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# LG reviews Preparedness for G20 Meeting



**HT News Network**  
SRINAGAR, MAY 04: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday asked officials to make concerted efforts to ensure that the upcoming G20 meeting here is conducted successfully. He made the remarks while chairing a high-level meeting.

## Two day meeting of Foreign Ministers of SCO begins in Goa

S Jaishanker holds talks with SCO Secretary-General

**HT News Network**

GOA, MAY 04: Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) grouping members have started arriving in Goa for the Foreign Ministers' meeting. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has landed in Goa. The meeting is being held in Goa today and tomorrow.

This morning, External Affairs Minister Dr. S Jaishankar held meetings with SCO Secretary-General.



## Army Chopper Crashes in Kishtwar, three injured persons evacuated

**HT News Network**

KISHTWAR, MAY 04: An Indian Army chopper crashed in Kishtwar district on Thursday morning, officials said.

As per reports, a three member on board army chopper flying in Marwah area of Kishtwar district reportedly crashed at Village Machna.

In a defence official statement issued, it read that at about 1115 hours on 04 May 2023, an Army Aviation ALH Dhruv helicopter on an operational mission made a precautionary landing on the banks of Marua river in the Kishtwar region of Jammu and Kashmir. As per inputs, the pilots had reported a technical fault.

Turn.....Army Chopper Crashes.....Pg 02

## 2 charred to dead, 5 injured as hotel catches fire in Ramban

LG grieved over loss of lives

**HT News Network**

RAMBAN, MAY 04: Two people were killed and five others injured when a hotel caught fire in Ramban district on Thursday morning.

Reports said that fire broke out in Hotel Maa Shanti in Sanasar tourist resort in the intervening night of Wednesday and Thursday and spread fast engulfing the entire area.

Officials said that a fire fighting operation was launched after the incident. Deputy Commissioner Ramban has ordered a magisterial inquiry headed by ADC Ramban.

Meanwhile, the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, has expressed grief over the loss of lives in the fire accident. He has conveyed his condolences and sympathies to the kin of those who have died in the accident and the injured.

Turn.....2 charred to.....Pg 02

### NEWS BRIEF

#### Two militants killed in Baramulla encounter

BARAMULLA, MAY 04: Two newly local militants of Lashkar-e-Toiba were killed in an encounter at Wanigam Payeen village of Kreeei in north Kashmir's Baramulla district on Thursday.

Additional Deputy General of Police (ADGP), Kashmir, Vijay Kumar as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said that both the militants were affiliated with the

Turn.....Two militants killed.....Pg 02

#### Two injured in Kulgam road accident

KULGAM, MAY 04: Two persons were injured in a road accident in Chawalgam area of south Kashmir's Kulgam district on Thursday.

As per reports to CNS, an alto vehicle (JK18B 3531) overturned at chawalgam area resulting in the injuries to father-daughter duo.

The injured were identified as Javid Ahmad Wani and his daughter musai-ban residents of Khull Ahmadabad. The duo was shifted to district

Turn.....Two injured in.....Pg 02

#### J&K cop's son booked under PSA

JAMMU, MAY 4: A son of Jammu and Kashmir Police Assistant Sub-Inspector has been booked under Public Safety Act (PSA) for his alleged involvement in theft and drugs related cases in Rajouri district.

Police spokesman said that the accused identified as Sunny Sharma, son of ASI, resident of Ward No 5, Jawahar Nagar, Rajouri has been booked under PSA for his repeated involvement in theft cases and drug peddling

Turn.....J&K cop's son.....Pg 02

#### No Grenade Incident in Budgam: Police

SRINAGAR, MAY 04: Police on Thursday evening said that a fake post is being circulated on social media regarding Grenade incident in central Kashmir's Budgam district.

In a brief handout to GNS, the police said that a fake post regarding a grenade incident in Pakherpora Budgam is being circulated on social media platforms. No such incident has occurred. People are asked to refrain from circulating the fake news.

Turn.....No Grenade Incident.....Pg 02

## NIA Searches 16 Locations In Jamat Terror Funding Case

**HT News Network**

SRINAGAR, MAY 04: As part of its continuing crackdown on terror funding in Jammu and Kashmir, the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Thursday conducted searches at multiple locations in a case related to separatist and secessionist activities of the banned Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI).

JeI has been found carrying out terror funding activities in Jammu and Kashmir, even after being declared an unlawful association under the U(P) Act on 28th February 2019, the spokesperson of NIA said. NIA had filed a chargesheet in the case in Special

Magistrate's Court, Patiala House, New Delhi, on May 12, 2022 against four accused. It had earlier registered a suo motu case in the matter on February 5, 2021.

The searches were conducted today at the premises of JeI (J&K) members and supporters, Turn.....NIA Searches 16.....Pg 02



## Won't allow enemy to disturb peace in Valley: Army after foiling infiltration bid in Kupwara

'Troops braving sub-zero temperature stood under open sky for 48 hours to eliminate infiltrators'

**HT News Network**

KUPWARA, MAY 04: Following the killing of two militants in Machil sector in north Kashmir's Kupwara district, Army on Thursday said that they are ready to foil any attempt made from across the border to push infiltrators into the



Valley to disturb peace. Addressing a press conference at Z Gali, as per news agency— Turn.....Won't allow enemy.....Pg 02

## Police SI Recruitment Scam J&K HC Rejects Bail Application Of Accused Officer, Son

**HT News Network**

JAMMU, MAY 4: The Jammu and Kashmir High Court has rejected the bail application of a police officer and his son who were arrested by the CBI last year in connection with the police sub-inspector recruitment scam.

Justice Mohan Lal dismissed the joint bail application moved by Assistant Sub-Inspector Ashok Kumar and his son Jaishriya Sharma, terming it "misconceived under law".



The police officer and his son were arrested on November 6 and 9, respectively, by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) for their

Turn.....J&K HC Rejects.....Pg 02

## Kisan Sampark Abhiyan Is Big Hit Among J&K Farmers

57,000 farmers participate in first Two Rounds; 17 More rounds to follow until August 31, 2023



**HT News Network**

SRINAGAR, MAY 4: The KISAN SAMPARK ABHIYAN has been a resounding success, with 57,000 farmers participating in the orienta-

tion programme during the first two rounds, which began on April 24. The second round, held from May 1 to May 3, saw a massive turnout of farmers. The programme has covered a

Turn.....Kisan Sampark.....Pg 02

## Kashmir's first male makeup artist makes it to international book of records

**HT News Network**

SRINAGAR, MAY 04: A youth from Budgam district of Kashmir has made it to the International Book of records for doing the fastest Indian bridal makeup.

Younis Ahmad Sheikh (22) known by the name Afnan, a resident of Bugam district area in Chadoora hamlet of Budgam district has created a record for making Indian bridal makeup in less than 9 minutes.

Talking to news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Younis said that he was interested in calligraphy since childhood which

Turn.....Kashmir's first male.....Pg 02

## CRPF Trooper From Bihar Wins Hearts With His Rendition Of Kashmiri Songs

**HT News Network**

BANDIPORA, MAY 4: A CRPF trooper has won hearts on the internet with his soulful rendition of popular Kashmiri songs.

Kashmir Ops Sector, CRPF, shared a video of constable Mrityunjai Kumar Rai, posted in the third battalion of the Central Reserve Police Force in Bandipora district in north Kashmir, singing the songs on Twitter

Turn.....CRPF Trooper From.....Pg 02

## Amid forecast for rain spell, temp records drop at most places in J&K

**HT News Network**

SRINAGAR, MAY 4: Amid forecast for generally cloudy weather with possibility of rains at several places during next 24 hours, night temperature recorded a drop and settled below normal at most places in Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday, officials said.

A meteorological department official told GNS that there was possibility of a brief spell of rain and thunderstorm particularly in Kupwara, Poonch, Rajouri and Baramulla today.

Turn.....Amid forecast for rain.....Pg 02





# Srinagar Smart City: Trial test carried for pedaled cycles

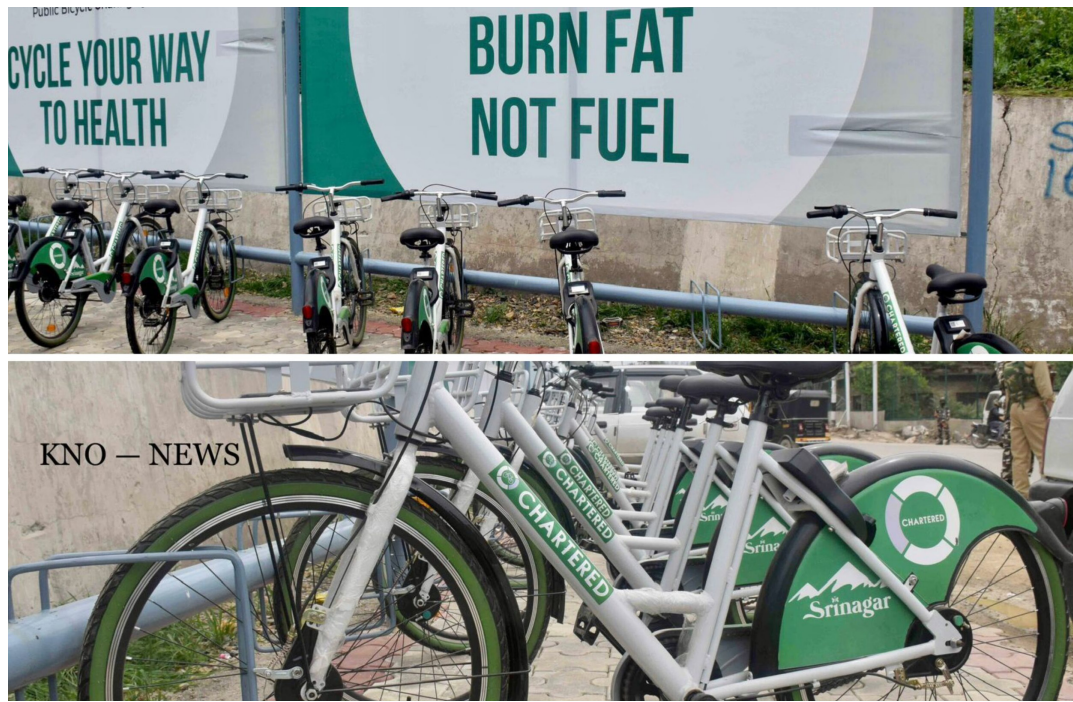
'With 900 pedaled & 100 electric cycles, Srinagar to have 100 docking stations'

**SRINAGAR, MAY 04:** Amid ongoing works in the city under the much-anticipated Srinagar Smart City project, a trial test for the pedaled cycles was carried out on Thursday here.

Mehran Khan, who heads the operations of e-bikes and pedaled cycles, told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the operations for the start of e-bikes and cycles are under process and today they carried out testing for operating pedaled cycles.

"It is a project under the umbrella of the Srinagar Smart City project and today we are carrying the testing for the operation of cycles and once the roads and cycle tracks are fully complete we will start the operations at full scale," he said.

Khan said they have around 1000 cycles of which 900 are pedaled and 100 are electric and will have around 100 docking



stations across the Srinagar city. "We have a mapped application which shows all the locations of all the stations and anyone after installing it on the phone can avail the cycle from the nearest dock-

ing station," he said.

He said that so far 70 percent of the docking stations are complete and that the remaining stations are likely to complete in the next 15-20 days.

Speaking about the tariff plans, Mehran said that apart from being good for health and going from one place to another in Srinagar using pedaled cycles, they have made cost-effective pricing with the first 30 minutes of the ride free and afterward charging Rs 5 for 30 minutes.

"We also have a mechanism in place in case of theft as the cycle is fitted and enabled with GPS and can be easily located," he said.

Khan said they are an Ahmedabad-based company—'Chartered Bike', which has now been set up in Srinagar for executing the operations of both pedaled and electric cycles.

