about "the predominance of British-Pakistani males who hold cultural values totally at odds with British values". "[British-Pakistani men] see women in a demeaned, illegitimate way, and pursue an outdated and frankly heinous approach to the way we behave," Ms Braverman commented after she was informed that a Home Office report in 2020 concluded that most child sexual abuse gangs are made up of white men under the age of 30, and that there was not enough evidence to suggest members of grooming gangs were disproportionately more likely to be Asian or black. Ms Braverman instead pointed to reports from Rotherham, which was rocked by a child sexual exploitation scandal in which five British-Pakistani men were convicted of grooming, raping and exploiting young girls.

Trump charged with 34 counts of falsifying records

HT News Network

NEW YORK: Former president Donald Trump pleaded not guilty to 34 felony counts of falsifying business records in a historic moment for the United States on Tuesday, as prosecutors accused him of paying two women to suppress their accounts of sexual encounters with him.

The indictment, unsealed after Trump's court appearance along with a statement of facts, alleged that Trump and others violated election laws through a scheme to suppress the publication of negative information about him ahead of the 2016 US election. The two women were adult film actress Stormy Daniels and former Playboy model Karen McDougal.

According to Alvin Bragg, New York's district attorney, the charges include the former president made a payment to a doorman at Trump Tower who said he had fathered a child out of wedlock.

Trump returned to his Mar-a-Lago residence in Florida after the court appearance. Wearing a dark blue suit and red tie, Trump, the first sitting or former US president to face criminal charges, sat with his hands folded at the defence table as he entered his plea flanked by his lawyers.

Ex-president was taken into custody before his appearance in court

"Not guilty," Trump, 76, said when asked how he pleaded.

"We're going to fight it. We're going to fight it hard," Todd Blanche, a lawyer for Trump, told reporters after the arraignment, adding that Trump was frustrated, upset and angry about the charges.

"But I'll tell you what — he's motivated.



And it's not going to stop him. And it's not going to slow him down. And it's exactly what he expected," Blanche added.

The judge set the next court hearing for Dec 4 and did not issue a gag order on any of the parties.

Some of the evidence against Trump was caught in an audio recording in September 2016 as he and his attorney discussed how to suppress stories about his affair, prosecutors said. Court documents said Trump can be heard saying: "So what do we got to pay for this?" Trump's reimbursement cheques to a lawyer for the suppression payments falsely stated that the money was for a "retainer agreement", prosecutors said.

The indictment accused Trump of falsifying his real estate company's books with intent to defraud.

Trump, the front-runner for the Republican presidential nomination for next year's election, said nothing as he entered the courtroom or when he left roughly an hour later. Trump previously called the charges politically motivated.

Jacinda Ardern Delivers Final Speech To New Zealand Parliament

HT News Network

Wellington, New Zealand: Former New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern bowed out of parliament Wednesday, ending a career marked by empathetic leadership during times of crisis even as she faced escalating abuse online.

Ardern shocked New Zealand earlier this year when she announced she was stepping down as prime minister and retiring from politics, saying she no longer had "enough in the tank".

The 42-year-old, once the youngest woman leader in the world, said in her final speech to parliament that she never expected to take the nation's top job.

"It was a cross between a sense of duty to steer a moving freight train... and being hit by one," she quipped during her valedictory address.

"And that's probably because my internal reluctance to lead was matched only by a huge sense of responsibility."

Ardern steered New Zealand through natural disasters, the Covid-19 pandemic and the 2019 Christchurch mosque massacre -- in which a white supremacist gunman killed 51 Muslim worshippers.

"These stories and phases remain etched in my mind and likely will forever. That is the responsibility and privilege of the role of prime minister."

Ardern dedicated a significant section of her speech to climate change, urging the country's politicians to band together.

"Climate change is a crisis. It is upon us," she said.



"And so one of the very few things I will ask of this house on my departure is that you please take the politics out of climate change."

She will now devote herself to stamping out online extremism as part of the Christchurch Call project, which she set up as prime minister in the wake of the mosque attack.

Lightning rod French President Emmanuel Macron, who took part in the first Christchurch Call summit, said he was reassured to see Ardern continuing to "fight terrorist and violent extremist content online".

