

28th Ramadan
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Shab'e Qadr Observed With Religious Gaiety Across Kashmir

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 18: Shab-e-Qadr (Night of Power) was observed with religious fervour across the Valley on Monday night.

Devotees remained engaged in night-long prayers till Tuesday morning across the shrines and mosques of the Valley.

As per past practice, the largest gathering was held at the Hazratbal shrine on the banks of the Dal Lake.

After four years, Congregational night prayers were allowed by authorities at historic Jamia Masjid Nowhatta. A huge gathering was witnessed at the mosque for the Taraweeh prayers. However, no night long sermon was held there.

At other religious places, Besides 'taraweeh' prayers, devotees remained engrossed in supplications and recitals of the holy Quran. Religious heads also threw light on the significance of the holy night. All the major shrines of the Valley were well-illuminated and wore a festive look on Monday night in view of the large



attendance of devotees.

Shab-e-Qadr is considered to be the holiest night of the fasting month of Ramadan. Shab-e-Qadr is also called Laylat-ul-Qadr and according to Muslim traditions, it usually falls on the 27th night of Rama-

zan. However, scholars say that it can also fall on any odd night of the last 10 days of the fasting month.

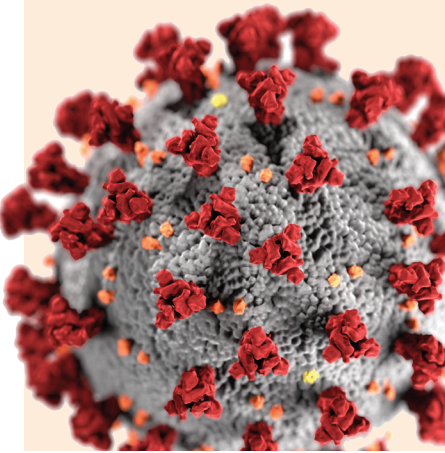
Keeping in view the sanctity of the night, many Muslims engage in nightlong prayers. **Shab'e Qadr Observed.....Pg 02**

J&K Reports 76 Fresh Covid-19 Cases, No Death

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 18: Jammu and Kashmir reported 76 fresh covid-19 cases while there was no death due to the virus during the last 24 hours, officials said on Tuesday.

They said that 43 cases were Turn.....J&K Reports 76.....Pg 02



5-year term of SMC, JMC & other ULBs to end in Oct- Nov

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 18: The five-year term of urban local bodies in Jammu & Kashmir would end in October- November this year, officials said.

An official told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that incumbent Srinagar Municipal Corporation, Jammu Municipal Corporation, Municipal Councils and Committees of the Union Territory would complete their five-year term later this year.

"The Srinagar Municipal Corporation would complete its term on November 05, 2023 Turn.....5-year term of.....Pg 02

Srinagar Police busted an inter-district burglary gang

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 18: Police on Tuesday busted an inter-district burglary gang when they arrested eleven thieves and recovered stolen property including gold, cash and seized three vehicles in Srinagar district.

Police said on the intervening night of March 2/3, 2023 thieves barged into the house of one Abdul Rehman Rather at Rawatpora Baghat and decamped with jewellery and cash.

A case was registered in Police Station Sadler and investigation was set in motion during which eleven accused persons were arrested for questioning.

Those who were picked up for question Turn.....Srinagar Police.....Pg 02

NEWS BRIEF

Identify new OGWs if any in DKR Range: ADGP Jammu

JAMMU, APR 18: The Additional Director General of Police, Jammu Zone, Mukesh Singh on Tuesday stressed upon identification of new Over Ground Workers (OGWs) if any in the Doda-Kishtwar-Ramban (DKR) Range of Jammu and Kashmir.

Singh was chairing a meeting to review the crime situation of the Doda-Kishtwar Range in Ramban district. Turn.....Identify new OGWs.....Pg 02

Delegation of Kashmiri Migrant Relief holders calls on LG

JAMMU, APR 18: Delegation of Kashmiri Migrant Relief Holders, Jagti Township called on Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha at Raj Bhavan, today.

The members of the delegation led by Sh Ravinder Koul expressed gratitude to the Lt Governor for the unprecedented initiatives taken by the UT administration for the welfare of Turn.....Delegation of Kashmiri.....Pg 02

DPC promotes 289 officials of Agriculture deptt

SRINAGAR, APR 18: The Agriculture Production & Farmers Welfare Department Kashmir today conducted Departmental Promotion Committee (DPC) meeting.

The DPC approved promotion of 289 officials comprising 250 officials at various levels of executive cadre and 39 officials at various levels of ministerial cadre. Turn.....DPC promotes 289.....Pg 02

9.35 Lakh Seized From Man In Ramban

JAMMU, APR 18: Police on Tuesday seized ₹ 9.35 lakh cash from a man in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district, officials said.

During routine checking, a police team intercepted a car which was on its way from Ramban to Dharam. A total of 1,870 notes of 500 denomination with a total value of ₹ 9,35,000 was seized from a man, identified Turn.....9.35 Lakh Seized.....Pg 02

World Heritage Day:

Govt launches scheme for restoration of Architectural Heritage in J&K

Work underway at 9 sites, says official

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 18: In order to preserve the heritage of J&K, the government has launched "restoration of Architectural Heritage" scheme for the restoration of architectural heritage sites.

Mushtaq Ahmad Beigh Deputy Director Archives Archaeology and Museums Srinagar told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) the scheme of restoration of architectural heritage of J&K has been launched and 16 architectural buildings including shrines, temples, churches and Gurudwaras are being restored in the first phase in Kashmir.

"Work at nine sites is going on and works at seven more spots have been tendered out and very soon work will Turn.....Govt launches scheme.....Pg 02

Mutton Crazy Kashmir consumes over 800 truckloads of sheep this Ramdhan

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 18: Amid fluctuation in mutton rates, the demand of mutton has increased in the Valley as over 800 truckloads of sheep were consumed in the holy month of Ramdhan so far.

"Nearly 30-35 trucks loaded with sheep arrive in Kashmir on a regular basis in the past 27 days of Ramadan," Mehraj ud Din, General Secretary of

Mutton Dealers Association told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO). He said there is no shortage of mutton in Kashmir, adding that the shortage of mutton would be possible in case the highway is closed for vehicular movement amid the prevalent weather conditions.

The General Secretary of the association further informed that so far a total of 811 trucks Turn.....Mutton Crazy.....Pg 02

CS calls for third-party audit of JK Minerals to boost its performance, generate employment



HT News Network

JAMMU, APR 18: Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta today chaired

175th board meeting of Jammu & Kashmir Minerals Ltd.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary emphasised over the need for

a third-party audit to evaluate the performance of the corporation's mines. He stated that the audit Turn.....CS calls for third.....Pg 02



Rains lash plains, higher reaches receive snowfall in Kashmir

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 18: Rains lashed plains and higher reaches received snowfall in Kashmir valley even as Meteorological Department predicts more precipitation on Tuesday.

Most parts of Kashmir valley received light to moderate intermittent rains and some higher reaches received snowfall during the past 24 hours while widespread light Turn.....Rains lash plains.....Pg 02

Spell of rain bring respite from heat in Jammu

HT News Network

JAMMU, APR 18: A spell of rain brought some respite from soaring temperature on Tuesday morning. The Jammu and Kashmir Turn.....Spell of rain bring.....Pg 02

J&K RTI Foundation Founder Expresses Concern Over Lack of RTI Data

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 18: Irfan Banka, founder of J&K RTI Foundation, has expressed concern over the lack of data related to Right to Information (RTI) requests in Jammu and Kashmir. In response to an RTI request filed by Banka, the Central Information Turn.....J&K RTI Foundation.....Pg 02

Minimal access Heart Surgery performed at SSH Jammu

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 18: A minimal access heart surgery was performed at Super Speciality Hospital (SSH) Jammu.

Chief Surgeon at SSH Dr Shyam Singh told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that heart Surgeries through small incisions have evolved over the years and become standardised.

"These procedures need expertise and perseverance to make it a routine," he said after carrying out a procedure of Heart Valve replacement Turn.....Minimal access Heart.....Pg 02

Balakov Ops Showed Effectiveness Of Air Power Even In 'No War, No Peace' Scenario: IAF Chief

Agencies

NEW DELHI, APR 18: Air Chief Marshal VR Chaudhari on Tuesday highlighted the critical importance of India's air power considering the nature of its adversaries and said the Balakov operations of 2019 demonstrated its effectiveness even in a 'no war, no peace' scenario and under a "nuclear overhang". The Chief of Air Staff said air power has become an option of choice due to "inherent flexibil-



ity" and "unmatched" precision strike capability.

"Operations like Balakov have also demonstrated that given the political will, aerospace power can be effectively used in a no war, no peace scenario, under a nuclear overhang without escalating into a full blown conflict," he said.

"This is very important given the nature of our adversaries. The response options available to the leadership have Turn.....Balakov Ops Showed.....Pg 02

CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

Shab'e Qadr.....

prayers during all odd nights of the last 10 days of Ramadan. However, the night is at large observed on the 27th night of Ramadan.

The day after Shab-e-Qadr, people usually start making preparations for Eid-ul-Fitr that falls after the fasting month. Shopping for the festive occasion also peaks after Shab-e-Qadr. Officials said that special arrangements were put in place for the holy night across religious places in Kashmir.

They said officials from district administration took stock of the arrangements and Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), J&K Road Transport Corporation (J&KRTC), Power Development Department (PDD), Traffic police, and other associated departments were pressed in to provide services to the devotees.

"We had kept men and machinery available at all religious places ahead of the holy night. In addition to routine work, we held special sanitation drives across the religious places," an official from SMC said.

National Conference President and Member of Parliament from Srinagar Dr Farooq Abdullah and Vice President Mr. Omar Abdullah have greeted the people on the auspicious eve of Shab-e-Qadr.

In a message, Dr Farooq Abdullah said that this holy night provides us an opportunity to pray for Almighty's blessings and strive for being compassionate, pious and dutiful. "It is the unique and holy night when Almighty Allah chose to reveal the holy Qur'an to Prophet Muhammad (SAW) for the guidance of mankind," he said.

Omar Abdullah in his message said, "The blessed night provides an opportunity to us to spend the night in praying and seeking forgiveness and blessings from Allah."

Last week, Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri appealed to people to adopt Covid Appropriate Behavior (CAB) during congregation prayers on the auspicious occasions as a precautionary measure to avoid spread of Covid-19.

Meanwhile, the Director General of Police, J&K Dilbag Singh has extended greetings to the people of J&K and Police Pariwar on the auspicious occasion of Shab-e-Qadr.

He has wished the people and families of police a blessed night.

In a message of greetings, the DGP hoped that this auspicious occasion would bring peace, progress and prosperity in Jammu and Kashmir. The DGP prayed for the well-being of the people of J&K.

J&K Reports.....

reported from Jammu division and 33 from Kashmir Valley, taking the overall tally to 481064. Among the cases, 174676 are from Jammu division and 306388 from Kashmir Valley.

Providing district wise details of the cases, they told GNS, Jammu reported 30, Udhampur 6, Rajouri 1, Doda 2, Kathua 1, Samba 0, Poonch 1, Ramban 0, Reasi 2, Srinagar 10, Baramulla 3, Budgam 11, Pulwama 1, Kupwara 0, Anantnag 2, Bandipora 3, Ganderbal 0, Kulgam 2, Shopian 1.

There was no death either from Jammu division or Kashmir Valley during the time. So far 4789 people have succumbed to the virus and among them include 2356 from Jammu division and 2433 from the Valley.

Besides, they said, 91 Covid-19 patients recovered during the last 24 hours—43 from Jammu division and 48 from Kashmir Valley. There are now 723 active cases— 345 in Jammu and 345 in Kashmir.

5-year term.....

while Jammu Municipal Corporation's term would end on November 14, 2023," he said, adding that the five-year term of an ULB is counted from the day of their first meeting.

The first meeting of SMC was held on November 6, 2018 and that of JMC on November 15, 2018. Juniad Azim Mattu and Chander Mohan Sharma were elected as mayors of SMC and JMC after ULB elections, respectively.

According to the official, the five-year term of municipal Councils and Committees would also come to end in October- November this year.

The last urban local bodies polls were held in four phases in October 2018 during Governor's rule in the erstwhile state of Jammu & Kashmir. While voter turnout remained impressive in Jammu region, only 3.1 percent of the eligible electorate exercised their voting rights in Kashmir.

Only 31541 votes were polled in the Valley against the total electorate of 1032498.

Srinagar Police.....

were identified as Abdul Qayoom Guroo, Arif Ahmad Guroo alias Tasleem arif, Shareef Ahmad Guroo, Abdul Rashid Guroo, Arif Ahmad Garoo, Mohammad Haneef Guroo residents of Rabtar Gund Roshan Ganderbal, Sameer Hussain, Asif Hussain Dar, Shabaz Hussain laway, Mohammad Maqbool laway residents of Sultanpora pattan and Nazakat Ahmad khan of Tikeri Udhampur.

Four among the eleven accused who are arrested from twin districts of south Kashmir, Naina Batapora Pulwama and Amono Kulgam admitted to have committed the burglary at Baghat and others are receivers of the property, police said.

Two others were arrested from Naina

Batpora Pulwama and other two from Amono Kulgam, police said and added that on their disclosure five more accused who were receivers of stolen property were arrested from Ganderbal and Baramulla districts in different raids.

Police said the interesting fact about the gang is that it is being operated by three brothers from the same household, who closely coordinate these thefts in the areas of different districts and police Stations across the valley.

Stolen property 168 gms Gold (in the form of various jewellery items), Cash Rs 70,000 and 2 Vehicles and Pulsar Bike recovered from their possession while 72gms gold (consisting of jewellery items) and gold ornaments pertains to other thefts of Srinagar and other districts.

Further investigation is going on to unearth more emerging facts, police said.

Govt launches.....

be started there as well," he said. He said the Secretary Culture is very keen to restore these sites to their original position and around 50-60 percent work at these sites have been already completed, he said.

The sites where work is going on includes Reshi Moll sahb Anantnag, Devbal Temple Anantnag, Zaina Shah sahb Anantnag, Ram Mandir Srinagar, Khanq-e-Sokhta, Ganpatyar Temple, temple at Bamb demb Srinagar, Hajibal Masjid Tangmarg and Ziyarat of Mohammad Amin Qureshi Owaisi Kupwara.

"Two years before, we established an art museum here and we have displayed modern paintings in it and 200 year old paintings were also displayed in it so that visitors can easily differentiate old and new art known as modern art," he said.

Beigh said that they have kept it available for local artists as well who can easily exhibit art for a week or two weeks.

"We have kept recent findings in the SPS museum which includes the excavated findings besides that some were received from Police stations," he said. "My message will be to all that aware all about our rich heritage so that our students will know about past as J&K has rich heritage and if we will compare it with states, J&K has best collection of monuments."

He requested heads of all schools to take their students at heritage sites besides museums so that it can work as stress releaser for students.

He said that Public has to play a part in preserving the heritage. "Heritage tourism has great potential in J&K and if locals wherever monuments are existing, will preserve them as it will provide them employment opportunities once tourists will visit there," he said, adding that "I personally request tour operators to inform tourists about monuments, museums and other heritage sites so that they will know that tourism is J&K confined to Gulmarg and Pahalgam only but there is much more," he said.

On eve of the world Heritage day, the department organised one day seminar cum exhibition on the theme "Monumental Heritage of Kashmir" at SPS museum and museum in which students of different schools also participated, he said

Mutton Crazy.....

loaded with Sheep arrived in Kashmir since the beginning of Ramadan. "30-35 trucks arrive in Kashmir on a daily basis. The number of trucks ahead of Eid will go up to 160 a day," he said.

Moreover, the consumers continue to complain that the mutton is being sold at Rs 650-700 per kg, adding that there has been no proper check on the ground as it seems that the mutton dealers and butchers have been let loose to loot the public as per their will.

"One fails to understand the need of issuing a rate list when it is not being implemented on the ground. It seems that the authorities concerned are reluctant to act against the mutton dealers and have been maintaining silence over the issue," a consumer said.

He further said that a few months back, the concerned officials started a drive to act tough against the mutton dealers, but all in vain as the step has not yield any results for the consumers.

CS calls for.....

would assess whether the mines are operating at their optimal condition and determine if there is potential to generate more employment within these mining facilities.

Dr Mehta also called for the development of a mining plan, with expert consultation, to increase the output of the Kalakote coal mines.

The Chief Secretary urged upon the Corporation that all of their activities should aim at boosting the economy of Jammu & Kashmir. He commended the corporation's financial records over the past three years and suggested holding quarterly meetings for better coordination and implementation of decisions.

During the meeting, the Board unanimously agreed that in order to avail the funding under NMET (National Mineral Exploration Trust), J&K Minerals Limited shall surrender the Lease Hold Rights of Sapphire Mine so that Ministry of Mines can take up the work.

Furthermore, the Board approved e-Auction of rough sapphire to promote transpar-

ency. The Board members in attendance included Secretary Planning Development & Monitoring, Dr Raghav Langer; Secretary Mining, Amit Sharma; Director, Geology & Mining, OP Bhagat; Managing Director, JKML, Vikram Gupta; DG Codes, SL Pandita besides officers from other concerned Departments.

J&K RTI.....