## G-20: Security bunkers converted into 'Smart bunkers'

**SRINAGAR, MAY 04:** Ahead of the G20 meeting here, Srinagar Smart City has taken up the revamping and repair of security bunkers by converting them into "smart bunkers" at different locations.

A contractor assigned with the making of "smart bunkers" told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that he has been allocated seven sites for the construction of smart bunkers in Srinagar city.

"It is a part of the facelift and repairing of the bunkers ahead of the G20 meeting," he said, adding, "I have been assigned only seven sites."

Notably, the preparations for the upcoming G20 meeting are in full swing, with authorities in the valley taking the work on a fast-track basis to ensure the completion of works before the event. The city is getting a makeover with newly-laid footpaths and realigned roads.

Visibly the smart bunkers consist of iron net protection with bulletproof shields inside them. The outer layer is covered with photos of tourist spots of the valley.

The task to facelift and renovate the existing security bunkers as part of beautification in the valley has been given to Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL).

## Muslims joins Pandits to celebrate Ganesh Chaturthi in Kupwara's Handwara

Pandits hail support extended by local muslim community

**HANDWARA, MAY 04:** Kashmiri Pandits in north Kashmir's Handwara sub-division Tuesday celebrated Ganesh Chaturthi with the active support from the local Muslim community.

Ganesh Chaturthi is a Hindu festival commemorating the birth of Hindu god Ganesha. The festival is marked by the installation of Ganesha's clay idols. On this day Hindus seek his blessings given that Ganesha is known as god of wealth, sciences, knowledge, wisdom and prosperity.

Talking to news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Vice President Sanathan Dharam, Surinder said that this occasion is celebrated every year and special prayers are held. "On this special occasion, we also held fist prayers at Razdan Mandir which has been renovated. The religious idol installed there was specially imported from Jaipur," he said.

"People have been very supportive here. Even before the migration they would join us in numbers to take out the rally. They would even offer basil water, fruits and many other things to us," he said. "Brotherhood between the pandit and Muslim communities here is exemplary. People here have always been very cooperative and supportive in every manner."

About the support from administration, he said that they have provided all the basic immediate requirements here. Also, he said the army has been very supportive.

Aijaz Ahmad, a local, said that everyone here is happy with seeing pandits celebrating their day with brotherhood and harmony. "Last year people from both pandit and Muslims communities together took out a rally. We welcomed them wholeheartedly. This will have a greater impact across the region, encouraging everyone to live together," he said.

He also said that Kashmiris are incomplete without pandits.

Ghulam Mohiuddin another local said that both pandits and muslims brothers and everyone are happy with the reunion. "People have changed, Kashmir has changed for good. We want them to live with us. Everyone has come here to welcome them. Locals in numbers have joined them to celebrate this occasion," he said.

## Police intensify action against illegal mining in Ganderbal

'Scores arrested, several vehicles seized'

**GANDERBAL, MAY 04:** Police in this central Kashmir's Ganderbal have intensified action against those involved in the illegal extraction of minor minerals like sand, bajri, boulders and also the unauthorized transportation within the district.

Under the directions of SSP Ganderbal Nikhil Borkar, special police teams were constituted, which were led by SHOs and DOs of police stations and police posts of Ganderbal under the supervision of SDPO Kangan Muzaffar and DySP Hqrs Ganderbal Gh Hassan, to check the menace of illegal mining in the district, an official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

He said during the course of action, seven persons were arrested and seven tippers seized on the spot in the last two weeks. These vehicles were loaded with illegally extracted bajri, sand and boulders from Nallah Sindh Ganderbal.

In this regard, a case under FIR numbers 26, 27, 109, 10, 12 and 25 of 2023 IPC under relevant sections of law stands registered at Police Station Lar, Police Station Ganderbal, Police Station Safapora and Police Station Kheerbawani respectively and the investigations have been started.

Moreover, in a joint action, Ganderbal Police along with Geology and Mining Department raided different locations in the district and seized four tippers and a tractor for illegal extraction of minor minerals from Nallah Sindh, the official said.

"Police have repeatedly issued strict warnings to those involved in the illegal extraction of minor minerals and again appeal to stop this illegal practice or face strict action under the law," he said.

## Online Gondola tickets; 80 percent livelihood of tourist guides affected, says Prez Guide Association Gulmarg

**GULMARG, MAY 04:** In a bid to stop the illegal selling of fake Gondola tickets to the tourists, the locals at famous tourist destination Gulmarg have been demanding the shift back of the online ticketing system to go offline, says the rampant incidents of fake ticket selling is maligning the image of the famous ski-resort. However, president Gulmarg guides association says their 80 percent livelihood has been affected by the online system.

Speaking to news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Jahengir Ahmed Bhat, a social activist from Gulmarg said that miscreants are trying to malign the image of a famous tourist destination by selling fake tickets to the tourists who mostly are from outside the union territory. The acts are adversely affecting the people here in Gulmarg, besides it is taking a toll on the livelihood of people.

"The Gulmarg authorities must shift back the ticketing system from online to offline as it used to be a few years back. The online ticket system has increased the selling of fake tickets as there is every possibility because technology is advanced and editing nowadays is not a big deal," he said.

He said that the authorities, instead of an online system, should increase the number of ticket counters to tackle the time consuming process and inconvenience to the tourists due to increasing footfall. "There must be a scanner before entering the Gondola for a ride to check the authenticity of tickets," he added.

President Guides Association Gulmarg, Mushtaq Ahmed Lone told KNO, that their 80 percent livelihood has



been adversely affected by the online ticketing system. Offline ticketing was accommodating people including guides, people on counters, but they all have been affected now.

He said that, earlier they were having 30 percent of the quota but after the system was changed to online, the quotas were withdrawn, which severely affected their livelihood. "We were not taken on board when the system was changed to online," he alleged.

A total number of registered people to Gulmarg guide association has touched 918 people, how would they survive? Questions Mushtaq. "As of now, the offline ticketing too is taking place but Gulmarg authorities have been calling that as VVIP quota. Some 400 offline ticket bookings take place", he said. The situation has forced a few of the guides to do the black marketing of ticketing, as they are not able to earn their livelihood,

he said.

"We moved from pillar to post to get our genuine demands redressed, besides taking the issue with CEO Gulmarg, chief secretary and other concerned but so far nothing has been done on the ground. Let the administration think over it and give us a quota as we were earlier having, so that we too can earn our livelihood," he said.

Meanwhile, CEO Gulmarg Development Authority and Managing Director, JK Cable Car Corporation, Ghulam Jeelani Zargar despite repeated attempts didn't respond to the calls and texts from this correspondent.

Pertinent to mention here that several fraudsters involved in selling fake Gondola tickets were arrested this month. With the officials saying that they are working closely with the police to arrest fraudsters and travel agencies involved in fraudulent activities.

# School Edu Deptt Srinagar to arrange supplementary classes for students who exhibit weak performance in any subject

**SRINAGAR, MAY 04:** The School Education Department Srinagar Thursday said that it will arrange supplementary classes for the students who exhibit weak performance in any subject.

It also said that there was a need in improving the learning level of the students and curbing the Indiscipline and absenteeism among the students.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Chief Education Officer (CEO) Srinagar said this while issuing a communique regard-

ing the measure to be taken for improvement in the learning level of the students and curbing the Indiscipline and absenteeism among the students.

The official said that achieving academic excellence is paramount for the growth and development of students. "It not only prepares them for future success but also contributes to their personal growth," he said.

It also said that academic excellence cannot be achieved without reducing instances of absenteeism and promoting

punctuality.

"For students who exhibit weak performance in any subject, supplementary periods must be arranged for all classes and schools, and records must be kept for verification by teams appointed by the Chief Education Officer Srinagar," the official said.

According to the official communique, the CEO has asked all HOs to implement the directions effectively to enhance the effectiveness and operation of their schools.

"By reducing absenteeism

and promoting punctuality, students will have access to the knowledge and resources necessary to excel in their studies," it reads.

The CEO also said It is imperative for educational institutions to take proactive measures to address issues related to absenteeism and punctuality to ensure that students have the best possible learning experience.

"To optimize academic performance and reduce incidents of truancy, all Heads of Institutions (HOs) are required to

establish committees consisting of four to five members," the official said.

The CEO further said that the committees must be entrusted with the responsibility of addressing concerns related to irregular attendance and unsatisfactory academic progress.

It also states that upon identifying students with inadequate attendance or performance, the committee is obligated to communicate with their guardians or parents to inform them of the situation.

"Hols are responsible for

determining the number of parents or guardians to be contacted by each committee per day, based on the school's specific requirements and demands," the official said.

The CEO added that with the aid of these communities, HOs endeavour to ensure the timely and regular attendance of all students, if any student is absent, concerted efforts must be made to bring them back to the classroom.

"Additionally, HOs may seek the assistance of PRIs, Municipality committee members,

senior citizens, or educationists in the locality to encourage students to attend school regularly and punctually," reads the communique.

It also said that the HOs must issue three notices to the parents or guardians of students who cannot be persuaded to return to school by the committee.

"Records of these notifications must be kept on file as evidence of the HOs or committees' final attempts to bring absent students back to school as per above format," it reads.



# Atal Dulloo roots for increased productivity in fisheries, livestock sectors

## Chairs UT level AMC meet of PMMSY

**HT News Network**

JAMMU, MAY 04: Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Agriculture Production Department (APD), Atal Dulloo, today chaired the UT Level Approval and Monitoring Committee (AMC) meeting of the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) to finalise the action plan of PMMSY 2023-24 for the Fisheries Department.

The meeting shared the achievements of the department with the ACS and it was revealed that fish production increased by 28% between the years 2019-20 and 2022-23.

Addressing the officers during the meeting, the ACS emphasised on setting up more trout hatcheries, mini

feed mills, fish kiosks besides the other activities planned by the fisheries department should be amplified. He highlighted that the sector has a lot of scope for growth and increased productivity.

The proposed plan for the current year under PMMSY includes setting up of units and facilities to support fishermen and promote aquaculture development in both the private and government sectors. These include hatcheries, feed mills, tanks, markets and support services. Interventions such as a disease diagnostic lab and brood bank are also planned.

The ACS during the meeting was informed about the expected outcomes, including an increase in fish production, job creation, value chain



strengthening, market infrastructure development, promoting ornamental fisheries, securing fishermen's livelihood, reducing post-harvest losses

and accessible disease diagnostic facilities for farmers.

Pertinently, PMMSY, a flagship scheme launched in 2020-21, aims to

enhance fish production to 220 LMT with an investment of over Rs. 20,000 crores by 2024-25. Jammu and Kashmir has been given a target of producing an additional 15,000 MT of freshwater fish under the PMMSY program during the project period.

Meanwhile, the ACS also chaired UT Level Executive Committee meeting for the National Livestock Mission (NLM) 2023-24, where the physical and financial achievements of the Animal Husbandry and Sheep Husbandry departments were shared.

Among the topics discussed were the progress made under breed development activities for livestock and poultry, the establishment of a Regional Semen Production Laboratory and Semen Bank for sheep and goat and

the propagation of Artificial Insemination centres.

During the meeting, the ACS emphasised the need for world-class training and capacity building to develop these sectors in J&K. The ACS also underlined that an MoU has been signed with New Zealand for the development of sheep husbandry sector in J&K.

The meeting also covered other activities such as capacity building, exposure visits and insurance.

The meetings were attended by Director General Sheep Husbandry Kashmir, Director Animal Husbandry Jammu/Kashmir, Director Sheep Husbandry Jammu, Director Fisheries besides other officers of the concerned departments both in person and through video conferencing.

### DDC reviews progress on Rajouri-Thanamandi-Surankote road project; Asks for timeline completion of project

**HT News Network**

RAJOURI, MAY 04: District Development Commissioner Rajouri, Vikas Kundal, today reviewed the progress of work on Rajouri-Thanamandi-Surankote road here in a meeting of the concerned officers.