Ardern will also become a trustee of Prince William's Earthshot Prize, which hunts for solutions to the planet's most urgent environmental challenges.

Despite her glittering reputation on the international stage -- she graced the cover of Time Magazine in 2020 -- Ardern was far from universally adored at home.

She became a lightning rod for online abuse as her premiership wore on, and was regularly targeted in social media posts filled with violent and sexist language.

Breakaway candidate could give Erdogan a lifeline in tight election

HT News Network

ANKARA: A second-time presidential candidate who lost out to Tayyip Erdogan in a 2018 vote could push Turkey's May election to a second round, potentially boosting the president's prospects of winning, according to analysts and polls.

Muharrem Ince, formerly of the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP), joined the fray last month and secured a spot on the ballot at the weekend, fuelling concerns among Erdogan's opponents about a split in the opposition vote.

Some surveys put Ince's support at more than 5 per

cent, with one by Panora-



matr giving him 10pc last month.

Pollsters and analysts say his backers would mostly otherwise vote for CHP leader Kemal Kilicdaroglu, who is the main opposition candidate seen as the biggest electoral challenge to

power. "The fundamental consequence of Ince's (candidate) is sending the elections to a second round," Panoramatr research director Osman Sert said.

He said Ince's support could slide from 10pc, where it has mostly held

over the last month, as the vote approaches. "But even if there is such a meltdown it would not prevent the election going to a second round," Sert said.

Some analysts say Ince might agree a deal with Kilicdaroglu and withdraw before the vote to boost the opposition which, polls suggest, retains an edge over the incumbent Erdogan. But Ince indicated he would not bow to such pressure.

"There is no situation that would require us to withdraw and technically this isn't possible," he told broadcaster Haberturk on Monday, noting that an official draw on Saturday formalised his spot on the ballot.

More than 350 arrests in Jerusalem's Al-Aqsa compound: Israel police

HT News Network

Israeli police arrested more than 350 people early Wednesday after clashes at Jerusalem's flashpoint Al-Aqsa mosque, a police spokesperson said.

In a statement, police said they had "arrested and removed over 350 individuals that violently barricaded" themselves inside the mosque in the Old City of annexed east Jerusalem.

Those arrested included "masked individuals, stone and firework hurlers/throwers, and individuals suspected of desecrating the mosque," it said.

Israeli police attacked dozens of worshippers in the mosque's compound before dawn in the wee hours of the day in what Israeli police said was a response to rioting.

The incident sparked protests across the occupied West Bank and the Israeli military claimed nine rockets were fired from Gaza toward Israel after sirens blared in southern towns.

Violence in the occupied West Bank and Jerusalem has surged over the past year and there is concern that tensions could escalate this month, as the Muslim holy month of Ramadan coincides with Judaism's Passover and Christian Easter. The Palestinian Red Crescent said seven Palestinians sustained wounds from rubber-tipped bullets and beatings in clashes with Israeli police at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound.

Block Diwas held at Chrarwani in Charar-e-Sharief

Reyaz Badana

BUDGAM, APRIL 05: The District Administration Budgam today held Block Diwas at Panchayat Halqa Chrarwani in Block Charar-e-Sharief.

The Programme was chaired by ADDC Budgam, Dr Akramullah Tak. On the occasion, DDC Nagam, BDC Charar-e-Sharief were also present.

Local PRIs & senior citizens from villages including Zagipora, CG Dhar, Dardipora, Kakawring and other adjacent villages apprised the ADDC about their needs.

After giving patient hearing to the public, the ADDC assured that all genuine demands shall be looked into on priority.

Speaking on the occasion, ADDC directed concerned to address the issues on priority.

R&B and PMGSY authorities were instructed to take up development and macadamization works of main roads and inner links in phased-manner for better connectivity to the general public. He emphasized on speedy completion of works related to JJM, PDD and create better sports related facilities for the local youths. The ADDC stressed on coordination between departments and availability of field functionaries on the ground for public convenience. He emphasized that works related to irrigation, road development and improvement in education and health sectors be executed in a time bound manner for public convenience. The ADDC urged that villages elders and parents must play active role



in curbing the drug abuse spread by keeping tight vigil on their wards and emphasized youth should actively participate in co-curricular activities and sports activities to remain healthy and away from the drugs and other

social evils. At the outset, the ADDC also appealed youths to register themselves under different self-employment schemes and create their own ventures to become job providers instead of job seekers.

