



27th Ramadan
Sehri 04:30 AM
Iftaar 07:07 PM

India Holds 100th G20 Meeting In Run-Up To Leaders' Summit

HT News Network

NEW DELHI, APR 17: India celebrates a key milestone in its G20 Presidency today, with the hosting of its 100th G20 meeting, the Meeting of Agriculture Chief Scientists (MACS) in Varanasi. The 2nd Health Working Group in Goa, the 2nd Digital Economy Working Group in Hyderabad and the Space Economy Leaders' Precursor Meeting in Shillong are also being held today.

Following the handover of the G20 Presidency to Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi at the G20 Bali Summit on 16 November 2022, India's year-long G20 Presidency commenced on 1 December 2022, and would continue until 30 November 2023.

Turn.....India Holds 100th.....Pg 02



LG attends book launch event in remembrance of Prof. Giridhar Prasad Thakur



HT News Network

NEW DELHI, APR 17: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha attended the book launch event in remembrance of Prof. Giridhar Prasad Thakur, today. The Lt Governor paid tributes to Prof. Giridhar Prasad Thakur for his significant

contribution to Psychological research and teaching.

"He was a leading luminary of Psychology and a world leader in many areas of Applied Psychology. Throughout his life, Professor Thakur pursued and achieved excellence in both research & teaching."

Turn.....LG attends book.....Pg 02

NEWS BRIEF

Registration For Annual Amarnath Yatra Begins Across India

JAMMU, APR 17: The registration for the annual Amarnath pilgrimage began on Monday with scores of people lining up at designated bank branches across the country to secure a permit.

The 62-day pilgrimage to the 3,880-metre-high cave shrine in south Kashmir is scheduled to start on July 1 and continue till August 31.

The journey can be undertaken through two routes — the traditional 48-km route through Pahalgam in south Kashmir's Anantnag and the 14-km shorter but steep Baltal route in Ganderbal district of central Kashmir.

"Today, registration has begun at bank branches across the country. The exercise is being conducted at 316 branches of PNB (Punjab National Bank)," PNB Chief Manager Rohit Raina said.

Raina, who has been designated as the yatra registration officer for PNB, said this time it was Aadhaar authentication-based form generation for yatris as compared to last year's

Turn.....Registration For Annual.....Pg 02

Girl taking selfie with child hit by train, dies

SRINAGAR, APR 17: A 17-year-old girl died after she was hit by a train while allegedly taking a selfie with a child in Srinagar on Monday, officials said.

The teenage girl, a resident of Shankarpora, was allegedly taking the selfie near the railway track at Manchowa on the Srinagar-Budgam railway lane.

She died instantly, the officials said. "The child accompanying the woman is however safe", they added.

Jamia Masjid is not under control of Waqf Board: Dr Darakhshan Andrabi

SRINAGAR, APR 17: The Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board Chairperson Dr Darakhshan Andrabi on Monday said that the historic Jamia Masjid in Srinagar is not under direct control of J&K Waqf Board as local Auqaf is taking care of it.

Darakhshan told news agency KNB

Turn.....Jamia Masjid is not.....Pg 02

Dismal performance of banks in bringing non-banking financial institutions to J&K

J&K administration expresses concern; UTLBC constitutes committee

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 17: The Public Sector Banks (PSBs) have not been able to bring non-banking financial companies and micro finance institutions to Jammu & Kashmir.

Documents show that J&K Chief Secretary Arun Kumar Mehta has expressed displeasure over poor performance of public sector banks in

Turn.....Dismal performance of.....Pg 02

Srinagar City to go Garbage Free & Dumpster Free

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 17: In a step towards making Srinagar city garbage and dumpster free, the Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) has added 150 new C&T vehicles and starts its path-breaking GIS based and real time GPS monitored 100% door to door Segregated Waste Collection system and initiated removal of dumpsters from the city.

Commissioner SMC, Athar Aamir Khan has issued a revised area and

ward wise deployment schedule of Garbage Collection Vehicles across the city to ensure 100% collection of segregated dry and wet waste. SMC has also initiated the process of removing dumpsters and bins from the city in a bid to create a garbage free & dumpster free city.

SMC has added more than 150 vehicles to its existing fleet including 100 new light motor vehicles for door to door primary collection and around 50 new heavy

Turn.....Srinagar City to go.....Pg 02

Rain, snow likely in Kashmir during next 24 hrs: MeT

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 17: Rain lashed most parts of Kashmir valley on Monday even as Meteorological centre predicted more rain or thunderstorm at scattered places while snow is likely over higher reaches during the next 24 hours.

Rain or thunderstorm are very likely at

Turn.....Rain, snow likely.....Pg 02

Police arrests six drug peddlers in Baramulla

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 17: Police on Monday claimed to have arrested six drug peddlers and recovered Charas and brown sugar from them in Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district.

Police arrested a drug peddler identified as Amir Hussain Dar, a resident of Wagoora during checking at Kachwa Muqam Chandooza and recovered 50 grams of Charas like substance from him.

Turn.....Police arrests six drug.....Pg 02

Massive fire breaks out in Hazratbal

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 17: A massive fire broke out in a commercial complex in Hazratbal Dargah area of Srinagar on Monday afternoon.

As per reports to CNS, the fire erupted this afternoon in Amigos restaurant opposite sir Syed gate Kashmir University which soon engulfed nearby shops in the complex including jawed Habib salon, following which fire tenders were

Turn.....Massive fire breaks.....Pg 02

Steering committee takes stock of modification process of Indus Waters Treaty



HT News Network

NEW DELHI, APR 17: The sixth meeting of the Steering Committee on matters related to the Indus Waters Treaty of 1960 was held today, to take stock of the ongoing modification process of the Treaty.

The meeting comes after India in January this year notified Pakistan of plans to amend the Indus Waters Treaty due Islamabad's "intransigence" in implementing the pact.

The Steering Committee is chaired by Secretary, Department of Water Resources, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India.

Foreign Secretary Vinay Mohan Kwatra also attended the meeting.

The meeting took stock of the ongoing modification process of the Indus Waters Treaty.

Matters related to the ongoing Neutral Expert proceedings pertaining to the Kishenganga and

Turn.....Steering committee.....Pg 02

In an interview to senior journalist Karan Thapar, Malik said: "He (Muzaffar Beigh) was coming to meet me one day and was a bit late. When I asked the reason he (Beigh) said Geelani (Syed Ali Geelani) had called him. I said what is he (Geelani) saying, Beigh said Geelani told him where is he going and he (Beigh) informed him (Geelani) he is going to meet the Governor."



(Beigh) is going to meet the Governor."

Turn.....Late Geelani Had.....Pg 02

LATE GEELANI HAD APPRECIATED MY ROLE, SAYS FORMER J&K GOVERNOR

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 17: Former Jammu Kashmir Governor Satyapal Malik has claimed that late senior separatist leader Syed Ali Geelani had lauded him for his role in Jammu and Kashmir.

Malik quoted former minister Muzaffar Beigh as having said to him while his (Beigh's) meeting with Geelani.

Gumri Avalanche: Six people rescued, vehicles retrieved

HT News Network

DRASS, APR 17: At least six persons including five drivers have been rescued after a massive snow avalanche hit five vehicles yesterday near Shaitan Nallah Gumri area of Drass Kargil. SSP Kargil Inayatullah Chowdhary

Turn.....Six people rescued.....Pg 02

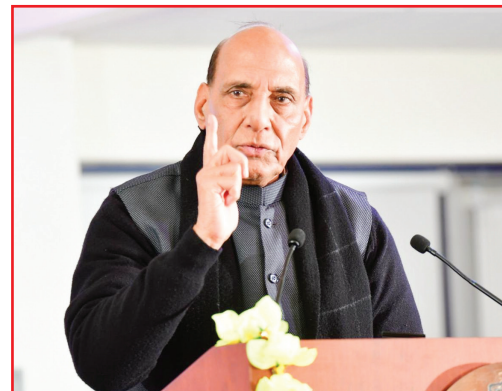
Cultural Security Is Equally Important As Other Aspects Of Security To Keep Our Identity Intact: Rajnath

HT News Network

GUJARAT, APR 17: Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday said "cultural security" is equally important as other aspects of security to maintain the identity of the country.

Addressing the inaugural function of the "Saurashtra-Tamil Sangamam" programme organised here in Gujarat's Gir Somnath district, Singh took a veiled swipe at Congress leader Rahul Gandhi over his 'Bharat Jodo Yatra', saying the people who are not able to do anything else go out to connect India which is "united and

Turn.....Cultural Security Is.....Pg 02



CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

India Holds.....

Earlier on 8 November 2022, Prime Minister had launched the G20 logo and had unveiled India's G20 Presidency theme – "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam"- "One Earth. One Family. One Future". Designed in the colours of India's national flag, the G20 logo symbolizes our pro-planet approach and growth amidst challenges.

The Group of Twenty (G20) comprises 19 countries (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Türkiye, United Kingdom, and United States) and European Union. The G20 members represent around 85% of the global GDP, over 75% of the global trade, and about two-thirds of the world population.

In-person participation during India's G20 Presidency is among the largest ever. Over 12,300 delegates, from over 110 nationalities have attended G20-related meetings so far. This includes participation from G20 members, 9 invitee countries and 14 international organizations. As on date, the 100 G20 meetings have been held in 41 cities, covering 28 States and Union Territories. Meetings are being organized across the length and breadth of India with the full support and participation of State Governments and Union Territories. During our Presidency, India will be hosting foreign delegates for over 200 G20-related meetings in around 60 cities across India, the widest geographical spread in any G20 Presidency. All 13 Sherpa Track Working Groups, 8 Finance Track Workstreams, 11 Engagement Groups and 4 Initiatives have embarked on substantive interactions. A new Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), a new Engagement Group "Startup 20" and a new Initiative Chief Science Advisers' Roundtable (CSAR) have been operationalized in our G20 Presidency. The 11 Engagement Groups provide a platform for dialogue among the private sector, academia, civil society, youth and women, as well as institutions including the Parliaments, audit authorities and urban administrations.

Till date, three Ministerial meetings have been held. The first Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting (FMCBG) was held in Bengaluru on 24-25 February 2023, the G20 Foreign Ministers Meeting (FMM) was held in New Delhi on 1-2 March 2023, and the second FMCBG meeting was held in Washington DC on 12-13 April 2023. Two Sherpa Meetings have been held in Udaipur (4-7 December 2022) and Kumarakom (30 March – 2 April 2023). The FMCBG, FMM and Sherpa meetings saw record, high-level in-person participation from all delegations with Ministerial-level dignitaries. 28 Foreign Ministers (from 18 G20 members, 9 guest countries and AU Chair - Comoros) and 2 Deputy/Vice Foreign Ministers (from Japan and Republic of Korea) attended the FMM. These Ministerial meetings concluded with substantive outcome documents that fostered consensus on G20's shared priorities. These include consensus on setting up of an expert group on MDB reforms and on debt treatment in the 1st FMCBG, and on multilateral reforms, development cooperation, food and energy security, counter-terrorism, new and emerging threats, global skill mapping and disaster risk reduction in the FMM.

During its Presidency, India is also amplifying the voice and concerns of the Global South and developing countries. The Voice of Global South Summit held in January 2023, chaired by the Prime Minister, was attended by 125 countries, including 18 at Heads of State/Government level and others at Ministerial level. Furthermore, during India's ongoing Presidency, participation from Africa is the highest ever, which includes South Africa (G20 Member), Mauritius, Egypt, Nigeria, AU Chair - Comoros, and AUDA-NEPAD.

Unique experiences showcasing India's diversity, inclusive traditions and cultural richness are also an integral part of the visiting delegates' programme. Millet-based dishes have been incorporated in the menu, and a wide range of cultural performances and excursions have been organized. Over 150 cultural events, with the participation of over 7,000 artists, showcasing local and national art forms, have been held. Many Jan Bhagidari activities are also being simultaneously held with active public participation in a whole-of-nation and whole-of-society approach, making India's G20 Presidency a "People's G20". These include G20 University Connect lecture series, Model G20 meetings, Special G20 sessions in Schools/Universities, G20 Pavilions in major festivals, Quiz contests, Selfie competitions, #G20India stories, and hundreds of other G20-theme events by the civil society and private sector.

Substantive deliberations during India's ongoing G20 Presidency comprise broad priority areas such as inclusive and resilient growth; progress on SDGs, green development and Lifestyle for Environment (LIFE); technological transformation and public digital infrastructure; reforming multilateral institutions; women led development; and international peace and harmony.

India's G20 Presidency, in the build-up to the New Delhi Leaders' Summit on 9-10 September, has received immense support from G20 Members and guest countries for its inclusive, ambitious, action-oriented and decisive agenda. The wide ranging, large-scale and enthusiastic participation in India's G20 meetings is a testimony to the G20 Members and invitees coming together under India's G20 Presidency to collectively address contemporary global challenges.

LG attends.....

The Lt Governor said. Prof. Thakur, Professor of Clinical Psychology had served as a Head, department of Psychology

and Dean, faculty of social sciences, Mahatma Gandhi Kashi Vidyapith. He also held various positions in Psychology related organisations around the world. As President of Indian Academy of Applied Psychology, Prof. Thakur had played a pivotal role in guiding the research. He was decorated with some of the world's most prestigious awards besides contributing to international journals.

"Prof. Thakur had demonstrated that Indian knowledge system provided solid base for Psychological testing model. He had relentlessly guided the growth of Indian School Psychology Association & nurtured several organisations that put India on the world map in psychological research," the Lt Governor observed.

"Professor Thakur was a pioneer of Sports Psychology in India. He made a huge contribution by using psychological knowledge and skills to address the issues related to performance and to create conducive environment for sports persons," the Lt Governor said.

The Lt Governor called upon teaching community, researchers, writers and thinkers to share Prof. Thakur's wisdom with young generation.

"Psychology & science have made immense contribution to social inclusion and equity. In India's march to progress, the young generation and academic world can be benefitted through experience and research works," he added.

The Lt Governor said in Amrit Kaal, we must focus on revival of Indian Knowledge System and commit ourselves in exploring new ideas, new opportunities to meet the challenges of 21st century.

"Under the guidance of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji, the National Education Policy-2020 is promoting Value-based education, fostering innovation & creativity and building the future human capital. Connectivity & Content will play a crucial role in India's journey," the Lt Governor said.

Prof. S. Varakhedi, Vice Chancellor, Central Sanskrit University, New Delhi; Prof. Nageshwar Rao, Vice Chancellor, IGNOU, New Delhi; Prof. Dinesh Singh, former Vice Chancellor, University of Delhi; Dr. Archana Thakur, Joint Secretary, UGC, family members of Prof. Giridhar Prasad Thakur and prominent personalities from all walks of life were present.

Late Geelani.....

Satyapal Malik while quoting Beigh went on to say that Beigh informed him (Satyapal) that Geelani said that the (Satyapal) is a great Governor and we can enter into a deal.

Hearing this revelation, the interviewer Karan Thaper quipped, "Geelani had said this, about you," to which Satyapal replies in affirmative. "That poor leader (Geelani) is not alive today, but Muzafar Beigh is alive."

Quoting Beigh, Satyapal said that Geelani had told Beigh that Satyapal doesn't resort to deceit and treachery but calls a spade a spade.

Meanwhile, responding to the claim made by the former Jammu Kashmir Governor, the Deputy Chief Minister in Mufti Sayed's cabinet, Muzafar Beigh told a media outlet that Malik has lost his memory as he never met Syed Ali Geelani.

Rain, snow.....

scattered places on Monday while light to moderate rain or snowfall over higher reaches is likely with main activity expected to take place during April 17 (night)-18, the Met office said.

It said during this wet spell, thunderstorm with strong gusty winds reaching speeds of 20-30 kmph and hailstorm is also possible at some places of Jammu and Kashmir, while there could be intermittent light to moderate rain during April 19 to 21.

There is also possibility of temporary disruption of surface transportation especially over hilly and snowbound areas during April 17-18 and wet weather can cause water logging in low lying areas besides damaging Orchards, the Met office said and added that day temperature could fall 5-6 degree Celsius during the period.

Srinagar and its adjoining areas were lashed by rains this morning causing considerable drop in temperature. The sky is partly to generally cloudy at most places.

Regarding the rainfall, the Met office said Srinagar received 3.9mm, Qazigund had 0.8mm of rainfall, Pahalgam 3.5mm, Kupwara 5.4mm, Kokernag traces and Gulmarg 10.8mm of rainfall during the past 24 hours till 0830 hours today.

Srinagar recorded a low of 10.7 degree Celsius against 10.9 degree Celsius the previous night and it was 2.8 degree Celsius above normal for the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir during this period of the season.