Commission (CIC) stated that it did not have data on the number of RTI applications and first appeals filed in the region in the past four years. The CIC suggested that Banka file an RTI request with the state government to obtain the desired information. Normally, the data is kept by the Information Commissions, but no such department or State Information Commission exists in Jammu and Kashmir as the J&K RTI Act was repealed in 2019 when the Central RTI Act 2005 was introduced in the UT.

In a statement issued to CNS, Banka criticized the lack of transparency and accountability related to RTI Law, especially after Jammu and Kashmir was made a Union Territory and its own state information commission was dissolved. He believes that the RTI Act has weakened in the region and that some public information officers (PIOs) view it as useless.

The RTI Act of 2005 empowers citizens to access information held by public authorities in order to promote transparency and accountability. The act applies to all states and union territories of India. However, Banka's experience raises questions about the effectiveness of the RTI Act in Jammu and Kashmir.

As a result of the lack of data, it is unclear how many RTI applications and appeals have been filed in Jammu and Kashmir since it was reorganized in 2019. This lack of information makes it difficult to hold public authorities accountable and undermines the very purpose of the RTI Act.

Banka's concerns highlight the need for greater transparency and accountability in the RTI system in Jammu and Kashmir. As citizens' right to information is an essential part of a functioning democracy, it is imperative that the government takes steps to ensure that the system is effective and transparent.

Minimal access.....

on a young female patient of Rheumatic Heart Disease hailing from a far off village Chansri, Mughal maidan Kishtwar.

In this procedure, he said, a small cut below the right breast is made to undertake the whole operation and fine scar hides in the breast crease and is cosmetic in female patients, besides need for less blood transfusion and less pain relieving medications.

The Patient was moving around in the ward the next morning which is normally not possible in a conventional Surgery, he said.

Further, the Patient had a rare blood group of O negative and there was minimum blood loss during the procedure, he said.

The surgical team comprised of Dr Shyam Singh, Dr Ishtiyak Ahmed Mir and Dr Arvind Kohli while the Anaesthesia team was headed by Professor and HoD Cardiothoracic Anaesthesia Dr Puja Vimesh conducted the per-operative and postoperative management along with Dr Rasmeet Kour, Dr Vikas, Vikas Sharma, Arif, Sonal and Abhiranjan.

Charanjit Singh and Roshan Lal managed the vital parameters of the patient while the patient was on Heart lung machine during operation while theatre scrub sister Angmo helped to carry out the procedure.

Principal GMC Jammu Professor Dr Shashi Sudan lauded the efforts of the Department of Cardiothoracic Surgery and Department of Cardiothoracic Anaesthesiology to make such surgeries possible and routine in SSH Jammu under Ayushman Bharat Scheme for which the Patients don't have to pay from their pockets.

She further said that the Department of Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgeons (CTVS) is routinely doing open heart surgeries for the last 2 years and very shortly Bypass surgeries (CABG) shall also be started which shall be followed by starting Super-speciality DNB CTVS courses.

She said that department has already applied for DNB Vascular Surgery courses and is most likely to get permission soon.

Rains lash.....

to moderate rain in the plains and snow on higher reaches is likely during the next 48 hours, the MeT office said.

It said during this wet spell thunderstorm with strong gusty winds with 20-30Kmph and Hailstorm are also possible at some places of J&K during April 18-19.

Possibility of intermittent light to moderate rain at isolated places during April 19-21, the MeT office said and added weather likely to remain dry from April 22-25.

Srinagar and its adjoining areas lashed by light to moderate rains resulting in considerable drop in temperature forcing people and tourists to wear warm clothes. It has been raining since morning at most places in the valley.

The Day temperature in most areas of Jammu and Kashmir is expected to remain below 4 - 10 degree Celsius, said an independent weather observer Faizan Arif.

Regarding the rainfall, the MeT office said Srinagar received 6.9mm, Qazigund had 11.0mm of rainfall, Pahalgam 22.4mm, Kupwara 15.7mm, Kokernag 12.2mm and Gulmarg 2.1mm of rainfall during the past 24 hours till 0830hours Tuesday.

Srinagar recorded a low of 11.0 degree Celsius against 10.7 degree Celsius the previous night and it was 3.1 degree Celsius above normal for the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir during this period of the season.

Qazigund recorded a low of 9.8 degree Celsius against 8.8 degree Celsius which was 3.3 degree Celsius above normal at the gateway of Kashmir.

Tourist hot spot of Pahalgam recorded a low of 5.6 degree Celsius against 5.5 degree Celsius the previous night and it was 2.2 degree Celsius above normal.

Kokernag had a low of 9.3 degree Celsius, Kupwara 8.6 degree Celsius and ski resort of Gulmarg in north Kashmir recorded a low of 3.6degree Celsius on Tuesday, the MeT office said.

Spell of rain.....

meteorological department however, have forecast three-day bad weather across the Union Territory.

On Tuesday rains also lashed in Poonch, Rajori, Samba thus bringing relief from heat.

The changing weather due to Western Disturbance may affect the Jammu-Srinagar National Highway, said the Weatherman.

He said on Monday, the day temperature touched 39 degrees in Jammu while most parts of the UT remained cloudy.

"The day temperature in Jammu was 5.3 notches above normal at 38.7 and last night's minimum temperature was 25.9 degrees Celsius, which was 6 notches above normal," he added.

The day temperature in Banihal was 23.5, Batote 25.8, Katra 34.2 and Bhaderwah 26.3 degrees Celsius.

Leh recorded a minimum temperature of 2.0 degree Celsius Sunday night.

The Jammu-Srinagar highway may be affected due bad weather in the next few days, he said.

Meanwhile, Director, IMD, Jammu and Kashmir, Dr Sonam Lotus said intermittent Rain and snow at many places and thunderstorm very likely to continue.

On April 19, he said intermittent light to moderate rain and snowfall (over higher reaches) was very likely at many places and during this wet spell, thunderstorms with strong gusty wind reaching (20-30KMPH) and Hailstorm were also possible at some places of Jammu and Kashmir.

Intermittent light to moderate rain at isolated places and it will be mainly dry between April 22 to 25.

Balakot Ops.....

suddenly increased and increasingly, air power has become an option of choice due to inherent flexibility and unmatched precision strike capability," he said.

Air Chief Marshal Chaudhari was speaking at a seminar on 'Aerospace Power: Pivot to Future Battlespace Operations'.

India's war planes pounded a Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist training camp in Balakot in Pakistan in February 2019 in response to the Pulwama terror attack in which 40 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel were killed.

"India's security concerns necessitate that it puts in place adequate military power that has the ability to achieve deterrence, ensure information dominance, coerce when needed and provide multiple response options," Air Chief Marshal Chaudhari said.

"Attributes of aerospace power enable the leadership to formulate an appropriate strategy with due cognizance given to

the desired end state, conflict termination criteria and escalation matrix," he said.

The IAF chief said that considering the advantages that the aerospace power offers, it will become a crucial factor in future battlespace operations.

To be able to control the airspace across domains will prove vital in the future and in order to achieve that, he said.

Air Chief Marshal Chaudhari said there is a need to harness technology including the CMOS (complementary metal oxide semiconductor) sensors, Artificial Intelligence enabled decision support matrix and manned-unmanned teaming.

He said next generation fighter aircraft will prove to be a deciding factor when fighting "tomorrow's wars".

"One aspect that deserves a special mention is the humans in the chain. Any amount of automation will not be effective unless we have well-trained, situationally-aware and technologically sound professionals handling our systems," the IAF Chief said. "To see first and see clearly, to reach first and reach farthest and to strike first and strike with precision will be the mantra for fighting modern wars," he added.

The Air Chief Marshal said battlespace transparency, enhanced rapid mobility and pin point precision capability will be the key to success and India's capability development plans must address these issues.

"If the world is increasingly becoming volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous, it is high time that we develop counters," he said.

"We must evolve to counter the volatile with stability and calmness that comes from good strategy formulation and training in an environment of denial," he said. (Agencies)

Identify new.....

"Keep close watch on OGWs and identify new ones of any," Singh told officers and emphasised on action against known drug peddlers in the range.

DIG DKR Range Sunil Gupta, SSP Ramban Mohita Sharma, SSP Doda Abdul Qayoom and SSP Kishitwar Khalil Poswal attended the meeting.

Addressing the officers the ADGP stressed on quality investigation of cases and close supervision by the supervisory officers.

Some cases of each Police Station have been identified for close monitoring and 'pairvi' so that the cases end in conviction. At the same time cases of terrorism registered under the UAP Act were put on special focus during the meeting.

Delegation of.....

Kashmiri Pandit community. They also submitted a memorandum of demands to the Lt Governor.

The Lt Governor assured the members of the delegation of redressal of the genuine issues put forth by them on merit.

DPC promotes.....

Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Agriculture Production Department, Attal Dulloo, in a felicitation message, congratulated the promotees and hoped they will work with added zeal and vigour for larger interest of the society.

9.35 Lakh.....

as Tariq Ahmed, travelling in the car. they said.

During questioning, Ahmad said he is working with a contractor but failed to justify the possession of such a huge amount of cash, the officials said.

The cash was seized by the police party as the matter pertains to be of tax evasion, they said, adding the Income Tax Department was alerted for further action.

SSP Awantipora chairs crime, security review meeting at DPL Awantipora

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 18: Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Awantipora Ajaz Ahmed Zargar chaired a crime and security review meeting with SDPOs, DySP DAR Awantipora, CIO SIU Awantipora and SHOs of Police District Awantipora.

During the meeting, follow up of previous meetings and various security measures were discussed for ensuring peace and stability in the Police district. Various aspects of policing including investigation of cases specifically NDPS & UAPA cases besides, other issues related to accountable policing were also discussed, a statement issued to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said.

While interacting with the officers,

SSP Awantipora reiterated the importance of strengthening the counter insurgency and security grid of their respective areas. Besides, taking stringent action against those involved in anti-national activities. SSP Awantipora stressed on making the strategies & plans to fight crime in more effective manner.

The officers were urged to make all possible efforts to fight against menace of drug abuse and work with dedication to prevent social crimes. SSP Awantipora emphasized upon the participating officers to ensure quantitative and qualitative disposal of under investigation criminal cases.

All officers were instructed to adopt a public-centric approach and to ensure timely redressal of their grievances, the statement said.



CS tours Jammu City to inspect ongoing Development works

Also visits Jambu Zoo to assess facilities there

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, APR 18: Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta today conducted an extensive tour of Jammu City and inspected ongoing works at Jambu Zoo and other developmental works being executed here under Smart City Mission.

He was accompanied by Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar; Deputy Commissioner Jammu, Avny Lavasa; Chief Wildlife Warden, Suresh Kumar Gupta; Regional Wildlife Warden; Wildlife Warden Jambu Zoo besides Engineers of JPDCL, Jal Shakti, PWD, and other concerned officers.

Dr Mehta visited Jambu Zoo at Nagrota which is nearing completion and took stock of ongoing works there.

The Chief Wildlife Warden gave a detailed presentation on the works carried out so far. It was informed that the work on cafeteria and parks had been completed while the work on parking, animal enclosures are in the final stages of completion.

The Chief Secretary also sought other important details regarding

the prestigious project including details of animals and birds to become part of the Zoo after its completion.

Dr Mehta directed the concerned officers to closely supervise the works and expedite the ongoing works for opening of the Zoo to public.

Responding to the issue of water supply to the Zoo, the Chief Secretary asked the Engineers of Jal Shakti Department to follow up on the NOCs from the Ministry of Defence and ensure water supply at the earliest.

He also issued directions for expediting facilities like ticketing system, security, services like cafeteria so that the completed part of the zoo could be thrown open for public as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, Chief Secretary also conducted Jammu city tour and inspected the ongoing pathways/footpath and Junction improvement projects being executed under Jammu Smart City Mission. He inspected the progress of work at various locations, including Gandhi Nagar, Panama Chowk, University Road and Bahu Fort



area. The concerned officers apprised him of the present status of work and future work plan. Dr Mehta directed the executing agencies to further increase the pace of work on all the works and complete them at the earliest.

Later, Chief Secretary inspected Development of Tawi River Front.

Regarding the project the Chief Executive Officer, Jammu Smart City Limited, Rahul Yadav apprised him of works completed so far besides present status of work and future plans.

It was informed that work on machinery mobilization, grating, centre making, topographic survey etc have been completed while

work on construction of diaphragms is in full swing.

While taking a round of various spots of ongoing works Dr Mehta directed concerned officials to clear bottlenecks, if any, and expedite the pace of work for timely completion of this significant project. He also instructed them to ensure that quality parameters of

each work are strictly adhered to.

While inspecting work on Tawi barrage the CS issued strict directions to the executing agencies to set weekly targets and ensure completion of the project in a time bound manner. He even directed them to consider issuing notices to contractors whose performance is not found satisfactory.

Chief Secretary also inspected the progress on Package 1 of Jammu Akhnoor Road Project nearing Bhagwati Nagar rotary to Canal Head. The Engineers of NHIDCL informed that the land acquisition process has been completed and the work on construction and raising the pillars for flyover is in progress to complete the work within the fixed deadline.

Dr Mehta also directed Divisional Commissioner Jammu to develop surface parking on available vacant land near 4th Tawi bridge (Bhagwati Nagar) within two months so that the same is ready for use during the upcoming Shri Amarnath Ji Yatra and also cater to the visitors coming to watch the Tawi River Front after its beautification and development.

Newly constructed govt school building develops cracks in Payar

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 18: A newly constructed school building in Pulwama district has developed cracks posing threat to students as well as teachers.

Locals from Payar village told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), that the government is putting emphasis on quality education for which better infrastructure is mandatory but no cognizance is being taken of the structures that have developed cracks despite being constructed recently.

They said that around three years ago, a school building of Government High School Payar was constructed at a cost of around 80 lakhs but in no time it has developed cracks.

Shabir Ahmad, a local, said that the building was constructed by R&B department and was handed over to School education department just two years ago.

He said that it appears the building was constructed without proper monitoring that is why it developed cracks in a short period.

Education department is equally responsible for it as they should have properly checked the building at the time when building was handed over to them, he said.

Another local said that it seems the building is decades old despite that government's claim that about 80 lakhs were spent on it.

"The condition would not have been so, if 80 lakhs would have been spent on it," he added

He said that both departments are responsible and due to their negligence it is putting the lives of dozens of students at risk.

An official of the education department said that they have taken up the issue with higher ups of the education and R&B department. But nothing has been done so far, he said.

10 Years on, School Building at Bandipora's Tulail yet to be completed; Students suffer

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 18: The residents of Malangam area Tulail in north Kashmir's Gurez Tehsil on Tuesday expressed anguish against authorities for failing to complete the construction of a high school building from the past 10 years.

Locals told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), that due to the lackadaisical

approach of higher authorities the smooth functioning of the school had been suffering badly from a long time as the students have only two rooms for ten classes.

The locals said that the secondary school is functioning in an old primary school building which is not in a favourable condition, thus leaving both students and teachers in deteriorated conditions.

The condition of the present school is getting worse each passing day, Irshad Ahmad, a local said, adding that they have approached the administration about the issue many times but no action was taken.

Muhammad Amin, another local, said that the lack of infrastructure for these schools has left students in the lurch who have to study in cramped up spaces.

"I feel like I'm always cramped and uncomfortable in my classroom. There are too many students and not enough room for us to move around and work comfortably. It's hard to focus on my studies when I'm constantly bumping into my classmates or struggling to find space to work," Shaziya, one of the students said.

"Sometimes it feels like I'm not getting the education I deserve because we don't have enough

resources or space to learn properly. I just wish we had a bigger, more well-equipped school that could provide us with the space we need to succeed," she said.

The locals and students appealed to the Lt. Governor Manoj Sinha to personally look into the matter and ask the concerned department to expedite the construction work and complete the project without any further delay.

Poor weather dampens market buzz ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr

Shopkeepers pray for weather improvement to display their stock outside

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 18: As the last few days before Eid-ul-Fitr witness people's rush for shopping, the inclement weather forecast until April 21 dampened the market buzz in the valley on Tuesday.

Mohammad Maqbool, who runs a sweets and confectionary shop in Srinagar, told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that they could not display their sweet items outside their shop due to the continuous rainfall since morning.

"We normally fix a tent outside our shop to display the stock of sweets and confectionary for sales, but the wet weather played a spoiler," he said, adding that they are hopeful of improvement in the weather and after which they will display their stock.

The street vendors from various parts of the valley who also fix their cots temporarily along roadsides to sell their merchandise like kitchen items, utensils, clothing, and bakery items also struggled to make any sales due to the rainfall.

In Lal Chowk, the street vendors were seen struggling to place their items on cots for sale, as the intermittent spells of rainfall did not let them settle.

Notably, soon after the Jummat-ul-Vida and Shab-e-Qadar occasions, markets often witness an upsurge in sales with people thronging the shops to buy dresses for children, food items, bakery items, mutton, and other items.

Meanwhile, as per the J&K's weather department, the intermittent rain and thunderstorms are very likely to continue till April 21, and that 19th

April will "very likely witness intermittent light to moderate rain/snow-fall (over higher reaches) at many places".

The weather official said that during the wet spell of April 18 to 19, a thunderstorm with strong gusty wind reaching 20-30 kmph and hailstorm is also possible at some places in Jammu & Kashmir.