Officers present in the meeting were ADC Rajouri, Rajeev Kumar Khajuria; ADC Nowshera, Kartar Singh; OC BRO 58 RCC, Major Manju Nath; ACR, Imran Rashid Kataria; AC Defence, Saleem Qureshi and SDM Thanamandi, Vikas Dhar and tehsildars.

It was informed that the total length of the road is 33 KM of which 13 Kms has been blacktopped and work of wet mix macadamization is complete on 20 Kms. The DDC also asked the officers to ensure that the road is constructed as per prescribed specifications. He also directed the concerned department to expedite the completion of the road work and maintain quality standards in the construction.

He directed the agencies to coordinate with each other to complete the project within the stipulated timelines as it is important for local connectivity and development.

### IIT Jammu offers Summer School Internships and Training Programs

**HT News Network**

JAMMU, MAY 04: The Centre for Essential Skills (CES) at the Indian Institute of Technology Jammu (IIT Jammu), in partnership with Nucleon, IIT Alumni initiative, is thrilled to announce the launch of its summer school program. The program is designed to provide an exceptional opportunity to college and school students to gain practical experience and learning across a range of domains to enhance their career prospects.

The internship & training programs offered include Web Development with Hands-On Projects, IoT & Mechatronics Foundations, Data Science, Blockchain & Web 3.0 including Growth with Professional Tools, ChatGPT and other Generative AI, Entrepreneurship & Business Essentials, Mastering No-Code Technology, and placement related guidance. A special program is also designed for school students to build strong foundations in various domains such as IoT, Google Suite, Creativity & Design, and Communication & Personality Development including informative workshops on emerging tech such as AI, AR/VR, and Blockchain. The summer school program is open to all students from different disciplines, and it provides a unique opportunity to gain exposure and learn from experienced professionals. The program is an excellent way for students to expand their skill sets, explore new areas of interest.

### Reasi: Awareness camp on women centric schemes held at Chamera -B Panchayat

**HT News Network**

REASI, MAY 04: District Hub for Empowerment of Women (DHEW) Reasi, in collaboration with Childline Reasi and Health Department, today organised an awareness camp at AWC Chamera -B Panchayat.

District Mission Coordinator, DHEW Monika Sharma gave a detailed information pertaining to women centric schemes like eligibility criteria and the procedure to avail benefits under different schemes like Restructured Marriage Assistance Scheme, Sukanya Sarmidhi Yojana, WHL-181, PMMVY, Women Entrepreneurship Programme like Tejaswini, PMEGP, Skill Development Programmes like SBI RSE-



TI, PMKVY. The participants were also imparted complete information pertaining to the services being provided by One Stop Centre. The Camp was attended by a large number of women, AWW's, DHEW and Childline Team. Pamphlets were also distributed among the women. At the end of the programme, grievances of the women were also noted down and they were assured to provide assistance with the help of the concerned department. District Mission Coordinator, DHEW Monika Sharma gave a detailed information.

### Deputy Commissioner Rajouri reviews functioning of Revenue Department

**HT News Network**

RAJOURI, MAY 04: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Vikas Kundal, today took a comprehensive review of the functioning of the Revenue Department here at a meeting of the concerned officers.

During the meeting, a detailed discussion was held on various points including progress on geo-tagging of villages under Cadastral map, online revenue services being provided to the public, Sarkari Zameen Portal, disposal of public grievances and other revenue-related matters.

The meeting was informed that out of a total of 386 villages in the district 69 have been geo-tagged so far. The Deputy Commissioner stressed the impor-



importance of expediting the geo-tagging process and asked the officers to complete the process at the earliest. Similarly, the DC also reviewed the progress under Sarkari Zameen Portal.

The importance of government priorities such as the digitization of Jamabandies, efficient delivery of all online revenue services, and other public-friendly initiatives aimed at bringing transparency and

accountability to the department were also highlighted during the meeting.

The DC emphasized the importance of providing prompt and efficient services to the public and urged the officers to work with zeal and dedication towards achieving this goal.

The Deputy Commissioner also directed revenue officers to educate the public about the online services and encourage them to take advantage of the

same. He also stressed the need for prompt disposal of online applications to ensure that the public receives timely and efficient services.

Officers who attended the meeting were ADC Rajouri, Rajeev Kumar Khajuria; ADC Nowshera, Kartar Singh; ADC Koreranka, Surinder Mohan Sharma; ACR, Imran Rashid Kataria; SDM Thanamandi, Vikas Dhar and Tehsilars.

### DC Reasi review progress of Water Supply Projects under JJM

**HT News Network**

REASI MAY 04: Deputy Commissioner Reasi, Babila Rakwal today reviewed the progress of water supply projects taken up under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) to ensure the entire household in the district have access to safe and adequate drinking water facilities.

At the outset, the DC took a detailed review of the physical and financial progress of works on Pouni Kanah and Marhi Pouni Water Supply Schemes (WSSs) taken up under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) in Reasi district.

While majority of the works have been completed under JJM, the DC reviewed the progress of balance undergoing works at few places.

The Executive Engineer Jal Shakti, Rakesh Kumar Gupta briefed that Augmentation of Water Supply Scheme Pouni Kanah Water Supply Scheme with retrofitting costing Rs 4.19 Crore would provide tap connection



to around 300 households, while around 239 households are targeted to be connected through Augmentation of Water Supply Scheme at Marhi Pouni.

The DC was apprised that pace of work on the twin projects is in full swing and more than 500 households in these habitations are being provided safe and adequate drinking water.

### Arrangements for smooth conduct of 3-Day Historic Moungrri mela discussed at Udhampur

**HT News Network**

UDHAMPUR, MAY 04: The District Administration Udhampur today discussed the arrangements for the smooth conduct of three day historic Annual Shiv Parvati Shrine (Moungri) mela here at a meeting of stakeholder departments chaired by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Joginder Singh Jasrotia in presence of SSP Dr Vinod Kumar. The Mela is commencing from 15th of May 2023 at Sar Daber in Tehsil Moungri.

The meeting discussed arrangements for maintenance of road, Security, Sanitation, Health care, Transport, Drinking water, power supply, market rate checking, deployment of



Fire tenders and hosting of Cultural programme and sports events. The ADC directed all the officers to ensure all arrangements pertaining to their respective departments well in advance and in an effective manner leaving no scope of any complaint from any quarter. The Executive Engineer PHE was asked to make adequate arrangements for drinking water supply at the mela site while Xen PDD was directed to provide uninterrupted power supply till the culmination of

the historic fair. The ADC directed the Executive Engineers PMGSY and PWD to take up the repair work of the road. It was decided that District Police would deploy adequate security personnel during mela days, while ARTO was asked to deploy a sufficient number of buses from different locations for the convenience of the devotees visiting the shrine. Regarding providing First aid facilities at the mela site, the ADC directed the Chief Medical Officer to deploy a team of doctors.

### Orientation, Training Programme for intending Hajj pilgrims concludes at Kishtwar

DC, SSP address participants, extended best wishes

**HT News Network**

KISHTWAR, MAY 04: The orientation-cum- training program, organised for intending Hajj pilgrims by J&K Hajj Committee under the close management of District Administration Kishtwar, concluded in the Islamia Faridia College of Education, here the other day.

The aim of this program was to provide essential information and guidance to the 106 intending pilgrims to ensure their safe Hajj pilgrimage.



Experienced trainers guided the Hajj aspirants about the various stages of the Hajj journey, including the Hajj rituals, health and safety measures, travel arrangements and other important aspects of the pilgrimage. The program covered a range of topics, and its conclusion marks an important milestone in the government's efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of Hajj pilgrims.

Deputy Commissioner Kishtwar, Dr. Devansh Yadav and SSP Kishtwar

Khalil Ahmed Poswal also addressed the pilgrims and extended best wishes for the upcoming pilgrimage.

The training provided during the program will help the pilgrims perform the Hajj rituals with ease and comfort while also ensuring their safety and the safety of their fellow pilgrims.

Training was organised by the J&K Hajj Committee under the close management of District Administration Kishtwar and under the supervision of Hajj Incharge District Kishtwar Haji Ayaz Ahmed

### DC inspects patient care facilities in Associated Hospital GMC Kathua

Seeks focus on encouraging Institutional deliveries, augmentation of health infra and expert human resource

**HT News Network**

KATHUA, MAY 04: Deputy Commissioner Kathua, Rakesh Minhas today conducted a surprise inspection of Associated Hospital of Government Medical College Kathua and took stock of the patient care facilities and services being provided to the people.

During the visit, the DC inspected Surgery OPD, Surgery Ward, Emergency, Recovery, Paediatric and Gynaecae wards, besides took a round of Blood-Bank, the hospital Laboratory and assessed the working of these sections. He also interacted with patients and doctors to enquire about the current patient care facilities and



health scenario. Inquiring about the maternity and child care facilities, the DC directed to encourage expecting mothers to opt for institutional delivery in the government health institutions. The DC also enquired about the

status of ongoing augmentation work of 200 bedded medical block and other facilities coming up in the hospital. He said district administration and GMC authorities will work in tandem to provide best health care to the patients by strengthening medical infrastructure and expert human resources.

The DC also took feedback on the functioning of Rogi Kalyan Samiti of the Associated Hospital and expressed hope that a workable plan will be adopted to prioritise the issues to bring qualitative change in the delivery of healthcare services.

While interacting with Doctors and staff members, he asked them to perform their duties with utmost dedication and honesty.

EDITORIAL

The Bag Burden.....

The education system in Kashmir has been facing several challenges over the years. One of the most significant issues is the burden of heavy school bags that children are expected to carry every day. The government of Kashmir had issued orders in 2018 to limit the weight of school bags, but it seems that many schools are still violating these orders. This not only puts undue stress on children's physical health but also their mental well-being.

The government of Kashmir had issued orders in 2018, limiting the weight of school bags to a maximum of 10% of a student's body weight. The aim was to reduce the physical burden on students and prevent back and neck problems. However, these orders seem to have been ignored by many schools in the region.

It is common to see young children in Kashmir carrying heavy bags to school. The bags can weigh up to 5 kg, which is a tremendous weight for a child to carry. Carrying such heavy bags can lead to several health problems like back and neck pain, spinal deformities, and fatigue.

Several studies have shown that carrying heavy school bags can impact children's academic performance as well. When children are physically tired and stressed, they cannot concentrate on their studies, leading to lower grades and academic achievement. It is essential to ensure that children are not burdened with the weight of their bags, and the government's order to limit the weight of school bags should be strictly enforced.

Similarly, the government of Kashmir had issued guidelines in 2019 regarding the homework burden on students. The aim was to ensure that children have enough time for physical activity, hobbies, and socialization, which are essential for their overall development. The guidelines recommended limiting homework to one hour per week for students in classes 1 and 2, 90 minutes per week for classes 3 to 5, and two hours per week for classes 9 and 10.

Unfortunately, many schools in Kashmir are still assigning excessive amounts of homework to their students, despite these guidelines. Excessive homework can lead to stress, anxiety, and burnout, which can be detrimental to a child's mental health. It is essential to ensure that children are not burdened with unnecessary stress, and the government's guidelines regarding homework should be strictly enforced.

In a recent event, taking action for "violating" the government norms, District Magistrate Anantnag on Saturday sealed and penalized the Oxford Presentation High School K P Road Anantnag and reiterated to the other institutions of the district to not deviate from the government orders.

One of the reasons why schools are still assigning excessive amounts of homework is that they do not have enough resources. Teachers often use homework as a way to cover the syllabus and ensure that students have enough practice. However, this approach is not effective and can lead to children feeling overburdened and stressed. The government needs to provide schools with the necessary resources, like digital textbooks and other educational technology, to ensure that homework is assigned effectively.