The Maximum temperature was 1.7 degree Celsius below normal against 21.1 degree Celsius in Srinagar.

Qazigund recorded a low of 8.8 degree Celsius against 7.8 degree Celsius which was 2.3 degree Celsius above normal the gateway of Kashmir while tourist hot spot of Pahalgam recorded a low of 5.5 degree Celsius, 2.1 degree Celsius above normal.

Kokernag 8.2 degree Celsius, Kupwara 8.7 degree Celsius and ski resort of Gulmarg in north Kashmir had a low of 3.5 degree Celsius on Monday, the Met office said.

Police arrests.....

The accused was taken into custody immediately, police said.

Another drug Peddler identified as Parvaiz Ahmad Lone of Ferozpora Tangmarg was arrested at Ferozpora Tangmarg during a routine checking along with 30 grams of contraband Charas like substance.

Police in a similar way arrested a drug Peddler Abdul Hameed Najar, a resident of Goshugh who was coming from Durhama towards Kreeri and was carrying a nylon bag. Upon seeing the police party he tried to flee from the spot but was apprehended tactfully.

During search of the bag 4 Kgs of contraband Poppy Straw and one gram Brown Sugar like substance was recovered.

Police also arrested a drug Peddler identified as Manzoor Ahmad Hajam of Tarhama Kunzer who was coming from Hardu Aboora towards Hardu Aboora Bridge and upon seeing the Patroling party tried to flee from the spot but was apprehended.

During the search 25 grams of contraband Charas-like substance was recovered from his possession.

Two more drug Peddlers, identified as Reyaz Ahmad Khan and Tariq Ahmad Khan, both residents of Janbazpora Baramulla, were arrested during checking.

The duo were coming from Chakloo towards Baramulla and upon seeing the police party tried to flee from the spot but were apprehended tactfully.

During their personal search 85 grams of contraband Charas like substance was recovered from them.

Cases under Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act were registered in concerned Police Stations and investigations set in motion, police said.

Police said that general People of the area hailed the efforts of Baramulla Police and showed their willingness to support police to eradicate the menace of drugs from the society.

Massive fire.....

rushed to the spot. Official sources said that the fire erupted around 11.50 a.m. in one of the restaurants. Soon after receiving the call, the call fire tenders were rushed to the spot. However, intensity of the fire was severe and when the fire was brought under control, it had substantially damaged the goods housed in the upper storey of the commercial complex.

Various commercial establishments including residential houses of Ab Majid Sheikh, Ab Hamid Sheikh, Ab Hamid Dhobi, Gulzar Ahmad Dhobi, Bashir Ahmad Dhobi were gutted in the fire incident.

Meanwhile, a police team including SSP Hazratbal, SHO Hazratbal, SHO Nigeen, D.O Hazratbal were present on the spot and were assisting the F&E officials in dousing off the flames. Police have registered a case and investigation regarding the cause of the fire was being investigated. While property worth crores of rupees was destroyed, there was no report about injury to anyone in the incident, they added.

Dismal performance.....

bringing NBFCs/ MFIs to J&K. "Chief Secretary expressed displeasure over low pace in bringing NBFCs/ MFIs to J&K by public sector banks and impressed upon PSBs especially State Bank of India and Punjab National Bank to do something concrete in the matter," reads minutes of 9th Union Territory Level Bankers committee (UTLBC) held on March 03, a copy of which is with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

Out of 12 PSBs operating in Jammu & Kashmir, only State Bank of India has succeeded in bringing one NBFC Midland Microfin Ltd to J&K which started its operations on December 12, 2022, the record note of the UTLBC reveals.

The UTLBC decided that Public Sector Banks will expedite the submission of precise plans with timelines and milestones, for bringing NBFCs/ MFIs to UT of J&K.

The UTLBC also constituted a sub-committee for greater presence of NBFCs/MFIs in J&K. The committee will comprise representatives from SBI, PNB, Canara Bank, UCO Bank and Union Bank of India.

The issue had also come up for discussion in the last UTLBC held on October 19, 2022.

It is worthwhile to mention that banks were directed to initiate dialogue for bringing in more non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) and micro financial institutions (MFIs) to UT of J&K, and explore partnership with them to augment credit in the UT through co-lending model.

Srinagar City.....

motor vehicles including modern compactors for secondary transportation.

This is the first such massive upgradation in Srinagar city's Solid Waste Management Infrastructure. All vehicles have been enabled with GPS devices for real time monitoring. The GIS mapping and geo-fencing of all areas and wards up to lane level has been done to ensure efficient and timely waste collection. The areas and households to be serviced by each vehicle have been mapped.

The Integrated Solid Waste Management IT System under Smart City project will enable comprehensive monitoring. It has been enabled with features including live location tracking, route & time deviation alerts, grievance redressal and quality assurance tools.

The garbage collection vehicles will reach each and every household and every commercial establishment including shops in Srinagar City. People will have to necessarily hand over the segregated waste to SMC garbage collection vehicles.

SMC is closing down all the garbage vulnerable points as well as the sites where dumpsters used to be located. It has been prohibited to deposit

waste at such points now onwards. General public as well as commercial establishments shall handover the waste to SMC's vehicles only and shall refrain from putting them at any other place.

The notification issued by Commissioner SMC, Athar Aamir Khan also informs the general public that in case Garbage Collection vehicle doesn't come to their house or establishment or is not on time, the local ward level officers shall be contacted or SMC's control room shall be informed. The contact details of concerned ward level officials and details of vehicles deployed in each area have been shared in the public notification.

The success of the initiative is heavily dependent on the participation and cooperation of the general public. Segregated waste collection will help SMC better manage the waste at the Achan site.

SMC is also working on the project for removal of legacy waste and biominning and bioremediation of existing waste at its Achan Landfill site. The legal waste removal plan has been prepared in consultation with IIT Jammu and NIT Srinagar and has been projected for funding under SBM 2.0.

Six people.....

told news agency Kashmir News Trust that five vehicles including four trucks were laden with fruits and vegetables when they came under an avalanche. The eatables were destroyed and vehicles too suffered damages.

Police and the army rushed to the spot and rescued at least 6 persons beneath the snow. "We provided critical and timely assistance, rescuing six persons. They were given immediate medical aid and their vehicles were retrieved from the snow as well," the army said.

Meanwhile, Jammu and Kashmir State Disaster Management Authority (JKDMA) has issued an avalanche warning for 4 districts in the next 24 hours.

The state disaster management authority said that a 'low danger level' avalanche is likely to occur above 3200 to 3500 meters above sea level over Doda, Kishtwar, Bandipora, and Kupwara districts in the next 24 hours. The people living in these areas are advised to take precautions and avoid venturing into the avalanche-prone areas for safety purposes till further orders, the SDMA said.

Steering.....

Ratle Hydroelectric Projects were also discussed, said an official statement.

India had on January 25 conveyed the "notice for modification" of the treaty to Pakistan through the Commissioners for Indus Waters of the two sides. India was forced to issue the notice as Pakistan's actions had "adversely impinged" on the provisions of the treaty and their implementation.

The action was necessitated as Pakistan had refused to discuss and resolve the issue of India's Kishenganga and Ratle Hydro Electric Projects for the last five years, despite India's efforts.

Pakistan had raised objections to India's construction of the Kishenganga and Ratle hydroelectric power projects, located in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Indus Waters Treaty was signed in September 1960 brokered by the World Bank, which too is a signatory. The treaty aims to allocate the use of and resolve disputes over the Indus River and its tributaries, which flow through both countries.

According to the treaty, the waters of the three eastern tributaries – the Ravi, Beas and Chenab go to India, while that of the western rivers – the Chenab, Jhelum and main Indus river go primarily to Pakistan.

In 2015, Pakistan requested the appointment of a Neutral Expert to examine technical objections to India's Kishenganga and Ratle Hydroelectric Projects. In 2016, Pakistan unilaterally retracted this request and proposed that a court of arbitration adjudicate its objections.

Following this, India made a special request for the matter to be referred to a neutral expert.

Cultural Security.....

indestructible".

Singh also asserted that the age of "cultural renaissance is upon us" looking at activities dedicated to our civilization, religion and culture undertaken under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "You all are aware of border security, economic security, social security, and food security. Now new dimensions like space and cyber security have also been added. Yes, there is another dimension of security which is equally important. And that is the dimension of our culture. If I have to give it a name, I will call it cultural security," Singh said.

He said the way the security of borders and other things is needed to keep the identity of a nation intact, the security of its culture is equally necessary to maintain its identity. He said India's cultural tradition is so strong that even the "strongest tempest" cannot shake it.

"But there is a fashion to connect such a united, unbreakable and unique India. Those who are not able to do anything else go out to connect India, but India is saying that 'I am unbroken, I am not broken', but they say, no, I will keep connecting you," Singh said.

in an apparent reference to Bharat Jodo Yatra taken out by Rahul Gandhi from September 2022 to January 2023 which covered more than 3,000 km.

"Not today, they have been doing the work of connecting India for a long time," he added.

Singh said India is becoming a witness to a huge cultural change and we are lucky to be not just a witness but also a participant in this change.

Referring to the ongoing construction of the Ram temple in Ayodhya, Singh said once it had become difficult for Lord Ram who lives in the hearts of the people of the country, to find a place in Ayodhya.

"Several generations were lost wondering whether the Ram Mandir will be constructed. People made fun of us and asked for the date of its construction. For centuries, devotees thought the dream (of Ram mandir in Ayodhya) would be never realised, but it was under Modi's leadership that the construction of the grand temple was finally undertaken," he said.

In a dig, the defence minister said once the construction of the temple is completed, those asking such questions (regarding its date of construction) should be invited to its inauguration.

"It is a matter of pride for India that people from different communities such as Muslims, Jews and Parsis got the opportunity not just to live in the country but become its integral part. India's cultural tradition with a message of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' (World is One Family) is the reason behind this integration," he added.

Referring to Muslim invaders of history, Singh said they put all their might to loot wealth and destroying all that they could not carry with them.

"But there was something that was not possible for them to destroy. Forget destroying, even reaching there was not possible for them. There was something which lived a thousand times more inside the people than what could be seen outside... And this was our Bharat," he said.

Singh said as India lives inside the hearts of the people, it is very difficult to define India.

"India is not something to be understood with the mind, it is a subject of experience. India can only be understood and experienced by entering the hearts of the people. One can find India in farmers, labourers, in the people who are dedicated to the service of the nation, in 12 jyotirlingas, 52 shakti peethas and char dhams," the senior BJP leader said.

Singh said whatever the great sants of the country said in different languages and different words carried the basic message of the welfare of all human beings.

"You will see it in the words and deeds of devotees. In fact, this feeling is India. You can take an Indian out of India, but can't take India out of an Indian. And this fits best for the people of Saurashtra," he said.

Singh said India is the only country where one can find all 72 sects of Muslims together.

"Even in Muslim countries, all 72 sects are not found together. If there is a country where they are found together, it is India," he added.

Registration.....

manual procedure. "Forms were given to yattris manually till last year. Forms will be system generated now. It is mandatory for all aspiring yattris to get health certificate from designated doctors all over India," He said.

Decked with flowers and bunting, the designated PNB branch here opened at 9 am, ahead of regular timings, to welcome aspirant Amarnath pilgrims who were standing in queues since 8.30 in the morning for registration.

Pilgrims were enthusiastic for registration. "I want to do darshan on the first day at the cave shrine at Amarnath on July 1. That is why I stood in line at 8.30 am to register," Sham Lal Dogra told PTI.

The schedule of the pilgrimage was decided at the 44th meeting of the Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board (SASB) chaired by Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at the Raj Bhavan.

The yatra would commence simultaneously from both the routes, officials said.

The shrine board will also enable live telecast of morning and evening "aarti" (prayers) for devotees across the globe.

The board, which manages the annual pilgrimage, has designated 542 bank branches across the country for the registration of the pilgrims, in addition to the facility on its website.

According to it, no one below the age of 13 years or above the age of 75 years, and no woman with more than six weeks' pregnancy shall be registered for the yatra.

Jamia Masjid.....

that, it should be under Waqf Board instead of local Auqaf and what so ever issue is there that is directly under the control of local Anjuman Auqaf.

"Waqf Board can't interfere in the issue related to Jamia Masjid till it is under the control of local Auqaf," Darakhshan said.

Meanwhile, Darakhshan further said that all the preparation are completed for Shabe-Qadr as we are expecting a large number of Devotees.



Brainpreneurs centre brings health, education together to help children to unleash their potential

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 17: Brainpreneurs children development centre, a first of such kind of centre in Kashmir where they bring education and health together completely intermingled to help children to unleash their potential with special focus on holistic development.

Sunaina Tickoo founder and CEO of Brainpreneurs Child Development

Centre Srinagar told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that they are running the centre from 2020.

He said that two such centres are also functional in Jammu since 2018. Brainpreneurs mainly focuses on children who are Neurodiverse and the centre is being under the supervision of their mentor Dr Sushil Razdan, She said.

"We felt that we are giving medicines to Neurodiversed children, there is also a huge need for therapeutic intervention as well. We are giving both therapy and medicine together," she said.

She said doctors and therapists are working together at the centre and they are bringing physiotherapy and OT. "We have helped several children in the last few years and they have joined normal school," she said, adding more children are being brought here for early interventions and they are

hopeful of very positive results. "Neurodiversity is on rise and reasons behind it are being checked. Autism is not considered an abnormality as their brains are little different and we as a society have to prepare and we have to give right interventions for such children so that they can talk," she said.

After Covid pandemic, cases of depression are coming to the fore due to social isolation and neuro disorder cases are being found in

adults as well. Sanjay Razdan working at the centre said that the aim of the centre is to help all those children who are having any deficiencies and enable them to make them join normal school and help them in getting jobs and earn for themselves and their families.

He said that Dr Sushil Razdan has been visiting the centre to provide holistic development to the children suffering from neuro related issues.

SEX RACKET BUSTED IN JAMMU, SEVERAL ARRESTED

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, APR 17: Jammu Kashmir Police busted an alleged sex racket in the heart of the city's Jewel area, running in the hotels, officials said Monday.

As per details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), police conducted several raids for the past one week and burst a major prostitution racket active in Jewel and adjoining areas of the city.

"Police raided Hotel Tourist Camp at Sant Market, Jewel, three days ago and detailed a customer from Paddar Kishtwar, who caught red handed in a compromising position with a teen-aged girl from Bihar," sources said adding, "Police arrested Hotel manager and a pimp from of Rajouri," sources said adding, "Another pimp namely and person, who had taken the hotel on a lease, were on large." The officer added that following leads, police conducted fresh raids at a hotel named Richland. Police arrested three persons and rescued two young women from the hotel. The officer said that the accused have confessed in the Police custody that they brought young women from Kashmir promising them jobs and later clicked their photographs and used the photographs to blackmail them and used them in the sex racket. It is being said that the trio is in touch with several other women.

The report quoting police sources said several teams of Nowabad Police Station have been constituted to trace and arrest the absconding accused while police are also investigating whether other hotels or lodges in the area are also involved in these types of illegal activities as it was also a general complaint of the people of the area that several women are indulged in prostitution and they roam freely in the area to search for their customers.

A senior police officer disclosed that the accused are on the couch with several women and potential consumers and more names will be unearthed during the course of investigation. "The investigation is on in the case and disclosing many details may hamper the progress," the officer said.

Meet Mohammad Rafee, the man with facial hemangioma, spinal injury 'but' plays nationals in wheelchair baskets
 'Starts general store in his locality to earn livelihood'

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 17: At a time when most of the handicapped persons become a burden on their families or resort to begging, a man from Srinagar is inspiring hundreds of handicapped persons to stand on their own legs and live a better life.

Mohammad Rafee (35) a resident of Lawaypora area of Srinagar despite being disabled has reached to national level in wheelchair basketball and started a general store to earn livelihood.

Rafee while talking to news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that he was having facial hemangioma by birth and despite surgeries and other treatments, he wasn't successful in any way to get relief from hemangioma.

"I was already facing a lot of problems due to hemangioma and in 2010 during the construction of the house, I fell down from the roof of my house causing severe injuries to my spinal cord and confined



my movement to bed only," he said. "Later I visited Shafqat Rehabilitation Centre for around three years, where a wheelchair was bought for me following which I started using a wheelchair."

At rehabilitation centre he was introduced to fun games and later basketball following which he started learning basketball.

"I started learning basketball and after playing at state level and in 2015, I along with 7 others went to Chennai for a wheelchair basketball workshop and in the same year we participated for the first time for Nationals in Delhi," he said.

"I got an opportunity to play at national level five times that includes first national at Delhi in 2015 followed by Chennai 2016, Hyderabad 2017, Erode Tamil Nadu 2018 and Mohali Punjab 2019."