As per the MeT officials, last 24 hours till 0830 hours Tuesday, Srinagar received 6.9mm of rain, Qazigund 11.0mm, Pahalgam 22.4mm, Kupwara 15.7mm, Gulmarg 12.2mm, Jammu 6.2mm, Banihal 21.1mm, Katra 4.4mm, and Baderwah 9.2mm.

The temperature, as per the MeT for Srinagar, recorded a low of 11.0°C against 10.7°C on Monday night and it was 3.1°C below normal for the summer capital.

Sopore's Khankah residents decry water crisis

Alleges the concerned department is 'least bothered' about the problem

■ HT News Network

SOPORE, APR 18: The residents of Khankah Mohalla in Sopore town of north Kashmir's Baramulla district on Tuesday complained that they are without drinking water for the last couple of weeks,



and alleged that the concerned department was least bothered about their problem.

Talking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the resident of Khankah Mohalla said they are facing acute water scarcity and are drinking unhygienic water.

"There is no drinking water in our area and we are being compelled to fetch raw water from river Jhelum. This contaminated water is unhygienic and poses a health risk," said Junaid Peer, a local.

As the Eid-ul-Fitr is approaching, there is more consumption of water, he said, adding, "We have been moving from pillar to post to get this genuine demand redressed but to no avail. The concerned department is making no effort to ease our difficulties."

The locality has the famous Khankah mosque where thousands of Muslims in and around Sopore come to offer prayers, but the lack of water supply is causing great problems for them, said another local. The locals said if the issue of water shortage in the area is not addressed at the earliest, they will hit the roads.

Vlogger On A Mission To Attract Tourists To Sonamarg

Abdul Rouf Raina has gained over 4.5 lakh followers, mostly tourists, on Instagram

■ HT News Network

GANDERBAL, APR 18: "Will, dedication and hard work can fetch you success" has been proved by a youth hailing from the Sonamarg area of central Kashmir's Ganderbal district.

Abdul Rouf Raina has attracted more than 4.5 lakh people across the world to his Vlogs related to the scenic beauty of the famous tourist resort Sonamarg on Instagram. Raina after completing his studies opted for photography as a profession, "keeping in view the tourist potential of the Sonamarg". He began earning livelihood by providing service to tourists across during their

visit to the resort.

"I had a dream to explore the unseen beauty of my homeland and share it with the rest of the world. This dream was realised when some tourists advised me to use social media," Rouf told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

Initially, he created a page on YouTube and Facebook and started posting the content. Sensing the poor response, Rouf switched over to Instagram and continued to post short videos related to the scenic beauty of Sonamarg.

"This was the breakthrough where the Instagram page received overwhelming response across the world and right now



it has more than 4.5 lakh followers which are expanding with each passing day," he said. "I feel I have achieved what I desired and now I am receiving messages from my followers all over

the world who wish to visit Sonamarg after watching the reels posted on Instagram."

Sonamarg is the only tourist destination that remains closed for several months during winter

due to heavy snowfall and avalanche threats along the road leading to the resort.

The closure does not only affect the economy of the people affiliated with tourism but a huge population living in some villages around the resort and the population has to migrate to other areas in the district. Amid this disturbance, Rouf has gained popularity with his dedication and hard work.

Rouf is happy with the government initiatives to make Sonamarg an all-weather destination this year as, according to him; it will improve the economy of the people affiliated with tourism and provide a sigh of relief to the population living in villages.

'Bandipora village to become India's largest book village, promoting Kashmiri literature, culture'

HT News Network

Srinagar, April 17: 'Sardhad' a Pune-based non-government organisation is all set to convert Aragam village of North Kashmir's Bandipora district into India's largest book village in collaboration with the Jammu and Kashmir government. The NGO has submitted a proposal which has already been discussed with the District administration to create a book village in Aragam village in collaboration with the J-K government.

Explaining why it has chosen the Aragam village, an NGO official said, "The village is located in the scenic region where the beauty of nature can solace the visitors' minds and make them more creative and probe the fundamental questions of life."

"There cannot be such a



place equal to Aragam in Kashmir that has a great potential to make a group and cultural village where unparalleled natural beauty can inspire to probe into Kashmiri literature and rich history of Kashmir, besides witnessing an astounding culture," he added.

He also said that ideally located amidst the pristine forests of the Himalayas along the banks of Asia's second-largest freshwater Wular lake in the

district. "Teeming with inspiration for art and literature-scenic beauty, diverse, cultural natural trails for leisurely walks and several locations for trout fishing while enjoying the books," he added.

Giving details about the book village, the NGO official said, "The book village idea, though not new, in this concept it will be a unique destination where visitors can get absorbed into the ancient to modern literature and history of Kashmir and can get to introduce to its folk culture intimately.

The visitors, NGO said, will find books almost everywhere and places to read at leisure.

Talking about the concept, he said, "It will be a village where ancient manuscripts, paintings and artifacts from Kashmir will be on constant exhibition. The new and old books will be made available to read and contemplate, adding that it will be a village where folk culture will be showcased, besides the author's historians and nature lovers will visit for their solace."

He further said that a room would be constructed where literary discussions and cultural shows can take place, whose walls would be used to display the artwork of various artists on a rotation basis.

NIT Sgr student to donate Rs 1.23 lakh profit earned from share market

Students should become ray of hope for the society: Director

HT News Network

Srinagar, Apr 18 : A student from National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar has earned 1.23 lakh profit from his investment in the share market during the past one week and has decided to donate the entire amount among marginalized sections of society.

Tabrez Alam, a 8th-semester student from the Department of Information Technology is all set to donate his profit of investments among marginalized sections of society including students.

In his message, Director NIT Srinagar Prof. (Dr.) Rakesh Sehgal appreciated Tabrez Alam for the noble initiative. Donations can



provide essential support to individuals and communities who are struggling with poverty, illness, or other challenges, he said.

"By donating, individuals can inspire others to give and contribute to creating a culture of generosity and compassion," Prof. Sehgal said, adding that NIT Srinagar students should become a ray of hope for

the society.

Institute's Registrar, Prof. Syed Kaiser Bukhari said donation is a powerful tool for creating positive change in the world and helping those in need. By giving to others, we can make a difference in their lives and contribute to building a better future for all, he said.

Prof. Bukhari said helping society at the time of need

is essential for building a strong and resilient community. Addressing systemic issues that contribute to social and economic inequality requires sustained limitless efforts. Such things are the need of the hour, he said.

Hailing from Dhaka Champaran district of Bihar, Tabrez stated that he had invested around 5 lakh in the share market. Now has decided to share his entire profit among the marginalized sections of society including poor students, he said.

"I want to help people who are suffering in our society. Although it is a small contribution, I am trying my best to do my part," he said.

DPC promotes 289 officials of Agriculture department

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APRIL 18: The Agriculture Production & Farmers Welfare Department Kashmir today conducted Departmental Promotion Committee (DPC) meeting.

The DPC approved promotion of 289 officials comprising 250 officials at various levels of executive cadre and 39 officials at various levels of ministerial cadre.

Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Agriculture Production Department, Atal Dulloo, in a felicitation message, congratulated the promotees and hoped they will work with added zeal and vigour for larger interest of the society.

Power shutdown

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APRIL 18: Power Controller Kashmir has informed that, the power supply to Receiving Stations Brein, Nishat, Shalimar and Harwan shall remain affected due to facilitate repair works and remodelling in HT/LT lines on April 19 from 11 am to 5 pm.

Similarly, in order to facilitate augmentation works in 33/11 KV Pinjura receiving station, the power supply to receiving stations Aathama, Pinjura and Chowdhary Ghund shall remain affected on April 19 from 10 am to 3 pm.

YSS Conclave 2023 Director YSS along with Senior Officers Take Stock Of Arrangements

HT News Network

Srinagar April 18: The Department of Youth Services and Sports J&K is organising the maiden sports conclave on 19th of the current month at SKICC here. Director of the Department Subash C Chhibber along with Joint Director Kashmir Waseem Raja and other senior officers of the Department took stock of the arrangement being made for the successful conduct of the first of its kind conclave. The sports conclave being attended by J&K Chief Secretary Dr Arun Kumar Mehta and other senior dignitaries is aiming at exploring means and methods by the ways of deliberations and discussions between the field staff.

DC Srinagar visits ShankarAcharya Temple; finalises arrangements for ShankarAcharya Jayanti on 25th April

HT News Network

SRINAGAR APRIL 18:- Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad today visited ShankarAcharya Temple to review the arrangements being made for forthcoming ShankarAcharya Jayanti scheduled to be celebrated on April 25, 2023.

The Shankaracharya Jayanti is considered one of the significant celebrations in Sanatan Dharma which marks the day of birth of

Adi Shankaraji, an 8th century Indian philosopher and theologian.

While taking review on the spot, Deputy Commissioner directed concerned departments to ensure all basic arrangements are put in place for the devotees expected to perform Darshan in the Shankaracharya Temple on the top of Zabaran hills during ShankarAcharya Jayanti.

The DC instructed for ensuring hassle-free traffic movement for the devotees and making adequate facilities



at the designated place for parking of the vehicles.

He also instructed for ensuring uninterrupted

supply of electricity and drinking water at the venue so that devotees do not face any problem during their visit to pay obeisance at the Temple.

The DC also asked the Health Department to deploy a Medical team at the venue with the availability of all emergency medicines and first aid facilities to handle any medical emergency.

The DC directed the officers of all line departments to ensure all necessary arrangements required for smooth stay and enriching pilgrimage for all visitors on this occasion. He also stressed on maintaining

proper sanitation at the Temple premises and at the entire pilgrimage route.

The concerned police authorities were asked to take all measures to ensure adequate security arrangements around the Temple.

Earlier, the DC interacted with the members of the Dharmarth Trust and security incharge. The DC assured them of all possible support from the District Administration for smooth celebration of Shankaracharya Jayanti.

Dr. Syed Sehrish Gets Coveted PM's Award for Excellence in Public Administration- 2022

HT News Network

BARAMULLA, APRIL 18: Bringing laurels for the UT of Jammu and Kashmir in general and for district Baramulla in particular, Deputy Commissioner Baramulla Dr Syed Sehrish Asgar has achieved the coveted Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration-2022, India's highest award in civil services. Dr Sehrish has been selected for this prestigious achievement in the category of Aspirational Districts programme as she has brought transformative changes in the identified parameters envisaged in the said programme. As per reports, key aspects for Aspirational District Programme in Baramulla for which the Deputy Commissioner was awarded by the Prime Minister include establishment of Birth Waiting Wards in Primary Health Centres, Community Health



Centres, Upgradation of diagnostic services at all delivery points and Poshan Tracker Tabs for all Anganwadi workers.

The Deputy Commissioner supported farmers through mechanism, plant protection, nursery strengthening, robust root stocks, quality planning material etc and organized marketing facility established at Sopore which is the second largest Fruit Mandi in Asia.

SSP Awantipora chairs crime /security review meeting at DPL Awantipora

HT News Network

Awantipora April 18: SSP Awantipora Shri Ajaz Ahmed Zargar -JKPS chaired a crime/ security review meeting with SDPOs, DySP DAR Awantipora, CIO SIU Awantipora and SHOs of Police District Awantipora.

During the meeting, follow up of previous meetings and various security measures were discussed for ensuring peace and stability in the Police district. Various aspects of policing including investigation of cases specifically NDPS & UAPA cases besides, other



national activities. SSP Awantipora stressed on making the strategies & plans to fight crime in more effective manner.

The officers were urged to make all possible efforts to fight against menace of drug abuse and work with dedication to prevent social crimes. SSP Awantipora emphasized upon the participating officers to ensure quantitative and qualitative disposal of under investigation criminal cases.

All officers were instructed to adopt a public-centric approach and to ensure timely redressal of their grievances.

issues related to accountable policing were also discussed.

While interacting with the officers, SSP Awantipora reiterated the importance of strengthening the counter insurgency and security grid of their respective areas. Besides, taking stringent action against those involved in anti-

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Electricity connection with Consumer ID No 0206050014248 Registered in the name of Mudasir Ahmad Wani R/O Bilal Abad Lawaypora Srinagar is to be transferred in the favour of Abdul Rashid Jan R/O Bilal Abad Lawaypora Srinagar.

Anybody having any objection, May Contact Assistant Executive Engineer PDD Sub Division Lawaypora Srinagar within a period of 7 days. After that no objection will be entertained in any case.

Owner Name
Abdul Rashid Jan
R/O Bilal Abad Lawaypora Srinagar

PUBLIC NOTICE

I want to correct the name of my ward from Abid Yousuf S/O: Mohammad Yousuf Bhat to Aabid Yousuf S/O: Mohammad Yousuf Bhat if anybody has any objection in this regard He/She may submit the same in the office of the Principal SHAHEEN PUBLIC SCHOOL Ganderpora, Srinagar within Seven days of the publication of this notice. No objection shall be entertained after the stipulated time.

MOHAMMAD YOUSUF BHAT
E/O Aabid Yousuf
Class 9th
Roll no. 06
Contact no. 8899887302

Fatehpura Panchayat of B'la receives DDUPSVP National Panchayat Award 2023

HT News Network

BARAMULLA, APRIL 18: As India advances towards National Panchayati Raj Day 2023, being celebrated every year on April 24, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj today organised an award ceremony in order to celebrate the National Panchayat Awards week from April 17- 21, 2023, as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav 2.0.

Hon'ble President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the event titled 'National Conference on Incentivization of Panchayats-cum-Award Ceremony' and to flagged off the National Panchayat Awards Week.

The five-day event is expected to witness the participation of more than 1,500 delegates from across the country.

At the event, Fatehpura



Panchayat of Baramulla district has received the Deen Dayal Upadhyay Sata Vikas Puraskar (DDUPSVP) National Panchayat Award 2022-23 under the "Women Friendly Panchayat" thematic area.

The award has been formally received by a team of officers from Baramulla led by Deputy Commissioner Dr Syed Sehrish Asgar.

Assistant Commissioner Panchayat Baramulla Gulzar Ahmad Khan, BDO

Baramulla Fayaz Ahmad and Sarpanch Fatehpura were accompanying the DC.

Meanwhile, the DC has extended her warm appreciations to the whole team of Rural Development Department and other concerned functionaries and said that such recognitions at the national level boosts the spirit of enthusiasm and zeal among the govt officials.

She added that Fatehpura Panchayat of Block

LMD Bandipora Intensifies market checking

HT News Network



BANDIPORA, April 18: Following the directions of Deputy Commissioner Bandipora Dr Owais Ahmed, Legal Metrology Department (LMD) has intensified its market checking operations in order to ensure that businesses in the area comply with legal requirements for accurate rates of commodities and weighing and measuring instruments.

Continuing the market inspection drive in the holy days of Ramzan, LMD carried inspection in the vicinities of Chittay Banday, Argam and Sumbal and booked as many as 13 traders under various sections of Legal Metrology Act. A fine of Rs. 6600 was recovered on spot.

LMD officials informed that the drive shall continue in the coming days.

The concerned officers of LMD Bandipora has urged all business establishments to ensure that their weighing and measuring instruments are accurate and ensure compliance with legal requirements beside

Department of Archives, SMVDU celebrate world heritage day Speakers highlight diverse antiquities of Jammu region

HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, APRIL-18:- Department of Archives, Archaeology and Museums, in collaboration with Shri Mata Vaishno Devi University (SMVDU), Jammu & Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages and Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (Jammu Chapter) celebrated World Heritage Day at Matrika Auditorium in SMVDU today.

Prof R K Sinha, Vice Chancellor SMVDU was the chief guest on the occasion. The event was thronged by academicians, heritage enthusiasts, archaeologists, architects, story tellers, writers and art lovers.

Prof R K Sinha emphasized the need for appreciating the heritage of India and exhorted the students to develop keen interest in the rich heritage and culture of India. He appreciated the efforts of the Archives Department for involving students of the University in the preservation and promotion of the heritage. "Interestingly, Jammu region has antiquities from Harappan civilisation, Kushan to the



present Dogra rulers," he added.

Dr. Lalit Gupta, a distinguished culture and art historian, described the Jammu region as mini-India and stressed the need for involving youth in spreading awareness about heritage. Dr. Gupta explained the nuances of sculptures carved on the walls of the Charai Muttal

Bawlis. He also talked about the legend surrounding the construction of Bawlis. "The richly carved walls around the Bawlis and aqueducts have footprints of Rajasthani art" he said.

Arvind Kotwal coordinator Heritage Tourism INTACH was also present on the occasion.

He elaborated on the built heritage of Jammu and need for its documentation and perseverance. Dr Sangeeta Sharma, Assistant Director Archives apprised the gathering about the rich heritage of Jammu region. Charai Muttal Bawli represents the zenith of Bawli architecture in Jammu region "she said.

Nagendra Singh Jamwal, Registrar SMVDU, also laid emphasis on the propagation of information about culture and heritage, and their conservation.

The scintillating folk performance by Ram Ditta & party and Kud performance by Khem Raj & Party in the Matrika Auditorium of the SMVDU inspired the audience with a new zeal and love for their intangible cultural heritage.

Students from SMVDU recited Hindi and Dogri songs on the occasion. Students of SMVDU also participated in the ramp walk organised to celebrate India's ethnic wear and cultural ethos. Scintillating Lavani folk dance performance by students of Dance Club was the highlight of the event.

Dr. Rakesh Kumar and Dr. Kamini of Board of Cultural Activities SMVDU coordinated the event.