He also emphasized on cleanliness and maintenance of proper sanitation in the area.

The ADDC informed that various JJM works have been approved to ensure improvement in the tap water supply to all the habitations in the area and added that under JJM, projects worth Rs. 1240 crore shall be executed to provide tap water supply across the district.

He instructed Panchayat members to ensure cleanliness and maintenance of proper sanitation in all panchayat halqas of the block and urged PRIs to ensure that people ensure a ban on use of one-time plastic items and dumping of garbage roadside and in open areas.

SDM Chadoora CEO, Tehsildar, Executive Engineer PDD, BMO and other concerned officers and officials were also present on the occasion.

PCCF Dr Mohit Gera tours West Circle forests

Discusses forest-fires preparedness, reviews mechanisms to prevent damages

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 05: Dr Mohit Gera, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests (Head of Forest Force), Jammu and Kashmir, and BM Sharma, Additional Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Jammu, conducted a tour of the forest areas of Jammu West Circle, including Katra Range of Reasi Forest Division and Mahore Forest Division today, to review forest fire preparedness and damage prevention measures.

During the tour, officers from West Circle and Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board (SMVDSB) presented their measures and prepa-



rations to prevent forest fires. Vinay Khajuria, Assistant Conservator of Forests (ACF), representing CEO, SMVDSB, Katra, informed the team about various measures like control burning, creating fire lines, spreading awareness among local communities, collecting chir pine needles, clearance of bushes on both

sides of the track, and wetting of Shrine slopes during May and June. A future plan for the installation of a rain gun on the track was also discussed.

Range Officer Katra and Range Officer Reasi Forest Division informed that they had taken up massive fire lines creation and control burning, and coordination

with Forest Protection Force, Police Department, SMVDSB, Katra authorities had been pursued to prevent forest fires in forests of Reasi Forest Division. Awareness Camps about the prevention of forest fires and subsequent penal action for inducing forest fires were also being conducted regularly.

Dr Gera inaugurated the Forest Guard Hut in Kanthan Forest block and interacted with the PRI members. Later, plant distribution of various species was done among the local public in the light of 'Har Gaon Haryali' campaign of the J&K Government. Dr Gera and his team also visited Mahore Forest Division to review forest field staff and conduct a mock drill to check forest damage and prevent forest fires.

Dr Gera expressed satisfaction with the functioning of the West Circle and called for more focused efforts to protect and conserve the green wealth of Jammu and Kashmir.

The J&K Forest Department and its sister wings have successfully planted over 150 lakh saplings in the last financial year 2022-23. The J&K Forest Department plans to distribute plants to the maximum number of rural and urban households in the upcoming financial year. The department is also committed to creating livelihood opportunities in association with J&K Rural Livelihood Mission and Tribal Affairs Department under the newly launched Non-Timber Forest Produce policy.

Additionally, Nagarvans projects, beautification of water bodies/wildlife areas, and plastic-free forest campaigns.

2685 solar lights procured already and received by PDD Kupwara.

HT News Network

KUPWARA, APRIL 5 :

In pursuance to PRI demands under ADF, Executive Engineer, Electric Division, Kupwara has procured as many as 2685 Solar Lights, amounting to Rs. 612.26 lakhs, under District CAPEX Budget (PRI Grants) during 2022-23.

These Solar Lights, as per the statement of concerned Executive Engineer, have been procured already and being installed in different Panchayats of Sogam, Kalaroos, Kupwara, Qadirabad, Trehgam, Chowkibal, Hyhama and Drugmulla areas of Kupwara Electric Division of the district, while as at few Panchayats installation of Solar Lights and GI tagging is in progress.

The Executive Engineer has also informed that 35% of the total amount of contracts has been kept withheld as per rules till final installation. This include 25% in the shape of FDR and 10% in the shape of deposit amount.