He said: "These tournaments were organised by Wheelchair basketball federation of India where teams won many medals." "Currently I am working at my own general store at Lawaypora Srinagar so as to earn livelihood beside that I am working with an NGO to help and guide all those persons who are facing problems like me," Rafi said.

"I have been guiding such patients on how to get rid of bed sore, neurogenic pains and other issues as I have experienced such things," he said. "I teach and try to help them in the reorientation of life after Disability. I also make them aware of appropriate assistive devices, home modifications, bedsores, and other different and associated problems they face."

He said persons having disabilities must accept their disability and they must understand that they too can live a rewarding life. "They must understand the purpose of life and work to fulfill their dreams, though their ways may be different," he said.

SED all set to start Social, Emotional, Ethical Learning project for Govt Schools

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 17: School Education Department is all set to initiate a Social, Emotional and Ethical Learning (SEEL) project for the students of government schools.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Directorate of School Education Jammu has said that it has decided to launch the project in collaboration with Piramal foundation.

"Social, Emotional and Ethical Learning (SEE Learning), is a K-12 education program developed for international use," it reads.

Joint Director at DSEJ said, "Guided by a shared vision for an education of heart and mind, the program conveys a universal, non-sectarian, and science-based approach to bringing the ethical development of the whole child into education."

"SEEL provides educators with a comprehensive framework for the



cultivation of social, emotional and ethical competencies; age-specific curricula consisting of easy to implement lessons; and a support structure for educator preparation, facilitator certification, and on-going professional development," reads the communique.

The joint director said that it has shortlisted 70 trainees in this regard. "During second phase these master

trainers will further train teachers dealing with elementary classes for imparting Social Emotional and Ethical Learning to students via virtual mode," it reads.

The joint director said, "In view of all of the above, you are directed to intimate HOs of the schools to depute the trainees for one day launch cum orientation on the project SEEL at SRML Model HSS, Jammu on April-17."

Absence of doctors hits patient care in Gurez

■ HT News Network

GREUZ, APR 17: The health care system in Gurez is in shambles due to absence of doctors in various health care centres.

On 15 April, Block Medical officer (BMO), Gurez, Dr Tahira even complained with the chief medical officer (CMO) Bandipora about the absence of three doctors from the Primary health centre (PHC) Sheikhpora.

The Medical Officers left without permission or any communication to the office, resulting in a public crisis at the hospital, the BMO said.

"On the evening of April 14th, 2023, a burn case was brought to PHC Shiekhpora, but not a single doctor was present on duty among the three assigned," she said, adding that the doctors at PHC Shiekhpora have been continuously neglecting their legitimate duties, causing problems and attracting public crises in the area.

"Despite warnings and notices issued by BMO Gurez's office, the doctors' irresponsible and unruly behavior persists," she said, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

The BMO demanded stern action against the negligent doctors to ensure they mend their ways in the future or vacate their position.

In another official communication on the same day, BMO Gurez informed the CMO about the absence of four officials at four different health stations, including Achoora, Dangithal, Badwan, and Markoot.

"I would like to bring to your attention that these MLHPs (Multi-Purpose Health Workers) have left their stations without seeking permission or informing the office of the U/sd. As a result, patient care has been severely affected," she said, adding that it is worth noting that the aforementioned MLHPs have been neglecting their legitimate duties, which has led to several problems. Despite receiving multiple warnings and notices from BMO, they continue to display an irresponsible and unruly attitude.

"Therefore, I request that stern action be taken against these negligent MLHPs to prevent future incidents of this nature. Such action will hopefully prompt them to mend their ways and fulfill their responsibilities effectively in the future," the BMO added.

An official at the office of Chief Medical Officer Bandipora said that the matter has been conveyed to the higher authorities.

According to locals in Gurez, health centres lack staff and doctors. "Even the PHC Shiekhpora was without staff today as no one was present there," they said.

The locals have requested the concerned authorities and Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to personally look into the matter and redress their grievances.

SHEIKH AND COMTECH FAMILY

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رُجْعُونَ

WITH PROFOUND GRIEF AND HEAVY HEART, I INFORM THAT OUR BELOVED FATHER **HAJI ALI MOHAMMAD SHEIKH** LEFT FOR HEAVENLY ABODE ON 16/04/2023 AT OUR RESIDENCE LANE NO 2, H/N-15, UMERABAD, HMT SRINAGAR

FATEH KHAWANI WILL BE HELD ON **19/04/2023** AT OUR RESIDENCE GRAVEYARD SRINAGAR AT 9:00AM

GRIEFLY STRICKEN:

Mr. Khurshed Ahmad sheikh Mr Imtiaz Ahmad sheikh Mr Riyaz Ahmad sheikh

(Chairman J & K Agriculture technocrat United forum)

10th NCORD meeting held at Budgam

District Administration committed to create a drug-free environment in the District: DC

HT News Network

BUDGAM, APRIL 17: The 10th NCORD meeting of District Budgam was today held at the Conference hall of DC Office here under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Budgam, S F Hamid.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Budgam, Dr. Nasir convened the meeting and briefed the chair regarding actions taken by various departments as per the decisions made in the previous NCORD meeting.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC stressed for strict penalties on the drug peddlers. He reviewed all the departments involved directly in curbing the spread of drugs in the district.

The DC directed Forest, Agriculture and other concerned departments to



come up with a proposal for plantation of useful vegetation to replace the wild cannabis (Bhang) in the district. He directed the Excise and Taxation department to check the cultivation of poppy and cannabis before it is actually grown.

The sub divisional administrations were directed to coordinate with police and assistant drug controller at subdivision level to carry out joint pop-

py destruction exercises. They were also instructed to involve PRIs and other stakeholders.

The DC directed the Education, Health and Social Welfare and Information department to conduct awareness programmes in all colleges, schools of the district.

He further directed the Health department for health checkup of students in all Degree Colleges, High-

er Secondary and High Schools under the direct supervision of their respective heads.

He directed to complete the exercise within the shortest possible time.

Seeking strict enforcement of drug control rules, he asked Assistant Drug Controller Budgam to ensure mandatory maintenance of the record of sale of psychotropic drugs to be maintained by the medical stores, check all the medical shops have installed CCTV cameras.

He further directed principals of different colleges of Budgam to actively participate in curbing this social abuse.

He called for sensitisation of local Imams and religious heads by imparting training to them at District level for counseling of the youth against effects of drug abuse.

DC reviews arrangements for rollout of KSA under HADP at Ganderbal

HT News Network

GANDERBAL, APRIL 17: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Shyambir today chaired a meeting of officers to discuss the rollout of Kisan Sampark Abhiyan (KSA) under Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) at Panchayat level here at V.C Room of Mini Secretariat, Ganderbal.

At the outset, detailed presentation was given by the District Sheep Husbandry Officer, Ganderbal/ District Nodal Officer, Farmers Orientation under HADP regarding the projects approved, mode of implementation, identified venues and other arrangements put in place for the successful conduct of farmer's orientation programme under the HADP in the district.



The meeting was informed that 29 projects under agriculture and allied sectors have been approved under HADP besides 47 venues have been identified for training to the farmers which shall commence on 24 April, 2023.

The DC stressed upon the officers to ensure that the farmers along with PRIs actively participate in the camps. He stressed upon

regarding the benefits and profits of modern technologies and schemes.

The concerned departments raised several issues in implementation of the programme for which the DC assured all possible help from District Administration for the successful implementation of the programme in the district.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer, Irfan Giri, SDM Kangan, Assistant Commissioner Development, ACP, Chief Horticulture Officer, Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, Ganderbal, Assistant Director Fisheries and Chief Agriculture Officer BDOs besides other officers of all concerned departments.

The DC stressed upon the officers to ensure that the farmers along with PRIs actively participate in the camps. He stressed upon the Agriculture.

Maha Gramsabha held for formulation of GPDP of two Smart villages

HT News Network



KUPWARA, APRIL 17 : A Maha Gramsabha was held today at Shah Lal Handwara to formulate GPDP 2023-24 for two smart villages Shah Lal and Buderhur.

Maha Gram sabha which was attended by PRIs, a large number of local residents District officer and Sectoral officers of all line departments was presided over by Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Handwara Nazir Ahmad Mir. Addressing the Maha Gramsabha, ADC Handwara said that Mahagramsabha provided a platform for officers of different line departments, field functionaries, PRIs and general public to assemble at one place and discuss various development issues. ADC said that there was healthy interaction and GPDP for both the panchayats was formulated. He further said that it is responsibility of district administration and PRIs to work in tandem and ensure development and happiness in rural areas.

DDC member Rajwar, Sulaman Mir on the occasion congratulated the residents of both the Panchayats Shah Lal and Buderhur for getting their Panchayats selected as Smart villages. He said that GPDP for both the Panchayats were formulated today in a peaceful and interactive atmosphere. He said that Education is the top most priority in both the Panchayats and he appreciated Education department for approving of two Kindergartens at Shah Lal and Waripora. "By executing different projects in convergence mode in both the smart villages we can create a benchmark of development here" DDC member said.

Maha gram sabha was attended by PRIs and district and sectoral officers of Line departments.

Intensive market checking held at D H Pora, Nihama markets

Farooq Rather

KULGAM, APRIL 17: On the directions of Deputy Commissioner Kulgam, a joint team led by Sub District Magistrate (SDM) Noorabad, Bashir ul Hassan carried out intensive market checking in DH Pora, Nihama and Nandimarg markets. During the market checking, an amount of Rs 5000 fine was recovered from violators. The SDM while interacting with customers urged them to be aware of their rights. He said that to curb overpricing and other violations, market checking drives will continue in the subdivision. The SDM was accompanied by Tehsildar D H Pora, TSO, SHO and other members of the enforcement team.

FATEH KHAWANI

With sorrow this is informed that Jana Bagum W/O Ghulam Mohammad Ganai R/O Dangarpora Tahsil Sumbal Sonawari Bandipora left for heavenly abode on 16 April Sunday 25 Ramadan 1444. Congregational Fatiha prayers will be observed on 19 April Wednesday 2023 in their accinal graveyard Dangarpora Tahsil Sumbal Sonawari Bandipora. Funeral for only Three days at their residence.



Fayaz ahmad Ganai
Javid ahmad Ganai
Ajaz Ahmad Ganai
SONS

AP&FWD Kulgam organizes Awareness programme fir PRIs under HADP

Farooq Rather

KULGAM, APRIL 17: The Agriculture Production & Farmers Welfare Department Kulgam in collaboration with allied departments and KVK Kulgam today organized a daylong awareness programme for PRIs under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) at Rest House Chawalgam, here.

The awareness programme was inaugurated by the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Dr. Bilal-Mohi-Ud-Din-Bhat.

District Development

Council Chairperson, Mohd Afzal Parrey was also present on the occasion.

Among others, Additional District Development Commissioner Showkat Ahmad Rather, DDC, BDC and other PRI members, Chief Agriculture Officer, Chief Horticulture Officer, DSHO and other officers, besides progressive farmers also attended the programme.

Addressing the occasion, DC said government has announced a Rs 560-crore project under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) to strengthen the existing



market infrastructure and create a robust market ecosystem to boost the region's economy and benefit farmers.

He added that a 3-day awareness camp will be organized in each panchayat across the district so as to sensitize and acquaint

farmers with opportunities offered under different schemes of Agriculture and allied sectors under HADP.

The DC emphasized upon the Sectoral Officers of Agriculture and allied departments to give the programme a wide publicity so that mass participation of the farming community can be assured. Among others, Additional District Development Commissioner Showkat Ahmad Rather, DDC, BDC and other PRI members, Chief Agriculture Officer, Chief Horticulture Officer, DSHO and other officers, besides progressive farmers also

attended the programme.

Addressing the occasion, DC said government has announced a Rs 560-crore project under the Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) to strengthen the existing market infrastructure and create a robust market ecosystem to boost the region's economy and benefit farmers. He added that a 3-day awareness camp will be organized in each panchayat across the district so as to sensitize and acquaint farmers with opportunities offered under different schemes of Agriculture and allied sectors under HADP.

Bandipora gears up activities under Jal Shakti Abhiyan

HT News Network

BANDIPORA, APRIL 17: On the directions of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, JD Planning, Imtiyaz Ahmad today chaired a meeting of various stakeholders to discuss the micro activity plan (MAP) implementation under Jal Shakti Abhiyan (JSA) post declaration of District under water stress category. The meeting witnessed threadbare discussion regarding the implementation of the Jal Shakti Abhiyan and the challenges being faced by the executing agencies in the district.

The meeting was attended by Nodal Officer Coordination and Assistant Commissioner Development Mohammad Ashraf Hakak, SE Hydraulic PHE Circle Baramulla/ Bandipora Mohammad Hanif, Ex En PHE, ACP, JDP, Executive Engineers and other concerned besides PRIs. During the meet-



ing, the concerned were directed to expedite the implementation of the Jal Shakti Abhiyan activities and ensure that all households in the district have access to safe and adequate drinking water supply in all seasons. Stress was given to work in a coordinated manner to ensure the success of the program. The officials were also instructed to conduct awareness campaigns and mobilize the community to ensure programme sustainability.

SVEEP Awareness programmes & Rally held at Shopian

HT News Network

SHOPIAN, APRIL 17: In order to inspire and encourage the newly eligible and prospective voters about the voter registration and electoral participation, a SVEEP Awareness programme was today organized at Govt. Hr. Secondary School Sedow Shopian.

The programme was organized by a team of election employees under the supervision of Dy. District Election Officer Shopian, Jahangir Ahmed.

On this occasion, a large gathering of teachers, stu-



dents and other officers/officials were briefed with the basic knowledge related to the electoral process.

Dy. District Election Officer elucidated the process of electoral registration and value of vote and stressed upon participants for their registration/modifications etc during the ongoing SSR.

The song dedicated by ECI "Main Bharat Hoon" was also played to inspire the participants.

Election NT and Booth level Officers were also present during the programme and shared their experiences among the participants.

A large number of forms viz. Form 6, Form 7 and Form 8 were also distributed among the students. The participants were also informed about the schedule issued by the Chief Election Officer J&K which commenced from 5th of April and shall continue up to 20th of April.

Hundreds of veterans participate in Senior Citizens Sports event at Beerwah

HT News Network

BUDGAM, APRIL 17: The District Administration Budgam, in collaboration with Youth Services and Sports (YSS), Budgam today organised a first of its kind Senior Citizens Sports Competition at DIET Beerwah in Budgam.

Living truly to this adage "Age is just a Number", hundreds of Senior citizens both men and women participated in events including Kabaddi, Tug of War, Chess, Carrom, Skipping Rope, Hopscotch with full enthusiasm and energy. Various cultural programs including skits were presented by the local, renowned artists to raise awareness against drugs and other social evils and highlighted the importance of sports for a happy and healthy life.

The performances also focused on the role of elders and parents towards society and curbing the drug menace with proper guidance and vigil on their wards.

Speaking as a chief guest, Deputy Commissioner (DC), Budgam, S F Hamid highlighted the importance of sports in all age groups to remain



both mentally as well as physically fit. He said that the District Administration Budgam is committed to take these events at village level also under the ongoing ambitious Khelo-India programme to ensure maximum participation of people in sports activities no matter what their age is.

DC said that overwhelming participation of senior citizens in today's competition is a testimony to the fact that the people of Budgam are committed to the development and path of prosperity.

He said that sports not only helps to keep us hale and healthy but also

keep our youth away from drugs and other social evils.

DC said that senior citizens are important part of society, having say to council and motivate youth to participate in sports, cultural or any adventurous activities, and save them falling prey to drug abuse. He also urged parents to keep tight vigil on their wards to ensure they remain away from drugs.

On the occasion, the DC also distributed trophies among the participating senior citizens for their exemplary performances in a series of sports disciplines.

Awareness Camp regarding formation & benefits of FPOs held at Ajas

HT News Network

BANDIPORA, APRIL 17: An awareness camp was today held by the Department of Sheep Husbandry Bandipora at Ajas to familiarize sheep farmers with the necessity of organizing themselves into a farmer producer organization (FPO) in the wake of imminent implementation of Holistic Agriculture Development Plan. A sizable number of farmers in excess of 80 from adjoining areas of Ajas like Sounara, Banyari, SK payeen, SK Bala and Chewa participated in the camp with spirit and zest besides sarpanchs and other PRI members also graced the occasion. Veterinary Assistant Surgeon Ajas, Dr. Mir Mehraj and Veterinary Assistant Surgeon Sumbal, Dr. Umar Amin were present as experts on the event. At the outset VAS Ajas apprised and educated farmers about the ambitious nature of HADP and explained at length as to how this project aims to push sheep husbandry sector to a new trajectory of growth with a mission of massive shift in the next five years by transforming sheep rearing from subsistence activity to a sustainable, remunerative and commercially viable venture. He emphasized upon the educated unemployed youth to come forward and become stakeholders on this development journey by aggregating themselves into FPOs. He further articulated the multiple benefits of forming such FPOs in tandem with HADP ranging from establishment of abattoirs, common facility centers, mutton processing plants, sustainable pelt and wool value chains, market linkages thus resulting in overall optima.