In addition, schools should also ensure that homework is assigned in a way that is not burdensome for students. It is essential for schools in Kashmir to abide by the government orders and guidelines regarding bag burden and homework. Schools should prioritize the well-being of their students and ensure that they are not being burdened with unnecessary physical or mental stress.

In conclusion, the burden of heavy school bags and excessive homework is a significant problem in the education system in Kashmir. The government of Kashmir needs to enforce its orders and guidelines strictly to ensure that children are not burdened with unnecessary stress. Schools should be provided with the necessary resources to reduce the weight of school bags and assign homework effectively. It is crucial to prioritize children's physical and mental well-being and ensure that they have a positive and healthy learning environment. By working together, the government, schools, and parents can ensure that children in Kashmir receive the best education possible.

# India's School Education Now Has Three Class Layers



VIJAY GARG

Unprofessional working style of the CBSE under constant political pressure have also been pushing India's schools to opt for international boards.

Recent attempts by CBSE to drop some chapters from Class X, XI and XII syllabus have brought the spotlight back on 'saffronisation of education' in India. Although the CBSE has made similar amendments in the past, this time, the cause of aspersion has been the board's intention, particularly the removal of certain chapters from social science textbooks. Political actors have been proactively making arguments and counter-arguments on such inclusions/deletions, but their cacophony hides the larger transformation in India's school education.

Such frequent changes are an outcome of political battle over social science syllabus, and have been resulting in the gradual emergence of three layers of school education system in India — each accessed by different classes.

**The emergence of three layers of school education**

There has been very little analysis of the implications of politically motivated changes. To syllabus, particularly the macro amendments. However, recent reports suggest big transformation going on in school education system, led by India's elite schools of metropolitan cities — to leave CBSE per se, and opt for international boards such as International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and International Baccalaureate (IB).

After interacting with some of the teachers at international schools, I found that besides several pull factors



such as liberty to charge high fee and higher prospects for their students securing admission in foreign universities, the unprofessional working style of the CBSE under constant political pressure have also been pushing India's schools to opt for international boards. Despite and IGCSE and IB schools charging exorbitant fees, an increasing number of Indian students, particularly from super elite families, are withdrawing from the Indian boards and opting for these international boards.

The increasing number of students opting for IGCSE and IB schools suggest a gradual emergence of the third layer of school education system in India. Primarily, there existed two layers of school education system in the country — CBSE and ICSE affiliated schools and state boards institutions. The medium of instruction has been a marker of hierarchy among these two layers with English being the main medium of instruction in the former

and the regional languages in the latter. Schools affiliated to international boards are imparting education mainly in English and also teaching foreign languages. Teaching Indian languages is not compulsory for them, but they are allowed to teach one regional language.

The said layers of school education also indicate the three classes of Indian society — super elite, middle class, and the marginalised. Students from super elite class would go to international board schools, middle-class students to CBSE and ICSE schools and the marginalised to state board institutions. There might be few exceptions in this schema, but exceptions don't make a rule.

These emerging trends of schooling also indicate the kind of education that is being imparted. The elite students not only have the liberty to study the course, subject, and languages of their choice, but also without a burden of studying Indian nationalism, Indian

languages, patriotism, and cultural values. The middle class students would have limited choice in terms of course, syllabus, and language and will have to study Indian nationalism, patriotism, and cultural values. The students from marginalised communities will keep alive regional and local languages, as well as culture and knowledge.

This emerging mode of school education system has been reproducing a new kind of social and economic inequality. The super elite class is becoming the ultimate beneficiary, since all changes have been only impacting students from middle and marginalised classes. The super elite remain unaffected — enjoying their full liberty to achieve their economic goals. This could also be the reason why the super elite do not raise their voice over the current school education system in India.

Vijay Garg Retired Principal Malout Punjab

# 'After such knowledge, what forgiveness?'

The idea for his first book came while he was a student of history at the University of Calcutta



IMAN MITRA

He would have turned a hundred in a few weeks and had been unwell for a while. But the fact that he was alive for almost a century and worked till very well into his nineties has a historical value.

All the events that took place in these hundred years, in varying degrees, greatly impacted his life and oeuvre, but more importantly, his political convictions and their emphatic articulations in his research.

His was a life which he kept examining and re-examining till the very end. It is another matter that this critical examination resulted in an overturning of the edifices that occluded creativity and empathy in history writing in South Asia.

Guha was born on 23 May 1923 in the Barisal district of present-day Bangladesh. His family owned some 50 acres of land in the region and hence was part of the landed gentry in pre-partitioned Bengal. He finished his schooling in Barisal and Calcutta in the forties and entered the Presidency College, Calcutta, where he was introduced to Marxism and left politics.

Between 1942 and 1956, he wrote for Swadhinata — the newspaper published by the Communist Party of India — and the journal People's War in Bombay, went to Paris as a representative to the World Federation of Democratic Youth, and worked among the workers of the Keshoram Cotton Mill and with the dock workers of Metiabruz and Khidirpur. In 1956, he resigned from the Communist Party, protesting against the invasion of Hungary by the Soviet Union.

The idea for his first book came while he was a student of history at the University of Calcutta. Growing up with the children of the peasants who used to work in the lands owned by his family, Guha became acutely aware of the hierarchies which existed between him and his playmates. The master-subject relationship explicitly drawn and practised within the zamindari system initiated by the Permanent Settlement started to fascinate him as the foundation of social and cultural hierarchies that coloured the experience of colonialism. Guha offered an intellectual history of Permanent Settlement to show that the contradictions in the ideology of the Empire were already at play in its early days. One of these contradictions had to do with the nature of modernity in South Asia, which came to us through our colonial masters with a lot of restrictions and modifications. This theme would return in many of his later writings.

Guha's ideas were not well received among his leftist peers, and eventually he had to publish the book A Rule of Property for Bengal (1963) after he moved to Europe. In 1970-71, the ongoing political turmoil in India turned his attention to the figure of the peasant as the agent of history. In the existing scholarship on colonialism, he discovered a tendency to speak in the voice of the elitist groups, both the British and their Indian counterparts. Even the Marxist historians tended to look at the resistance against the British as conditioned by a 'false consciousness' on the part of the peasant rebels. In the late seventies, Guha gathered a group of young scholars, many without even PhD degrees, to form the Subaltern Studies collective for exploring the role of the political consciousness of the non-elite groups in the anticolonial struggle.

The term 'subaltern' was borrowed from the Italian thinker Antonio Gramsci's lexicon but thoroughly

redefined in the Indian context as the demographic difference between the elites and the rest of the country. Between 1982 and 2005, the collective published twelve volumes with articles by some of the major historians of the country and abroad. Of the twelve, Guha edited the first six and set the tone of the research programme the collective would adopt in its early days. The works of the Subaltern Studies group inspired similar research projects in Latin America and other parts of the world.

In 1983, Guha published his seminal study on the structural organisation and continuity of the insurgencies that haunted the British Empire in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Titled Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India, the book showed how various forms of inversion of the social, political and linguistic codes of the elite groups contributed to the making of a consciousness, which was decidedly antithetical to the so-called mainstream political mobilisations by the elite leaders. It also opened possibilities of research where reading against the logic of the colonial archives offered insights that challenged the accepted versions of history.

Guha's interest in seeking narratives alternative to the official ones continued in his later writings. The 'small voices of history' from the fragments left behind by the colonial archives became his lifelong compatriots. His last English title, history at the Limit of World-History (2002), has a quotation from T.S. Eliot: 'After such knowledge, what forgiveness?' We shall remember Ranajit Guha as an unforgiving speaker of truth to power whose quest for justice was extended beyond the living and recovered the prestige of the dead as well. (iman.mitra@snu.edu.in)

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SHRI HARDEEP S PURI

# Rationalisation and Reform for a Gas-based Economy



Modi government has been taking various measures to protect Indian consumers from international oil and gas price volatility. Despite a staggering increase of 228% in international gas prices between January 2021 and February 2023, increase in CNG prices in India have been restricted to 83% – only about a third of the global increase. Politically motivated naysayers, in their haste to criticise rising prices, fail to see how well India has done to shield its citizens from extreme price volatility in comparison to other major economies.

Farsighted governance through proactive measures such as increasing domestic Administered Price Mechanism (APM) gas allocation and diverting gas from non-priority sectors to transport and domestic segments has made this possible. The recent Cabinet decision to approve a series of critical APM gas pricing reforms will further advance this objective. These reforms achieve two major goals – first, to protect Indians from extreme price volatility and to provide clarity for planned capex investments in gas-based sectors; and second, to promote more innovation and investments in Exploration and Production (E&P).

The need for this set of rationalisation and reforms (R&R) arose from the limitations of the New Domestic Gas Pricing Guidelines, 2014, which, until recently, determined APM prices based on the volume-weighted average price of gas at four international hubs. The transmission of these prices came with a significant time lag (6-9 months) and contained high volatility even as two producer countries' gas hub prices had lost their relevance in the last few years.

For instance, the APM price between October 2020 and September 2021 remained \$1.79/MMBTU, much below the marginal cost of production of \$3.5/MMBTU for nomination fields. During this period, LNG prices in west India averaged about \$11/MMBTU. In essence, domestic production fetched a price less than 20% of the LNG prices. However, the same APM prices jumped from \$1.79/MMBTU in September 2021 to \$8.57/MMBTU in October 2022 due to a 400% price surge in international hub prices after the Russia-Ukraine crisis, bringing tremendous distress to the fertiliser, power and City Gas Distribution (CGD)

sectors.

The government decided to insulate domestic gas consumers as well as national oil companies from such volatility by benchmarking APM prices to a slope of 10% of Indian Crude basket price to be determined on a monthly basis, together with a ceiling of \$6.5/MMBTU and floor of \$4.5/MMBTU for nomination fields. The ceiling has been determined at 10% of the last 20 years of Indian crude price (about \$65/BBL) while the determination of the floor price considers the marginal cost of production of about \$3.5/MMBTU for gas production from nomination fields.

The slope of most of the Indian long-term LNG contracts has hovered around 13% above Brent. Accounting for the costs of liquefaction, transportation and regasification in LNG contracts, the slope for domestic gas has been pegged at 10% for the APM prices.

After these reforms, the average cost of cooking fuel for households (PNG) has been reduced by about 10% and CNG vehicle owners have seen a 6-7% reduction in prices. Another crucial advantage will be the reduction in fertiliser subsidies, expected to be more than Rs. 2000 crores each year.

These reforms will also help incentivise investment in the E&P sector by providing a floor price for mature fields of nomination while also incentivising new wells of nomination fields which will receive 20% higher prices. The ceiling on production from ONGC and OIL will remain the same for the first two years and then increase by \$0.25/MMBTU every year, to adjust for any cost inflation. The reforms will not impact private operators of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) fields or High Pressure, High Temperature (HP-HT) fields that have a ceiling price or new gas produc-

tion from field development plans submitted after February 2019. They will continue to have marketing and pricing freedom.

The Cabinet's decisions have received a thumping response from the markets and experts alike. Some commentators, however, have raised concerns regarding these reforms in an Op-ed in this newspaper. Their article states that domestic consumers would have benefitted from the recent decrease in the US-based Henry Hub prices and Russian gas prices had the reforms not been implemented. It forgets to mention that there were four hubs in the 2014 formula, and the prices of one hub, i.e., the British-based virtual trading zone National Balancing Point (NBP) are still in the range of \$12/MMBTU. Further, current prices would have impacted APM prices only in the next pricing cycle of Oct 2023-March 2024. The recent change in formula

ensures that the benefit to the consumers is passed on without a time lag as price will now be determined on a monthly basis rather than half-yearly.