The people and PRIs have expressed gratitude for the department for installation of Solar Lights in their respective areas in shortest possible time and prevented lapse of funds allotted for the purpose.

Furthermore it is clarified by the department that all GFR and procedures have been followed in totality in the said task and no excess payment is released to any contractor as otherwise mentioned in some media reports.

Mega Block Diwas held at Kulgam, programme witnesses overwhelming public response

Farooq Rather



KULGAM, APRIL 05: District Administration Kulgam today organized special public grievance redressal camps across 3 blocks including Devsar, D. K. Marg and Kulgam.

On the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner (DC), Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat held a Public Darbar at Kulgam and gave patient hearing to the people who projected different public and development related issues.

During the proceedings, several deputations, individuals from different areas flagged-off their issues, grievances and demands and sought their redressal.

Delegations from Manzgam, D. K. Marg, Akhall, Brinal, Liasoo, Bolsoo and other areas participated in grievance redressal camp and apprised the DC about their issues and grievances for early redressal.

DC Srinagar holds Public Grievance Redressal Camp at Khimber Inspects progress of works on Rs 90 lakh NTPHC Chatterhama, Rs 2.0 Cr Sports Field Khimber, Rs 7.94 Cr Tribal Research Institute

HT News Network

SRINAGAR APRIL 05: In its endeavour to bring Administration to the door steps of the people particularly living in outskirts of the District, the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad today held a Public Grievance Redressal Camp under weekly Block Diwas Programme at Khimber for on spot resolution of public issues and listen to developmental demands of the local people.

Besides, the Members of District Development Council, Block Development Council and Panchayat representatives, a large number of people of Khimber and adjoining areas in North Tehsil of the District were part of the Public Grievance Redressal Camp.

While, Chief Planning Officer Srinagar, Chief Medical Officer, Assistant Commissioner Development, Tehsildar North, BMO Hazratbal, Lead Bank Manager and other District Officers were also present on the occasion.

During the Grievance Redressal Camp, the DDC members and the people of the area expressed their gratitude to the Deputy Commissioner for bringing the District Administration to their doorsteps by holding



Block Diwas at Khimber. They also thanked DC Srinagar for fulfilling 90 percent local developmental needs as promised in the last Block Diwas held at Khimber area.

On the occasion, local DDC member, PRI representatives projected various issues and demands before the Deputy Commissioner including upgradation of Sub Health Centre, Shifting of Patwar Khana to suitable location, cleaning of Mawas SE Canal, providing local transportation facility, notification of merging under Rural Sector and other development related matters.

The Deputy Commissioner after giving patient hearing to the griev-

ances and demands of the public issued on the spot instructions for their time bound redressal. He assured them that all other genuine demands and issues projected by them will be taken up with concerned authorities on priority.

Addressing the gathering, the Deputy Commissioner said the purpose of holding such grievance redressal Camps is to take appraisal of local issues from the general public for their time bound redressal. He said such programmes also guide the Administration to plan developmental interventions for the public good and reach to the doorstep of the people instead of them visiting the DC Office.

I&C department, DPIIT conducts 'Workshop cum Capacity Building Programme'

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 5: The Department of Industries and Commerce in conjunction with Department for Promotion of Industry & Internal Trade (DPIIT), GoI, today conducted one day 'Workshop cum Capacity Building Programme' for effective implementation of 'New Central Sector Scheme [NCSS], 2021 in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir at Udyog Bhawan, Rail Head Complex, here.

In the morning session, R K Singh, Joint Secretary, DPIIT and Dr. Kajal, Director, DPIIT along with team from DPIIT, Union Ministry of Commerce & Industry, E&Y, addressed officers of Directorate of Industries and Commerce and District Industries Centres of

Jammu division on 'New Central Sector Scheme [NCSS], 2021.

Anoo Malhotra, Director General, Industries and Commerce, Jammu, gave a detailed presentation on the industrial ecosystem of J&K and shared the progress made in registrations and claims in respect of Jammu division.

The officers from DPIIT appreciated the progress made by the UT tea and emphasized that J&K needs to play a proactive role for attracting investments and making the New Sector Scheme for Industrial Development of J&K a big success.