DC Kathua reviews progress under 11th Agriculture Census Directs timely completion, uploading of data entries

HT News Network

KATHUA, APRIL 17: To review the progress of 11th Agriculture Census Phase-1, Deputy Commissioner Kathua, Rahul Pandey today convened a meeting of all the concerned officers here in the DC Office Complex. Threadbare discussion was held with focus on the collection of data about the number of Agricultural Operational Holders, its land utilization, Tenancy status and irrigation facilities available etc. The Census is being conducted in a phased manner and comprises three phases. The first phase of the scheme is based on complete enumeration study, whereas the other two phases are based on survey study. It was given out in the meeting that the 1st stage Census has been going on in full swing in 353 villages, while 177 villages are taking up the census

task this week.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC said that the crux of the scheme lies in knowing about the size of the agricultural holding and the number of operational holders in the state/UT. The Agricultural Census is a large Statistical Operation and the information collected through it is quite significant for the policy planners both at national as well as State/UT level, he informed.

With regard to the related exercise the DC said that the enumerators (Patwaris) are supposed to upload the data entries (Survey Numbers) on the given portal which is accepted or rejected by the supervisors (Tehsildars).

The DC directed officers of Revenue Department to complete the Census exercise and uploading of data entries on the given portal by or before end of current month.

The DC also directed ACR Kathua to



fix daily tehsil wise targets besides collecting and collating the detailed report so as to continuously monitor the progress made in the matter. Assistant Commissioner Revenue Vishav Pratap Singh, District Statisti-

cal & Evaluation Officer Ranjeet Singh besides officers from Revenue, Agriculture and others attended the meeting. To review the progress of 11th Agriculture Census Phase-1, Deputy Commissioner Kathua, Rahul Pandey today convened a meeting of all the concerned officers here in the DC Office Complex.

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AWs, Women staff sensitized about Special Summary Revision in Reasi

HT News Network

REASI, APRIL 17: As a part of Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation program (SVEEP), a briefing session was organised by the District Election Office Reasi for Anganwari Workers, staff from Mahila Shakti organisation and One Stop Centre Reasi, here in the Conference Hall.

Detailed information about the ongoing Special Summary Revision of the Photo Electoral Rolls with 01-04-2023 as the qualifying date was given to the participants. They were asked to disseminate the schedule of the ongoing Special Summary Revision among the general public, especially the women folk.

Mohammad Anwar Banday, Programme Officer, ICDS, Reasi; Rakesh Kumar, Deputy District Election Officer; Anshumali Sharma, Assistant Commissioner Revenue; Narinder Kishore, Incharge SVEEP and other officers were present in the programme.

A rally was also taken out on the occasion, which was flagged off by the Programme Officer, ICDS, Reasi and the Deputy District Election Officer, Reasi.

Govt SPMR College of Commerce organises Pledge Taking Ceremony, Anti- Drug rally

JAMMU, APRIL 17: Cultural & Literary Committee, NCC, NSS Units of Government SPMR College of Commerce, Jammu, under the initiative of G20 and IQAC, on Monday organized a Pledge Taking Ceremony and Rally against the Drugs to institutionalize the Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan on the theme "Say No to Drugs and Yes to Life". Prof. Deepshikha Sharma, Convener Cultural & Literary Committee said the objective of the rally was to raise awareness among the students and masses about the grave issue and its harmful effects. Dr. Surinder Kumar, Principal of the college talked about the present status of Drug Menace in India and in particular Jammu. He said most addicts are between the age groups of 15 to 35 and also mentioned how Covid-19 disrupted the life of people and presented challenges for people with substance use disorders and in recovery.

Later, a rally was flagged off by the Principal of the college from college campus. Around 80 students participated in the pledge taking Ceremony and raised slogans on Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan viz Say No to Drug, Nashe Ko Jo Apnayega Pura Jeevan Pachtayega, Nashe Ki Maar Sabse Bari Maar Barbad Kre Sukhi Parivaar.. Prof. Savita Jamwal HOD Economics, Dr. Monika Malhotra IQAC Coordinator, Prof. Deepshikha Sharma Convener Cultural & Literary Committee, Prof. Harpreet Kour, Prof. Rajni Bala, Prof. Apfan Ali NSS PO also accompanied the rally and took part in the Pledge Taking Ceremony.

DC Ramban reviews arrangements for Kisan Sampark Abhiyan under HADP

HT News Network

RAMBAN, APRIL 17: Deputy Commissioner Ramban Musarat Islam today chaired a meeting to finalize the arrangements for smooth conduct of farmers' orientation programme (Kisan Sampark Abhiyan) under Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) here.

The meeting was attended by Chief Planning Officer, Dr. Kas-turi Lal; Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, Dr. Suhail Jan (District Nodal Officer) CAO, CHO, DSHO, and others from Agriculture and Allied departments. The HADP aims at holistic development of the agriculture sector by pushing agriculture and allied sectors to a new trajectory of growth with economy, ecology, and equity as its guiding pillars. The GI tagging of the products, integrated farm-



ing, and handholding of the farmers for better produce and linking their products with fair market are some of the objectives of the HADP. During the meeting, District Nodal Officer, CAHO apprised the chair regarding the arrangements put in place for the successful conduct of farmers' orientation programme under the HADP which will be held from 24th April upto 31st of August 2023. The Deputy Commissioner stressed upon the officers of Agriculture and allied departments to give the programme a wide publicity in advance so that mass participation of the farming com-

munity can be assured.

He also asked to inform the farmers about modern tools and techniques that have been incorporated in HADP to overcome the prevailing constraints and use different extension methods to motivate the farming community in adoption of proposed inter-

ventions in the approved projects.

He assured all possible help from District Administration for the successful implementation of the programme in the district to uplift the livelihood of the farming community. The HADP aims at holistic development of the agriculture sector by pushing agriculture and allied sectors to a new trajectory of growth with economy, ecology, and equity as its guiding pillars. The GI tagging of the products, integrated farming, and handholding of the farmers for better produce and linking their products with fair market are some of the objectives of the HADP. During the meeting, District Nodal Officer, CAHO apprised the chair regarding the arrangements put in place for the successful conduct of farmers' orientation programme under the HADP which will be held from 24th April upto 31st of August 2023.

DC Rajouri reviews performance of line departments on Good Governance Index

HT News Network

RAJOURI, APRIL 17: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Vikas Kundal, today presided over a meeting to review the performance of line departments on the Good Governance Index (GGI). The meeting, held at the District Administrative Complex, brought together officials from different departments to discuss and assess the progress made towards achieving good governance parameters in the district.

The Good Governance Index is a comprehensive tool that measures the performance of districts on various governance indicators. It serves as an important benchmark for evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of government policies and programmes. During the meeting, the DC stressed the significance of good governance in ensuring transparency, accountability, and citizen-centric service delivery. He highlighted the importance of aligning administrative processes with the prin-



ciples of good governance to enhance the overall governance standards in the district.

The Deputy Commissioner reviewed the performance of different departments in key areas such as public service delivery, public infrastructure, economic governance, and social welfare. He appreciated the efforts of various departments in implementing government initiatives and programmes to benefit the citizens of Rajouri.

He also stressed the need for continuous monitoring and evaluation of governance indicators to identify areas for improvement and take corrective measures. He encouraged all departments to work collaboratively and adopt innovative approaches.

Eid-Ul-Fitr arrangements finalized at Udhampur

HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, APRIL 17: To finalize the necessary arrangements in connection with ensuing Eid-Ul-Fitr festival, a meeting of District Officers and prominent citizens of the district was held today under the Chairmanship of Additional Deputy Commissioner, Udhampur, Joginder Singh Jasrotia here in the Conference Hall DC Office Complex.

Various issues related to the celebration of Eid-ul-Fitr especially the availability of water supply at the designated places of Eid Prayers, uninterrupted



power supply, Traffic Management, Checking of rates, security arrangements and proper sanitation during the celebration were discussed in the meeting.

The ADC issued directions to the concerned department to ensure uninterrupted water and power supply on the occasion; besides asking the police to make proper security

arrangements around the Eid-Gah and Masjids during the festival. Traffic department was also directed to deploy an adequate number of traffic personnel at traffic jam prone places.

The Chief Medical officer was directed to provide Medicare facilities and deploy a medical team at Eid-Gah and Masjids during the festival.

Juhi meets public delegations; vouches for meeting teaching staff shortage in far flung areas

HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, APRIL 17: District Development Council, Vice Chairperson, Juhi Pathania today met scores of public delegations here in her office and listened to their grievances. While interacting with a battery of deputations drawn from various parts of Ramnagar, Udhampur, Pancheri and Moungr, she called for making good staff requirements in the schools of Udhampur district. Same way the paucity of Staff was an issue in HS Chigla Blata, HS Nagulta, HS Dudu, HS



G.S. Banj, HS Ressian, HS Jandrore, HS Barta, HS Deot. She also took up the issue of hanging schools with the Administrative Secretary to regularise them at the earliest so that people and students do not face unnecessary hassles. Shambu Dutt, Sarpanch Panchayat

Rassain was leading a delegation demanding bus service to Rassain. She took up the issue with ARTO Udhampur for bus services particularly to Rassain, Chigla Blota and other far flung areas. She also called for SRTC service from Jammu to Babey, to Joffer and to

various far flung pockets of Moungr and Pancheri in District Udhampur. Another delegation projected a variety of issues including provision of drinking water, electricity supply, road connectivity. The delegations had detailed discussions with the Vice Chairperson regarding key developmental issues pertaining to their areas. Among various issues called upon was the demand for road connectivity from Jagote to High School Balta via Mazoom to be enlisted on priority under NABARD. The People also projected issues regarding scarcity of drinking water.

Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan DIPR Culture Wing presents Cultural programme at GHSS Gandhi Nagar

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 17: Cultural Wing of Department of Information and Public Relations on Monday presented a cultural program in Government Higher Secondary School Gandhi Nagar on the theme Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan.

Principal of the school, Adarsh Bala Sharma was the chief guest on the occasion.

Artists of Cultural Wing Information Department Jammu Vijay Anand, Surjeet



Singh, Balbir Singh, Bunty Kumar, Kamal Kumar and Mukesh Kumar presented Folk songs, patriotic songs and theme based songs. Students and staff of the

school also presented a colourful Cultural program which spell bound the audience. Speaking on the occasion, the Principal shared her views on the topic and

lauded the Cultural Unit of the Department of Information and Public Relations for organizing the program to aware the future of the nation. She urged the Information Department to organise such programmes in future also.

Among others, staff members of the school, officials of the Information Department and a large number of audiences witnessed the program.

The program was conducted under the supervision of Cultural Officer, Mukesh Kumar Sharma.

EDITORIAL

Fire Mishaps Require Swift Action....

The recent increase in fire mishaps in Kashmir, including the Hazratbal fire incident today, is a cause for concern. The Hazratbal shrine is one of the most revered places of worship for Muslims in the region and the news of the fire breaking out there has left many saddened and worried. Unfortunately, this is not the first time that a fire incident has occurred in the region, and it is high time that the authorities take steps to prevent such incidents from happening in the future.

The Hazratbal fire incident comes just days after a massive fire broke out in a hotel in Srinagar, causing extensive damage. Earlier this year, another fire incident occurred in the same area, where a residential building was gutted, and several families were left homeless. The frequency of such incidents is alarming, and it is essential that the authorities investigate the causes behind them.

At least seven residential houses including a 'U-shaped' shopping complex was damaged in a massive fire incident at Dargah Hazratbal in central Kashmir's Srinagar district today.

One of the main reasons behind the increase in fire mishaps in the region is the lack of fire safety measures. Many buildings in the region do not have fire safety equipment such as smoke detectors, fire alarms, and fire extinguishers. Even if they do have these, they are often outdated or not maintained properly. It is essential that the authorities make it mandatory for all buildings to have proper fire safety equipment and ensure that they are regularly checked and maintained.

Another major reason for the increase in fire incidents is the general public's lack of awareness about fire safety. People often do not know what to do in case of a fire, which can lead to panic and chaos, making the situation worse. It is essential that the authorities conduct awareness campaigns to educate people about fire safety, including what to do in case of a fire and how to prevent fires from breaking out in the first place.

In addition to these, the authorities also need to take steps to prevent illegal construction in the region. Many buildings in the region have been constructed illegally and do not follow building regulations or safety norms. Such constructions are a significant fire hazard and need to be demolished immediately.

Finally, the authorities also need to investigate the possibility of foul play in such incidents. In the past, there have been cases where fires were deliberately started for various reasons, including to cover up other crimes. It is essential that the authorities thoroughly investigate each incident to rule out any possibility of foul play.

In conclusion, the recent increase in fire mishaps in Kashmir, including the Hazratbal fire incident today, is a cause for concern. It is essential that the authorities take steps to prevent such incidents from happening in the future. This includes making it mandatory for all buildings to have proper fire safety equipment, conducting awareness campaigns to educate people about fire safety, preventing illegal constructions, and thoroughly investigating each incident to rule out any possibility of foul play. Only then can we hope to prevent such incidents from happening again in the future.



VIJAY GARG

Rural management is a career path that involves managing and developing rural areas. Pursuing a career in rural management can be an excellent choice for students who are passionate about making a positive impact in their community. This blog is all about exploring the benefits of pursuing a career in rural management.

Opportunity to Make a Difference

One of the most significant benefits of pursuing a career in rural management is the opportunity to make a real difference in people's lives. Rural areas often face unique challenges, such as a lack of access to healthcare, limited economic opportunities, and inadequate infrastructure. Rural managers work to address these issues and enhance the quality of people living in these areas. By pursuing a career in rural management, you can use your skills and expertise to help improve the lives of rural people.

Career Growth and Advancement

Rural management is a rapidly growing field, with increasing demand for skilled professionals who can address the unique challenges facing rural



communities. As a result, pursuing a career in rural management can offer excellent opportunities to aspiring students for career growth and advancement. With experience and expertise, you can advance to higher-level positions, such as executive director or CEO of a rural development organization. Additionally, the skills and experience gained from working in rural management can be transferable to other industries and career paths.

Diverse Career Paths

Pursuing a career in rural management can offer students a wide range of career paths and opportunities. Rural management professionals work in a variety of roles, including community development, economic development, healthcare management, environmental management, and more. This diversity of roles allows students to pursue

a career path that combines with their interests and skills while still making a positive impact on rural communities.

Collaborative Work Environment

Rural management often involves working with a variety of stakeholders, including community members, government officials, non-profit organizations, and business leaders. As a result, aspiring for a career in rural management can offer a collaborative work environment where students can work with others to achieve common goals. Collaborative work environments can be rewarding, as they provide opportunities for students to learn from others, share ideas, and build relationships.

Strong Job Security

In many cases, dreaming of excelling in a rural management career can offer strong job security. Rural areas often

face long-standing issues that require ongoing attention, such as economic development, infrastructure improvement, and healthcare access. Due to this, there is a consistent need for skilled professionals who can address these issues and make a positive impact in their community. Additionally, rural management professionals may work for government agencies or non-profit organizations, which often provide stable employment with competitive salaries and benefits.

Personal Fulfilment

Rural management career opportunities offer a great deal of personal fulfilment. Professionals working in rural management strive to improve the lives of people in their communities, which can be incredibly rewarding. Seeing the positive effort of your work on individuals, families, and entire communities can be deeply satisfying and can provide a sense of purpose and fulfilment in your career.

Conclusion

FMS-IRM is the best rural management college in Jaipur that provides quality education to students with the help of experienced professors. You can find this college as the top rural management college in India that is constantly putting efforts into changing the lives of rural people and making advancements in the country.

**Vijay GarG Retired
Principal Educational Columnist
Malout Punjab**



AUBAID AHMAD AKHOON

"The values of gratitude, compassion, and mindfulness are not just for Eid ul Fitr but

should be practiced throughout the year, as we work towards a more just and equitable world for all."

As Eid ul Fitr approaches, it is crucial to reflect on the teachings of the Quran regarding moderation, gratitude, and compassion. This special holiday reminds us of the importance of coming together as a community and extending a helping hand to those in need.

In a world where extravagance and wastefulness are often praised, it is essential to remember that Allah has strictly forbidden spending in

vain. As we celebrate Eid ul Fitr, let us practice mindfulness and moderation in our spending habits, ensuring that we do not fall into the trap of excess.