The aforementioned article highlights that current high well head prices for domestic gas ensure a continued high price for LNG exports to India except for Qatar LNG. Domestic gas prices have nothing to do with the long-term LNG contracts or even spot purchases of LNG. Concerns had also been raised regarding stranded gas power plants. During the last half-yearly price of \$8.57/MMBTU, some power plants had stopped off-taking contracted gas, leading to issues of take or pay obligations under Gas Sale and Purchase Agreements (GSPA). With the new ceiling of \$6.5/MMBTU, gas power plants will now get much-needed relief.

To promote gas production from difficult areas (Deepwater, Ultra Deepwater and HP-HT fields), the government in March 2016 had notified that HTHP ceiling prices be pegged to imported alternative fuels such as LNG and landed price of imported Fuel Oil. Before this government, production from these fields was not considered viable. Today, production from difficult areas has reached about 20% of the overall domestic gas production, and is expected to reach 30% within the next few years. Considering the nature, complexity and viability of production from these areas, their formula has not been tweaked.

India is aggressively expanding infrastructure for oil and gas operations and executing policy reforms to balance the interests of both consumers and producers. Since 2014, India has increased the length of its gas pipeline network from 14,700 kms to 22,000 kms in 2023. The number of domestic connections has increased from 22.28 lakh in 2014 to over 1.03 crore in 2023. The number of CGD-covered districts in India has increased from 66 in 2014 to 630 in 2023 while CNG stations have gone up from 938 in 2014 to 5,283 in 2023. India's LNG terminal regasification capacity has increased from 21.7 MMTPA in 2014 to 42.7 MMTPA in 2023, with another 20 MMTPA capacity under construction.

With a growing demand for natural gas, India is well on its way to realising a gas-based economy as part of its broader energy transition goals. The vision of a cleaner, greener and sustainable energy future for India is steadily becoming a reality.

**Hardeep S Puri is Union Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas, and Housing and Urban Affairs in the Government of India**

## Born as poor is a stroke of fate but brooding over the same is a bit of an issue!



M S NAZKI

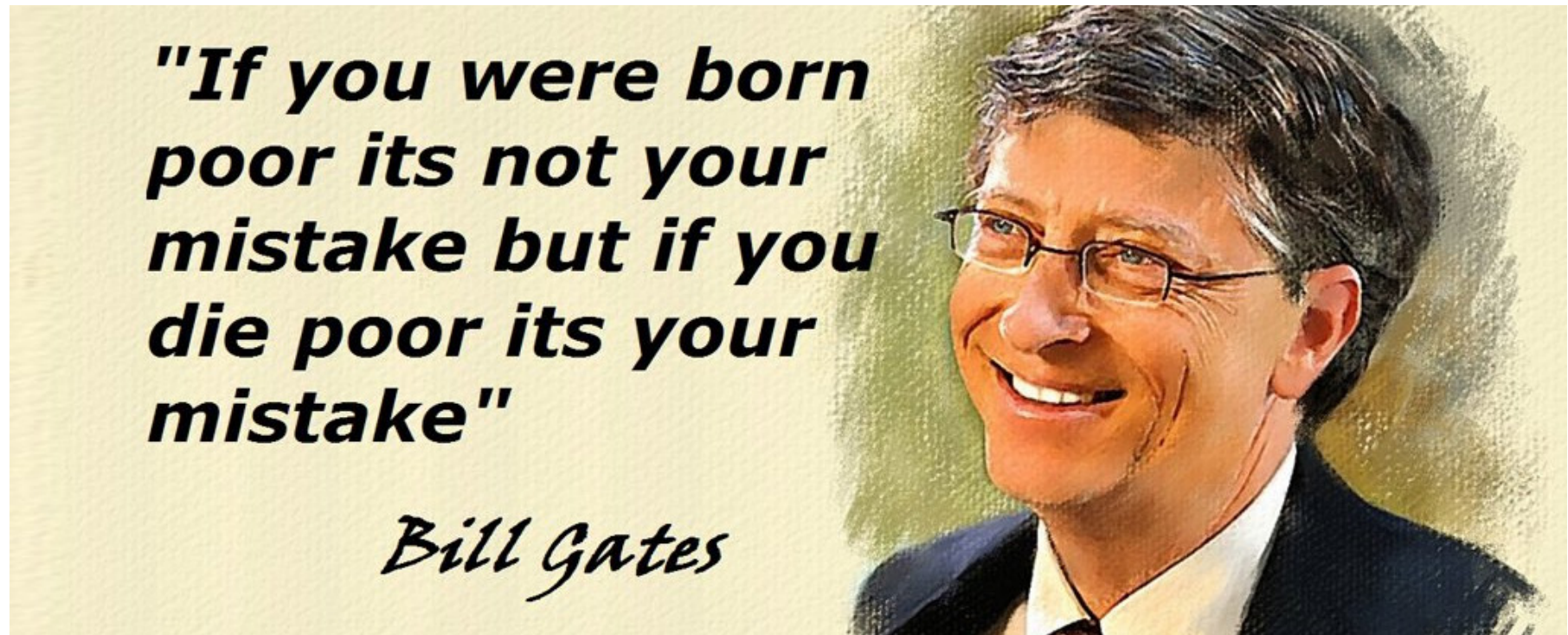
There have been many rags to riches stories and those happened because of the human spirit to keep trying and moving ahead! Those who toil, put in hard work do achieve something in life! If you raise your hands towards the skies it is but natural that you will not get the moon or stars in your fist but you will not get mud either! Poverty alleviation is in our own hands. Those who are not born with a silver spoon in mouth need not give up because life has twists and turns, opportunities are galore. One may find a closed door, maybe that's the opportunity you were seeking is inside the room behind but at least make an effort to open the door! May me inside the room is a ticket which will make you move on in life!

There is a famous saying written by a philosopher/economist that says, knowledge is wealth, wisdom is treasure, understanding is riches, and ignorance is poverty. Neatness and cleanliness is not a function of how rich or poor you are but that of mentality and principle. The same man also concluded that, I don't judge poverty by wealth. The poor are those who cannot afford to pay attention in life.

Removal of poverty is the prime objective that the government is working upon and the same thing is happening UT Jammu and Kashmir! The stress is on the fact that every person in India, in our case UT Jammu and Kashmir does not sleep hungry as the night approaches!

**Some facts:**

Trends in poverty and inequality remain a conten-



tious zone.

Rural poverty 'saw a modest rise' only during the strict lockdown period of April-June 2020, and then declined as sharply as in the pre-Covid period. And that while urban poverty also saw a 'modest rise' in 2020-21, by April-June 2021 its decline had resumed. But subsequently after that phase was over the levels slid down!

As per the report, over an eight month period (March to October 2020), average incomes of the bottom 10 percent of households were lower by Rs 15,700.

This income shock caused an increase in the poverty rate (below the national minimum wage threshold) by 15 percentage points in rural areas and nearly

20 percentage points in urban areas.

April 2020. And that while poverty did fall subsequently, it did not recover to pre-pandemic levels. Other indicators suggest that more workers fell back on agriculture indicating the absence of non-farm employment. More individuals worked under MGN-REGA than in the pre-pandemic period. Regular real wages witnessed a decline.

The things had to be pulled back and for that the Government is making whole some efforts! It's nice to see that every individual, be it rich or poor has understood what economy is all about! It all starts from a household and a conglomerate of households

becomes a locality and subsequently a society and the frame goes on to become larger at National level! Speaking in a broader and wider perspective, 'ignorance is no excuse in the modern day art of living and surviving, be it the rich or the poor'!

To end this one I will tell you a small story of a guy who was born poor but loved studying. He in his memoirs wrote that he thought everything had been said about poverty, until he had the inspiration to write six books in less than three years! So shed off the tag of the poor and knock at the doors that you have never been opened! Maybe the key for your success is there! That is the only way you can remove the logo of 'Poverty'!





# Asia still needs 55 years to eliminate child marriage: UN

HT News Network

UNITED NATIONS: South Asia leads global reductions in child marriage but still needs 55 years to eliminate the practice if it does not speed up the pace, says a UN report released on Wednesday.

To meet the UN target of eliminating child marriage by 2030, South Asia needs to accelerate the pace of reforms by seven times, says the report released by the UN Children's Fund (Unicef).

Within South Asia, Pakistan is third in reductions, behind Maldives and Sri Lanka but ahead of India, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Nepal and Bhutan. About 18 per cent women in Pakistan are still married in childhood, which is slightly better than the global average of 19pc.

According to the statistics released on Wednesday, Pakistan still has nearly 19 million child brides as 1 in 6 young women in the country are married in childhood. The minimum legal age for marriage in Pakistan is 18 but about 18pc of girls are married before 18. The age gap between a child bride and her groom is often between 40 to 60 years. At 51pc, Bangladesh has the highest rate of child marriages in South Asia. Maldives has the lowest, only two per cent.

India is home to the largest number of women who married in childhood. One in three child bride lives in India. There are about 34pc women in India who married



in childhood. The majority of Indian women married in childhood, gave birth as adolescents.

South Asia leads the world in progress on reducing child marriage. Yet, one in four young women in South Asia were first married or were in union before their 18th birthday.

The region is home to around 290 million child brides, accounting for 45 per cent of the global total. Levels of child marriage vary considerably across the region, from over 50pc in Bangladesh to 2pc in the Maldives.

In Pakistan, India, Nepal, and Bangladesh child brides are more likely to report that wife-beating is justified, and they often

experience such violence themselves. In Pakistan, 55pc of child brides say that wife-beating is justified. In India, 41pc say the same thing. Thirty-three per cent and 28pc in Bangladesh also justify wife-beating. Child brides in South Asia are more likely to live in poor households, have less education and reside in rural areas.

Three in four child brides in the region give birth while they are still adolescents. The vast majority of child brides in South Asia are out of school.

Unicef, however, also reports that the practice of child marriage has continued to decline globally, driven predominantly by a decline in India, which is still home to the largest number of child brides world-

wide. Progress is also evident in other contexts, including in populous countries where the practice has historically been common, such as Bangladesh and Ethiopia. Some smaller countries, such as Maldives and Rwanda, are moving closer to elimination.

Commenting on the good news, Unicef observed that "the experiences of these countries illustrate that progress is possible in a variety of settings."

But the UN agency warned that a 'polycrisis' — of war, climate shocks, and the Covid pandemic — threatens the fragile gains made towards ending the scourge. South Asia leads the world in progress on reducing child marriage. Yet, one in four young women in South Asia were first married or were in union before their 18th birthday. The region is home to around 290 million child brides, accounting for 45 per cent of the global total. Levels of child marriage vary considerably across the region, from over 50pc in Bangladesh to 2pc in the Maldives.

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## Pakistanis, Indians targeted online

HT News Network

ISLAMABAD: A report by Meta, the parent company of Facebook, has revealed that an online group in Pakistan targeted people, including military personnel, in both India and Pakistan through fake social media accounts, during the first quarter of the current year.

The "Adversarial Threat Report, First Quarter 2023" released at the Meta website stated that actions were taken against three separate cyber espionage operations in South Asia linked to a group of hackers known in the security industry as "Bahamut APT (advanced persistent threat)", another known as "Patchwork APT" and a "state-linked group in Pakistan".

The report highlighted fake apps and websites delivering malware at Facebook and Instagram social media platforms, involved in espionage as well as committing financial crimes across the world.

The report shared information about six networks that were taken down for violating the policies.

## Ukraine Realistic About "Not Being Able" To Join NATO During War: Zelensky

HT News Network



The Hague: Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said Thursday that Ukraine was "realistic" that it would not be able to join NATO while still fighting Russia.

"We are realistic, we know we will not be in NATO during the war," Zelensky said after meeting Dutch and Belgian Prime Ministers Mark Rutte and Alexander De Croo. "But we want a very clear message that we will be in NATO after the war," Zelensky added.

Zelensky made a surprise visit to the Netherlands a day after meeting Nordic leaders in Finland to drum up support ahead of Ukraine's awaited counter-offensive against Russia. "The most important thing is to deliver as quickly as possible what was promised to our soldiers," Zelensky told reporters. "We hope that the Netherlands and our other partners will help as quickly as possible," Zelensky said. The Netherlands has so far given or pledged 1.2 billion euros in military support to Ukraine.