The students and faculty of SMVDU later visited "Charai Muttal Bawli site.

World Heritage Day aims to raise awareness about the significance of heritage and encourage preservation and promotion of both tangible and intangible heritage of the country.

District Administration Reasi celebrates "World Heritage Day"

HT News Network

REASI, APRIL 18: To mark the World Heritage Day, District Administration Reasi, under the guidance of District Development Commissioner, Babila Rakwal, conducted cleanliness Drives at various ancient heritage sites and water bodies today.

World Heritage day is celebrated every year on 18th April to preserve the human heritage, diversity and vulnerability of the World's built monuments and heritage sites.

The cleanliness drive was conducted at Ancient temple Bhumika, Katra; Bhimgarh Fort, Reasi and heritage Bowlies in different Panchayats of District Reasi.

In the early Morning hours, a cleanliness drive was conducted at Bhim Garh Fort, Reasi by the NCC Cadets of Government Higher Secondary School (Boys).

Similarly a cleanliness drive and Heritage walk also organized at Bhumika temple, Katra, ancient Bowli at Chania near Shiv Mandir W.No: 3 Garan, Katra; step well at Chapanoo, Kanjli; ancient Aghar Jitto Temple; Dev Sthaan Gari & Jamia Masjid Nakka Block (Jij Bagli) and Shiv Temple Kakryal, Panchayat Sirah Kotla.

A large number of locals and PRIs participated in the programme.

PSPS GCW Gandhinagar organises orientation programme on "Phobia in Mathematics"

JAMMU, APRIL 18: Department of Mathematics, Padma shri Padma Sachdev Govt. College for Women, Gandhi Nagar the other day organized an Orientation Program to help students of the sem -2 fresher of Multidisciplinary Course to overcome the Phobia of Mathematics. Prof Minu Mahajan, Principal of the College, was the Chief Guest of the event. Through her inspiring thoughts, she encouraged the students to cultivate interest and passion towards the subject.

Dr. Renu Anand, HoD, Department of Mathematics and convener of the event formally welcomed the guests and described the significance of Mathematics in day to day life.

Professor Shobha Gupta, HoD, Department of Mathematics, GDC, Samba was the resource person of the event. She explained to students many basic concepts of Mathematics through real life examples. A large number of students attended and interacted with the resource person.

Radhika, a student of MD Mathematics in Sem 1 also shared her experience. Dr. Rupinder Kour and Dr. Jyoti Dutt also graced the event. Nisha, a student of Sem-2 compared the event.

IIM Jammu inks pact with Warsaw University of Technology Business School Poland for Academic & Research Exchange

HT News Network

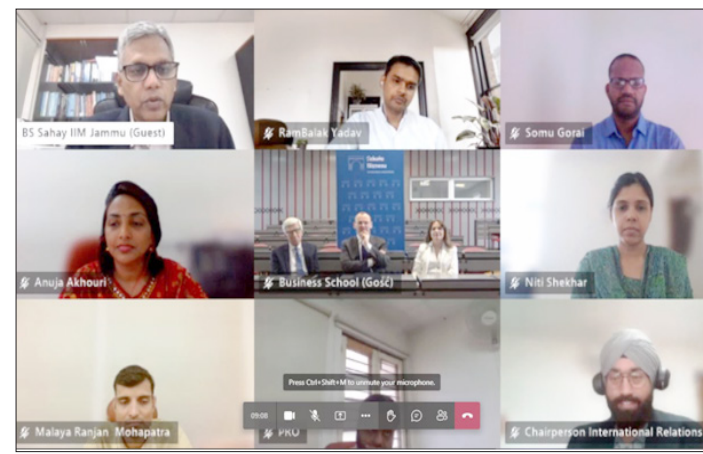
JAMMU, APRIL 18: Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Jammu has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Academic & Research Exchange with the internationally renowned Warsaw University of Technology (WUT) Business School, Poland.

The MoU was signed by Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu, and Dr. Pawel Urbanski, Director, WUT Business School, Poland through online mode.

Prof. B.S. Sahay, Director, IIM Jammu termed that the MoU with Warsaw University of Technology (WUT) Business School, Poland is a positive step toward absorbing the best practices in research and teaching from the best B-Schools in the world. According to him, these collaborations are a vital part of IIM Jammu's international endeavours, and these will be

helpful in fostering the advancement in teaching, research, and cultural understanding as well as the international reputation of both the institutes through student, and faculty exchange, executive education, and research programs. India being a fast-growing economy, I am sure that the collaboration is a great opportunity for both the Institutes and countries which is sure to lead to meaningful outcomes in the interest of the stakeholders.

Dr. Pawel Urbanski, Director, WUT Business School, Poland gave an overview of Warsaw University of Technology Business School, Poland, and mentioned that the Collaboration between both Institutes will help both the Institutes to develop our competence in many key areas ranging from the development of educational and training programs, long-range planning, and Institutional development. The collabora-



tion between the two reputed Institutes will give a leading edge to the research output of WUT Business School, Poland.

The cooperation aims to foster advancement in teaching, research, and cultural understanding, as well as the International Reputations of both Institutes through the exchange of postgraduate students, faculty

members, and academic information and materials; the organization of joint corporate training programs, joint research programs, joint conferences; Executive Education Programs, and other academic exchanges that both Institutes agree to.

The MoU Signing was coordinated by Dr. Sarbjit Singh, Chairperson, International Relations,

and Dr. Somu Gorai, Co-Chairperson, International Relations, IIM Jammu. The virtual tour of the state-of-the-art permanent campus of IIM Jammu was also showcased during the MoU signing ceremony.

The online MoU signing ceremony was witnessed by Prof. Gra yna Rembielak, Director of Executive MBA Programmes, WUT Business School, Poland, Dr. Anuja Akhouri, Chairperson, Corporate Communication Committee, Dr. Rambalak Yadav, Chairperson, Research, Dr. Malaya Ranjan Mohapatra, Co-Chairperson, Executive MBA, Dr. Niti Shekhar, Assistant Professor, IIM Jammu.

The MoU signing ended on a positive note with a mutual mandate to take things forward in quick succession by organizing joint online meetings amongst the faculty and students at both Institutes.

Talaash Back2School: Endline test conducted for OoSCs in district Kishtwar

HT News Network

KISHTWAR, APRIL 18: The endline test for "Out of School children" was successfully conducted across the four zones of district Kishtwar here under the guidance and overall superintendence of Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar, Dr. Devansh Yadav.

As many as 1347 OoSC appeared in the test which was conducted successfully across the 54 OoSC Centres which were earlier made functional by district administration Kishtwar in collaboration with the education department. Around 98 teachers were deployed to impart education to OoSC at designated centres exclusively opened for them. Under "Talaash" survey, conducted by Government of Jammu and Kashmir, near about 1800 OoSC were mapped by education department in district Kishtwar out of which more than 1400 were enrolled in winter coaching centres across the four zones of the district and immediately a baseline test was also con-



ducted for them with the motive to find out their level and the interventions needed. After that a sufficient time with regard to imparting education was given to them during the winter season through specially designed Bridge course and finally today the end line test was conducted for their mainstreaming via their formal schooling in next few days in their age-appropriate classes based on a functional grade system. The questionnaires/MCQs prepared by DIET Kishtwar under the supervision of Chief Education Officer and Principal DIET was set class wise/age wise.

DSEJ assesses functioning of schools in Lohai - Malhar area

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 18: Director School Education Jammu, Dr Ravi Shankar Sharma conducted an extensive tour of the Lohai -Malhar region of Kathua district to assess the problems being faced by students of Government High School Lohai Malhar, in particular and the area in general. Kamal Kumar, BDC Chairman; Parkash Lal Thappa, Chief Education Officer, Kathua; Dy CEO, Kathua and ZEO, Malhar also accompanied him. He inspected the ongoing works in Government High School, Lohai which included three Additional Classrooms, Arts and Crafts



room, Computer Room, Library, CWSN toilet, etc. at a cost of more than Rupees One Crores. While interacting with students, BDC member, sarpanch, retired educationists and locals people he also informed that immediate instructions have been passed on to concerned for completion of the incomplete building and redressal of issues in terms of academic and infrastructural gaps in the

schools falling in this far flung area. He disclosed that projects which are under various stages of completion in the school once completed will give impetus to the education in this far flung area bringing in new heights of accomplishment for students and public in general. It was also disclosed that some works including tiling of old block, white-wash and upgrading of toilets have been completed. He also assured that the Government is well aware of education needs of such far flung areas and have taken up several projects in the area for providing the best education to the students of the area and reducing the dropout rate.

Govt's claim of ensuring regular Power In Pir Panchal during Ramadan fallen flat: Ajaz Jan

HT News Network

POONCH: 18 April: Ajaz Jan, Provincial President Youth National Conference, Jammu, and former MLA Poonch raised serious concern over power outages during Sehri and Iftar across the Poonch and Rajouri district saying the government's claim of ensuring regular power during Ramadan has fallen flat. The senior NC leader today conducted a hectic tour of far flung areas of Haveli constituency and took stock of the hardships being faced by the general public.

The people expressed great disappointment over the callous attitude adopted by the administration for its failure to provide basic amenities to the people. They apprised the senior



NC leader about the dismal condition of power and water supply during the ongoing Holy days of Ramadhan. People are deprived of regular water and power supply. Besides they also raised serious concern over sky-rocketing prices of essential commodities. While interacting with people during his visit to far flung areas of Haveli

Constituency of district Poonch, the senior NC leader said ever since the holy month of Ramadan has set in, electricity has been playing hide and seek with the consumers particularly during Iftaar, Sehri, and Taraveeh hours. This has put the people to undue trepidation. However the LG led administration has failed to live up to its promise to ensure adequate power supply to domestic consumers, he said, terming it as a clear sign of an irresponsible approach on behalf of the concerned authorities. "Prices of vegetables and fruits have skyrocketed. The ground situation is totally contradicting the much hyped claims made by the administration. It is highly regrettable that our administration is unable to provide hassle free essential services and regulate market

UT Govt ready with Policy to allot land to landless people for PMAY houses

HT News Network

JAMMU, Apr 18: The Union Territory Government is almost ready with Land Allotment Policy to the poor people for construction of houses under Prime Minister's Awas Yojana for the landless people as there was no provision hitherto to allot land to the people and houses were being constructed only for those people who had land on their names.

Few days back, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha had made an important announcement in this

regard saying there was no law in Jammu and Kashmir to allot land to the people who don't possess it for construction of their houses under the Prime Minister's Awas Yojana and that the Government will shortly come out with law so that landless people get houses under the PMAY.

Official sources told the Excelsior that the administration is now ready with the laws for allotment of Government land to the landless people to facilitate construction of houses under the Prime Minister's Awas Yojana in both urban as well as rural areas.

"The laws are likely to be approved by the Administrative Council headed by the Lieutenant Governor shortly after which the Land Allotment Policy will come into force," they said.

As per the sources, the Government could utilize some of the land recovered during anti-encroachment drive in January-February this year for allotment to landless people specifically for the purpose of construction of houses where the land is fit for residential purposes. In other cases, the land will be allotted in other areas where State land is available and houses can

be constructed. During anti-encroachment drive, the Lieutenant Governor had stated that encroached land retrieved from the people will be utilized for construction of schools, hospitals and other such places of public purposes.

During current financial year of 2023-24, Jammu and Kashmir has been allotted 40,000 new houses for houseless families under Prime Minister's Awas Yojana-G, 18934 dwelling units were completed under PMAY-U while 87,350 IHHLs and 2500 CSCs are to be constructed.

EDITORIAL

The Common Sight of Violence In The streets of 'Pir Vear'...

The picturesque valley of Kashmir, known for its scenic beauty and rich cultural heritage, has been plagued by a recent surge in stabbing cases. The spate of knife attacks has sent shockwaves across the once peaceful society, leaving people fearful and insecure. The sudden rise in such incidents has not only exposed the vulnerability of the people but has also cast a shadow on the region's cultural ethos.

The culture of Kashmir has always been known for its hospitality, warmth, and inclusivity. However, the recent stabbing cases have brought to light the increasing intolerance, frustration, and aggression within the society. The incidents of knife attacks are not only a matter of concern for the victims and their families but also for the society at large. It is alarming to see how easily the youth are being lured into such acts of violence, leading to a sense of chaos and anarchy in the region.

In a recent incident, a youth was grievously injured after he was stabbed by another youth during an altercation in the Sopore area of North Kashmir's Baramulla district on intervening Monday and Tuesday night.

One of the primary reasons for the increase in knife attacks is the prevailing sense of despair and hopelessness among the youth. The political turmoil in the region, coupled with economic instability, has led to a lack of opportunities and avenues for the young people. This has resulted in a growing frustration and sense of alienation, making them susceptible to extremist ideologies and violence.

Another contributing factor is the easy availability of weapons. The authorities have failed to curb the influx of weapons into the region, making it easier for the youth to acquire them. The lack of effective law enforcement has further aggravated the situation, with criminals and anti-social elements taking advantage of the chaos and instability.

The impact of these stabbing incidents on the once cultured society of Kashmir cannot be overstated. The sense of fear and insecurity has affected the social fabric of the region, leading to a breakdown of trust and communal harmony. The culture of hospitality and inclusivity that once defined the valley is now under threat, as people are hesitant to extend their homes and hearts to strangers.

The loss of tourism revenue has further exacerbated the economic challenges faced by the people of Kashmir.

In conclusion, the recent surge in stabbing cases in Kashmir is a cause for concern for the entire society. The impact of these incidents on the once cultured society of Kashmir has been profound, highlighting the need for a concerted effort to address the underlying issues. The authorities need to take urgent steps to curb the availability of weapons and improve law enforcement to ensure the safety and security of the people. At the same time, efforts must be made to address the economic and social challenges faced by the youth, providing them with opportunities and avenues for growth and development. The cultural ethos of Kashmir, which has withstood the test of time, must be preserved and strengthened, ensuring that the valley remains a beacon of hospitality, warmth, and inclusivity for generations to come.

Love and Betrayal on Social Media: The Dangerous Rise of Online Boyfriend/Girlfriend Scams



IRFAN ATTARI KASHMIRI

Social media has revolutionized the way people interact with each other, but it has also led to the rise of online scams. One of the most concerning types of online scams is the online boyfriend/girlfriend scam. This type of scam involves individuals who create fake online profiles to lure unsuspecting victims into romantic relationships. These scammers use emotional manipulation and deception to exploit their victims for financial gain.

The online boyfriend/girlfriend scam is becoming increasingly common, and the consequences can be devastating. In this article, we will explore the dangerous rise of this type of scam on social media, and provide tips on how to protect yourself from falling victim to it.

How the Scam Works

The online boyfriend/girlfriend scam usually starts with a fake profile on a social media site. These profiles often use attractive photos and a charming persona to lure in potential victims. Once they have established contact with their victim, they will begin to build a relationship with them. This can involve daily messages, phone calls, and video chats.

As the relationship progresses, the scammer will start to make requests for money. These requests can come in the form of small amounts at first, such as money for a phone bill or transportation costs. However, they can quickly escalate to larger amounts, such as requests for money for medical expenses or to help with a business venture.

The scammer will use emotional manipulation to convince their victim to send them money. They may claim that they need the money to come and visit their victim, or that they are in a dire financial situation and need help. They may also use guilt tactics, telling their victim that they are the only one who can help them.

Once the scammer has received the money, they will often disappear without a trace. Victims may find it difficult to track down the scammer, as they have often used fake names and addresses.

The Consequences of Falling Victim to the Scam

The consequences of falling victim to the online boyfriend/girlfriend scam can be devastating. Victims can lose thousands of dollars, and may feel embarrassed or ashamed about being scammed. They may also feel a sense of betrayal, as they have often built a strong emotional connection with the scammer.

In addition to financial loss, victims may also experience emotional trauma. They may feel angry, depressed, or anxious about the experience. They may also struggle to trust others in the future, and may feel hesitant to enter into new relationships.

Protecting Yourself from the Scam

There are several steps you can take to protect yourself from falling victim to the online boyfriend/girlfriend scam.

Be wary of strangers on social media. If someone you don't know sends you a friend request or starts messaging you, be cautious. Take the time to look at their profile and see if it seems legitimate.

Don't share personal information with strangers. Avoid sharing personal details such as your phone number, address, or financial information with someone you have just met online.

Be skeptical of requests for money. If someone you have just met online asks you for money, be skeptical. Don't send money to someone you don't know, no matter how convincing their story may seem.

Look out for red flags. If the person you are talking to online starts making grand promises or seems too good to be true, be cautious. Also, be wary if they avoid video chats or in-person meetings.

Use reputable dating sites. If you are looking for a relationship online, use reputable dating sites that have a screening process in place to prevent scammers from joining.

Report suspicious activity. If you suspect that someone is trying to scam you online, report the activity to the social media site or dating site where you met them. You can also report the scam to the authorities.

The online boyfriend/girlfriend scam is not limited to any one social media platform. However, the main two social media apps that scammers are using to perpetrate this fraud are Instagram and Snapchat.

Instagram, with its large user base and easy-to-use interface, is a popular platform for scammers to create fake profiles and build relationships with potential victims. Scammers often use attractive photos and charming personalities to lure in victims and build emotional connections.

Snapchat, with its disappearing messages and lack of a paper trail, is another popular platform for scammers to operate on. Scammers can use Snapchat to communicate with victims and send messages that are difficult to trace.