Director General also highlighted the challenges that need to be addressed in respect of IDS-2017, NCSS portal for registration of units, Working Capital Interest



Subvention, Term Loan Interest Subvention, Capital Investment Incentive and GST linked incentives claim application forms and subsequent uploading of documents.

The officers from DPIIT assured to resolve the issues and request-

ed the Industries & Commerce Department to activate their field teams and conduct interactions with the entrepreneurs. They also asked the department to identify specific sectors and set targets for New Central Sector Scheme for its effective implementation

In the afternoon session, the team held a thorough interaction with various entrepreneurs and representatives of various Industrial Associations of Jammu division.

The DPIIT team apprised the association members of various financial and tax benefits under the New Central Sector Scheme to attract new investment in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir, both in manufacturing and service sectors. The team also explained various features of NCSS portal, clearing their doubts about various aspects of the scheme.

The representatives of various Industrial associations highlighted the outstanding points in the earlier IDS - 2017 as well as the registrations under the new NCSS.

Principal Boys Hr Sec School Uri and ZEO Uri extended a warm welcome to BMO Uri Dr Balwinder Singh

Aashiq Hussain



Uri, 05 Apr (HT) Dr Balwinder Singh recently joined as Block Medical Officer Uri in the Sub Division Uri. A brief meeting was also held in which various matters were discussed. Principal BHSS Uri Mr Mushtaq Sopori said that we need to work in coordination for the betterment of society. Dr Balwinder Singh thanked Principal BHSS Uri and Zonal Education Officer Uri for their goodwill gesture.

Could your native language have an impact on how you think?



Although certain core brain regions are involved in the processing of all languages, these regions show distinct activation patterns during the processing of different languages. The different brain activation patterns observed during the processing of specific languages suggest that individuals with different native languages would show structural differences in the brain. A new study found that native Arabic and German speakers showed differences in the wiring of brain regions involved in the processing of language. These findings suggest that learning one's native language during childhood shapes the connections in the brain and may explain why differences in native languages affect how people think.

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These findings suggest that learning one's native language during childhood shapes the connections in the brain and may explain why differences in native languages affect how people think.

An individual's native language can shape how they think. For instance, while there is a single word for colors in the blue spectrum in English, there are two distinct words in Russian that distinguish between light and dark blue. Interestingly, native Russian speakers tend to be much faster in tests involving the discrimination of light and dark blue than native English speakers. Similarly, results have also been observed for the words used to describe directions in different native languages and the sense of orientation an individual has. A recent study published in *NeuroImage* provides evidence for differences in the wiring of language processing regions in the brain of native Arabic and German speakers. This suggests that learning one's native language during childhood could lead to structural changes in the brain, potentially explaining the

differences in cognitive function in individuals who speak different first languages.

Language processing in the brain

Scientists have, over the years, shown that language is processed and produced by a complex network of interconnected brain regions, predominantly in the left half or hemisphere of the brain. Moreover, studies have revealed that distinct brain pathways are associated with processing particular aspects of language, including semantics (meaning of words), syntax (grammatical structure), and phonology (sounds associated with language).

The processing of syntactic and semantic information primarily occurs in brain regions located in the left hemisphere. However, other information associated with language, especially that concerning the sounds and intonation, is processed in either the right or both hemispheres. This information is then integrated with the semantic and syntactic information processed in the left hemisphere.

There are nearly 7,000 different languages that are used across the globe. Although the same core brain regions are involved in the comprehension and production of all languages, individuals with different native languages show divergent brain activation patterns during language processing. These distinct patterns of activation of brain regions are due to the differences in the syntactic, semantic, and phonological features of these languages.

Studies Trusted Source have found structural differences in the

brains of individuals with different native languages. This suggests that the acquisition of one's native language during childhood induces changes in the structure of the brain that differ from those who have a different first language.

The tissue in the brain can be classified Trusted Source as either gray Trusted Source or white matter. The gray matter is composed of the cell bodies of nerve cells or neurons and is involved in information processing. On the other hand, white matter consists of neuronal processes, i.e. axons and dendrites, that conduct information from one neuron to the other.