This included 45 T-72 tanks, armoured personnel carriers and at least 100 Leopard 1 tanks, together with Denmark and Germany, as well as 14 Leopard 2 tanks together with Denmark. It also included eight howitzers and 120 mm shells as well as two Patriot missile systems, 100 mobile air defence cannons and Stinger missiles among other weapons, the Dutch defence ministry said on its website. Dutch instructors are also helping to train Ukrainian recruits along with other Western nations.

Zelensky was to visit a Dutch military base later on Thursday in central Netherlands to view equipment reserved for Ukraine.

## Heavy rains kill at least 109 in Rwanda

HT News Network

Kigali, May 4 (UNI) Heavy rains and flooding that hit Rwanda's western and northern provinces in two days have killed at least 109 people, according to local officials. Francois Habitegeko, governor of Western Province, told national broadcaster Rwanda Television on Wednesday morning that at least 95 people were killed in flash floods caused by heavy rains in the province between Tuesday and Wednesday. Northern Province governor Dancille Nyirarugero also confirmed to the television that at least 14 people were killed by heavy rains during the same days. "We extend our deepest condolences to the families of the victims during this difficult time," Habitegeko said. "We are working closely with local authorities and emergency services to provide relief efforts and support to those affected by this disaster." The latest weather forecast by Rwanda Meteorology Agency indicated that the expected rainfall in many parts of the country will be slightly above the range of rainfall usually recorded in May. According to a recent report by the ministry in charge of emergency management, more than 60 people were killed by disasters in the country between Jan. 1 and April 20.

## Hungary plans to buy gas from Turkey, Azerbaijan - Foreign Minister

Budapest, May 4 (UNI) Budapest is holding talks with Ankara to buy Turkish natural gas and transit Azerbaijani gas to Hungary through Turkey, Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Szijarto said. "Without Turkish transit, there is no reliable energy supply for Hungary... We count on Turkey's transit role in the subsequent period as well. First of all, due to the fact that an agreement is being drawn up with Azerbaijan on the purchase of Azerbaijani gas. We will be able to deliver Azerbaijani gas to Hungary only if Turkey provides a transit opportunity for this," Szijarto told reporters in Ankara as broadcast on Facebook (an extremist social network banned in Russia). Hungary is negotiating with Turkish energy company Botas to buy "Turkish gas too, liquefied or from other sources,"

## Israeli forces kill 3 Palestinians in Nablus raid

HT News Network

Israeli forces on Thursday killed two Palestinian gunmen who had allegedly shot dead a British-Israeli mother and her two daughters in April in the occupied West Bank, Israel's domestic security service said.

British-Israeli Lucy Leah Dee and her two daughters Maia and Rina were shot dead on April 7 in the Jordan Valley.

"Medical teams recovered the bodies of 3 Palestinians in a house besieged by Israeli forces in the Old City of Nablus," the official Palestinian TV reported.

A picture of a Palestinian mother with her son, who according to the Israeli military aided two Palestinian gunmen, hangs on a wall at his house where he was killed by the Israeli forces along with the gunmen in a raid, in Nablus in the Israeli-occupied West Bank on May 4, 2023.—Reuters/Raneen Sawafta

The Israeli army left after the raid, witnesses told Anadolu.

The Palestinian Health Ministry said there had been three fatalities during the raid in the city of Nablus.

Meanwhile, the Palestine Red Crescent Society said "its crews dealt with two serious injuries caused by live bullets during clashes that erupted between dozens of Palestinians and the Israeli army in Nablus".

A third militant who had aided the two gunmen was also killed in the raid, Israel's Shin Bet service said.

A Palestinian man looks on as he views



the site where Israeli forces killed Palestinian gunmen in a raid, according to the Israeli military, in Nablus in the Israeli-occupied West Bank on May 4, 2023.—Reuters/Raneen Sawafta

Shin Bet also said that all three men were members of the Palestinian Islamist armed group Hamas, which Hamas confirmed.

The Directorate of Education in Nablus announced the postponement of school hours until the end of the military operation.

Tensions have been running high across the occupied West Bank in recent months amid repeated Israeli raids into Palestinian towns.

More than 100 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire since the start of this year, according to Palestinian figures.

Sixteen Israelis have also been killed in separate attacks during the same period. Tensions have been running high across the occupied West Bank in recent months amid repeated Israeli raids into Palestinian towns. More than 100 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire since the start of this year, according to Palestinian figures.

## Heavy fighting in Sudan's Khartoum as power struggle rages

HT News Network

Fierce fighting could be heard in central Khartoum on Thursday as the army tried to push back the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) from areas around the presidential palace and army headquarters, with a lasting ceasefire appearing elusive.

Each side appears to be battling for control of territory in the capital ahead of any possible negotiations, though the leaders of both factions have shown little public willingness to hold talks after more than two weeks of fighting.

Heavy bombardments also rang out in the adjoining cities of Omdurman and Bahri. Both sides had agreed to a seven-day ceasefire, which has been violated.

"Since yesterday evening, and this morning, there are air strikes and the sounds of clashes," said Al-Sadiq Ahmed, a 49-year-old engineer speaking from Khartoum. "We've got into a state of permanent terror because the battles are around the centres of residential neighbourhoods.



We don't know when this nightmare and the fear will end." The United Nations, meanwhile, pressed Sudan's warring factions on Wednesday to guarantee safe passage of humanitarian aid after six trucks were looted and air strikes in the capital undermined a supposed truce. UN aid chief Martin Griffiths said he hoped to have face-to-face meetings with Sudan's warring parties within two to three days to secure guarantees from them for aid convoys to deliver relief supplies. The United Nations has warned that fighting between the army and RSF, which erupted on April 15, risks causing a humanitarian catastrophe that could spill into other countries. Sudan said on Tuesday that 550 people had died and

4,926 people wounded so far in the conflict. About 100,000 people have fled Sudan with little food or water to neighbouring countries, the UN says.

The army said it killed RSF fighters and destroyed a number of vehicles "belonging to the rebels", after clashing with the group in the Bahri military region. The army and RSF joined forces in a coup two years ago and had shared power as part of an internationally backed transition towards free elections and civilian government before falling out over the transition. The RSF accused the army of breaching a ceasefire and attacking forces since dawn. It said the army attacked its residential neighbourhoods with artillery and aircraft.

## Pakistan set to host Chinese foreign minister from May 5-6, says FO

HT News Network

China's State Councillor and Foreign Minister, Qin Gang, is set to embark on a two-day official visit to Pakistan from May 5 to attend the Pakistan-China Strategic Dialogue, the Foreign Office said. This visit marks his first official trip to Pakistan since taking office. The fourth round of the Pakistan-China Strategic Dialogue will be co-chaired by Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari and his Chinese counterpart, Qin Gang. The structured mechanism is designed to review bilateral cooperation in key areas. The Foreign Office said that during the strategic dialogue, both sides will reaffirm the abiding vitality of the all-weather



er strategic cooperative partnership between Pakistan and China. Furthermore, they will develop a roadmap for multidimensional cooperation, and discuss the evolving regional and global landscape, according to the FO. The third round of the Pakistan-China Strategic Dialogue took place in July 2021 in Chengdu, China. The

upcoming visit by Qin underscores the importance of Pakistan and China's relationship and their commitment to further strengthening their strategic partnership. Meanwhile, China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson, in a statement today, highlighted the significance of Qin's visit to Pakistan, stating that it was an important aspect

of the recent close and frequent interactions between high-level officials of China and Pakistan. The spokesperson also added that during this visit, both sides will engage in in-person and in-depth communication regarding bilateral relations as well as the international and regional situation. The spokesperson reiterated that China and Pakistan shared an all-weather strategic cooperative partnership and were ironclad friends. In this context, the spokesperson recalled Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's "successful visit to China" in November last year, during which the leaders of both countries charted a course for bilateral relations. "Additionally, the premiers of China and Pakistan also had a phone.

## Declared chemical arms to be destroyed soon: watchdog

HT News Network

NOOTDORP (Netherlands): The world's chemical weapons watchdog said on Wednesday that the process of destroying tens of thousands of tonnes of declared chemical stockpiles will be completed "within the next few weeks". The watchdog, which also unveiled its new chemical laboratory and high-tech facility outside The Hague, warned that new challenges to fight chemical weapons were emerging such as threats posed by artificial intelligence. "More than 70,000 tonnes of the world's most dangerous poisons have been destroyed under the supervision of the OPCW," said Fernando Arias, head of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). A small remnant left in the US "will be destroyed within the next few weeks," Arias told journalists on a tour of the new facility, which opens its doors next week on Friday.

Since the Chemical Weapons Convention, the treaty that bans the use of toxic arms, was implemented in 1997, the OPCW had destroyed 72,118 tonnes of stockpiles declared by countries around the world, or 99 per cent.

"Around 127 tonnes of declared weapons remained to be destroyed at two facilities, one in Denver, in Colorado, as well as at the Blue Grass chemical facility in Kentucky," a senior OPCW official said.

# CUK's DCJ observes world press freedom day

## HT News Network

Ganderbal, May 3: Department of Convergent Journalism (DCJ), Central University of Kashmir (CUK) Wednesday observed the "World Press Freedom Day" by organising a lecture on "New Media and Standalone Journalism," by Prof. Dev Vrat Singh, former Head & Dean, Deptt of Mass Communication, School of Mass Communication and Media Technologies, Central University of Jharkhand. Addressing the participants comprising the faculty members and the students, Prof. Dev Vrat Singh, said, the occasion emphasizes the importance of unrestricted jour-

nalism and advocates for the fundamental right of freedom of speech. He said the day serves as a reminder of the critical role that journalists play in holding the powerful accountable and ensuring that the masses have access to impartial information. In his presentation, the speaker discussed changes in journalism in the light of Information Technology and highlighted the significant role played by the social media platforms including Facebook, twitter, Instagram and YouTube in highlighting the public issues instantly. He, however maintained, that the news groups on the social media platforms should necessarily get the official version, before uploading the news content.



"There have been several instances wherein the credibility of the social media news groups has taken a hit as they failed to follow the ethics and principles of journalism in letter and spirit," he said. After the address, the speaker also interacted with the faculty and staff. Speaking on the occasion, Dean Academic Affairs and Dean School

of Media Studies, Prof. Shahid Rasool, described media as an important pillar of democracy and said the day is being observed to emphasise the value of press freedom and the difficulties faced by journalists in their work. "The purpose of the Day is to raise awareness about press freedom, the necessity of defending journalists' rights, and the need to support independent, free media," he said. He further added that the freedom of speech should not be misused by anyone for their vested interests. Head DCJ, Dr. Arif Nazir Zargar, who conducted the proceedings, said, World Press Freedom Day serves as a reminder of the significance of the right to freedom of

speech, which is a basic human right recognised in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. He said the theme for the year 2023 is "Shaping a Future of Rights: Freedom of Expression as a Driver for all other human rights." Sr Asst Prof. Dr John Babu Koyye, proposed the vote of thanks. After the address, the speaker also interacted with the faculty and staff. Speaking on the occasion, Dean Academic Affairs and Dean School of Media Studies, Prof. Shahid Rasool, described media as an important pillar of democracy and said the day is being observed to emphasise the value of press freedom and the difficulties faced by journalists in their work.

# Jal Shakti Abhiyan- 'Catch the Rain': DDC Bandipora chairs review meeting

## HT News Network

BANDIPORA, MAY 04: The District Development Commissioner (DDC) Bandipora, Dr Owais Ahmad today chaired a meeting to review the status of works under Jal Shakti Abhiyan (JSA) and its implementation across the district.