Juraiya Rashid also shared with me another alarming trend on social media, where boys create fake Instagram profiles and pretend to be doctors working at prestigious hospitals like Aaims. They then proceed to ask for money from unsuspecting girls, claiming that they need it for medical emergencies or to fund their research projects. This is yet another example of the dangers of social media, where people can easily pretend to be someone they are not and take advantage of others' trust. It is essential to be cautious and verify the authenticity of people we meet online, especially when they ask for money or personal information

It is important to remember that scammers can operate on any social media platform, and it is essential to be cautious and vigilant when interacting with strangers online. By following the tips outlined in this article and being aware of the red flags associated with online scams, you can protect yourself from falling victim to the dangerous rise of online boyfriend/girlfriend scams on social media

How Online Boyfriend/Girlfriend Scams on Social Media Can Ruin Your Life

The rise of online boyfriend/girlfriend scams on social media is a serious issue that can have devastating consequences for those who fall victim to it. While the financial losses can be significant, the emotional toll of being scammed can also be severe. Here's how online scams can ruin your life:

Financial Losses: The financial losses associated with online scams can be significant. Victims can lose thousands of dollars, which can have a lasting impact on their financial stability. In some cases, victims may even need to declare bankruptcy or take out loans to cover their losses.

Emotional Trauma: Falling victim to an online boyfriend/girlfriend scam can be emotionally traumatizing. Victims may feel a sense of shame, embarrassment, or betrayal. They may also struggle with feelings of anger, depression, or anxiety. The emotional toll of being scammed can last long after the scam is over.

Trust Issues: Victims of online scams may struggle to trust others in the future. They may feel hesitant to enter into new relationships or may be overly suspicious of others' intentions. This can make it difficult to form meaningful connections with others and can lead to feelings of isolation and loneliness.

Reputation Damage: Scammers may use the personal information they have obtained from their victims to damage their reputation. Victims may find that their personal information has been shared online, which can lead to harassment or even identity theft.

Legal Troubles: In some cases, victims of online scams may face legal troubles. For example, they may have unknowingly participated in illegal activities, such as money laundering or fraud. This can have serious legal consequences and can ruin a victim's life in the long-term.

The rise of online boyfriend/girlfriend scams on social media is a serious issue that can ruin lives. While it can be difficult to protect yourself from scammers, there are steps you can take to minimize your risk. By being vigilant, skeptical, and cautious when interacting with strangers online, you can protect yourself from falling victim to online scams and avoid the devastating consequences that come with them

The Deceptive Charms of Online Love: A Cautionary Tale of Betrayal and Scam on Social Media

Note: The following story was shared by my friend Juraiya Rashid, and the names of the characters and location have been changed to protect their privacy.

I was speaking to my friend Juraiya Rashid while writing about the ongoing social media frauds. She told me a story that perfectly illustrates the dangers of online relationships and how they can lead to devastating consequences.

Juraiya's friend, Sarah, had recently moved to a new city and was feeling lonely. She started using social media apps like Instagram and Snapchat to connect with new people and make friends.

One day, Sarah received a message from a guy named Adam, who lived in another country. They started talking, and before long, they became close friends. Adam was charming and attentive, and Sarah found herself drawn to him.

As they got to know each other better, Adam started expressing his feelings for Sarah. He said that he had never met anyone like her before and that he wanted to be with her. Sarah was hesitant at first, but Adam was so persuasive that she eventually agreed to be his girlfriend.

Sarah and Adam continued their relationship online, sharing messages, pictures, and videos. They even exchanged personal information like email and social media passwords, believing that they could trust each other.

One day, Sarah received a message from Adam, saying that he was in trouble. He said that he needed money urgently to pay for medical bills and other expenses. He asked Sarah if she could lend him some money, promising to pay her back as soon as he could.

Sarah was worried about Adam and wanted to help him, so she agreed to lend him the money. She transferred the money to his bank account, believing that he would keep his promise and pay her back.

Days turned into weeks, and Sarah didn't hear from Adam. She tried calling and messaging him, but he didn't answer. She realized that she had been scammed by someone she thought she could trust.

Sarah felt betrayed and heartbroken. She had lost her savings, and worse, she had lost the person she thought was her soulmate. She realized that she had been too trusting and had fallen prey to an online scammer.

The lesson that Sarah learned was a hard one. She realized that she needed to be more careful when making online relationships and never to share personal information or send money to someone she had never met in person.

As for Adam, he disappeared into the digital ether, leaving behind a trail of broken promises and shattered dreams. Sarah learned the hard way that not everyone on social media is who they claim to be, and that love and trust are precious things that should not be given away lightly.

The moral of the story is clear: online relationships can be dangerous, and we must be cautious when engaging with strangers on social media. We must remember that not everyone has our best interests at heart and that some people will do anything to take advantage of our vulnerability.

Juraiya Rashid also shared with me another alarming trend on social media, where boys create fake Instagram profiles and pretend to be doctors working at prestigious hospitals like Aaims. They then proceed to ask for money from unsuspecting girls, claiming that they need it for medical emergencies or to fund their research projects.

This is yet another example of the dangers of social media, where people can easily pretend to be someone they are not and take advantage of others' trust. It is essential to be cautious and verify the authenticity of people we meet online, especially when they ask for money or personal information.

As we navigate the ever-evolving world of social media, we must stay informed and aware of the potential risks and take steps to protect ourselves and our loved ones. Only then can we truly enjoy the benefits of this powerful tool without falling prey to its pitfalls.

In conclusion, the rise of social media has brought new opportunities for people to connect and build relationships online. However, it has also led to an increase in online frauds and scams, particularly in the form of fraudulent online boyfriend/girlfriend schemes.

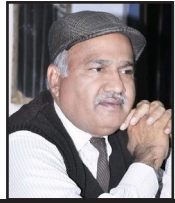
As we have seen in the story shared by Juraiya Rashid, trusting someone we have met online can have devastating consequences. It is essential to be cautious when engaging in online relationships and to be wary of people who ask for personal information or money.

We must remember that online relationships are not the same as real-life relationships. We cannot see the person we are talking to, and we cannot know for sure if they are who they claim to be. We must be cautious and take steps to protect ourselves, such as avoiding sharing personal information and never sending money to someone we have never met in person.

While social media can be a great way to meet new people and make friends, we must be mindful of the risks that come with it. By being vigilant and using common sense, we can protect ourselves from online frauds and scams and enjoy the benefits of social media without falling prey to its pitfalls.

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Home Schooling In India



VIJAY GARG

Home Schooling in India is a form of alternative education in which education is provided to children at home by parents or by tutors rather than in public or private schools. This conforms to the prevalence of similar homeschooling option for parents in many countries. But it does not conform to the same approaches, attitude, practices, and trends found elsewhere in the world. The highlight of this article is as such directed towards home education or home-based learning in India. Home education in India is offered by various agencies enabling an increase in the resources for imparting and promoting education. Some of these are in the form of associations, education providers, support groups forums etc. Most of these are active on the internet and that is why they remain largely unknown to the common people. Moreover, homeschooling is more prominent in major urban Indian cities, like Bangalore, Chennai, Kolkata, Mumbai, New Delhi and Pune. In other parts of India, homeschooling has only a minimal presence. The estimated number of homeschoolers has been put to 500-1000 children as per the Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA), a non-profit advocacy organization working for the education of children.

To begin, homeschooling is initiated when a family decides to teach their child at home and a parent assumes responsibility for the formal instruction of his or her child. Whether they resort to private tutors, later on, is a different matter. Next step is securing funds, choosing curriculum content, and determining the gradation and progress of the child. This practice makes this type of schooling associated with the term 'privatization of education' as parents or guardians provide their children with a learning environment as an alternative to public or private schools outside the home. Before the introduction of compulsory school attendance laws, most childhood education occurred within the family or community. Homeschooling isn't a recent or a sudden development in India. Indian History itself reveals various such examples wherein Shishyas (students) were taught by Gurus (teachers) conforming to the tradition of Guru-Shishya. Shishyas were taught a wide range of subjects like administration, combat, politics, sports etc. While some of this education was provided by experts, some were also provided by Sages within the premises of the house. Homeschooling in India, in the modern sense, is different.

Home School Education in India: How it works?

There are fixed rules for home education in India if a candidate appears for examinations. Parents use a curriculum prescribed by NIOS or IGCSE and then appear for the examinations. Children can even take examinations as private candidates at a regular school. Second way follows a liberal approach; parents may design their own curriculum by referring to syllabi of different boards. It is up to the parents or their children to decide whether they want to register with a board and appear for examinations.

Main Bodies that are involved in the Academic Study of Homeschoolers in India

NIOS

National Institute of Open Schooling is a board of an open school in India. It provides relevant continuing education at school stage, up to pre-degree level through open learning system. Homeschoolers can directly use NIOS to take the exams for class X and XII. They are only required to register with the body a year before they want to take the exam. Certificates issued by NIOS carry the same recognition as other Boards and are valid for taking competitive exams.

NIOS offers following Courses/Programmes of Study through Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode

Open Basic Education (OBE) Programme for 14-year's age group, adolescents, and adults at A, B and C levels that are equivalent to classes III, V, and VIII of the formal school system.

Secondary Education Course

Senior Secondary Education Course

Vocational Education Courses/Programmes

Life Enrichment Programmes

For detailed information visit NIOS Website - <http://www.nios.ac.in>

IGCSE: International General Certificate of Secondary Education is an internationally recognized qualification for school students, typically in the 15-16 age group.

The International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) is a globally recognized qualification, conducted at the Class 10 level, similar to the Class 10 examinations of the CBSE and ICSE.

IGCSE Courses

Cambridge Primary (CIPP): 5 - 11 years

Cambridge Secondary 1 (Lower Secondary/Checkpoint): 11 - 14 years

Cambridge Secondary 2 (IGCSE/O level): 14 - 16 years

Cambridge Advanced (AS/A level): 16 - 19 years

A candidate can appear for the IGCSE exams as a private candidate. IGCSE is conducted by two boards:

Cambridge International Examinations (CIE) and Edexcel.

For appearing in the examinations, one has to register his kid as a private candidate in an IGCSE school. One can also take the examinations at the specified CIE exam centre, which could be British Council in Kolkata as it is the only CIE exam



centre. For more information visit - <http://www.cie.org.uk/countries/india/>

Homeschooling in India: Methods

Homeschooling system in India uses a variety of methods and materials which may follow the prescribed regulations or a mixture of any as per the intelligence and preference of children and/or parents. Most of the common methods used in India are the Montessori Method, Un-schooling, Radical Un-schooling, Waldorf education and School.

Apart from the Major Methods, Parents/Children use some Techniques Mentioned below

Self Study: If a student is intelligent and independent self-study is encouraged. Children are encouraged to figure out things by themselves and find pleasure in learning new things.

Practical Study: Parents/tutors use a practical approach or use routine based activities to educate the child. Morals, manners, speaking, reading etc. are taught with practical examples.

Personalised Study: Parents/teachers opt for not following a structured timetable or a prescribed course. Textbooks maybe partially followed or rejected altogether. Some parents will allow more attention to those subjects which are favourites or which are easy based on their kids choice. The tough ones and boring ones are given less attention to allow specialisation.

Various types of course material and educational tools are used towards this effect. Some of these are Educational CDs, Games, Magazines, Television Programmes, Websites or any other preferred or suitable material.

Home Schooling Education in India: Resources

As mentioned earlier there are many supporting bodies in India which back this option of education in various active and passive manners, some of these have been mentioned in the following paragraph.

Indian Association of Homeschoolers: Also known as Swashikshan, it is a non-profit initiative of homeschooling children, parents, guardians and friends. The members of this association include homeschoolers residing in India, irrespective of nationality & homeschoolers of Indian origin, irrespective of location. Website - <http://homeschoolers.in>

Homeschooling Forum: It discusses and facilitates homeschooling, unschooling and attachment parenting at the local & national level in India. Website - <http://indiahomeschoolers.ning.com/>

Twitter of Homeschooling in India: A platform for sharing general links & stuff of interest to homeschoolers in India (and to people in the education field). Website - <https://twitter.com/indiahomeschool>

FB of Homeschoolers, India: Indian homeschoolers have their own Facebook account where they can share their views and so on. Websites - <https://www.facebook.com/indiahomeschool> <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Homeschooling-Alternative-Education-in-India/135772739790943>

Homeschooling in India Yahoo Group: An online support group which facilitates information regarding home educating. Website - <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/alt-ed-india/>

Google Group of Indian Homeschoolers: Alt-learn-blr is a google based group of homeschoolers and their supporters in India. Website - <http://groups.google.com/group/alt-learn-blr/about>

Some Indian Homeschooling Websites / Links

<http://alternativeeducationindia.wordpress.com/>

<http://homeschooling.gomilpitas.com/regional/India>

htm

<http://www.alternativeeducationindia.net/>

<http://www.swaraj.org/shikshantar/>

<http://indiahomeschoolersconference.blogspot.in/>

<http://www.ndtv.com/video/player/news/india-matters-coming-home-to-school/216468>

Some Supporting Organisations

Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA), Multiworld Network, <http://multiworldindia.org/>, International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), Pune Homeschoolers Group.

These resources work in favour of homeschooling education in India in any possible and legal manner which includes communicating, consultations, holding events and other beneficial and supportive activities.

Legality of Homeschooling in India

Education comes under the Right to Education (RTE) Act which came into effect on April 1, 2010. The act makes it mandatory for every child, from 6 to 14 years, to be enrolled in a formal school. However, there is controversy regarding the legal status of homeschooling in India. This controversy started when Shreya Sahai, a 14-year-old girl filed a petition in 2011 through her mother, contending that - 'Section 18 of RTE Act does not recognise any other mode of imparting education except the one through formal schooling'. The petition further sought a direction to include homeschooling and alternative education schools under the 'specified category' under Section 2(P) of the RTE Act.

In response, the Centre filed an affidavit in the Delhi high court in July 2012. As per the affidavit "Parents who voluntarily opt for systems of homeschooling and such alternative forms of schooling may continue to do so. The RTE Act does not come in the way of such schooling methodologies or declare such form of education illegal." The affidavit, also said, "National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) for children in the age group of 6-14 years will only be allowed to run up to 2015".

But in October 2012, the Union government stated before a division bench of the Delhi High Court, that "Its earlier stand towards home education was incorrect and contrary to Section 10 of the Act". The court has given time to the Centre to file a new affidavit towards this statement. Technically speaking, until a final decision is made towards this issue, "Homeschooling in India is not allowed as per the RTE Act as of December 2012. But taking a close look at the RTE Act reveals another facet. RTE document does not refer to homeschooling or neither does it make clear on it being illegal. The act is more focused on the duty of the state in regulating education. With reference to a Homeschooling website - <http://homeschoolers.in/is-homeschooling-illegal/>, the assumption of the illegality of homeschooling is quite in contradiction with Article 26 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights which clearly states that - "Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children." So how can homeschooling be illegal?

Home Schooling in India: Promoting Factors

Different parents and/or children have different reasons for choosing to homeschool as an option for educating their siblings. These reasons are also the contributing factors towards this type of education.

Dissatisfaction with Conventional System of Education: The conventional system of Indian Education is flawed in a major way as opined by the majority of citizens. The Indian Education system prepares students for appearing in examinations rather than preparing

them for the real world. Parents are not happy with the education they themselves have got from the education system. They have lost faith in the education system and feel that they can provide a better education at home.

Flexibility: Flexibility is another major promoting factor for homeschooling. Parents or kids can decide what they want to study and when they want to study. Flexible schedule of the study also allows more socialisation within or outside the house. One can decide independently how much study is enough or deficient. This way the child learns at his own pace and can avoid stress related to the pace of covering syllabus.

Disabilities: For children with learning disorders homeschooling is a better option. Such kids will not face any sort of discriminatory or derogatory act. Parents have a better knowledge of their own as compared to teachers who could be partially or totally unaware of what matters the most. Certain mental or physical disabilities also encourage homeschooling.

Less Stress: The prevalent education system in India puts a lot of performance pressure on kids. Those who do not perform well are condemned and those who are naughty are punished. Various competitive examinations in India and their accompanying pre and pro processes have an overbearing effect on those involved. Stress, aggression, abuse, violence and other negative behaviour is the outcome of the race to excel.

Mindset: Some kids do not like to attend school due to various reasons or simply a preference. Some parents also do not prefer that their kids should go to any school. Some kids are able to do well while studying in the home as compared to going to school. They are better at studying at home than going regularly to school. Some parents especially those living in rural areas feel that conventional education is biased against their moral values and social requirements.

Teacher-Student Ratio: The major factor affecting the Indian Education System has been the skewed ratio of student-teacher in a school or college environment. 1 Teacher teaching 30 or so students cannot give the quality of education to each individual, nor is it possible for the teachers to provide undivided attention.

Online Forums: Online forums address various issues related to homeschooling. Parents can interact with each other and get solutions for their problems. Parents, tutors and students feel a sense of belongingness towards a common objective.

Better Attention to Specialisation: In a conventional school environment a child's specialisation may go unnoticed or unappreciated. Interests like music, dance or any non-academic skill are generally not given much support. This attitude does not do justice to the talent of the individual. Homeschooling offers the facility to go for what one is perfect in. Musician, sports person etc. require more training in their chosen field instead of just pure academics.