A previous study Trusted Source revealed that English and Chinese speakers show differences in the density of gray and white matter in areas involved in language processing. Similarly, studies have also shown differences in the patterns of white matter tracts that connect brain regions in native English, German, and Chinese speakers.

Arabic vs. German: Differences in brain connectivity

In the present study, the researchers compared the differences in the wiring of brain regions involved in language processing in individuals with Arabic and German as their native languages. The researchers chose these languages due to the stark difference in the role of semantics and syntax.

Firstly, these languages belong to different families, with Arabic being a Semitic language and German being an Indo-Germanic language. German has a more complex grammatical or syntactic structure than Arabic, whereas Arabic is semantically more pronounced.

Unlike German, Arabic words often omit short vowels, and the meaning and pronunciation of Arabic words are based on context. Furthermore, Arabic script is written and read from right to left, whereas German script is written from left to right.

Consistent with this, studies have shown greater activation of regions involved in syntactic processing during comprehension of German. In contrast, others Trusted Source have shown greater involvement of regions involved in semantic processing during comprehension of Arabic. These studies involve examining brain patterns using magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) while the participants process a particular language.

Connections in the left and right hemispheres

In the present study, the researchers examined whether native German and Arabic speakers showed structural differences in their brains at baseline owing to the different demands on the brains during the processing of these languages.

Specifically, the researchers examined whether native German and Arabic speakers showed differences in the patterns of connection in the brain at baseline. They used a type of MRI, called diffusion-weighted MRI, to detect white matter tracts that connect different regions of the brain.

Participants in both groups showed greater connectivity in the left hemisphere, where the processing of language in general predominantly occurs. However, participants with German as their native language showed stronger

connections between brain regions involved in language processing within each hemisphere compared with Arabic speakers.

In contrast, native Arabic speakers showed stronger connections between regions in the left and right hemispheres than native German speakers. The greater activation of both hemispheres could be due to the semantic complexity of Arabic and the right-to-left writing system.

In addition, brain scans of German speakers revealed stronger connections between brain regions involved in syntactic processing in the left hemisphere. In contrast, connections between regions associated with semantic processing were stronger in native Arabic speakers.

Can language change personality?

In sum, the present study shows that speaking one's native language over a lifetime results in changes in the brain's structure.

The study's author Dr. Alfred Anwander, a neuropsychologist at Max Planck Institute, said:

"The study strongly supports the environmental and native language dependence on developmental shaping of the brain and in particular the shaping of the connections which directly influence our cognitive processing in the brains. This might point in the direction that also individual personality is not 'hard-wired' in our brains and is the result of lifelong experience."

Dr. Anwander also suggested that the study results could be used to tailor approaches for individuals with neurological diseases.

NEWS

Industries can harm health in many ways: here are 3 that aren't so obvious

A recent ground-breaking series of reports in the science journal *The Lancet* unpacks what commercial determinants of health are, and how they affect public health. It uses a new, broader definition of the determinants:



The systems, practices and pathways through which commercial actors drive health and equity.

Some commercial entities contribute positively to health and society. However, research shows that some commercial products and practices are directly linked to avoidable ill health, planetary damage, and social and health inequity. Large transnational corporations are especially to blame. The *Lancet* series examines not just directly damaging products (such as alcohol or ultra-processed foods) but the commercial practices that influence human health, inequities in health and planetary health. The series highlights the need to better understand the diversity within the commercial world, and the variety of ways its normal operations harm humanity and the planet. Three 'hidden' industries that can harm your health seem benign – or even beneficial – industries actually have major and avoidable impacts on health. They contribute negatively to health in subtle or indirect ways. The pharmaceutical industry is one. Its abuse of intellectual property to increase prices and limit access to essential drugs is a common trend. The pre-selling of COVID-19 vaccines to wealthy countries is a recent, massive-scale example.

On world health day, Paras Health Srinagar underscores Health for All

World Health Day is a global health awareness day that is celebrated every year on April 7th. It was first established by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1950 to raise awareness about the importance of health and well-being around the world. World Health Day is an important occasion to understand importance of health.