The meeting was informed that in District Bandipora 133 sites were identified under Amrit Sarovar, out of which 59 have been taken up, out of which 49 have been completed.

It was given out that 73 sites were identified in Bandipora, 58



in Sonawari and 02 sites in Gurez. Dr. Owais instructed all the concerned officers to speed up the work under JSA so that the

target can be achieved within the stipulated period.

He asked the officers to regularly monitor the quality and

progress on all allotted works for time-bound completion.

Dr Owais laid stress on ground water recharging and rain water harvesting. He said that every drop of water is valuable and vital. He directed the concerned that there should be a planned mechanism to hold surface water besides maintaining available water resources.

During the meeting, the DC took detailed review of physical and financial progress of various JJM Works, besides he also discussed authorization for issuance of allotment for various works under JJM in the district.

The meeting was attended by

Additional District Development Commissioner Bandipora Ali Afsar Khan, Nodal Officer Coordination and ACD Bandipora Mohammad Ashraf Hakak, JD Planning Imtiyaz Ahmad, Superintending Engineer PHE Hyd. Circle Bpr/Bla H.Q Sopore, Mohammad Haneef, Executive Engineer PHE/Irrigation Bandipora Syed Fida Hussain Rizvi, Executive Engineer PHE/migration Sopore, Executive Engineer PHE Mechanical North Bla/Bpr and others. During the meeting, the DC took detailed review of physical and financial progress of various JJM Works, besides he also discussed authorization.

## Women College Gandhinagar hosts interactive session on "LIBRARY E-RESOURCES: N-LIST and DELNET"

### HT News Network

JAMMU, MAY 04: Department of Political science of Padma Shri Padma Sachdev (PSPS) Government College for Women, Gandhinagar, organized an interactive session on "LIBRARY E-RESOURCES: N-LIST and DELNET".

The session was held under the patronage of the College Principal Prof. Minu Mahajan. The speaker of the occasion, Prof. Sonika, Librarian of the College familiarised the students about the various E-Platforms (both paid and free) subscribed by the College for knowledge enhancement of the students. She, along with Pankaj Talashi guided students about different Log - in procedures and resolved their queries. The session turned out to be really beneficial for students especially for those who are struggling through financial difficulties as they were able to access over 5400 E-books, E-Journals, E-Papers etc available on certified portals like N-LIST and DELNET without any monetary burden.

The session was coordinated by Dr Pooja Charak, Prof Paramjeet Singh, Dr Harmeet Singh and Dr Vandana Sharma from the Department of Political Science.

A total of 92 students participated in the session and displayed great enthusiasm. The event was moderated by Ms. Mansha and Ms Ashpreet, students of 2nd and 4th semester respectively.

The Department of Political Science and Department of Science also expressed their gratitude towards the Principal and Institution for availing such important opportunities for the staff and the students.

## Baramulla Bar Association bids farewell to outgoing PD&SJ, Mobile Magistrate

### HT News Network

BARAMULLA, MAY 04: Bar Association Baramulla on Wednesday accorded a warm farewell to the outgoing Principal District & Sessions Judge Baramulla, Mohammad Yousuf Wani and Mobile Magistrate Baramulla Sajad-ur Rehman during a grand function organized, here.

Ist Additional District and Sessions Judge Baramulla Shabir Ahmad Malik, NIA Judge, Pawan Kumar, Munsif Judge Baramulla, Zahoor Ahmad Ganie, President Bar Association Baramulla, Farooq-u-Din, Senior Advocate Nilofer Masood besides Bar Members, Advocates and other concerned participated in the farewell function.

All the Bar Members, Advocates present in the function lauded the working style and leadership qualities of both the judges and extended their best wishes for their new assignment.

Speaking on the occasion, President, Bar Association Baramulla said that the Principal District and Sessions Judge and Mobile Magistrate have given their best in their respective fields and have set examples in their work fields. He appreciated the working nature of the outgoing dignitaries.



The Principal District and Sessions Judge and Mobile Magistrate also spoke on the occasion and extended their gratitude to the whole team and thanked the Bar Association Baramulla for organizing such an impressive farewell. Bar Association Baramulla on Wednesday accorded a warm farewell to the outgoing Principal District & Sessions Judge Baramulla, Mohammad Yousuf Wani and Mobile Magistrate Baramulla Sajad-ur Rehman during a grand function organized, here. Ist Additional District and Ses-

sions Judge Baramulla Shabir Ahmad Malik, NIA Judge, Pawan Kumar, Munsif Judge Baramulla, Zahoor Ahmad Ganie, President Bar Association Baramulla, Farooq-u-Din, Senior Advocate Nilofer Masood besides Bar Members, Advocates and other concerned participated in the farewell function.

All the Bar Members, Advocates present in the function lauded the working style and leadership qualities of both the judges and extended their best wishes for their new assignment.

## ACP Kupwara reviews different sanitation and development schemes

### HT News Network

KUPWARA, May 4: On the directions of District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kupwara, Dr. Doifode Sagar Dattatray, a review meeting was held at ACD complex Kupwara under the Chair of ACP Kupwara, Parvaiz Raheem.

The meeting was convened to review achievements under ODF plus status of the district, completion & functionality of segregation sheds, status of door to door collection of waste, SSG 2023, Completion of Community Sanitary complexes, completion and Uploading GPDP on portal and Conduct IEC activities to aware the general public regarding Solid & liquid waste management.

Meeting was attended by all BDOs of the district, AEs, JEAs and Dealing Assistants of different schemes.

ACP took a detailed review of different sanitation and development schemes being executed by RDD under different sectors in all Blocks of Kupwara District.

On the occasion, the ACP directed the Officers and field functionaries to re-double their efforts to ensure cent percent saturation of all the deliverables in the District so that targets are achieved well in time with tangible results on the ground and people are benefited.

The ACP stressed the officers and field functionaries to speed up the pace of sanitation and cleanliness related schemes in the rural areas with added zeal and dedication.

## DC Kathua distributes Disaster Response kits among 'Aapda Mitra' volunteers

### HT News Network

KATHUA, MAY 04: District Administration Kathua today distributed 'Disaster Response Kits' among nine newly trained 'Aapda Mitras' here in the Office chamber of Deputy Commissioner.

Deputy Commissioner, Rakesh Minhas along with ADC Deepika Rana handed over the kits to the trained 'Aapda Mitra' which also contained certificate of participation, I-Card and a T-Shirt.

The group of the Aapda Mitras has undergone 12 day training at Central Training Institute (HG, CD, SDRF) Kot Bhalwal, Jammu.

Interacting with the 'Aapda Mitras', the DC Kathua impressed upon them to be proactive and utilise their acquired skills to save precious lives in the event of any disaster. He said the Aapda Mitra can play a deciding role in dealing with any disaster and called them as 'all eyes and ears' of the district administration who shall reach to the affected area and help in relief and rescue works efficiently.

During the 12 Day training at Central Training Institute (HG, CD, SDRF) Kot Bhalwal, Jammu, Aapda Mitras were imparted training in water rescue and mountaineering rescue besides fire-fighting skills, flood rope crossing, rappelling, climbing and rescue from higher buildings.

## DDC Rajouri reviews progress of work on border bunkers and PMAY-G Houses

### HT News Network

RAJOURI, MAY 04: The District Development Commissioner Rajouri, Vikas Kundal today chaired a meeting of the concerned officers here to review the progress of border bunkers being constructed by the PWD and RDD and PMAY-G. Reviewing the progress achieved by RDD, the meeting was informed that against the target of constructing 1892 bunkers, the work on 1528 bunkers is complete in all respects. Similarly, while reviewing the progress by the PWD sector, it was informed that out of 1274 bunkers, the work on 1265 bunkers is complete. The DDC directed for speedy tendering and allotment of remaining works so that the work on bunkers can be completed at the earliest to provide necessary benefits to the border residents.

The DDC also instructed the officers to put in all possible efforts to ensure that the set targets are achieved well in time. Stress was also laid on maintaining quality while executing work on the bunkers and the DDC made it clear that no laxity shall be tolerated in this regard.

## Pr. Secy SDD lays foundation stone of 100 bedded hostel block at ITI Anantnag

### HT News Network

ANANTNAG, MAY 04: Principal Secretary, Skill Development Department (SDD), Dr. Asgar Hassan Samoon today laid foundation stone of 100 bedded Hostel Block today at Industrial Training Institute (ITI), Ashajipora here.

During the visit, the Principal Secretary also took round of the institution and took stock of its infrastructure and other facilities.

The Principal Secretary during the visit inaugurated the computer lab for Software Testing Assistant Trade developed under STRIVE scheme. He also inaugurated show room and guard rooms constructed during this year.



The Principal Secretary during the visit expressed satisfaction over the functioning of institution.

Dr. Samoon later distributed certificates among meritorious students of various trades besides all India toppers of tourist guide and mason trades were also felicitated.

Principal ITI Anantnag, Imran Wajahat while speak-

ing on the occasion said that 100 percent target in terms of admission were achieved by this institution and expressed his satisfaction on imparting of different training programs being conducted under different schemes like PMKVY, SHG, B2V4, among others. Dr. Samoon later distributed certificates among meritorious students of various.

## PSPS Govt College for Women organises students' field visit to Old Age Home

### HT News Network

JAMMU, MAY 04: The Department of Psychology of Padma Shri Padma Sachdev (PSPS) Government College for Women, Gandhinagar, on Thursday organised a student's field visit to the Home for the Aged and Infirm, Amphalla to sensitise them about the social problems affecting the elderly. The visit was a part of their curriculum which focuses on holistic learning and giving back to the society. This activity was organised for the students of the second semester of the Psychology department. The students were apprised about the functioning of the Home by the President I. D Soni who explained that the Home was established about 59 years ago and caters to those who are either abandoned by their family members or those who have no living family members. Secretary Vijay Kumar Bhagotra informed about the facilities provided to the residents such as regular medical checkup by the doctors, emergency services among others.



Every resident has been provided a single room and are provided with healthy meals and snacks throughout the day. The students interacted with the residents who shared their experiences with them. R.C. Vaid and Vinod Kumar, members of the committee of the Home appreciated the gesture of the students and encouraged them to become better members of the society and contribute towards the well being of the needy people. The visit was managed by the faculty members and staff of the Psychology Department viz. Prof Eisha Gohil, Dr Ujjwal Sharma, Dr Syed Shehna, Rohini Sharma, Satinder Kumar and Kuldeep Kumar. Dr Suraj Mohini, HoD.

# To have or not to have: Curd at night

The best time to have curd is during the day, preferably in the morning or afternoon, as it is easier to digest.

Amid the sea of nutritional advice freely available on the internet, there are so many things spoken about dairy that it often becomes difficult to separate facts from myths and fads. One such oft-discussed food item is curd and the right time to have it. So, if every night you wonder whether you should have this healthy food, you will not need to do that anymore. Today, we will try to answer all your questions.

## Should you have curd at night?

According to celebrity nutritionist Shweta Shah, founder of Eat-fit24/7, there is no harm in having curd at night. "However, it is recommended to consume it in moderation as it is a dairy product that is rich in fats and proteins, which can be difficult to digest for some individuals at night, leading to discomfort or indigestion. But if you do not have any digestive issues, you can consume curd at night as a part of your balanced diet," she told Something similar was shared by Neha Sahaya, a nutrition and wellness consultant, on Instagram. Sharing how, according to Ayurveda, curd has



both sour and sweet properties, and it increases the kapha dosha in the body, she wrote: "At night, there is a natural predominance of kapha in the body. This can lead to excess mucus development in the nasal passages. However, this does not apply to everyone," adding that only people prone to asthma or cough and cold should avoid it for dinner as it causes mucus.

"It's a great vegetarian source of protein, good for the gut, aids in digestion, low in calories, and high in calcium and phosphorus content. Try to have freshly made set curd at home to get the maximum benefits," she continued.