Enjoyment in Education: It is not a hidden fact that nobody has got enjoyment from education at school, of course, exceptions are always there, but very few. At home, education can be delivered in more ways than possible in a school environment. Kids or parents can mould education with props like CD's, puppets or activities like a visit to a zoo, cooking, artistry etc. Such form of education brings variety in education as compared to the repetitive routine of schooling.

Safety: Safety here means both physically and mentally. Children can be spared from bullying, adultery, addictions or any other negative influence which children face while studying in a school.

Vijay Garg Retired Principal Educational Columnist Malout Punjab

Why was parole granted to 11 convicts in the Bilkis Bano case, asks SC

HT News Network

New Delhi, Apr 18 (UNI) The Supreme Court on Tuesday expressed its displeasure and questioned as to why parole was granted to 11 convicts in the Bilkis Bano case, when the gravity of the offence should have been considered by the Gujarat government.

The Supreme Court said, "Apples cannot be compared with oranges, similarly massacre cannot be compared with single murder," a two-judge bench of the Apex Court, headed by Justice KM Joseph, and also comprising Justice BV Nagarathna said. Bano was 21 years old and five months pregnant when she was gang-raped while fleeing the riots that broke out after the Godhra train burning incident. Her three-year-old daughter was among the seven family members killed. The top court said, "Just because Union has approved does not mean, the state (Gujarat govt) is not required to apply mind. Today, this is this lady, and tomorrow it could be someone else. There must be objective standards." The bench issued notice to the



Centre, Gujarat government and the convicts on the plea filed by Bano and asked the parties to complete the pleadings by the next date of hearing. "Every action should be for public good," the Supreme Court said and posted the matter for further hearing to May first week. The apex court has today posted the batch of pleas challenging remission to convicts in the case for final disposal on May.

The Apex Court granted UOI & Guj govt time till May 1 to take a call on whether it wishes to file review of its March 27 order directing UOI & state to be ready with

files granting remission to 11 convicts. The Centre and Gujarat Govt claimed privilege over the files relating to the grant of remission to 11 convicts in the Bilkis Bano case, adding they are likely to seek review of the court order. The Apex Court also questioned the reservations, of both the Govts, and asked what's there to hide if a legal decision was taken.

The Top Court fixed the next hearing on May 2 but emphasised that the crime in question was "horrendous" and it's imperative for the Gujarat Govt to show application of mind in allowing pre-mature

release of the 11 convicts.

Bilkis Bano, through her lawyer, Shobha Gupta, had filed the writ petition challenging the remission or premature release given to 11 gangrape convicts.

Bilkis Bano, had filed a writ petition, after the Supreme Court had last year, after her review petition was dismissed last year in December. In March 2002 during the post-Godhra riots, Bano was allegedly gang-raped and left to die with 14 members of her family, including her three-year-old daughter. She was five months pregnant when rioters attacked her family.

Modi, Yogi did historic work for UP: Piyush Goyal

HT News Network

Lucknow, Apr 18 (UNI) Union Textile Minister Piyush Goyal on Tuesday said that in the past the identity of Uttar Pradesh reached the world for all the wrong reasons, but Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath did historic work for the state which was beyond imagination.

During a programme of launch and signing of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) of Integrated Textile Park in 1,000 acres in Lucknow and Hardoi districts under PM Mega Integrated Textile Sector and Apparel (PM Mitra), Goyal said, "Lucknow is known for its art and culture, has a unique Tehzeeb, is famous for its hospitality and is famous in the world for its Chikan and Zari work."

He said, "But this identity was lost in some quantity. UP identity reached the world for all the wrong reasons, but the pair of Modi ji and Yogi ji has done historical work for the state which was beyond imagination. Now not only the picture, but the character of UP is also changing."

The Minister said that UP was sort of a textile and handicraft capital of the country for decades or even



generations. "The work of artisans of UP was famous and popular in the world, but it could not be given the shape which was needed keeping in mind the possibilities available could not be given," he said.

He said, "For decades due to small political reasons, benefits and self-interest different governments came and went, but they failed to do what Modi ji and Yogi ji did."

Goyal said that the industry needs a strong law and order situation, good infrastructure and best facilities. "If an industry has to grow it needs a good law and order situation. No industry will invest if law and order is weak. A good infrastructure is needed for the industry so that it can grow and prosper. An infrastructure which has all the facilities

benefit from the decision of the UP government in which it announced a Rupees 2 rebate per unit on electricity," he said.

He said that the decisions like rebate in land prices for setting up large scale units and others is the reason promoting development in the Hindi Heartland. "UP has followed the PM's vision of Speed, Skill and Scale. In this regard, projects are monitored, there's a transparent system of governance, observation of ongoing works, officers and politicians are accountable for the deadline, all these detailing has led to a dream, a dream of achieving a 1 trillion dollar economy and UP is moving on that path," he said. Goyal highlighted the exemplary initiatives taken by the UP government with regard to good governance, enforcing law and order and building a holistic ecosystem in the state towards its development. He recalled former PM Atal Bihari Vajpayee and said he was the ambassador of the state. He assured that PM Mitra Park in UP will be the first Park in the country to be inaugurated after completion. "Prime Minister Narendra Modi will be invited to do the bhoomi puja following which within a fortnight.

PM Modi congratulates winners of National Panchayat Awards

HT News Network

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has congratulated the winners of National Panchayat Awards. Responding to a tweet by Rural Development Minister Giriraj Singh, he said the awardees have played an important role in the development of India's villages, and their service and dedication are going to inspire everyone. Modi has requested everyone to Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya in New Delhi. Responding to a tweet by Neeraj Shekhar, the son of former Prime Minister Chandra Shekhar, about his visit to Pradhanmantri Sangrahalaya, the Prime Minister said it his good fortune that he got to spend time with a great personality like Chandra Shekhar. The Prime Minister also lauded the site clearance of over 2,250 acres land by the Civil Aviation Ministry for Greenfield Airport project at Kottayam. Sharing a tweet by the Ministry, Modi called it great news for tourism, especially spiritual tourism. Modi also shared a video of cultural performances from Saurashtra Tamil Sangamam on Twitter.

Manipur BJP Dissent Against Chief Minister Buzz As Some MLAs Visit Delhi

HT News Network

Imphal/New Delhi: Speculation over dissension brewing in Chief Minister N Biren Singh government grew as a group of BJP MLAs have left for Delhi to meet with BJP's central leaders, especially as a prominent party leader also came up with a social media post seemingly explaining that complaining or taking a dispute to a higher party functionary did not tantamount to indiscipline. Party officials have confirmed that at least four BJP MLAs from Manipur valley are in Delhi to meet central leaders. Uripok MLA Khwairakpam Raghmani, who is among the four BJP MLAs from Manipur valley camping in Delhi, posted a picture on a facebook site 'Raghmani for Uripok' showing the group meeting Union Minister of State for North East B L Verma.

CBI Pauses Notice To Abhishek Banerjee Till Supreme Court's Further Orders

HT News Network

Kolkata: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Tuesday sent another letter to Trinamool Congress national general secretary Abhishek Banerjee informing him that the earlier notice for questioning has been kept in abeyance till further orders from the Supreme Court. The central probe agency's letter was dispatched a day after it had sent a notice to the TMC MP asking him to appear before its sleuths at its Kolkata office for questioning in connection with the school jobs scam following certain allegations of arrested Trinamool Congress youth leader Kuntal Ghosh. Monday's notice to Abhishek, nephew of West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, had reached him a couple of hours after the Supreme Court put a stay on a Calcutta High Court order permitting the CBI and the Enforcement Directorate (ED) to question him till April 24.

UP's environment most favourable to set up enterprises: Yogi

HT News Network

Lucknow, Apr 18 (UNI) Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday asserted that Uttar Pradesh has the most favourable environment to set up enterprises and said that no mafia can spread terror in the state and every district is now safe having its own identity and the government is capable of safeguarding the interests and the capital of the investors.

He said addressing an event in which a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the UP government and the Union government in the presence of Union Minister for Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal for setting up a textile park in Lucknow and Hardoi district on 1,000 acre land under the PM Mega Integrated Textiles and Apparel (PM Mitra) scheme at Lok Bhawan.

Slamming previous governments for making UP infamous because of poor law and order situation, Yogi said, "Prior to 2017, UP was known for riots and crime. Today, all districts in UP are witnessing growth and darkness in every way has been eliminated. The government is paving the way for UP's development through



airports, highways, and proper law and order situation."

He said that earlier those who were trouble for UP are today in trouble themselves. "More than 700 riots took place in UP between 2012-17. Over 364 riots took place in UP between 2007-12 but not a single riot has taken place since 2017 till now," he said.

Expressing gratitude to the Prime Minister for choosing UP under the center's ambitious PM Mega Integrated Textiles and Apparel (PM Mitra) scheme, the CM said, "This move is a step towards re-establishing the UP's ancient glory and towards making the state the 'new textile hub' of the country."

"Won't Go Into Personal Laws": Supreme Court In Same-Sex Marriage Hearing

HT News Network

New Delhi: The Supreme Court on Tuesday made it clear that it will not go into the personal laws governing marriages while deciding the pleas seeking legal validation for same-sex marriages and asked the lawyers to advance arguments on the Special Marriage Act.

A five-judge constitution bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud termed the issue involving the pleas "complex" and said the very notion of a man and a woman, as referred to in the Special Marriage Act, is not "an absolute based on genitals." "It is not the question of what your genitals are. It is far more complex, that's the point. So, even when the Special Marriage Act says man and woman, the very notion of a man and a woman is not an absolute based on genitals," said the bench, which also comprised justices SK Kaul, SR Bhat, Hima Kohli and PS Narasimha. On being pointed out the difficulties and ramifications for the Hindu Marriage Act and personal laws of various religious groups if the court were to hold same-sex marriages valid, the bench said, "Then we can keep the personal laws out of the equation and all of you (lawyers) can



address us on the Special Marriage Act (a religion neutral marriage law)." The Special Marriage Act, 1954 is a law that provides a legal framework for the marriage of people belonging to different religions or castes. It governs a civil marriage where the state sanctions the marriage rather than the religion. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, referred to the laws on transgenders and said there are several rights such as the right to choose partners, privacy right, right to choose sexual orientation, and any discrimination is criminally prosecutable. "However, the conferment of socio-legal status of marriage cannot be done through judicial decisions. It cannot even be done by the legislature. The acceptance has to come from within the society."

Centre asks States, UTs to ensure prep for easing effects of heat wave on workers

HT News Network

New Delhi, Apr 18 (UNI) Amid the temperature soaring across the country, the Government on Tuesday directed the States and Union Territories (UTs) to ensure preparedness for effective management and mitigation of adverse impact of heat wave conditions on workers and labourers.

In a letter addressed to Chief Secretaries / Administrators of all States/ UTs, Union Labour Secretary Arti Ahuja emphasised upon the need to issue directions to the occupiers / employers / construction companies / industries to undertake necessary steps to mitigate the adverse effects of extreme hot weather, an official statement said.



The letter referred to the seasonal outlook issued by Indian Metrological Department (IMD) for hot weather season during current year which indicates above normal maximum temperatures over most parts of North East India, East and Central India, and some part of Northwest India, as per the communique. It also lists out various strategic steps required to be taken which include re-scheduling of working hours for employees/workers, ensuring adequate drinking water facilities at work places, making provision for emergency ice packs and heat illness prevention material to construction workers, coordinating with Health Department to ensure regular health check-up of the workers, adhering to Health Advisory issued by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for employers and workers, it said. The letter also impresses upon the need to issue instructions to the Managements of Mines asking them to undertake immediate steps to make provision for rest areas, adequate quantity of cool water and electrolyte supplements near the workplace. Allowing work at slow pace in case the worker feels unwell, allowing rest times and flexible schedules to let

workers do the hardest work during the coolest parts of the day with, assigning a two-person crew to perform work during extremely hot temperatures, ensuring proper ventilation in underground mines and making the workers aware of dangers from excessive heat and humidity and remedial measures are some of the other measures suggested.

Apart from factories and mines, the Labour Secretary has also impressed upon the need to pay special attention to construction workers, and brick kiln workers and to carry out adequate information dissemination at the Labour Chawks.

"Complete Self-Sufficiency A Dead-End": Russian Minister To S Jaishankar

HT News Network

New Delhi: External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar met Russian Deputy Prime Minister Denis Manturov, on the second day of the latter's visit, on Tuesday.

Mr Manturov, who is also the country's minister for Industry and Trade, arrived in the national capital on Monday.

This is the second meeting of EAM Jaishankar with the Russian Deputy Prime Minister, during the course of his India visit.

On Monday, Mr Jaishankar and Mr Manturov met representatives of Russian and Indian businesses at the India-Russia Business Dialogue in New Delhi.

Addressing the Russia-India Business Dialogue, Mr Manturov said, "Together with Eurasian Economic Commission, we are looking forward to intensifying negotiations on Free Trade Agreement with India."

The visiting Russian minister also said Moscow is interested in a qualitative increase in trade.

"Additionally, we are working on signing of Russia-India Bilateral Agreement for the Promotion and Protection of Investments," Mr Manturov said at the event, which was organised jointly by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry and Russia-India Business Council.

To protect the principles of free trade with its partners, Russia has undertaken a set of effective measures, including import preferences. Mechanisms that guarantee the protection of investments will be in demand among Russian and Indian businessmen, Mr Manturov said.

EU envoy attacked as death toll passes 200 in Sudan turmoil

■ HT News Network

KHARTOUM: Fighting between the army and paramilitaries in Sudan has killed around 200 people and wounded 1,800, left hospitals damaged and medical supplies and food in short supply on Monday after three days of urban warfare.

The European Union ambassador to Sudan was attacked in his home in Khartoum, the bloc's top diplomat Josep Borrell said.

"A few hours ago, the EU Ambassador in Sudan was assaulted in his own residency," Borrell wrote on Twitter, without detailing any injuries to the envoy. "Security of diplomatic premises and staff is a primary responsibility of Sudanese authorities and an obligation under international law," he added.

The EU ambassador to Sudan is veteran Irish diplomat Aidan O'Hara. EU spokeswoman Nabila Massrali said he was "OK" following the assault.

The United Nations has called for an immediate ceasefire and international bodies, including the European Union, have expressed grave concern.



A weeks-long power struggle exploded into deadly violence on Saturday between the forces of two generals who seized power in a 2021 coup. Sudan's army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and his deputy, Mohamed Hamdan Daglo, who commands the powerful paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF).

Battles have also taken place throughout the vast country, and there are fears of regional spillover. Terrified residents of the

capital are spending the last and holiest days of Ramadan watching from their windows as tanks roll through the streets, buildings shake, and smoke from fires triggered by the fighting hangs in the air.

The conflict has seen air strikes, artillery and heavy gunfire.

Those compelled to venture out face queues for bread and petrol at outlets which are not shuttered. Residents are also dealing with power outages.

Volker Perthes, the head of the UN mission to Sudan, told the Security Council in a closed-door session, that at least 185 people have been killed and another 1,800 wounded. "It's a very fluid situation so it's very difficult to say where the balance is shifting to," Perthes told reporters after the meeting.

Earlier on Monday, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres again called on Sudan's warring parties to "immediately cease

hostilities". He warned that further escalation "could be devastating for the country and the region."

Medics in Sudan had earlier given a death toll of nearly 100 civilians and "dozens" of fighters from both sides, but the number of casualties was thought to be far higher, with many wounded unable to reach hospitals.

The official doctors' union warned fighting had "heavily damaged" multiple hospitals in Khartoum and other cities, with some completely "out of service". The World Health Organisation had already warned that several of Khartoum's nine hospitals receiving injured civilians "have run out of blood, transfusion equipment, intravenous fluids and other vital supplies".

In the western region of Darfur, international medical aid organisation Doctors Without Borders reported receiving 136 wounded patients at the only hospital in El Fasher still operating in North Darfur state. In the western region of Darfur, international medical aid organisation Doctors Without Borders reported receiving 136 wounded patients at the only hospital in El Fasher still operating in North Darfur state.

China ready to facilitate Israel-Palestine peace talks, says foreign minister

■ HT News Network



China's foreign minister told his Israeli and Palestinian counterparts his country is ready to help facilitate peace talks, state media Xinhua reported Tuesday.

The separate phone calls between Foreign Minister Qin Gang and the Israeli and Palestinian top diplomats come amid recent moves by Beijing to position itself as a regional mediator.

Qin encouraged "steps to resume peace talks," and said that "China is ready to provide convenience for this," in a Monday phone call with Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen, Xinhua reported in a summarisation.

And Qin told Palestinian foreign minister Riyad Al-Maliki that Beijing supports the resumption of talks as soon as possible, according to a Xinhua summary.

In both calls Qin emphasized China's push for peace talks on the basis of implementing a "two-state solution," Xinhua said.

China has been on a recent diplomatic offensive, brokering the restoration of ties in March between Iran and Saudi Arabia — rivals in a region where the United States for decades has been the main diplomatic powerbroker.

Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations have been stalled since 2014.

Prayers for rain in Dhaka as temperatures soar

■ HT News Network

DHAKA: Hundreds of Bangladeshis gathered on an open field in Dhaka on Monday to pray for rain after the metropolis of 20 million people recorded its hottest day in almost 60 years.

Police said more than 500 worshippers congregated on the Aftabnagar playing ground, where popular TV cleric Shaikh Ahmadullah led the prayers.