Furthermore, as we enjoy the blessings of this holiday, let us remember those who are less fortunate and extend a helping hand to them. Whether it is through donating to charity organizations or volunteering at local shelters, there are many ways to make a positive impact on the lives of others.

At the heart of Eid ul Fitr is the spirit of gratitude and appreciation for the blessings in our lives. By cultivating a deeper sense of gratitude, we can not only honor the true meaning and spirit of this special holiday but also contribute to a more peaceful and harmonious society.

Finally, let us also ensure that we conduct our shopping and purchasing of essential commodities at government-approved rates and with sufficient quality standards. This will not only benefit us as consumers but also contribute to the betterment of society as a whole.

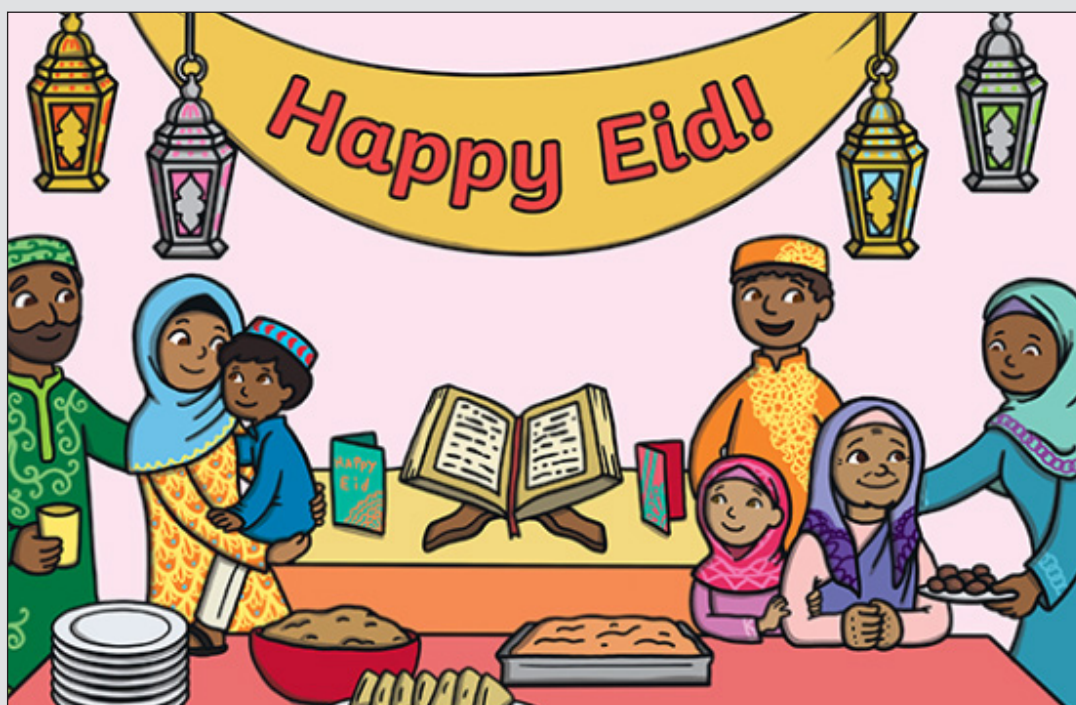
In addition to practicing moderation and mindfulness during Eid ul Fitr, it is also crucial to ensure that the prices of essential commodities remain within reasonable limits throughout the year. This can be achieved through the efforts of government departments such as the Food Control and Standards (FCS) and Consumer Affairs (CA), which can monitor and regulate the prices of goods in the market. By regularly checking market rates, these departments can ensure that consumers are not exploited by unscrupulous traders who may take advantage of special occasions to inflate prices. Therefore, it is essential that the FCS and CA carry out their duties effectively and efficiently, not just during special occasions but throughout the year, to ensure that the rights of consumers are protected, and the market remains fair and equitable for all.

Bottom Line: as we prepare for Eid ul Fitr, let us reflect on the teachings of the Quran and strive to embody the values of moderation, compassion, and gratitude. By doing so, we can contribute to a more just and compassionate world, one where everyone has the opportunity to thrive and live fulfilling lives.

"As we celebrate Eid ul Fitr, let us remember that our actions have the power to make a positive impact on the lives of others and contribute to a more peaceful and harmonious society"

The Author is a Educational Columnist, Motivational Speaker, Associate Editor of the weekly 'Education Quill', Senior EDP Head at DD Target PMT in Kashmir, which is a reputed institute for medical/JEE/Foundation Coaching Classes. Insta id UB19305, akhoun. aubaïd@gmail.com

Celebrating Eid ul Fitr With Mindfulness And Charity



THE ROLE OF ELECTRICAL ENGINEERS IN OUR SOCIETY



ER AIJAZ AHMAD

Electrical engineering is a most vast field that plays a very important role in our modern society. From powering our homes and businesses to developing cutting-edge technologies, electrical engineers are at the leading edge of innovation and progress. In this article, we will discuss the significant role of electrical engineers in our society and how their expertise impacts various aspects of our daily lives.

Power Generation transmission and Distribution

One of the primary responsibilities of electrical engineers is to design, develop, and maintain the systems that generate and distribute electrical power. They work in power plants, substations, and electrical grids to ensure a reliable and efficient supply of electricity to our homes, businesses, and industries. Electrical engineers are responsible for designing and optimizing power generation systems, such as thermal power plants, hydroelectric power plants, wind farms, and solar power systems, to meet the growing demand for electricity in our society. They also work on developing new and sustainable energy sources to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and mitigate the impact of climate change.

Renewable Energy and Sustainability

As the world shifts towards renewable energy sources to combat climate change, electrical engineers play a critical role in developing and implementing sustainable solutions. They work on designing and optimizing renewable energy systems,



such as solar panels, wind turbines, and energy storage systems, to maximize efficiency and reduce environmental impact. Electrical engineers also conduct research and development to improve the performance and reliability of renewable energy technologies, making them more accessible and affordable for widespread adoption.

Infrastructure and Transportation

Electrical engineers are also involved in the design and implementation of infrastructure and transportation systems. They

work on the electrical systems in buildings, including lighting, power distribution, and communication networks, to ensure safety, efficiency, and sustainability. Electrical engineers also play a crucial role in the development of electric vehicles (EVs) and charging infrastructure, as well as other transportation systems, such as railways, airports, and seaports. They design and optimize electrical systems in transportation networks to improve performance, reduce energy consumption, and minimize environmental impact.

Information and Communication Technology

In today's digital world, information and communication technology (ICT) are integral to our society. Electrical engineers are at the forefront of ICT, designing and developing the hardware and software systems that enable communication, data processing, and networking. They work on the design of telecommunications networks, such as wired and wireless communication systems, broadband internet, and satellite communication. Electrical engineers also

develop cutting-edge technologies, such as 5G, IoT (Internet of Things), and AI (Artificial Intelligence), which are transforming various industries and revolutionizing the way we live and work.

Research and Innovation

Electrical engineers are at the forefront of research and innovation, driving technological advancements and shaping the future of our society. They conduct research in various areas, such as power electronics, control systems, signal processing, robotics, and nanotechnology, to develop new technologies and solutions. Electrical engineers work in collaboration with other professionals, such as scientists, computer engineers, and physicists, to solve complex problems and develop innovative solutions to address societal challenges.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the role of electrical engineers in our society is multi-faceted and vital. They are responsible for designing, developing, and maintaining the systems that generate and distribute electrical power, driving renewable energy and sustainability initiatives, designing and optimizing infrastructure and transportation systems, and advancing information and communication technology. Electrical engineers are also at the forefront of research and innovation, contributing to technological advancements that shape the future of our society. Their expertise and contributions are critical to powering our modern world and improving our quality of life.

The significant role of electrical engineers in our society and how their expertise impacts various aspects of our daily lives. Electrical engineers are the spinal cord of our society, because they are power to the world.

Er Aijaz Ahmad is a occasional writer, engineer, social worker. he is the permanent member of international association of engineers

The visit by the General Officer Commanding Central Command was great, General Subramani! He visited military history so salutations to him!



M S NAZKI

I never knew how I should start this one! Today morning many stories are pending in my files, this came up first! I just saw the opening lines and perhaps they were perfect to construct this one. Why, because, we will tell you later!

A man must know his destiny... if he does not recognize it, then he is lost. By this I mean, once, twice, or at the very most, three times, fate will reach out and tap a man on the shoulder... if he has the imagination, he will turn around and fate will point out to him what fork in the road he should take, if he has the guts, he will take it. That is what Central Command Indian Army is all about!

The officers and the men know which finger of the fork to take! In the worst possible situations they emerge out as the best! How and why they know it better!

'It's war or peace that makes generals! I know that all the way!

Finally I will say that anyone can act strategically, it doesn't take much to make a plan. The skill of a general is his or her ability to react strategically when plans fail. This man has this capability!

Again a one liner I got from my friend MS. Nazki and it read, Lt Gen N S Raja Subramani, GOC-in-C Surya Command visited Golden Key Division and reviewed the operational preparedness. He commended all ranks for their professionalism and high morale. This was two days back but now today, so I had my memory racing back to back. I'm not a nervous system expert but I remembered that most available evidence suggests that the functions of memory are carried out by the hippocampus and other related structures in the temporal lobe. A small word hippocampus sent my fingers racing to the keyboards

and thus came into existence this production of ours!

14 Infantry Division RAPID / Golden Key Division: The 14 Rapid Signal Regiment (AREN) war memorial has been constructed in the unit premises on September 21, 1995 in the everlasting memory of L/Hav Ram Meher and Signalmen Surjit Singh Phul who laid down their lives on September 21, 1965 while on communication duty during the Indo-Pak war.

The Golden Key Signal Regiment under the flag of 14 Infantry Division was called upon to blunt Pakistan's attempt to challenge the might of the Indian Army in the western sector. Enemy's intense artillery, bombardment and low flying Sabre jets did not deter dedicated Signallers like L/Hav Ram Meher and Signalmen Surjit Singh Phul from providing excellent communication support.

58 Infantry Brigade under the command of 1 Armoured Division was in the thick of the battle of Chawinda on September 21. L/Hav Ram Meher and Signalmen Surjit Singh Phul of 58 Infantry Brigade Signal Company were manning the B1 link right next to the Battalion Commander sharing with him the enemy firing.

Both of them moved from one trench to another with their man pack radio set ANPRC 25 and ensure uninterrupted radio contact with the brigade headquarters. In this battle one enemy artillery shell scored a direct hit on these fearless Signallers killing them instantaneously.

They had accomplished their mission under most trying conditions and brought eternal glory to their Corps. In the 1971 War, for the first time, the Western front was given secondary priority. Pakistan lost an opportunity in mid-October when India's sole uncommitted reserve grouping (1 Armoured and 14 Infantry Divisions) had not been allowed 'provocative forward concentration' in the hope that a last-minute worldwide diplomatic effort would allow for a situation to develop in East Pakistan in which the refugee masses could go back in safety and honor.

But one thing is dead certain that a legacy had been established and later as the years



rolled over new pedestals were achieved by the Central Command Indian Army!

To commemorate the gallant acts of soldiers belonging to Central Command, who laid down their lives in the defence of our nation, War Memorial was constructed in 1993, next to Surya Auditorium along MG Road. It is one of the most picturesque and suitable locations in Lucknow Cantonment. Apty named 'Smritika', the foundation stone of the magnificent memorial was laid by the then COAS, Gen SF Rodrigues, PVSM, AVSM, VSM, ADC on 05 Jun 1993 and was inaugurated by then Lt Gen YN Sharma, GOC-in-C Central Command on 31 Mar 1994 in a grand yet solemn ceremony. Well laid out lawns and a beautiful garden with various varieties of all weather flowers greet the visitors on their arrival to 'Smritika'. The various stone structures are well lit by strategically placed flood lights and the entire effect puts the visitor in a becalmed state of mind, where-in only pure thoughts abound.

The first book my father (also in the army) presented to me was 'The golden key'! I had no idea as to what I was reading at that time when I was a kid but on an evening walk in Dehradun my father recited a few lines from the book and that got embedded in my heart and brain! The lines were, 'then the old Man of the earth stooped

over the floor of the cave, raised a huge stone from it, and left it leaning. It disclosed a great hole that went plumb-down. 'That is the way,' he said. 'But there are no stairs.' 'you must throw yourself in. There is no other way.'! If a thing has to be done it will have to be whatever be the case! That is what the Central Command Indian Army believes in!

The Golden Key Division Indian Army has some great military monuments and a few I enlist below (About one I have already talked about):

Shatrujeet War Memorial Agra:

To commemorate the gallant acts of Paratroopers, who laid down their lives in the defence of our nation, War Memorial was constructed in 1991, at Agra. Memorial was made of Agra Eastern Baked Bricks, set up on the Chambal sand and overlaid with Dholpur sandstone. The Shatrujeet memorial was constructed by 411(I) Para Field Company (The Bombay Sappers) and in recognition of the tradition of the valour of the Para fraternity was presented to 50 Independent PARA Brigade on its Golden Jubilee on 26 Oct 1991. Memorial was beautified by replacing sandstone with exquisite black granite in Sep 2009.

The Grenadiers war memorial at Jabalpur:

The Grenadiers War Memorial at the Grenadiers Regt Centre, Jabalpur is the representation of the glory of the Grinders' in their historically 'unparallel' tradition of valour, bravery and secularism. Designed initially by Lt Col (Retd) CP Diddi and constructed in the 1981, the memorial was inaugurated by Lt Gen SL Menezes, PVSM 24 Nov 1981. It was redesigned and reconstructed in the year 2010 while the concept of the War Memorial was kept as that of the original one. The monument stands on a broad tapered base which is almost thirty feet high symbolizing the bedrock on which the Regimental ethos are built. The monument has been constructed in black, white and French grey colour which represent Regimental colors of the Grenadier Regiment the Indian Army!

Yet another one is the 'Prerna Sthal War Memorial' at Dehradun:

Inaugurated on the occasion of Vijay Diwas 2022, in memory of martyrs of Golden Key Division, Prerna Sthal is located in Clement Town, Dehradun, overlooking the iconic 'Kala Ground' of erstwhile Joint Services Wing. The maintenance free aesthetics of the Memorial is made up of marble on which golden letters reading out the names of fallen heroes of 1965 and 1971 operations have been inscribed. Crafty portraits and Gita verses on the walls complete the solemn architecture of the Memorial, which inspires all ranks to realize the formation motto 'Golden Key to Victory'.

Well we will be telling you many stories about Central Command and the heroes they produced! So to conclude I will say what I just read, The book was the same as the pages had gone yellow, my Dad handed it to me 39 years back 'You have tasted death now,' said the old man. 'Is it good?' 'It is good,' said the young kid growing up. 'It is better than life.' 'No,' said the old man: 'it is only more life!' Just think it over and remember the great souls of the Central Command Indian Army who gave up their lives for not caring about their tomorrow!

President Murmu says villages are basic units to develop entire country; Confers National Panchayat Awards

HT News Network

New Delhi: President Droupadi Murmu today inaugurated the National Panchayat Awards Week and conferred the National Panchayat Awards at the 'National Conference on Incentivisation of Panchayats-cum-Award Ceremony' in New Delhi.

Addressing the gathering, the President said that the villages are the basic units to develop the entire country, which need to develop first. She said that villagers should have the right to develop their village as per their choice. Acknowledging the efforts of the women, the President said that all-round development of the society is possible only with the participation of women. She stressed that attention should be paid to maintaining peace and harmony in the villages.

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj is celebrating National Panchayat Awards Week commencing today to the 21st of this month, as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav 2.0 in the run-up to the National Panchayati



Raj Day scheduled on 24th April. The Ministry has conceptualized a series of Thematic Conferences based on the theme of "Panchayat ke Sankalpon ki Siddhi ka Utsav" to celebrate this monumental occasion. The Ministry said that under the series, five National Conferences covering nine themes under Localisation of Sustainable Development Goals through Panchayati Raj Institutions and Way Forward for 2047 will be organised during the Week Celebrations.

Our correspondent reports that more than one thousand 500 delegates from across the country

participated in the event. Union Minister of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Giriraj Singh, Union Minister of State for Panchayati Raj Kapil Moreshwar Patil, and Union Minister of State for Rural Development Fagga Singh Kulaste were also present at the event. Addressing the gathering, the President said that the villages are the basic units to develop the entire country, which need to develop first. She said that villagers should have the right to develop their village as per their choice. Acknowledging the efforts of the women, the President said that all-round develop-

ment of the society is possible only with the participation of women. She stressed that attention should be paid to maintaining peace and harmony in the villages.