Benefits of having curd  
 Curd is a rich source of probiotics, which are live bacteria and yeasts that are good for gut health. These probiotics help improve

digestion, boost immunity, and promote healthy gut flora. Curd is also high in calcium and protein, which are essential for bone health and muscle growth. "Additionally, curd is a good source of vitamin B12 and riboflavin, which are important for maintaining healthy skin and hair," Shah told indian-express.com.

Curd is generally beneficial for everyone as it provides many

essential nutrients and promotes gut health. "However, individuals who are lactose intolerant or allergic to dairy products should avoid curd. Also, those who have kidney problems or high cholesterol levels should consume curd in moderation," Shah informed.

## What is the best time and way to have curd?

The best time to have curd is during the day, preferably in the morning or afternoon, as it is easier to digest. You can consume it plain or as part of a meal, such as with rice or vegetables. Adding a small amount of fruit, such as banana or mango, can also enhance the taste and nutritional value of curd.

## Should curd be consumed both during summer and winter?

Yes, curd can be consumed throughout the year, regardless of the season. "However, during the summer months, it can be particularly refreshing and cooling. If you are prone to cold or cough, you may want to avoid consuming curd during the winter months as it is a cooling food," Shah suggested.

# Beyond the Surface: The hidden impact of mental health in the workplace

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), about 15% of working-age adults were estimated to have a mental disorder in 2019.

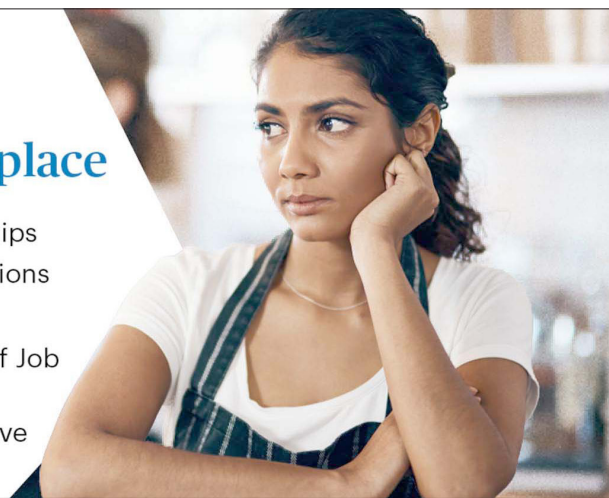
By Amrit Singh

In recent years, the conversation around mental health at workplaces has gained significant momentum, and rightly so. We have come to recognize that mental well-being is just as crucial as physical health, and this understanding must extend to our professional lives. In fact, studies have shown that poor mental health can have a significant impact on work productivity and performance. Impact on Well-being and Productivity

Why is mental health at the workplace important? The answer is simple: because our work environment significantly impacts our overall well-being and quality of life. Choosing a profession and career is one of the most significant decisions made in adulthood. It is a defining moment in the life and identity formation of a person. People spend a significant portion of their waking hours at work, which makes it necessary that this time is spent in an environ-

## Impact of Poor Employee Mental Health in the Workplace

- Strained Workplace Relationships
- Workplace Errors & Poor Decisions
- Declining Company Revenue
- Low Morale & Increased Risk of Job Flight
- Damaged Reputation & Negative Brand Association



ment that nurtures and supports their overall well-being.

Mental wellbeing at the workplace, or the lack of it, can affect not only the individual but also their colleagues and the overall work environment. Employees who are experiencing mental health issues may be more likely to have conflicts with colleagues, be less productive, and have a negative attitude towards their

work. This can, in turn, lead to a toxic work environment, lower morale, and a decrease in overall productivity. It is therefore essential that employers take proactive steps to address mental health issues in the workplace, not only for the individual's sake but also for the good of the company as a whole.

When the pandemic struck, one of the key challenges faced by

companies and the employees was the shift to remote work. While remote work can provide greater flexibility, it can also lead to increased stress and isolation for some employees. Working from home can blur the lines between work and personal life, making it challenging to maintain a healthy work-life balance. Additionally, remote work can exacerbate feelings of loneliness and

social isolation, which can impact

wellbeing. On the other hand, the return to the office can also add stress for some employees, especially if they have become accustomed to remote work. Companies need to be aware of these challenges and provide support for employees transitioning back to the office. Breaking Stigma, Building Strength Promoting mental health in the workplace comes with great benefits for both - the employer and the employees. It leads to increased productivity and engagement. When employees feel valued and supported, they are more likely to be motivated, focused, and committed to their work. On the other hand, a toxic work environment that neglects mental wellbeing can lead to burnout, stress, and decreased productivity. By investing in mental health initiatives, companies can create an atmosphere where employees feel safe, supported, and motivated to perform at their best.

# Want To Improve Heart Health With Mediterranean Diet?

The Mediterranean diet is known to be one of the healthiest diets in the world, and it has been linked to reducing the risk of heart disease. The Mediterranean diet is low in saturated and trans fats, which can increase cholesterol levels and raise the risk of heart disease. The diet is high in healthy fats such as monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fats which can reduce the risk of heart disease.

The Mediterranean diet is also rich in antioxidant-rich foods like fruits, vegetables, nuts, and olive oil that can protect the heart from damage. It is also high in fibre, which helps control blood sugar and cholesterol levels, and lowers the risk of heart disease.

The diet also includes fish which is a good source of omega-3 fatty acids that can reduce inflammation and lower triglyceride levels in the blood. Continue reading as we discuss some ways in which the Mediterranean diet improves heart health. We will also discuss some tips to help you get started on this diet. Here's how a Mediterranean diet can help improve heart health:

## 1. Lowering blood pressure

The high fibre content of a Med-

iterranean diet can help reduce blood pressure. The high intake of



potassium-rich foods like fruits, vegetables, and legumes can also help regulate blood pressure.

## 2. Reducing inflammation

Chronic inflammation can contribute to the development of heart disease. The anti-inflammatory properties of many foods in the Mediterranean diet, such as fruits, vegetables, and fatty fish, can help reduce inflammation.

## 3. Improving cholesterol levels

A Mediterranean diet is rich in

fibre and healthy fats, which can help reduce LDL (bad) cholesterol

levels and increase HDL (good) cholesterol levels.

## 4. Promoting heart-healthy weight loss

A Mediterranean diet is not a "low-fat" diet, but it is rich in healthy fats that can help you feel full and satisfied. This can lead to sustainable weight loss, which can improve heart health.

## 7 Tips to help you get started on the Mediterranean diet:

Eat plenty of vegetables in your daily diet. Include a variety of colour

in your diet by consuming different fruits and vegetables, which provide beneficial vitamins and minerals.

Incorporate more healthy fats into your diet. Replace animal fats with healthy fats like olive oil, avocados, nuts, and seeds.

Limit red meat and opt for fish and lean protein sources like poultry or legumes.

Switch to whole-grain bread, pasta, and cereal that provides much-needed fibre.

Reduce your intake of processed and packaged foods. Limit processed and packaged foods which often contain excess salt, sugar, and unhealthy fats.

Use herbs and spices instead of salt. Reduce your salt intake by using herbs and spices to add flavour to your meals.

Our meals are more than just about sustenance. It can be a time to socialise with family and friends, reduce stress levels, and ensure your food is enjoyed with mindfulness.

In conclusion, following these guidelines, you can make the Mediterranean diet a healthy and enjoyable lifestyle change that can enhance your quality of life and lower your risk for heart disease.

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# Alex Carey on the Ashes: 'We'll do it differently, we've had some serious success'

Australia's wicketkeeper says the team won't be lulled into trying to match England shot for shot

**ENGLAND:** Stuart Broad would like nothing more than to have Steven Smith caught at mid-off, but Alex Carey does not believe that Australia will be drawn into trying match England's aggressive style when the Ashes commences next month.

Broad's recent comments kicked-up the traditional pre-Ashes chat a few levels and will be followed this week by Smith beginning his short stint with Sussex. Meanwhile, Ben Stokes has called for "flat, fast" pitches to aid England's scoring rate while there was a report that the boundaries could also be

pulled in. There are still six weeks to go before the opening match at Edgbaston and before then Australia have the small matter of trying to topple India in the World Test Championship final, but Bazball will continue to dominate the lead-up.

"We've heard some stuff in the media what the wickets might be like, the boundaries etc, [and] the way [England] are playing at the moment it is eye-catching," Carey told SEN radio. "I'd like to think we aren't surprised now [with] the way they'll come out and play. "The tactical stuff will start

to take place over the next couple of weeks but I don't see us falling into our batters going out and trying to score the same rate. We'll do it differently, we've had some serious success in the last 18-24 months playing the style we want to play in different conditions and lucky enough to be rewarded with a spot in the World Test Championship [final]. So we are excited to come over to their backyard and take on a team that's playing some really eye-catching cricket. As a player it's going to be hot contest and I'm smiling just thinking about that first Test." Carey is one of ten members



of the Ashes squad who are currently in Australia with the others spread across the IPL and county cricket. Training will ramp up this month for those

at home with a camp in Brisbane before they depart for the UK in late May, leaving around 10 days to prepare for the WTC final at The Oval on June 7.

"We'll all come together before that World Test Championship and have our focus solely on that game but with an eye to the first [Ashes] Test match," Carey said.

On a personal level, the tour will be Carey's first experience of Test cricket in England having taken the Australia role at short notice ahead of the 2021-22 Ashes although he was very impressive during the 2019 ODI World Cup and scored his first one-day hundred there in 2020. He has a small amount of first-class experience in the country having played one match for Sussex in 2019 where he made

56 and 69 not out then was drafted into the Ashes squad to keep wicket in a tour match against Derbyshire.

Carey, who scored a maiden Test century against South Africa at the MCG last season, is confident of being able to adjust his game to conditions as required but admitted that the wicket-keeping could provide some challenges with the 'wobble' that can often happen to the red Dukes ball when it passes the batter.

It's hard to train [for] the wobble that we as keepers know comes down and we make it look a bit silly at times if we don't get a hand on it," he said.

## Johnson Charles joins Kolkata Knight Riders as Litton Das replacement

**KOLKATA:** Two-time T20 World Cup champion Johnson Charles has joined Kolkata Knight Riders for the remainder of IPL 2023 as a replacement player for Litton Das. Charles, a member of the West Indies team that was crowned champions in 2012 and 2016, brings with him extensive experience at the top of the batting order. He has opened in 179 of his 219 T20 innings, averaging 25.47 and striking at 125.72. He is, however, only just acquainting himself with international cricket.

Charles spent six years out of the West Indies setup, returning in October 2022 and playing seven T20s since. He made a 39-ball century against South Africa in March. This will be the 34-year-old's first stint in the IPL, having previously been part of franchise leagues in the Caribbean, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan.

Litton had left the Knight Riders camp earlier this month to attend to a medical emergency in his family. He played only one game in IPL 2023 having been bought for INR 50 lakh (approx USD 60,000) at the auction in December last year. Litton had also been called up to play for Bangladesh in an ODI series against Ireland starting next week. He would have missed three of the Knight Riders' four remaining matches as they continue to fight for a place in the playoffs. KKR have been struggling for stability



at the top this season, having gone through six opening combinations in nine games. Their first wicket partnership averages 21.33 - only Punjab Kings and Delhi Capitals fare worse - and has crossed fifty just once.

Charles, brought in for INR 50 lakh (approx USD 60,000), does have some experience batting in the middle order as well. He's hit two of his three T20 centuries from Nos. 3 and 4, which may come in handy given KKR have two other players

who present an attractive package as opening batters.

Rahmanullah Gurbaz was in top form in their last game - a loss to Gujarat Titans - and Jason Roy showcased excellent skill, especially against spin, in two of his three innings so far. If these two keep their spots, Charles may not get a lot of game time considering Andre Russell and Sunil Narine walk into the XI every time they're fit. IPL teams can only pick four overseas players for each game.



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