Dr. Altaf Ramzan, famous Neurosurgeon from Paras Health Srinagar on eve of world health day stated: "Health is the state of the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of a person and it is a valuable resource to lead a good life. 7th of April is a global health awareness day celebrated every year by WHO as World Health Day and the 75th anniversary of WHO. The day focuses on the theme of 'Health for All'. Paras Health's values – Compassion, Accessibility, Affordability, and Quality converge to make its vision a reality for all Bhartiya (Indians). Paras Health will continue to focus on its mission of making affordable and quality tertiary health accessible to communities that lack such services and promote 'Health for All' every day." (ACR) Ganderbal who was serving as Tehsildar Kangan previously.

After assuming the charge, he held introductory meeting with the officials of his office and urged the employees to work with a legacy of dedication and transparency for the Welfare of the general public.

While interacting with the officials, Mohammad Altaf said that the focus shall remain on providing prompt and efficient public service by strengthening transparency and punctuality in offices.

Higher magnesium intake linked to lower dementia risk

Researchers investigated how magnesium intake influences dementia risk factors.

They found that a higher magnesium intake is linked to lower dementia risk.

Further research is needed to confirm the results.

In 2019, 57.4 million people had dementia globally. By 2050, this figure is expected to rise to 152.8 million.

As there is currently no cure for dementia, many researchers emphasize preventative strategies Trusted Source such as diet. Some studies suggest that dietary magnesium is linked to better cognitive function Trusted Source and may reduce dementia risk.

One study Trusted Source that followed 1,000 middle-aged adults for 17 years found that those taking the highest levels of magnesium had a 37% lower risk of developing dementia compared to those who took the

least amount.

Further research on the link between magnesium and cognitive status could inform preventative strategies for dementia.

Recently, researchers investigated how magnesium intake over time affects dementia risk. They found that higher magnesium intake is linked to better brain health—especially in women.

"Although more research is needed on this topic, the results of this study suggest that higher magnesium intake is associated with improved brain health and may potentially also be linked to preserved mental function and a reduced or delayed risk of developing dementia," Dr. Kelly Johnson-Arbor, medical toxicologist, co-medical director, and interim executive director at the National Capital Poison Center, who was not involved in the study, told *Medical News Today*.

The study was published in the *European Journal of Nutrition*.

350 vs. 550 mg of magnesium daily



For the study, the researchers included healthcare data from 6,001 participants aged 40–73 years old from the UK Biobank.

Data included blood pressure mea-

surements, a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scan, and dietary magnesium intake over a 24-hour period

five times over 16 months.

Over 95% of participants consumed stable amounts of magnesium over the study period. Some, however, increased their intake over time, while

others decreased their intake.

In the end, they found that higher dietary magnesium intake was linked to larger brain volumes and smaller white matter lesions (WML)—both of which are indicators of dementia—in MRI scans.

They also found that consuming over 550 mg of magnesium daily is linked to a roughly one-year younger brain age by 55 years old than consuming 350 mg per day, which is close to the average daily intake.

This, they noted, means that increasing magnesium intake by 41% could improve brain health, preserve cognitive ability, and lower dementia risk.

They further found that high dietary magnesium intake was more neuroprotective for women than men, and post-menopausal women compared to premenopausal women.

However, they noted that the decreasing magnesium consumption over time was linked to larger brain

volumes in women.

Links between magnesium intake and blood pressure measures were mostly non-significant.

How magnesium lowers dementia risk

"It's known that magnesium is a neuroprotector as well as it having positive effects on blood pressure," Dr. Howard Pratt, D.O., psychiatrist and Behavioral Health Medical Director at Community Health of South Florida, Inc., who was not involved in the study, told MNT.

"High blood pressure in and of itself is a known risk factor for dementia. Increasing dietary intake of magnesium can have positive effects on cardiovascular health with the study subsequently showing a decrease in white matter lesions in middle to early old age," he added.

Dr. Johnson-Arbor noted that magnesium might help reduce inflammation.

17 women players to be offered national contracts for 2023-24: Cricket Australia

LONDON: This time the total number of women's contracts available has moved up from 15 to 18 under Cricket Australia's new MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) with the players. Grace Harris, Kim Garth and Heather Graham have made their way to Cricket Australia's women's contract list this time. Each player has been offered a contract for the first time.