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj is celebrating National Panchayat Awards Week commencing today to the 21st of this month, as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav 2.0 in the run-up to the National Panchayati Raj Day scheduled on 24th April. The Ministry has conceptualized a series of Thematic Conferences based on the theme of "Panchayat ke Sankalpon ki Siddhi ka Utsav" to celebrate this monumental occasion. The Ministry said that under the series, five National Conferences covering nine themes under Localisation of Sustainable Development Goals through Panchayati Raj Institutions and Way Forward for 2047 will be organised during the Week Celebrations. Our correspondent reports that more than one thousand 500 delegates from across the country participated in the event. Union Minister

"Remove 50% Reservation Cap": Rahul Gandhi To PM Modi

HT News Network

New Delhi: The Congress on Monday accused the government of resorting to caste-based politics to attack the Opposition and resisting a socio-economic and caste census in the country.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi said that the underprivileged need economic and political power and not empty words as he again called for removing the 50 per cent cap on quota and demanded reservations for Dalits and tribals based on their population.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge has also written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi demanding an up-to-date caste census, saying meaningful social justice and empowerment programmes are incomplete in the absence of such data.

"Prime Minister ji, the underprivileged need political and economic power, not empty words," Mr Gandhi said in a tweet in Hindi.

"Take these three steps: Make the 2011 census figures public, tell how many OBCs are there in the coun-



try and remove the 50 per cent cap on reservations. Give reservation to Dalits, tribals according to their population," he said.

Mr Kharge stressed that conducting the census is the responsibility of the Union Government "I am writing to you to once again place on record the demand of the Indian National Congress for an up-to-date Caste Census. My colleagues and I have raised this demand earlier in both Houses of Parliament on a number of occasions as have leaders of many other opposition parties," the Congress chief said in his letter dated April 16.

Congress leader Kanhaiya Kumar said if the government is really concerned about the OBCs, why

is it "reluctant" to issue the data pertaining to caste and social and economic status. He also echoed the demand to carry out a caste and social-economic census in the country to ascertain the number of people and their economic and social status that will help formulate its policies.

"The prime minister claims he belongs to the other backward classes. If the government really loves the OBCs, then it becomes important to ask some questions to the government. Why is the Government of India so reluctant to issue the data pertaining to caste and social and economic status of people in the country," he asked.

Mr Kumar alleged that ever since the new govern-

ment has come to power, no data has been issued and the 2021 census has also not been done.

Noting that in digital India, data is very important and whoever will have it will be the leading power, he said the country should know how many people are there, their caste and economic status. "Prime Minister ji, the underprivileged need political and economic power, not empty words," Mr Gandhi said in a tweet in Hindi.

"Take these three steps: Make the 2011 census figures public, tell how many OBCs are there in the country and remove the 50 per cent cap on reservations. Give reservation to Dalits, tribals according to their population," he said.

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PM To Inaugurate Global Buddhist Summit In Delhi To Be Held On April 20-21

HT News Network

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate a two-day Global Buddhist Summit in Delhi, to be held later this week, that will see the participation of eminent Buddhist monks, scholars and delegates from various parts of the world. Union Culture Minister G Kishan Reddy said on Monday.

Addressing a press conference in Delhi, he said the conference will be held at The Ashok hotel on April 20-21.

Apple Chief Tim Cook To Meet PM Modi Amid Expansion: Report

HT News Network

New Delhi: Apple Chief Executive Tim Cook will meet India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi and its deputy IT minister as part of his visit to inaugurate the iPhone maker's first retail store in the country this week, people familiar with the plans said. The visit by Tim Cook to open the first official company-owned outlets in Mumbai and New Delhi this week underscores Apple's growing ambitions for India, where despite having just a 3% market share the company has been expanding iPhone assembly via contract manufacturers, and also boosting its exports. Tim Cook will meet PM Modi on Wednesday in New Delhi, said the two sources, who included an Indian government official. One of the sources added the Apple chief would also meet India's deputy IT minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar. PM Modi's office declined to comment, while Apple and the IT ministry did not immediately respond to requests for comment. The sources did not elaborate, but Cook's meetings come amid Apple's growing focus on India, the world's second-largest smartphone market.

AAP Leader Gopal Italia Arrested Over Remarks Against Gujarat Minister, Granted Bail

HT News Network

New Delhi: Gujarat Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Gopal Italia has been arrested by the Surat Crime Branch over his controversial comments on state Home Minister Harsh Sanghavi at a rally before the Gujarat election in November last year. He was granted bail soon after he was arrested. Mr Italia, who was propped up by party chief Arvind Kejriwal as one of the key leaders of the AAP in the Gujarat election, had taken a swipe at the state Home Minister as "Drugs Sanghavi", according to a first information report (FIR) filed by a BJP worker. The complaint said Mr Italia defamed a respectable person. Mr Kejriwal tweeted that the BJP, "shocked" with the AAP's performance in the Gujarat election, arrested Mr Italia. "The BJP is so shocked by the spectacular performance of the Aam Aadmi Party in Gujarat that it has now arrested our Gujarat leader Gopal Italia. Now BJP has only one aim, how to finish Aam Aadmi Party. These people will put everyone in jail one by one," the Delhi Chief Minister tweeted, a day after he was questioned for nearly nine hours by the Central Bureau of Investigation as a witness in a case.

Supreme Court Seeks Delhi Police's Reply On FIR Request Against BJP's Anurag Thakur

HT News Network

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Monday asked the Delhi Police to respond to the plea of CPI(M) leader Brinda Karat challenging the Delhi High Court's order dismissing a petition against the trial court's refusal to order the registration of an FIR against Union Minister Anurag Thakur and BJP MP Pravesh Verma for their alleged hate speeches on anti-CAA protests.

A bench of Justices KM Joseph and BV Nagarathna issued the notice to the city police and sought its response within three weeks. During the hearing, the bench observed that prima facie the magistrate's stand that sanction was required for lodging FIRs against the two BJP leaders was not correct. On June 13 last year, the Delhi High Court dismissed the petition filed by CPI(M) leaders Brinda Karat and KM Tiwari against the two BJP MPs for their alleged hate speeches. The high court had refused to interfere with the trial court's order, saying that under the law, a sanction is required to be obtained from the competent authority for the registration of FIR in the present facts. The petitioners had claimed in their complaint before the trial court that Mr Thakur and Mr Verma had sought



to "incite people, as a result of which three incidents of firing took place at two different protest sites in Delhi". The petitioners alleged, at a rally in Rithala in the national capital on January 27, 2020, Mr Thakur egged on the crowd to raise an incendiary slogan -- "shoot the traitors" -- after lashing out at anti-CAA protesters of Shaheen Bagh.

They claimed Mr Verma, too, made an inflammatory speech against the Shaheen Bagh protesters on January 28, 2020.

The trial court had on August 26, 2021 dismissed the petitioners' complaint on the ground that it was not sustainable as the requisite sanction from the central

"Conspiracy To...": Mamata Banerjee On Amit Shah's '35 Seats' Remark

HT News Network

Kolkata: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Monday slammed Home Minister Amit Shah for his "undemocratic" and "unconstitutional" remarks that the Trinamool government won't survive beyond 2025 if the BJP wins 35 seats in the next year's Lok Sabha polls.

She also called for his resignation over the comments he had made during a rally on April 14. "On Friday, Amit Shah addressed a rally. That is fine. But how can the Union home minister of the country talk about toppling a democratically elected government of a state? Is the constitution of the country being changed? He can never make such a comment that if BJP wins 35 Lok Sabha seats, the state government won't complete the full term," Ms Banerjee told reporters.

The Mamata Banerjee government is scheduled to complete its third term in 2026. While addressing a public rally at Suri in Birbhum district, Mr Shah set a target for the BJP to win 35 Lok Sabha seats from West Bengal and said the incumbent Mamata Banerjee government in the state won't survive beyond 2025 if the goal is



achieved. The Trinamool chief claimed Amit Shah's remarks prove that "a conspiracy is being hatched to dislodge the state government", and added that the home minister should not speak like a "goon". Referring to CBI's summons to her Delhi counterpart Arvind Kejriwal, Ms Banerjee said, "Are they trying to send out a message that a chief minister can be summoned and questioned? If a Chief Minister can be questioned, why can't the home minister be questioned too?" she said. Ms Banerjee claimed that the BJP won't return to power in the next parliamentary polls, reiterating the appeal to the opposition leaders to unite against the saffron party ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

SIT to probe Atiq, Ashraf murder case

HT News Network

Prayagraj/Lucknow, Apr 17 (UNI) The Prayagraj police has constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to investigate the murder of mafia-turned-politician Atiq Ahmed and his brother Khalid Azeem alias Ashraf during police custody. An order in this regard has been issued by the Commissioner of Police (CP) Prayagraj Ramit Sharma on Sunday. Besides, Director General of Police (DGP) RK Vishwakarma on Monday constituted a team led by ADG Prayagraj zone Bhanu Bhaskar which will supervise the investigation done by the SIT. The CP in its order has stated that a case had been lodged at Shahganj police station in connection with murders of Atiq and Ashraf while being taken for medical examination on April 15 which is being investigated by the Station House Officer (SHO) Shahganj. He has stated that to ensure free and qualitative investigation, recording statements of the witnesses, collecting electronic and documented evidence, forensic and scientific evidence and to get them tested as the forensic science laboratory it would be appropriate to get the investigation done by the SIT.

The CP has appointed Additional Deputy Police Commissioner (Crime) Satish Chandra as the chief investigator. He will be assisted by Assistant



Police Commissioner Satyendra Prasad Tiwari and Inspector of Crime Cell of Crime Branch Om Prakash.

Meanwhile, DGP has constituted a supervisory team led by ADG Bhanu Bhaskar to monitor the probe being done by the SIT. CP Prayagraj Ramit Sharma and Director of Forensic Science Laboratory (FSL), Lucknow will be the members of the team.

The team will closely supervise the investigation along with analysing physical exhibits, sequential, concrete and verifiable evidence, digital, technical and scientific evidence and issue directives and guidance to the SIT from time to time.

The supervisory team will also handle and ensure compliance of the

11 people die of sunstroke near Mumbai after open-air award function

HT News Network

At least eleven people died on Sunday after suffering from sunstroke at an event attended by India's home minister on the outskirts of Mumbai, the chief minister of Maharashtra state said.

Hundreds of thousands of people attended an award function on Sunday afternoon where federal home minister Amit Shah presented an award to a well-known social activist, on the outskirts of the country's financial capital of Mumbai in Maharashtra.

The event was held outdoors in the afternoon in Khar, where the maximum temperature recorded was 38 degrees Celsius (100.4°F), normal for this time of the year.

Around 50 people were admitted to hospital after the event and 11 had died, Maharashtra's chief minister, Eknath Shinde, told reporters late on Sunday night.

Earlier, the weather office had said that India is likely to experience heat waves between March and May in 2023.

"Enhanced probability of occurrence of a heat wave during March to May season is likely over many regions of Central and adjoining Northwest India," the India Meteorological Department (IMD) had said.

Last year, government officials had warned that India could see more frequent heat waves in future and that average temperatures, even during the monsoon season, have been rising over the last two decades.

In a letter sent to all states and union territories in Feb, India's health ministry had said that temperatures in the country had already touched unusual highs in some places.

Fighting rages in Sudan as death toll climbs to 97

HT News Network

Explosions rocked the Sudanese capital Khartoum Monday as fighting between the regular army and paramilitaries raged for a third day with the death toll rising to nearly 100. The violence erupted Saturday after weeks of power struggles between Sudan's army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and his deputy, Mohamed Hamdan Daglo, who commands the powerful paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF). The raging battles triggered a wide international outcry with appeals for an immediate ceasefire and dialogue.

"The death toll among civilians in clashes since it began on Saturday... has reached 97," the doctors' union said in a statement early Monday, noting the figure does not include all casualties as many could not reach hospitals due to difficulties in movement.

It said hundreds of civilians were wounded in the clashes.

Loud gunfire and deafening explosions echoed across the streets of Khartoum Monday morning as clashes continued,



according to AFP journalists.

Astench of gunpowder lingered as plumes of thick black smoke emanated from damaged buildings, according to witnesses.

The fighting broke out after bitter disagreements between Burhan and Daglo over the planned integration of the RSF into the regular army — a key condition for a final deal aimed at

ending a crisis since the 2021 military coup they orchestrated together. The coup has already derailed a transition to civilian rule following the 2019 ouster of President Omar al-Bashir and piled on a spiralling economic crisis in Sudan. The clashes forced Sudanese to hunker down in their homes with fears of a prolonged conflict that could plunge the

country into deeper chaos, dashing hopes for a return to civilian rule. People carrying their belongings walk along a street in Khartoum on April 16, 2023, as fighting between the forces of 2 rival generals continues. — AFP

Since Saturday, the two sides have traded blame over who started the fighting. Each has claimed the upper hand by declar-

ing control of key sites, including the airport and the presidential palace but none of their claims could be independently verified.

Fighting also raged in others parts of Sudan including the western Darfur region and in the eastern border state of Kassala.

The Saturday killing of three staff from the World Food Programme in North Darfur clashes prompted the agency to suspend all operations in the impoverished country. Medics have pleaded for safe corridors for ambulances and a ceasefire to treat the victims because the streets are too dangerous for transporting casualties to hospital. The RSF was created under Bashir in 2013, emerging from the Janjaweed militia that his government unleashed against non-Arab ethnic minorities in Darfur a decade earlier, drawing accusations of war crimes.

The latest violence sparked by the two generals has reflected the deep-seated divisions between the regular army and the RSF.

Despite the wide calls for a ceasefire, the two generals appeared in no mood for talks.

Not lobbying for Imran Khan, say US lawmaker, diplomat

HT News Network



WASHINGTON: A senior US lawmaker, Brad Sherman, has said that former prime minister Imran Khan has assured him that he was not against America.

Mr Sherman, a Democrat Congressman from California, and the chief negotiator of the US-Taliban deal have both rejected the suggestion that they support former Mr Khan's campaign for regaining power.

Mr Sherman, however, confirmed that he spoke with Mr Khan recently and shared with him his concerns over alleged human rights violations in Pakistan.

In that telephone call, Mr Khan told him that "he believes in the rule of law" and wants good relations with the United States, Mr Sherman said in an interview with VOA Urdu this weekend.

Last week, Mr Sherman wrote a letter to US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, asking him to "use all diplomatic channels to urge Pakistani authorities to investigate the alleged abuses and to hold accountable anybody who may be responsible".

Like Mr Sherman, Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad, who negotiated the US-Taliban deal, also rejected the impression that he was lobbying for Imran Khan. Recently, Mr Khalilzad released several tweets, condemning alleged human rights violations in Pakistan and calling for fresh elections.

Earlier this week, former president Asif Zardari told a Pakistani TV channel that Mr Khalilzad was doing so because "someone might have acquired his services" and that's why he was supporting Imran Khan.

Mr Khalilzad used Twitter to respond to Mr Zardari's allegation as well. "I do not lobby for anyone or any country and am no one's agent," he wrote.

Putin hails military relations with China

HT News Network

Moscow: Russian President Vladimir Putin met Chinese Defence Minister Li Shangfu in Moscow on Sunday and hailed military cooperation between the two nations, which have declared a "no limits" partnership.

Footage of the meeting posted by the Kremlin showed Putin shaking hands with Li and then sitting down at a table. Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu was also present.

"Development of relations between our two nations is going well in all areas — in the economy, social, cultural and educational sectors, and in military departments," Putin said in opening remarks. Beijing had announced Li's visit to Moscow last week, saying he would meet defence officials, but made no mention of a meeting with Putin.

Chinese President Xi Jinping met Putin in Moscow last month. Russia and China have moved to further strengthen their economic, political and military ties since Moscow sent tens of thousands of troops into Ukraine in February 2022.

Ukrainian forces are finding a growing number of components from China in Russian weapons used in Ukraine, a senior official in Kyiv said on Friday. China has repeatedly denied sending military equipment to Russia.

China's rocket launch sent debris into sea, says Taiwan

HT News Network

TAIPEI: China said on Sunday it had launched a satellite into orbit, with authorities in Taiwan saying rocket debris had fallen into the sea where Beijing announced a no-sail zone this week.

Maritime authorities in China's eastern Fujian province this week banned ships from an area north of Taiwan from 9am to 3pm on Sunday due to "possible falling rocket wreckage".

Taiwan's transport ministry said Beijing had also planned to prohibit aircraft from entering the zone — criss-crossed by a number of international routes — for around half an hour from 9:30am, though Chinese authorities later criticised the claim as inaccurate.

The announcements came days after Beijing declared an end to large-scale military drills around Taiwan carried out as a furious response to its leader Tsai Ing-wen's recent visit to the United States.