"They held the prayers for rains. They also held prayers for easing the temperature and protection from the heatwave," local police chief Abul Kalam Azad said.

Bangladesh is at the forefront of climate change with frequent deadly floods and erratic rains.

The rains that usually fall in April and May have failed to materialise this year and the country has been gripped by unusually hot weather since April 4, Afroza Sultana from the meteorology department said.

On Sunday temperatures in Dhaka soared to 40.6 degrees Celsius, the highest since April 30, 1965, when the temperature hit 42 degrees Celsius, she said.

Sultana said temperatures would gradually decline in the coming days and rains were expected later this month.

Qatar and UAE in process of restoring diplomatic ties: official

■ HT News Network

Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are in the process of restoring diplomatic ties and reopening embassies, two officials said, more than two years after Arab states ended a boycott of Doha that had shattered the Western-allied Gulf Arab bloc.

"At present, the activation of diplomatic ties, which will include the reopening of embassies, is under process between both countries," a UAE official said in a statement in response to a question from Reuters.

A Gulf official said embassies were expected to reopen with new ambassadors in their posts by mid-June. A third source said diplomatic relations would be fully restored within weeks.

The restoration of ties comes amid a broader regional push for reconciliation with Iran and Saudi Arabia agreeing last month to re-establish relations after years of hostility, which threatened instability in the Gulf and stoked the war in Yemen.

In mid-2017, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Bahrain and Egypt severed all ties with Qatar over accusations it supported terrorism, a reference to Islamist groups, and was cosy up to Iran, accusations Doha denied.

Riyadh and Cairo were the first to reappoint ambassadors to Doha in 2021 after a Saudi-led deal to end the dispute, while Bahrain last week announced it would restore diplomatic ties.

All nations, with the exception of Bahrain, had already restored trade and travel links with Qatar in early 2021, when the UAE had suggested resuming diplomatic ties would take time.

Relations between the UAE and Qatar warmed last year and leaders of both countries met face-to-face.

"The UAE's foreign policy is primarily focused on building bridges, economic cooperation and regional de-escalation," said the UAE official, who declined to be identified. The other Gulf official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that late last month Qatari and Emirati officials agreed to restore diplomatic ties and that Abu Dhabi has informed Doha who its envoy would be. Qatar has yet to do the same, the official added.

Netanyahu seeks peace with Saudi Arabia

■ HT News Network

JERUSALEM: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Monday that normalising relations with Saudi Arabia would be a "giant leap" towards ending the Arab-Israeli conflict.

"We want normalisation and peace with Saudi Arabia. We view that as perhaps a giant leap towards ending the Arab-Israeli conflict," Netanyahu said, speaking during a meeting in Jerusalem with US Republican Senator Lindsey Graham.

"This agreement could have monumental consequences, historic consequences both for Israel, for Saudi Arabia, for the region and for the world," Netanyahu said. Israel has opened diplomatic ties with several Arab countries since 2020, including Saudi Arabia's neighbours the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain. But Riyadh has held back from recognising Israel, saying such moves should be tied to resolving Palestinian statehood goals.

A huge setback for Netanyahu's efforts came last month when a China-brokered deal saw Israel's major regional foe, Iran, mend its ties with Saudi Arabia. Iran's embassy in Riyadh reopened its gates last on Wednesday for the first time in seven years. Separately on Monday, Israel's foreign ministry said it had asked China to exert influence on Iran to prevent it from obtaining nuclear weapons. "We want normalisation and peace with Saudi Arabia. We view that as perhaps a giant leap towards



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Vladimir Putin Makes Rare Visit To Ukraine Frontline Regions

■ HT News Network

Kyiv, Ukraine: The Kremlin said on Tuesday that President Vladimir Putin had visited two frontline regions in Ukraine, prompting a strong rebuke from Kyiv which said he was viewing "the crimes of his minions".

The Kremlin did not say when Putin visited the southern region of Kherson and the eastern region of Lugansk, which Putin claimed to have annexed last September without fully controlling them.

The Kremlin chief sent troops to Ukraine in February, 2022, triggering the largest conflict in Europe since World War II.

Ukrainian forces have said they are preparing for a spring counter-offensive.

Mykhailo Podolyak, an advisor to President Volodymyr Zelensky, dismissed Putin's trip as "a special tour" of the mass murders author... to enjoy the crimes of his minions for the last time."

After Putin's visit was made public on Tuesday, Ukrainian officials said Russian forces had shelled the central market area of Kherson, injuring six people.

Last year, Russia was beaten back in northern and southern regions and Moscow's forces have made only incremental gains in eastern Ukraine.

Much of the fighting is now concentrated around the eastern town of Bakhmut which has become the longest and bloodiest battle of the conflict.

During his trip to Ukraine, Putin met Russian military commanders and discussed the situation on several fronts of



the pro-Western country, the Kremlin said. Video footage released by the Kremlin showed Putin disembarking from a helicopter as he visited the headquarters of the Dnieper army group in the Kherson region.

He also visited national guard headquarters in Lugansk in eastern Ukraine.

"It's important for me to hear your opinion on the situation, to listen to you and to exchange information," Putin said in the video, surrounded by senior military commanders.

The Russian leader wished the troops a happy Easter, which Orthodox Christians marked last Sunday, and gifted them copies of old icons, the Kremlin said.

His trips to Kherson and Lugansk came after the Kremlin said in March that the Russian leader had made a surprise trip to the port city of Mariupol that Moscow captured after a long siege last spring.

'Creeping advances'

British military intelligence said on Tuesday that "heavy fighting" continued along the Donbas front line.

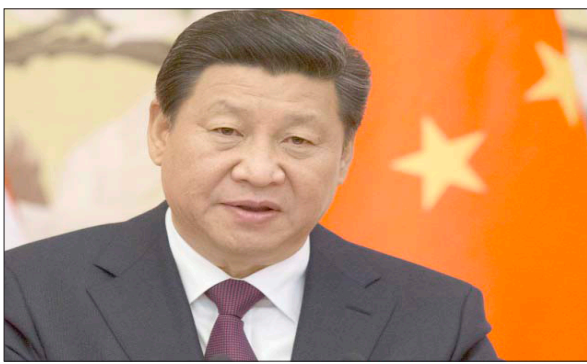
Xi Jinping Calls For "Higher Stage" Of China-North Korea Ties: Report

■ HT News Network

Seoul, South Korea: Chinese President Xi Jinping will push for a "higher stage" of relations with Pyongyang, North Korean state media said Tuesday, as G7 foreign ministers condemned the North's unprecedented string of weapons tests.

China is North Korea's longtime treaty ally and main economic benefactor, their relationship forged in the bloodshed of the Korean War when Mao Zedong sent in millions of "volunteers" to fight US-led United Nations forces to a standstill.

Mao once described the two countries as being close as "lips and teeth", and while relations have fluctuated



over the years, a breakdown in negotiations between North Korea and the United States has spurred both sides to strengthen their alliance.

"The traditional China-DPRK friendship has weathered the trials of the changed international situation for a long time," Xi said in a message to North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, using the initials for the North's

official name.

In the message carried by the Korean Central News Agency, Xi noted the current international and regional situations are "changing seriously and in a complicated way", adding: "I will continuously push the friendship and cooperation between the two sides to a higher stage."

The message came just hours before G7 foreign

ministers demanded North Korea "refrain" from further nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches, warning of a "robust" response.

"Such actions must be met with a swift, united, and robust international response, including further significant measures to be taken by the UN Security Council (UNSC)," the diplomats said in a statement after talks in Japan.

Pyongyang has carried out a blitz of banned weapons tests this year, including firing several of its most powerful intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs).

Last week, the North hailed its first successful test of a new solid-fuel ICBM, saying it will "radically promote" the country's nuclear counter attack capabilities.

Judge rejects Trump's request to delay trial in rape case

HT News Network

NEW YORK: A US judge on Monday rejected former president Donald Trump's request to delay a scheduled April 25 trial over whether he defamed former Elle magazine columnist E. Jean Carroll by denying he raped her.

Last week, Trump's lawyers urged US District Judge Lewis Kaplan in federal court in Manhattan to grant a four-week "cooling-off" period to at least May 23 to give Trump a fair trial, citing a recent "deluge of prejudicial media coverage" of criminal charges against him. In a written order on Monday, Kaplan said Carroll's case was "entirely unrelated" to the New York state-level prosecution, in which Trump pleaded not guilty to 34 counts of falsifying business records in connection with a hush money payment made to a porn star before the 2016 election. Kaplan said there was no reason to assume it would be easier to seat a fair and impartial jury in May. He said some media coverage was based on Trump's own public statements. "It does not sit well for Mr Trump to promote pretrial publicity and then to claim that coverage that he promoted was prejudicial to him," Kaplan wrote. Trump's lawyer Joseph Tacopina declined to comment. Carroll's lawsuit stems from her alleged encounter with Trump in late 1995 or early 1996 in a Bergdorf Goodman department store in Manhattan. She has said Trump asked her for help in buying a gift for another woman, but later "maneuvered" her into a dressing room, where he sexually assaulted her.

Govt generates Rs 261 cr revenue from e-auction of 257 retail liquor vends

HT News Network

JAMMU, Apr 17: The Government of Jammu and Kashmir has generated a highest ever revenue worth over Rs 261 crores with the e-auction of retail liquor vends for the year 2023-24. Official sources said that as compared to last year's revenue worth over Rs 217.43 crores, the J&K Excise Department generated a total revenue worth Rs 260.94 crores during this financial year from the e-auction of 257 vends.

Sources further said that 45 locations/vends shall be put to re-auction again within one week and with this, about Rs 285-290 crores revenue is

expected, showing about 34% hike.

A senior Excise official told the Excelsior that on April 7, 2023 final result of the bidding was declared with system generated instant mails to successful H-1 bidders and out of 305 vends put to auction, on 34 locations no bidder participated whereas, for remaining 271 vends bids were reported amounting to Rs 260.94 crores.

The official said before introducing bidding system in J&K for such vends, Rs 6.69 crore revenue was generated annually from all the liquor vends in J&K. The average revenue used to remain between Rs 6.5 to 7.0 crores. It increased to Rs 140.40 crores when the auction process started in J&K in



2021-22. During 2022-23, the total revenue generated was to the tune of Rs 217.43 crores in three auctions. The official further added that a

total 943 bidders participated in the bidding process, while 9 H-1 bidders failed to deposit the bid money within stipulated time of 5 bank working days and were declared defaulter and their EMDs amounting to Rs 90 lakhs were forfeited. Sources disclosed that 44 bidders fall in Rs 15 lakh range, 53 bidders in Rs 15 lakh to 50 lakhs, 66 bidders from Rs 50 lakh to Rs 1 crore, 78 bidders from Rs 1 cr to Rs 2 cr, 25 from Rs 2-3 cr category, 2 bidders within Rs 3-4 cr, two from Rs 4-5 crore while only one was in the category of Rs 5-6 crores. While Batwara location in Srinagar has remained at the top in the highest bid category, all the locations above Rs 3 crores fall in Srinagar Municipal Corporation jurisdiction. Within Rs 2-3 cr category locations at Uri, Qazigund, Kupwara, Upper Rehmab (Udh), Reasi, Manthral, Chennani and a few fall within SMC. Many

vends of Udhampur, Jammu North, Kathua and Samba have remained between Rs 1 to 2 crores group.

Excise Commissioner, J&K, Pankaj Sharma when contacted said that 257 new licenses have been issued and directions passed on to all the ETOs to ensure opening of all 257 vends from today (April 17). He said 3 H-1 bidders had to arrange premises for establishing their vends till this afternoon. "We have generated Rs 260.94 crores from 257 vends this year which is the highest ever revenue in the history of Excise department in J&K earned from liquor vends. We are expecting about Rs 25-30 cr more revenue with the re-auction of 45 vends," the Commissioner added.

Cong marches to LG residence, seeks probe into Ex Guv's revelations on Pulwama attack

HT News Network

Jammu, Apr 18 (UNI) Marching towards Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor's official residence, the Jammu District Congress members here on Tuesday under the 'Jai Bharat Satyagraha' banner staged protest after the claims regarding the Pulwama attack by former Governor Satyapal Malik.

Congress protested against the central government under the chairmanship of PCC President Vikar Rasool Vani, Manoj Yadav Secretary AICC, PCC Working President Raman Bhalla, Former Ministers Mula

Ram and Yogesh Sawhney and other leaders.

The protesters marched from Shaheedi Chowk to the LG house. Heavy deployment of police was made while the roads were purposefully barricaded and blocked to stop them from marching.

Holding placards, the protesters raised slogans against the Centre demanding restoration of statehood for J&K, setting up of an inquiry in the Pulwama Attack in lieu of Satyapal Malik's comments.

JKPC President Vikar Rasool Vani speaking to the media demanded a response from the Centre on the sensational com-



ments given by Former Governor Satyapal Malik concerning the Pulwama Attack.

Terming it 'deeply disturbing', the PCC President said, "the lives of the martyrs lost in the incident

should not be disrespected and there needs to be an immediate inquiry on the incident to judge the accuracy of the comments made by the Former Governor."

"Such actions cannot be swept under the rug by the

BJP leadership by simply ignoring the revelations made; people need urgent answers as it pertains to the security issue and the honor of our martyred jawans," he said. These are serious allegations as Malik has been the Governor of four states, and have first hand experience of the situation in J&K at that time, said the Congress leader adding, "PM Modi asked him to maintain silence on the Pulwama attack and as per his comments, the Home Ministry rejected a proposal to fly down the jawans instead of having them travel by road. This surely cannot be ignored by the Government."

Working President Raman Bhalla condemned the Union Government, calling it "corrupt, and ignorant". "We urge that a high level probe is set up into the Pulwama attack," Bhalla stated.

Senior Congress leader Manoj Yadav, Secretary AICC said that it must be investigated if intelligence inputs had been ignored by the Modi Government prior to the Pulwama incident.

Former Minister Yogesh Sawhney stated that it is shocking that such a huge statement from Former Governor has drawn no response from the government.

Farmers orientation programme under HADP to commence from 24th April in Kupwara district

HT News Network

KUPWARA, APRIL 18: According to District Sheep Husbandry Officer Kupwara, the department in collaboration with other Agriculture and allied departments is going to conduct Farmers Orientation programme under Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) in the district.

The programme shall commence from 24th April and will cover all 385 panchayats of 24 CD Blocks of Kupwara district. To accomplish the target, 133 Panchayat Ghars have been identified as orientation spots to cover all the panchayats across the district.

The orientation programme shall be conducted by the resource persons including Gazetted officers and supervisory staff of the Agriculture and allied departments who shall record and collect the basic data and feedback from the farmers. The programme shall cover 45 projects conceived under HADP programme in which Audio visual aids will be put into use for effective orientation. At each location, the orientation shall be conducted for 3 days.

For proper monitoring and supervision of the programme, each district officer of Agriculture and allied department shall look after 3 CD blocks. Booklets shall be provided to unemployed educated youth for mass awareness.

Saaya, Uri Foundation organise 'Health awareness program' at GHS Kandikaller

HT News Network

Srinagar, 18-Apr, CNS: A health awareness programme was held at Government High School (GHS) Kandikaller, Garkote in Uri area of north Kashmir's Baramulla district.

The theme of the program was 'Healthy lifestyle' which was organised by two Kashmir based NGOs - Saaya and Uri Foundation.

In a statement issued here to CNS, the organisers said that the aim was to educate the children of this remote area about health and hygiene.

The program started with the speech of Dr Asif (Dental Surgeon) who spoke about oral health and shared the tips and techniques on mouth hygiene with the students. Nisar Ahmad, health educator at SDH Uri spoke on hand hygiene and conducted a demo of proper hand washing with students.

Mohammad Hanief, a local social activist while highlighting the alarming rise in drug addiction in the society said that this needs to be addressed at the grass-root level. Amreen, a class 10th student of the school delivered a speech on the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

Later, a vote of thanks was delivered by Manzoor Mir, vice-headmaster GHS Kandikaller.

He appreciated the noble effort of the Uri Foundation for conducting such a program and thanked its functionaries. He expressed his desire that the foundation shall continue to organise more such programs in future, the statement adds.

Notably, students were involved in various activities for better learning.

The program was attended by almost 120 students and 10 teachers, organisers said.

The session was moderated by Irfan Majid, a faculty of GHS Kandikaller.

Abbar Bhat and Bashir Ahmad Bhat from Saaya and Uri Foundation were present on the occasion. (CNS)

Minor boy injured after dog attack in Awantipora

HT News Network

Srinagar, April 18 (KS): An eight-year-old boy was injured on Tuesday afternoon when a stray dog attacked him in Awantipora area of South Kashmir's Pulwama district. An official told Kashmir Scroll that a stray dog entered Awantipora area and attacked a minor boy and injured him near his home. He has been identified as Harris Khursheed Mir (08) daughter of Khursheed Ahmad a resident of Awantipora. Harris was shifted to nearby hospital for treatment from where he was referred to SMHS Srinagar for advanced treatment, he said He has been identified as Harris Khursheed Mir (08) daughter of Khursheed Ahmad a resident of Awantipora. Harris was shifted to nearby hospital for treatment from where he was referred to SMHS Srinagar for advanced treatment, he said—(KS)

J&K RTI Foundation Founder Expresses Concern Over Lack of RTI Data

HT News Network

Srinagar, 18-Apr, CNS Irfan Banka, founder of J&K RTI Foundation, has expressed concern over the lack of data related to Right to Information (RTI) requests in Jammu and Kashmir. In response to an RTI request filed by Banka, the Central Information Commission (CIC) stated that it did not have data on the number of RTI applications and first appeals filed in the region in the past four years. The CIC suggested that Banka file an RTI request with the state government to obtain the desired information. Normally, the data is kept by the Information Commissions, but no such department or State Information Commission exists in Jammu and Kashmir as the J&K RTI Act was repealed in 2019 when the Central RTI Act 2005 was introduced in the UT.