The rising star of Australia's women's cricket, Phoebe Litchfield, has secured a playing contract. She made an instant impact with unbeaten half-centuries in her first two ODIs earlier this year against Pakistan.



The 19-year-old star was also named in Australia's squad for the upcoming Women's Ashes Tour of the UK. "It's been an incredibly successful 12 months for the Australian women's team, but our attention now turns to the challenges ahead, particularly the upcoming Ashes Series in England," Shawn Flegler, Cricket Australia's head of performance (women's cricket) and national selector, said as quoted by ICC.

Grace Harris earned an upgrade last season and subsequently played every match throughout the T20 World Cup, she is a multi-skilled cricketer who can influence matches with both bat and ball, Flegler said.

"Kim Garth and Heather Graham have performed strongly at the domestic level over the past 12 months, and both thoroughly deserve their spot on the list. Phoebe Litchfield is a young talent who we believe has a big future, she's built her game upon a very sound technique and we're confident she can transfer those skills into international cricket," Flegler said as quoted by the ICC.

"We've had a core group of players performing well over the last 12 months which means some talented players have missed out, it's certainly made selection tough but we're in a fortunate position to have such depth across Australian Cricket," Flegler continued.

Australia women central contracts: Darcie Brown, Ashleigh Gardner, Kim Garth, Heather Graham, Grace Harris, Alyssa Healy, Jess Jonassen, Alana King, Meg Lanning, Phoebe Litchfield, Tahlia McGrath, Beth Mooney, Ellyse Perry, Megan Schutt, Annabel Sutherland, Tayla Vlaeminck, Georgia Wareham.

IPL 2023: Kolkata Knight Riders rope in Jason Roy for Rs 2.8 crore

KOLKATA: England opener Jason Roy was on Wednesday roped in by Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) to give the side a boost following injury to regular captain Shreyas Iyer and the pullout of Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan.

Roy will miss KKR's home game against Royal Challengers Bangalore (RCB) on Thursday but will be available for selection for the team's next match against Gujarat Titans in Ahmedabad on April 9.

The two-time IPL champions



were dealt a huge injury blow when Iyer was ruled out for the entire season due to a back injury, while Shakib pulled out citing personal and national commitments.

"Kolkata Knight Riders have signed England's Jason Roy for Rs 2.8 crore for the TATA IPL 2023 from his base price of Rs 1.5 crore," KKR said in a statement.

Roy, who first featured in the 2017 edition of the IPL for Gujarat Lions, last played in the 2021 season for Sunrisers Hyderabad.

In 2021, he played five games, scoring 150 runs, including a half-century.

The 32-year-old has played 64 T20s for England, scoring 1,522 runs at a strike-rate of 137.61 with eight fifties.

Roy is likely to replace Afghanistan wicketkeeper-batter Rahmanullah Gurbaz, who opened in their match against Punjab Kings and scored 22 from 16 balls.

The purple brigade already have N Jagadeesan to don the gloves.

Kuldeep Mishra, Foreman at Headlines Today Bereaved

Father Puralal Mishra Passed Away



Father of Chief of Operations and foreman at Lubaab Publications, offset printing press of daily English Newspaper Headlines Today, Mr Kuldeep Mishra passed away at a hospital in Gaziabad on Monday evening. Puralal Mishra was not keeping well from last couple of weeks and finally breathed his last at Aarogaya Hospital Gaziabad. Last rites of Puralal Mishra were performed on Tuesday evening at a Ghat in Farokhabad UP. A sizeable number of people from all walks of life participated in the last rites of Puralal Mishra.

The deceased was father of Deepak Mishra the Resident Editor of Meerut Edition of Amar Ujala. The deceased is survived by his Wife Munni Devi Mishra and three sons Deepak Mishra, Kuldeep Mishra and Pankaj Mishra.

Entire team of daily Headlines Today and Lubaab Publications in general and Editor in Chief Jahangir Bukhari have expressed solidarity with Kuldeep Mishra and the entire bereaved family in this hour of grief and sorry. A condolence meet was held at Headlines Today headquarters at Lubaab Publications building Radio Colony Gund Hassibhat Lawaipora Srinagar, wherein Solidarity was expressed with the bereaved family.

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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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