Chinese state media on Sunday announced the successful launch of a "new meteorological satellite" from a space centre in northwestern China at 9:36am. Footage released by state broadcaster CCTV showed a white rocket blasting off into clear skies from the launch centre in arid Gansu province, leaving a plume of smoke and dust in its wake. Taipei's defence ministry said the satellite's orbit "passed over the seas off (the) northern coast of Taiwan" and that "some rocket wreckage fell into the warning area".

"The military has used joint intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance measures to monitor the situation of the rocket launch," the ministry said. The debris "did not affect our homeland security", it added.

Beijing's Xinhua news agency reported that the launch of the Long March 4B rocket had carried the Fengyun-3 07 satellite "into its preset orbit".

"Internal Issue Of Afghanistan": Taliban On Ban On Women Working For UN

HT News Network

Kabul, Afghanistan: A ban on Afghan women working for the United Nations was an internal issue, the country's Taliban authorities said Wednesday, adding that the decision "should be respected by all sides".

Taliban authorities triggered international outrage earlier this month after extending a December ban on Afghan women working for non-governmental organisations to the UN.

"The Islamic Emirate does not want to create obstacles for the United Nations," Taliban government spokesman Zabihullah Mujahid said in a statement on Wednesday. "Rather, it wants to make it clear that this is an internal issue of Afghanistan which does not create a problem for anyone and should be respected by all sides." Under their austere interpretation of Islam, Taliban authorities have imposed a slew of restrictions on Afghan women since seizing power in 2021, including banning them from higher education and many government jobs. The UN said Tuesday the ban was forcing it to make an "appalling choice" on whether to continue operations in Afghanistan. The world body said it cannot comply with the ban as it was "unlawful under international law, including the UN Charter". Mujahid, however, said there was no "discrimination" in



the decision. "On the contrary, considering the religious and cultural interests, we are committed to all the rights of our people."

The increasing curbs on women are reminiscent of the Taliban's first government between 1996 and 2001, when the UN said they were responsible for repeated human rights violations — particularly against girls and women.

Since the ban was announced, the UN has ordered all its Afghan staff — men and women — not to report to work until further notice.

Taliban authorities justified the December ban on the grounds they had received "serious complaints" that women were not observing the group's interpretation of Islamic dress codes.

Several NGOs suspended operations in the country in protest, piling further misery on Afghanistan's citizens — half of whom face hunger, according to aid agencies.

Cops Suspect Use Of Homemade Pipe Bombs To Attack Japan PM: Report

HT News Network

Tokyo: Police are probing the possibility that the objects used in the Saturday attack on Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida could be homemade pipe bombs, investigators said Sunday, Japan Times reported.

The revelation came as police raided the home of Ryujin Kimura, the 24-year-old suspect, in Kawanishi, Hyogo Prefecture, in the early hours of Sunday.

Conducting wires found on both ends of one of the cylinders, which resembled a steel pipe, led investigators to believe that the objects may be pipe bombs, as such devices have gunpowder sealed inside a cylinder which is detonated by igniting a fuse, Japan Times wrote quoting NHK.

Police are still investigating whether the devices were designed to be lethal.

The suspect, Kimura was also carrying a knife in his backpack at the scene, investigative sources said.

On Saturday evening, police reportedly urged residents near Kimura's home to evacuate to a nearby community centre as they feared explosives could be found. The neighbours were allowed to return home before dawn on Sunday after authorities confirmed it was safe, Japan Times reported.

The searches began at 1am Sunday (Local Time) and lasted eight hours. Police removed more than a dozen cardboard boxes believed to contain confiscated items in connection with the incident, seizing what appeared to be gunpowder and a computer among other items.

Kishida spoke to reporters on Sunday



commenting on the incident, calling violent attacks during elections "unforgivable."

He added that details on security will be verified as the investigation moves forward and that the nation must ensure safety during the upcoming Group of Seven summit and other events that bring together dignitaries from around the world.

"Together with the people of Japan, we will do our utmost to ensure safety during the diplomatic schedule," Kishida said.

Kishida was unharmed in the attack, with his security detail taking him to safety shortly before the sound of an explosion rang out and Kimura was subdued. One police officer suffered minor injuries on his left arm, Japan Times reported.

During the attack, Kimura reportedly had two cylindrical objects, believed to be pipe bombs about 20 to 30 centimetres long. One object thrown by Kimura landed around a meter from the prime minister as he was about to begin a stump speech for a candidate in a Lower House by-election at Saikazaki fishing port in the city of Wakayama.

EU warns against unilateral steps after Poland, Hungary ban Ukrainian grain

HT News Network

WARSAW: Unilateral action on trade by European Union member states is unacceptable, a European Commission spokesperson said on Sunday, after Poland and Hungary announced bans on grain and other food imports from Ukraine to protect the local agricultural sector.

After Russia's invasion blocked some Black Sea ports, large quantities of Ukrainian grain, which is cheaper than that produced in the European Union, ended up staying in Central European states due to logistical bottlenecks, hitting prices and sales for local farmers.

The issue has created a political problem for

Poland's ruling nationalist important to underline that



Law and Justice (PiS) party in an election year as it has angered people in rural areas where support for PiS is usually high.

"We are aware of Poland and Hungary's announcements regarding the ban on imports of grain and other agricultural products from Ukraine," the spokesperson said in an emailed statement. "In this context, it is

trade policy is of EU exclusive competence and, therefore, unilateral actions are not acceptable." "In such challenging times, it is crucial to coordinate and align all decisions within the EU," the statement added. After Russia's invasion blocked some Black Sea ports, large quantities of Ukrainian grain, which is cheaper than that produced in the Euro-

pean Union, ended up staying in Central European states due to logistical bottlenecks, hitting prices and sales for local farmers.

The issue has created a political problem for Poland's ruling nationalist Law and Justice (PiS) party in an election year as it has angered people in rural areas where support for PiS is usually high.

"We are aware of Poland and Hungary's announcements regarding the ban on imports of grain and other agricultural products from Ukraine," the spokesperson said in an emailed statement. "In this context, it is important to underline that trade policy is of EU exclusive competence and, therefore, unilateral actions are not acceptable." "In such challenging times,

After major Yemen prisoner swap, another 104 released: ICRC

HT News Network

More than 100 prisoners of war were flown from Saudi Arabia to Yemen on Monday, further buoying peace hopes a day after a major exchange of 869 captives ended, the ICRC said.

Two International Committee of the Red Cross planes carrying 48 prisoners each flew to Sanaa, Yemen's rebel-held capital, while a third with eight captives took off for government-controlled Aden in the south, the humanitarian group said.

The "unilateral" release is outside the terms of the three-day exchange that was negotiated between Yemen's Huthi rebels and government officials and finished on Sunday, ICRC media advisor Jessica Moussan told AFP.

"We welcome this initiative and are pleased to see that humanitarian considerations are being taken for the sake of reuniting families," Moussan said.

"This will bring immense relief to the families of the detainees," she added. The ICRC is "facilitating" the transfer by providing air transport and logistical support, and by interviewing the captives, Moussan said.

The release of 104 captives, days before the major Muslim festival of Eid al-Fitr, takes the total number to 973 freed since Friday.

The Iran-backed Huthis seized Sanaa in 2014, prompting a Saudi-led military intervention months later.

Chairman DDC Budgam conducts Public Darbar at Narbal Urges locals to continue providing feedback & suggestions

HT News Network

BUDGAM, APRIL 17: Chairman, District Development Council (DDC) Budgam, Nazir Ahmad Khan today conducted a public darbar at Narbal to take firsthand appraisal of issues and demands of local populace.

The darbar was attended by the BDC Narbal, senior officers, PRI members and local public.

The aim of the public darbar was to provide a platform to the people of Narbal to voice their concerns and

grievances to the district development council. The event was well-attended and witnessed active participation from the locals who highlighted various issues related to the development of the region. During the public darbar, Khan listened to the problems faced by the locals and assured them of prompt action. He directed the concerned officials to take immediate steps to address the issues and to ensure that the benefits of government schemes and programs reach the last person in the line. BDC Narbal and senior officers also spoke on the occa-



sion and urged the people to actively participate in the development of their area by providing valuable feedback and suggestions. The Chairman DDC Budgam expressed his gratitude towards the people of Narbal for their active participation and assured them that their issues would be taken up on priority for resolution. He also urged the locals to continue providing feedback and suggestions to ensure that the district development council works for their welfare. The public darbar concluded with a vote of thanks to all the attendees and the commit-

ment to organize similar events in the future to ensure transparency and accountability in the administration. BDC Narbal and senior officers also spoke on the occasion and urged the people to actively participate in the development of their area by providing valuable feedback and suggestions.

The Chairman DDC Budgam expressed his gratitude towards the people of Narbal for their active participation and assured them that their issues would be taken up on priority for resolution. He also urged the locals to continue providing feedback.

DC Srinagar pays visit at Dargah Hazratbal Finalises arrangements for auspicious occasions of Shab-e-Qadr and Eid-ul-Fitr

HT News Network

SRINAGAR APRIL 17:- In order to review the arrangements for observance of auspicious occasion of Shab-e-Qadr and upcoming celebrations of Eid-ul-Fitr, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad Monday morning undertook a visit to Hazratbal Dargah in order to take onsite review of the arrangements being made by all line Departments for smooth conduct of the auspicious religious occasions.

The Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by Additional District Development Commissioner, Srinagar, Zahoor Ahmad Mir, Additional Deputy Commissioner Syed Shabir Ahmad, SP Traffic, Muzafar Ahmad Shah, Superin-



tending Engineer R&B, SP Hazratbal, SDM East, Chief Planning Officer, Joint Commissioner SMC, Deputy Director Information, BMO Hazratbal, Tehsildar Eidgah/ North, Executive Engineer PHE, ARTO, and senior Officers of SRTC,

PDD and other line Departments, besides Administrator of J&K Wakf Board and senior members of Hazratbal Shrine Management. While chairing a meeting in the premises of the Hazratbal Shrine, the DC on the occasion

sought a detailed action plan from concerned Departments regarding the arrangements put in place for observance of auspicious occasion of Shab-e-Qadr and upcoming celebrations of Eid-ul-Fitr related to supply of water and electricity, cleanliness measures, dog menace, fire service, transport, parking and medical facilities etc.

The measures to tackle any kind of inconvenience caused in inclement weather conditions were also discussed.

The DC directed the Officers of all line Departments to ensure special arrangements for smooth observance of the pious religious occasions at the Shrine for the Devotees particularly during the intervening night (Shab-e-Qadr) 26-27th Ramzan-ul Mubarak 1444 Hijri, which falls on inter-

vening night of 17-18 April, 2023 and on upcoming celebrations of auspicious occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr.

With regard to ensuring adequate supply of water, the DC asked the PHE authorities to ensure uninterrupted water supply at the Shrine so that devotees do not face any inconvenience. He instructed them to keep a sufficient number of water tankers at the premises to cater to the demand.

The DC was apprised that 50000 Gallon OH water Tank is already in place at the Shrine, besides 220 water posts are installed to suffice the requirements of the devotees while additional 20 temporary water posts are being installed at the shrine.

Similarly, the PDD Engineers were asked to ensure uninterrupted power supply at the Shrine.

ALLEN launches Superapp for PG Medical Aspirants

HT News Network

Srinagar, Apr 17, KNT: ALLEN, a leading name in medical coaching across India, has announced the launch of the ALLEN NEXT App, a cutting-edge platform designed to provide PG medical students with a comprehensive solution for NEET-PG, INI-CET, and FMGE exam preparation. The app offers a range of unique features and resources, setting it apart from other exam preparation platforms in the market.

Aman Maheshwari, Whole Time Executive, ALLEN NEXT Vertical, said, "Our goal with the ALLEN NEXT App is to make the medical PG entrance exam preparation process simpler and more accessible for students, regardless of their hectic schedules. By providing a complete roadmap to crack NEET-PG, INI-CET, and FMGE exams, we aim to empower PG medical students to achieve their academic and professional goals with ease."

The app eliminates the need for multiple resources and provides up-to-date and concise academic content from exclusive star faculties.

The three comprehensive course packages - Alpha, Beta, and Delta - cater to the diverse needs of students while ensuring they have access to the best resources for their preparations.

The ALLEN NEXT app is available for download on both the Play Store and App Store, making it easily accessible for students. Additionally, ALLEN NEXT offline centers will soon be launched across the country, providing students with the opportunity for classroom learning. [KNT]

DC Gandarbal inspects arrangements for Youth Entrepreneurship Festival at GDC

HT News Network

GANDERBAL, APRIL 17: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Gandarbal, Shyambir today inspected the available infrastructure in GDC Gandarbal where many events related to the Youth Entrepreneurship Festival are to be held. During the visit, the DC took a round of available infrastructure at GDC and gave necessary instructions for making arrangements to carry out various activities during the Festival. On the occasion, the DC took detailed discussion with the Program Director MGN, IIM Jammu which is academic partner for Youth Entrepreneurship Festival, regarding the setting of Entrepreneurship Development cell at GDC and it was also proposed that the Cell should be run by the College students where Innovation labs, Idea Incubation labs and Tinkering Labs shall be set. The DC gave necessary directions to the concerned for taking necessary steps for renovation of main block, auditorium, main ground and beautification of road from Towheed Chowk to Qamaria Stadium.

He also directed for making the Youth Lane alongside the venue where a number of Youth Engaging Mural Paintings shall be painted on the walls.

The DC also checked the venue for Success and Innovation talk events in which experts of innovation and successful entrepreneurs of the district shall deliver their sessions and share their success stories.

Prof. Shahid Rasool appointed Dean Academic Affairs, CUK

HT News Network

Gandarbal, Apr 15: In a first, the Central University of Kashmir (CUK) Vice Chancellor, Prof. A Ravinder Nath appointed Dean School of Media Studies, Prof. Shahid Rasool, as Dean Academic Affairs of the varsity on Thursday. Prof. Shahid is the first Dean Academic Affairs of the University. In a separate order Prof. Shahid was also appointed as Officer on Special Duty (OSD) to Hon'ble Vice Chancellor.

A former US Fulbright Fellow in Communication Technology, from Syracuse University, New York, Prof. Shahid has earlier served as Director, CEMCA, Commonwealth of Learning, Vancouver, Canada; Director, EMRC, University of Kashmir; Media Advisor, University of Kashmir; Head, Media Education Research Centre, UoK; Executive Director, BBC-WST project for promoting social affairs reporting and State Coordinator - Fundamental Duties and Rights Cell, for 70th year Celebrations of Indian Constitution in UTs of Ladakh and J&K.

Appointed as Director (Professor) EMMRC, KU in 2007, Prof. Shahid has over 34 years of experience in teaching, research, production, and direction of educational films, e-Content, Multimedia and MOOCs, authored scores of research papers/policy reports/articles, and one Book

Sajad Ahmad Lone greets people on the eve of Shab-e-Qadr

Lone Musaib

Baramulla:-The President Affarwat-XI Sports Club Sajad Ahmad Lone has extended his heartiest greetings to the people on the eve of Shab-e-Qadr.

In his message of felicitations, Sajad Ahmad Lone said "I pray that may the Allah (SWT) accepts your dua, protects your family, and relieves your stress on this special night. Have a blessed time and tons of Shab e Qadr wishes; he added. Lone further added and hoped the auspicious occasion of Shab-e-Qadr will usher in an era peace and overall development across Jammu and Kashmir

FCS&CA penalized 52 erring traders with Rs. 27600 for violating ECA, 1955

SRINAGAR, APRIL 17: The Enforcement squad of Food Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) Department under the supervision of Assistant Director Enforcement, Fayaz Ahmad Shah today penalized 52 erring traders with a sum of Rs. 27600 in Srinagar for violating ECA, 1955. The action against the erring was taken during a massive market checking drive held within the vicinity of Srinagar City i.e. Sonwar, Rawalpora, Qamarwari, Bernina, Batmaloo, Hari Singh High Street, Mehraj Bazar, Melijoor Nagar, Rainwari, Zonimar, Lal Bazar, Saida Kadal, etc.

JK Govt to launch Kisan Sampark Abhiyan envisaging practical trainings, online courses, IT services Unique opportunity to foster agri-preneurship in UT, says Atal Dulloo

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 17: The Agriculture Production Department in Jammu and Kashmir is all set to launch the Kisan Sampark Abhiyan, a program aimed at overall welfare of farmers across the Union Territory.

In this regard, Additional Chief Secretary, Agriculture Production Department, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a meeting to review progress on preparations being put in place for program launch. The Abhiyan will be launched across 3565 panchayats in Jammu and Kashmir from 24th April 2023 which will last for 4 months. The program aims to involve Panchayati Raj Institutions in the scheme and celebrate 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' as part of the program. To ensure success of the ambitious program, 2400 resource persons have been identified and trained for all districts besides 45



educational videos in multiple languages have been created to educate farmers and pamphlets have been printed in Urdu, Hindi and English.