In a statement issued to CNS, Banka criticized the lack of transparency and accountability related to RTI Law, especially after Jammu and Kashmir was made a Union Territory and its own state information commission was dissolved. He believes that the RTI Act has weakened in the region and that some public information officers (PIOs) view it as useless. The RTI Act of 2005 empowers citizens to access information held by public authorities in order to promote transparency and accountability. The act applies to all states and union territories of India. However, Banka's experience raises questions about the effectiveness of the RTI Act in Jammu and Kashmir. As a result of the lack of data, it is unclear how many RTI applications and appeals have been filed in Jammu and Kashmir since it was reorganized in 2019. This lack of information makes it difficult to hold public authorities accountable and undermines the very purpose of the RTI Act.

60 candidates selected for Class IV, MTS positions in RDD denied salaries

Matter taken up with Govt: Dir RDD Kashmir

HT News Network

Srinagar: As many as 60 candidates who were selected for the Class IV positions and Multi Tasking Staff (MTS) in Rural Development Department (RDD) after qualifying the Service Selection Board (SSB) exam have been denied the salaries for the last six months.

The aggrieved candidates said they are without salaries as the concerned authorities in the districts claim that there was no available vacancy for the posting of newly recruited staff.

The aggrieved candidates from different districts including Budgam, Kupwara, Anantnag, Ganderbal, and Kulgam who were appointed as Class IV and MTS in RDD said their selection was done through JKSSB notification no 1 of 2020 and received their appointment orders from the department after completing all formalities.

"However, when we joined our heir concerned Assistant Commissioner Development offices, we were informed that there were no vacancies for us," said one of the aggrieved candidates.



The move has raised questions over how the positions were referred to JKSSB, which is the exam conducting body, to go ahead with the recruitment process if there were no vacancies available in the department.

The selected candidates who are deprived of their salaries meanwhile said they were assured that the matter would be resolved within days, and temporary postings were done in their favor.

"However, seven to eight months have passed, and the issue remains unresolved, leaving the candidates without salaries for several months," the candidate said.

The issue has caused chaos and fear among the affected candidates, who despite being merit holders, are suf-

fering harshly. Some of the candidates are so depressed that they do not have a single penny to go to the office.

Despite approaching the Director of RDD, Under-Secretary RDD, Secretary RDD, and other concerned officials, the candidates have received no relief. With Eid-ul-Fitr around the corner, the affected candidates are struggling to make ends meet, and the administration's false promises have only added to their misery.

"Our administration is only giving us false hopes. We urge the authorities to adjust us against the vacant positions and release our pending salaries as well," the candidates said.

The Director RDD Kashmir Shabir Hussain Bhat when contacted said the administrative department has taken up the matter with the government and finance department has given its concurrence to resolve the issue of the aggrieved candidates.

"Actually we had clear vacancies when the posts were referred but after reorganisation the department faced some issues which are being resolved," Director RDD Kashmir told "The salary will be released within a month," he said.

LG administration fostering non locals at the cost of locals' livelihood: Rattan Lal Gupta

Surkhab Zehra

KATRA 18th: Accusing the BJP Government of providing contracts of development works to non locals, Rattan Lal Gupta, Provincial President JKNJammu on Monday said that non-locals are being fostered at the cost of livelihood of locals.

The NC stalwart leader was addressing NC workers convention here as chief guest. The convention was organized by Sher Singh, senior NC leader in which party activists and leaders from far off regions of district Reasi participated.

Rattan Lal said that the BJP Government at the centre has clogged all scope of locals to thrive and live with dignity and pride as it has snatched the livelihood of the people by giving undue preference to outsiders as in the case of contractors, the fact which the Mayor of JMC has also endorsed publically, in a statement to one of the



leading newspapers in Jammu had accepted that contracts are being given to outsiders discriminating the local contractors, which is suicidal for the local economy and people of the UT as well.

Sher Singh, NC leader apprised the senior leaders of the party about the repercussions of proposed Ropeway from Katra to Bha-

wan. He said that the project will directly affect the small businessmen, labourers, Ponywalas, Pithuwalas of Katra and adjoining areas. Mr Singh also demanded that the office of Additional Deputy Commissioner must be opened in Katra keeping in view heavy rush of pilgrims of Mata Shree Vaishano Devi Ji and law and order situa-

tion. Sher Singh also strongly objected regarding the last destination of Delhi Katra express way project at Tarakote by passing the Katra city is not acceptable to citizens of Katra because the Katra city will be totally ignored and by passed he said that the express way should be constructed upto Katra new bus stand as a last destination.

Upon this, Rattan Lal Gupta clarified that NC is not against development of Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine but is asking for maintaining a trade-off between development and the livelihood of the people because blindly creating edifice and giving two hoots to locals' livelihood will ultimately devastate socio-economic balance of the people, which should not be the case. He said that BJP government is indifferent towards the local population in J&K and in the race to create records and become popular, it is treating the people badly thus doing injustice.

Breast Cancer: How Depression Can Affect the Likelihood of Survival

Experts say depression is common among women who are diagnosed with breast cancer.

Researchers say having depression before or after a breast cancer diagnosis can increase a person's risk of death from the disease.

Experts say the findings emphasize the importance of monitoring a person for depression after a breast cancer diagnosis.

A cancer diagnosis can often cause depression as well as anxiety and a host of other mental health issues.

A study published today in *Cancer*, a journal of the American Cancer Society, takes that a step further by looking at how depression may affect a woman's chances of survival from breast cancer.

In the study, the researchers concluded that having depression before or after a breast cancer diagnosis was associated with a lower likelihood of survival.

Bin Huang, PhD, an associate professor at the University of Kentucky Markey Cancer Center, and his colleagues analyzed data from the Kentucky Cancer Registry to identify adult women diagnosed with primary invasive breast cancer from 2007 to 2011.

The team classified people in the study as having no depression diagnosis, depression diagnosis only before cancer diagnosis, depression diagnosis only after cancer diagnosis, or persistent depression defined as depression before and after cancer diagnosis.

The team also assessed the patients' receipt of first course guideline-recommended treatment as indicated by the National Comprehensive Cancer Network breast cancer treatment guidelines.

Details from the breast cancer depression study

Among 6,054 people in the study,

the analysis indicated that 29% of the people in the study did not receive guideline-recommended breast cancer treatment.

Compared with people with no depression, Huang said that people

receive guideline-recommended treatment faced a 118% higher risk of death.

An analysis based off of one region found that compared to people residing in non-Appala-

throughout a cancer patient's care, he said.

Huang also said that population-based cancer registry data enhances population-based cancer outcomes research.

tively and comprehensively address these issues. But generally, we are better aware of mental health now," he said.

A breast cancer survivor discusses depression

Marianne Sarcich, a breast cancer survivor and national breast cancer advocate, said that depression is something that must be monitored from the first day of care.

She also noted that palliative care should be offered and should continue as long as is needed.

"Supportive care, also known as palliative care, is patient-centered care that is the ultimate in personalized medicine because it is about quality of life for that patient as defined by that patient," Sarcich told Healthline.

"Starting at diagnosis, supportive care works alongside curative or active treatment, focusing on the whole patient," she said. "From symptom management to psychosocial to spiritual. All of this to ease the physical and emotional burden that can come with diagnosis, treatment and recovery. In addition, supportive care encompasses the entire family, not just the patient."

The world's most common cancer According to a recent update on global cancer statistics, female breast cancer has now surpassed lung cancer as the most commonly diagnosed cancer worldwide.

An estimated 2,261,419 new cases of breast cancer were diagnosed in women worldwide in 2020. More women in the United States are diagnosed with breast cancer than any other type of cancer besides skin cancer, according to the American Cancer Society.

The disease accounts for 1 in 3 of new female cancers annually.



with post-diagnosis only or persistent depression had a similar likelihood of receiving guideline-recommended treatment.

People in the study with depression pre-diagnosis had 25% lower odds of receiving guideline-concordant care. However, it's important to note that this finding was only marginally significant.

Depression pre-diagnosis only and depression post-diagnosis only (but not persistent depression) were linked with worse survival compared with no depression.

The study authors reported that depression pre-diagnosis was associated with a 26% higher risk of death. A post-diagnosis of depression was associated with a 50% higher risk of death.

In addition, people who didn't

chian Kentucky, people residing in Appalachia were 18% less likely to receive recommended care. However, researchers did not find any significant differences in survival.

Managing depression

Huang said the most surprising result from this study is that patients with persistent depression did not experience worse survival compared with patients with no depression.

Given that under-diagnosis and under-treatment of depression are common among cancer patients, persistent depression could be an indication that a person's depression may have been well managed, Huang noted.

Hence, this particular result suggests the importance of depression screening and management

"Utilizing linked health claims data and cancer registry data in this study demonstrated the value of data linkages across various sources for examining potential health disparities and identifying where improvements in cancer care are needed," he said in a press statement.

"More rigorous studies are needed in depression management and across various cancer sites and patient populations. Subsequently, results from these research studies may further shape policies and guidelines for depression management in cancer care," he noted.

Huang added that oncology in general now has a better understanding of how to take care of this condition.

"It takes a team to collabora-

NEWS

The Alarming Rise of Blood Pressure Cases in Kashmir: Addressing the Root Causes

Aubaid Akhoun



Blood pressure is a major risk factor for cardiovascular diseases, which are the leading cause of death globally. Unfortunately, the prevalence of hypertension is on the rise in Kashmir, posing a serious public health challenge. According to recent reports, over 30% of adults in Kashmir have high blood pressure, and the incidence is even higher among older adults and those with comorbidities.

There are several factors that contribute to the high prevalence of hypertension in Kashmir. Firstly, lifestyle changes such as sedentary habits, unhealthy diets, and stress have become more common due to urbanization and modernization. Secondly, genetic and environmental factors such as family history, obesity, and pollution also play a role. Thirdly, inadequate healthcare infrastructure and awareness, as well as limited access to medicines and diagnostic tests, hinder effective prevention and management of hypertension.

To address this public health crisis, we need to take a multi-faceted approach. Firstly, we need to promote healthy lifestyles by raising awareness about the benefits of physical activity, balanced diets, and stress reduction techniques. This can be done through mass media campaigns, educational programs in schools and workplaces, and community-based initiatives. Secondly, we need to improve the healthcare system by investing in primary care facilities, training healthcare providers, and ensuring the availability and affordability of essential medicines and diagnostic tests. Thirdly, we need to strengthen research and surveillance on hypertension and its risk factors in Kashmir, to inform evidence-based policies and interventions.

Symptoms of Eye Inflammation, Causes and Treatment

Eye inflammation can have a number of causes from infections to side effects of certain medications. The eye uveitis is mostly caused by the factors and conditions described below:

Allergies: Eye inflammation can be triggered by coming into contact with unclean lenses, environmental irritants, dirt, or makeup substances.

Infections: Eye inflammation is often caused by bacterial, viral or fungal infections.

Autoimmune diseases: Rheumatoid arthritis and SLE or Lupus is a very common factor behind this eye infection.

Trauma: Eye injuries or surgeries can also result in this condition.

Exposure to toxins: Chemical exposure, radiation therapy, or certain medications can also trigger this infection.

Eye uveitis symptoms usually vary with intensity and affected area. Most common symptoms and signs for an inflamed eye are:

- Blurry vision
- Swelling of the eye
- Redness
- Pain in the eye and discomfort

Eating Over 6 Teaspoons of Sugar Daily May Raise Your Risk of These Health Conditions

In a new meta-review, researchers found an association between sugar consumption and 45 health outcomes, which included heart disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, depression, certain cancers and death. Experts recommend reducing added sugar intake to 6 teaspoons per day. Healthy, low-sugar alternatives include sugar-free sweeteners like stevia, fresh or frozen fruit, and lower or zero-sugar yogurts. Consuming too much sugar can lead to numerous chronic health problems according to a new study.

A meta-review published by The BMJ Trusted Source outlined how much is too much when it comes to added sugar. Experts suggest lowering your intake of added sugars to around six teaspoons per day and limiting sugar-sweetened drinks to less than one serving each week. For the review, researchers analyzed 67 observational studies and six randomized controlled trials detailing 83 health outcomes in adults and children. They found a link between sugar consumption and 45 health outcomes, which included heart disease, diabetes, obesity, asthma, depression, certain cancers, and death.



The researchers found that sugar-sweetened beverages like soda are linked to a higher risk for certain health conditions such as gout and coronary heart disease. They recommend no more than one sugar-sweetened beverage a week. They found evidence of significant harmful associations between eating high amounts of added sugar and metabolic/endocrine disorders including diabetes, gout, and obesity. They also found that consuming sugar was

linked to an increased risk of cardiac issues including blood pressure, heart attack and stroke, and even certain cancers such as breast, prostate, and pancreatic cancer.

They also saw a link between sugar consumption and increased risk of chronic conditions including asthma and depression. "Excessive sugar intake puts you at higher risk for cardiovascular disease, certain cancers, liver disease, kidney disease, diabetes, high cholesterol levels, tooth decay, and weight gain to name just a few," Jamie Nadeau, a registered dietitian nutritionist, told Healthline. "It's no secret that added sugar isn't great for our bodies. We have solid research that consistently shows negative outcomes with excessive sugar intake."

Also, excessive sugar intake often means that high-sugar foods are replacing healthful foods, so you may be missing out on important nutrients, Nadeau added.

A guideline for added sugar intake According to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans Trusted Source, added sugar intake should be less than 10% of total calories. For a standard 2,000-calorie diet, that's approximately 200 calories.

Summer fruits and vegetables to lower cholesterol levels

By Parmita Uniyal

Go slow on ice creams and aerated drinks, and add these juicy, nutritious-rich summer foods to your diet for lowering cholesterol levels.

Summer season is ideal for weight loss considering we burn more fat during the season and cravings for fatty and oily food too are low. However, one may be at risk of turning sedentary when the weather gets hot as stepping outside is uncomfortable and even dangerous. So, many people may be switching on their air conditioning and sipping aerated drinks, enjoying ice creams and all kinds of sugary treats which can increase bad cholesterol levels in the body. Adding right food to your diet can prevent this risk. Eating lots of fruits and vegetable salad and fibre-rich diet can not only cool your body from inside but also keep chronic as well as seasonal dis-

eases at bay. (Also read: High cholesterol: 7 unhealthy eating habits that raise bad cholesterol levels)

Summer is the season of fresh and juicy fruits and vegetables. (Pixabay)

Summer is the season of fresh and juicy fruits and vegetables. (Pixabay)

"Summer is the season of fresh and juicy fruits and vegetables. From the delicious mangoes to the refreshing watermelon drinks, summer is all about soaking in the sun's warmth. However, it is equally important to take care of our health no matter how much we indulge in some tasty foods. Fat-like substance cholesterol is found in the body and there are two types of cholesterol, LDL and HDL. While cholesterol is required for our system, too much bad cholesterol or LDL can lead to kidney issues and increase the risk of heart disease," says Gagan Sidhu, Chief Dietitian at Dt Gagan's Clinic and Managing Director at Gleuhr Skin Clinic.

Processed food, fried food, dairy,



red meat, bakery products, cured meat like salami, sausages, chorizo, fatty cuts of meat all have high saturated fat and can increase LDL cholesterol or bad cholesterol in the body.

Here are some summer foods according to Sidhu that can help lower cholesterol:

1. Okra (Bhindi)

Lady finger or okra is a must-have

Include okra or lady's finger in form of sabzi and see the benefits yourself.

2. Bitter gourd (Karela)

Bitter gourd may not be a favourite vegetable for every one but it is packed with loads of nutritional benefits. It is a rich source of antioxidants which is one of the major components for lowering cholesterol. It also contains a high amount of vitamins and minerals which aid in building a strong immune system and fighting against heart risks and others.

3. Pointed gourd (Parwal)

Summer is the season for various types of gourds and pointed gourd is one such delicious vegetable that all love to indulge in. This vegetable is not just a staple summer food but it also helps to reduce high cholesterol levels. Enriched in nutrients such as vitamin C, B1, B2, and A, pointed gourd aids in increasing the levels of good cholesterol or HDL. Besides, it helps

with weight loss and constipation issues as well.

4. Watermelon (Tarbooj)

Who does not love to have a glass of watermelon juice after a hot, sunny day? Watermelon contains a great nutritional value and the presence of lycopene helps to lower cholesterol levels. Have a glass of watermelon juice with your breakfast or cut down a few slices of watermelon and have it as a mid-day snack.

5. Cucumber (Kheera)

Cucumber is another staple for the hot months. It contains a high volume of water which is great to keep you cool in the heat. It consists of phytochemicals which are known to reduce high cholesterol levels. Besides, it also has pectin which is a soluble fibre that aids in lowering down the levels of cholesterol.

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