The Kisan Sampark Abhiyan will include question and answer sessions for the farmers. Furthermore, the farmers will receive education about 18 Centrally Sponsored Schemes that have been designed for their welfare and development.

Additionally, manual passbooks under the Kisan Credit Card scheme will be replaced by smart cards for the farmers. This change is

aimed at helping farmers increase their spending in the sector, ultimately leading to an improvement in their productivity and production.

In addition to the Kisan Sampark Abhiyan, the Agriculture Production Department will launch Daksh Kisan, an online skilling platform that will provide farmers with learning opportunities. The platform will include 1700 videos across 118 courses in Urdu, Hindi, Dogri and Kashmiri. The course material with 20000 pages will cover several modules, including

business management and entrepreneurship. The completion of the course will provide learners with certificates from SKUAST. The entire program is free of cost, making it an unprecedented initiative for the farming community of Jammu and Kashmir.

The program will also launch an IT Platform, a one-stop dashboard to avail all farmers related services and schemes of the government with facility of online application and approval. The online system will also provide timely sector wise, region wise and crop wise advisories to registered farmers through SMS, irrespective of whether they have undergone any course or not.

ACS, Atal Dulloo, encouraged the officers to educate the farmers about the program and ensure availability and increased participation of farmers and Panchayati Raj Institution members.

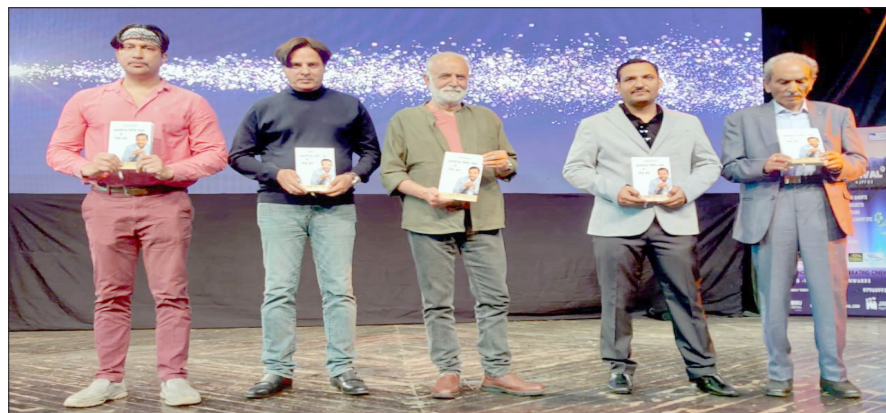
Renowned playwright Rakesh Roshan Bhat's Debut Book Released at Jammu Film Festival by Theatre Veterans and Bollywood Celebrities

Surkhab Zehra

Jammu Renowned playwright Rakesh Roshan Bhat added another feather to his cap with the release of his first book of two Kashmiri plays - "Chopayer Yee Gash" and "Gaad Bateh" during the 3rd edition of the Jammu film festival. The release was organized by Vomedh, a cultural organization based in Jammu, on the 9th of April.

Rakesh Roshan Bhat is a name synonymous with theatre in the region. With 8 full-length plays to his credit since 2008, Bhat has become a household name in the theatre community. His debut Kashmiri play "Chopayer Yee Gash" garnered immense popularity for its portrayal of the pain of exodus across generations of Kashmiri Pandits. Bhat has also written 3 Kashmiri and 5 Hindi plays along with several short plays.

Bhat's comedy play "Gaad Bateh" in Kashmiri also received a tremendous response from audiences. To celebrate the publication



of his first book, which includes two of his plays "Chopayer Yee Gash" and "Gaad Bateh", veteran theatre director M.K. Raina and writer M.L. Shant joined Bhat in a release event. Bollywood actor Rahul Roy and director Nitin Gupta also graced the event with their presence.

The book release was organized by Vomedh as a side event during the 3rd edition of the Jammu Film Festival on 9th April. Bharti Kaul,

the Vice President of Vomedh, expressed her admiration for Bhat's contribution to theatre in the region.

Speaking about Bhat's writing, M.K. Raina said, "Rakesh has a unique voice and his plays have a deep resonance with the people of Jammu and Kashmir. His writing is a reflection of the society we live in, and it's important that we support and encourage such talented individuals."

Actor Rahul Roy added, "I am honored to be a part of this event and to see Rakesh's work being recognized. It is important to preserve culture, and Rakesh is doing a great job with his plays."

Commenting on the occasion, Rakesh Roshan Bhat said, "I am humbled by the support and encouragement I have received from the theatre community in Jammu, Kashmir and beyond. It's my hope that my plays will continue to entertain and inspire audiences for years to come."

It is pertinent to mention that Rakesh Roshan Bhat along with his brother Rohit are doing immense work for theatre and culture in the UT of J&K. Besides theatre, they are involved in short film making and organizing 2 major international film festivals; the Jammu Film Festival in Jammu and TIFSS (The international film festival of Srinagar) in Srinagar.

The release of Bhat's book was a significant event during the Jammu film festival and highlights the growing recognition of regional language plays and literature.

ADHD and Gut Health: Study Finds Link to Fungi in Microbiome



Genetics, brain chemicals, and gut health are all linked to ADHD development.

New research has explored how the gut microbiome may influence the condition.

Levels of three specific fungi were different among ADHD patients.

An unbalanced gut microbiome can lead to inflammation, which could contribute to mental health concerns.

Research is ongoing into how gut health and ADHD are related.

Around 6 million Trusted Source or 10% of children aged 3-17 in the US are diagnosed with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

Several factors are thought to contribute to its onset and symptom severity, including the balance of bacteria in the gut microbiome.

Now, new research Trusted Source published April 5 from scientists in Taiwan, published in The Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, has gone one step further to explore the association between gut health and ADHD.

They focused on the microbiome, which encompasses the fungi housed in the microbiome — and found that imbalances of certain fungi were more prevalent in ADHD patients.

What the study learned

Using high-throughput sequencing, the researchers analyzed DNA from the stool samples of 70 individuals: 35 ADHD patients and 35 controls.

They found that levels of certain fungi were different between the two groups. Compared to the control group, those with ADHD had higher amounts of Ascomycota

and significantly lower amounts of Basidiomycota in their gut microbiome.

But they were not the only differences seen. Those with ADHD had significantly more Candida (particularly Candida albicans).

A second element of the study involved in vitro testing (performed outside of a living organism) and found that Candida albicans greatly increased the permeability of the gut lining.

A more permeable gut lining can lead to concerns such as inflammation.

The findings are significant, said Jordan Haworth, a gastrointestinal physiologist at the Functional Gut Clinic in Manchester, UK, who was not involved with the research.

"This is one of the first studies to sequence the microbiome in healthy controls and people with ADHD," he told Healthline.

How gut fungi affect inflammation

"Gut fungi are an important part of the gut microbiome, and there are hundreds of different fungi living in the gut," revealed Dr. Sarah Cooke, a UK-based general practitioner specializing in nutrition.

"The types and proportions of fungi can be affected by multiple factors," she told Healthline. "These include ethnicity, lifestyle, medication use, type of diet, and how regularly one may brush their teeth [as Candida albicans can thrive in the mouth]."

In this study, three fungi were highlighted as being of 'abnormal' levels in ADHD patients. With regards to Ascomycota and Basidiomycota, their specific function is not entirely clear, said Haworth. "These fungi aren't necessarily

novel, but they're not something other people have really looked at," he explained. "There's not a lot of research around what their potential mechanism could be."

Fortunately, scientists have a much better understanding of Candida.

"Candida, in general, are a genus of yeasts—and they're the most frequently detected kind of fungi in human feces," Haworth shared. "In normal health, Candida albicans are pretty harmless. But if your health is compromised, this yeast can flourish and become more detrimental."

Medications like antibiotics and immunosuppressants can deplete the gut's 'good' bacteria and allow yeast to thrive. Unfortunately, Haworth said, "whether ADHD medications can disrupt the gut microbiome isn't something that's really been looked into."

As found during the in vitro testing, flourishing Candida albicans may contribute to gut permeability—which can lead to inflammation.

"The intestinal barrier has two main jobs," said Haworth. "The first is to absorb nutrients, and the second is to prevent unwanted things in the gut from entering the body—mainly microbes and their waste products."

This barrier is made up of cells that are packed tightly together by proteins, he explained. However, when these proteins are damaged by inflammation, the gaps between the cells become bigger. The gaps allow metabolites and toxins to enter the bloodstream, said Haworth, and "travel through the body to different sites and cause inflammation."

"The gut-brain axis is an impor-

tant pathway where transmissions occur," Cooke added. "Gut permeability may affect these transmissions connecting the gut and the brain."

It's also worth noting that previous studies Trusted Source have revealed that imbalanced gut microbiota can trigger an immune response that also leads to inflammation.

How inflammation may influence ADHD

It's not entirely clear how inflammation and ADHD are linked, shared Sarah-Nicole Bostan, Ph.D., a clinical health psychologist and director of behavior change strategy at Signos.

"The study of gut-brain interactions is still in its infancy as it relates to functional impairment from mental health symptoms," she told Healthline, "[although] the relationship is increasingly acknowledged."

There are currently various hypotheses on the ADHD-inflammation relationship.

One, for instance, relates to the protective layer around the brain. "Just like the gut, the brain has a barrier, called the blood-brain barrier," Haworth explained. "This prevents unwanted things from the blood entering the brain."

However, he continued, "we know from studies that increased intestinal permeability is closely linked to a disrupted blood-brain barrier—[although] we can't be sure what's causing it."

Another potential factor, said Haworth, involves the kynurenine pathway. In the gut, microbes work to convert an amino acid called tryptophan into the neurotransmitter serotonin.

But "some pathogenic microbes,

including yeast species, don't convert tryptophan into serotonin," he said. "Instead, they convert it into something called kynurenine. And these can cross the blood-brain barrier and trigger neuroinflammation."

The kynurenine pathway, Haworth added, is notably more responsive in those with mental health concerns such as ADHD, depression, and schizophrenia.

Meanwhile, Cooke explained that some brain inflammation is beneficial. But adverse effects can arise when inflammation occurs over an extended duration.

"Neuroinflammation (inflammation of the brain) has a primary function of protecting the brain against pathogens (disease-causing organisms) via a process which encourages tissues to repair themselves," she said.

"However, if the inflammatory state is prolonged, then the inflammation can become detrimental and stop the renewal of cells," Cooke continued.

"Neuroinflammation has been proposed in contributing to the development of ADHD, and it is noted that a high proportion of patients with ADHD also have a co-existing inflammatory or autoimmune condition." Balancing the gut's microbiota

If an off-kilter gut microbiome and mycobiome play a role in ADHD, does that mean getting things balanced will ease symptoms?

Potentially, said Dr. Raphael Wald, a neuropsychologist at Marcus Neuroscience Institute, part of Baptist Health. "I would anticipate an improvement in ADHD symptoms with a more balanced gut microbiome."

NEWS

How Opioid Prescriptions and Suicide Rates are Linked



New research study has found that in areas where prescriptions of opioids have decreased, the rates of suicide were also impacted and were not as high as expected.

The study, published this week in the American Journal of Psychiatry, comes as opioid-related overdoses have reached record highs Trusted Source.

The author of the study, and professor of psychiatry and epidemiology at Columbia University, Dr. Mark Olfson (MD, MPH), said the study can help medical experts understand the risks of opioids and think about how to prescribe pills safely.

"On the one hand, what these results, from a clinical perspective suggest, is that they underscore safety risks of opioids, and they reinforce the importance of safe and judicious prescribing of opioids and proper disposal of unused opioids," Olfson said. "In managing patients with pain, it's important that healthcare professionals consider whether adequate pain relief can be achieved with interventions first that don't involve medications."

High-dose opioids and multiple prescribers raise suicide risk

Rather than looking at individualized data, the researchers focused on broader trends gleaned from national database data held by IQVIA alongside mortality statistics from the National Center for Health Statistics. The team looked at data from 2009 to 2017. During that time they looked at rates of opioid prescriptions, rates specifically for high-dose opioids, and for the number of long-term prescriptions. Additionally they looked to see what the rate was of having multiple opioid prescribers. They found during the study period there was a downward trend for all of factors. While the rate of suicide deaths did increase during this period from 13.80 to 16.36 per 100,000 persons, the researchers say that it would have been even higher if opioid prescriptions were as high in 2017 as they were in 2009.

"If opioid prescribing per capita had held constant from 2009 to 2017, there would have been an estimated 10.5% more suicide deaths involving opioids in 2017," Olfson said in a statement.

Fatal overdoses have increased thanks to spread of opioids

For Dr. Steven Sivek, founder of the Pain Center of Arizona, seeing patients who are grappling with issues related to mental health and suicide, alongside their use of opioids, is a common theme.

"Hopelessness is something that I see every day... and without the hope of stable pain control, without the hope of some level of someone listening, and addressing, and finding some component that allows these patients stable pain control, better level of functioning, and better quality of life, that hopelessness can spiral very quickly." He says that, for many of these patients, using opioids and other medications isn't about eradicating their pain completely, but about reducing it and improving their quality of life. His hope is that this study reinforces for clinicians that the link is there between suicide risk and opioid use and that it leads medical providers to dedicate more time and resources towards interventions for chronic pain that don't include opioids. "I will tell you that we are looking harder than ever at interventional therapies and minimally invasive surgeries now as tools and options to solve pathology rather than simply.

Strep Throat Type A Cases are on the Rise This Year

Infections of strep A or group A Streptococcus bacteria have increased this winter according to the CDC.

Cases have invasive group A strep have risen even higher than pre-pandemic levels.

Invasive disease Trusted Source means the bacteria spreads to other parts of the body instead of just staying in the throat.

This can cause severe infections such as necrotizing fasciitis or streptococcal toxic shock, which require care in a hospital and may cause death.

A short of amoxicillin is making treatment more difficult.

Infections caused by group A Streptococcus bacteria — commonly called strep throat or strep A — surged this past winter, a new report Trusted Source from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shows.

This year invasive group A strep (iGAS) infections cases have risen even higher than pre-pandemic levels,

according to the report. According to the CDC "iGAS infections have remained high in children in some areas of the country even after respiratory viruses decreased in those areas" additionally officials said they have seen a rise in infections in adults over 65 as well.

This, coupled with a shortage in the United States of pediatric versions of the antibiotic amoxicillin, has added to an already difficult respiratory season this year.

Products designed for the younger crowd are liquid — and usually bubble-gum pink — which is easier for kids to take than pills.

Why it's hard for some children to get diagnosed

Dr. Muzna Atif, medical director of pediatric hospitalist services at Pomona Valley Hospital Medical Center in Pomona, Calif., told Healthline that the rise in cases is concerning in itself, but some children also have atypical symptoms, making it harder for doc-

tors to diagnose this condition.

In general, strep throat is a mild



infection, with common symptoms Trusted Source including fever, sore throat and swollen tonsils. It is more common in school-aged children, but can also affect adults. Recently, some children with strep

throat have had cold-like symptoms

such as runny nose, nasal congestion



or cough — symptoms that don't usually occur with strep A infections. Atif said less commonly, strep A infection can "result in invasive disease or cases of rheumatic fever as complications."

Invasive strep means it can cause dangerous symptoms

Invasive disease Trusted Source means the bacteria spreads to other parts of the body instead of just staying in the throat. This can cause severe infections such as necrotizing fasciitis or streptococcal toxic shock, which require care in a hospital and may cause death.

During the pandemic, severe infections caused by strep A dropped by about 25% compared to the years leading up to this, the CDC found.

This was likely due to mitigation measures taken to slow the spread of COVID-19 and other respiratory diseases, such as masking, physical distancing and school and workplace closures, the agency said.

Less severe strep A infections in children are currently at high levels through the country, preliminary CDC data shows — at "levels similar to or higher than those seen in pre-pandemic years."

In addition, severe strep A infections have remained high in children in parts of the United States, the agency said. Some areas have also seen an increase in severe infections in adults, particularly in those 65 years or older.

Strep A infections are usually highest between December and April. Shortage of antibiotics makes treatment a challenge

Regardless of what kind of strep someone has, the infection needs to be treated with an antibiotic to prevent complications.

This year, though, the jump in strep A infections coincides with a shortage of pediatric amoxicillin, which the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) added in October 2022 to its list of drug shortages.

The shortage continues to affect multiple brands, including those manufactured by Teva and Sandoz. Some companies have reported to the FDA that their shortage is due to increased demand for the drug.

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