



Mulling AFSPA Revocation, Troop-Cut In J&K: HM Amit Shah

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 27: In a major reach-out to Kashmiris, Union Home Minister Amit Shah has said that New Delhi is mulling to pull-back troops from Jammu & Kashmir and also considering revocation of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) from the Union Territory.

Shah also said that the highest number of fake encounters have taken place in NC and PDP rule in Kashmir. He also said that the Union Government is committed to hold Assembly elections in J&K before September 2024 and statehood would be restored after the electoral exercise.

Have plans to pull back troops, to consider revocation of AFSPA



In an interview with a local TV channel, Shah, as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said that the Union Government will consider revocation of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) from Jammu and Kashmir and it is likely that Jammu and Kashmir police would helm the region's internal law and order. "We have plans to pull back troops and leave law and order to the Jammu and Kashmir Police alone. Earlier, the Jammu and Kashmir police was not trusted but today they are leading the operations. We will also think of revoking AFSPA," Shah told the news channel as per KNO.

The statement of HM indicates that the BJP-led Union Government

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J&K Sees Rise In Number Of Bird Species

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 27: Jammu & Kashmir has 592 species of birds, an improvement from earlier reports.

A study published in Indian Birds—a journal of south Asian Ornithology—analysed the available data which revealed that J&K has 592 species of birds belonging to 21 orders and 88 families.

The last checklist of birds was made in 2020 for Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh and that had put the number of birds as 555.

"This time 592 species have been found only in J&K and does not include Ladakh. The data shows clear improvement from the previous checklist," said Intesar Suhail, Wildlife Warden North, and one of the authors of the report.

The other authors of the reports include Muzaffar A Kichloo, Neeraj Sharma, Parvaiz Shagoo and Parmil Kumar.

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Kashmir Valley Braces For 4-Day Wet Weather

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 27: Kashmir valley is bracing for wet weather during the next four days from this evening, with rain and snow at many places.

Meteorological Centre Srinagar on Wednesday said the weather will remain generally cloudy with the possibility of light rain or snow in higher reaches at many places from



today evening to March 28 forenoon.

There is a possibility of light to moderate rain or snow in higher reaches at most places during March 29 evening to March 30 evening or night.

The intermittent light rain or snow at a few places is also expected on March 31. The weather will generally remain dry from April 1 to 5, the MeT office said.

The erratic weather may also cause disruption of surface transport over important passes, the MeT office said and advised travelers and tourists to plan their trip accordingly, particularly during March 30.

It has also advised farmers to suspend farm operations

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NEWS BRIEF

WB Resident Among 3 Drug Peddlers Arrested In Kashmir

SRINAGAR, MAR 27: Police on Wednesday arrested three drug peddlers, including a West Bengal resident, and recovered contraband substances from their possession in Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district.

Police said at a checkpoint established at Kanispora Chowk Baramulla, they intercepted one person. During the search, 20 grams of contraband brown sugar-like substances were recovered from his possession.

The accused has been identified as Sheikh Hashmat, a resident of

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Police Registers FIR Against A 'Rumour Monger' In Pulwama

SRINAGAR, MAR 27: J&K Police has registered a case against an alleged rumour monger in Pulwama district of south Kashmir.

The FIR was registered against Sameer Ahmed Paray, a resident of Kanikoot CB Nath for circulating incriminating content on social media.

Police said Parrey had recently uploaded a false post on his fake Facebook ID "Babar Azam" in which he uploaded a photo depicting Arms and ammunition and claimed that a new one from Pulwama has joined militancy.

"The said person has been found circulating incriminating content

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Case Against Man For Giving False Info About Heroin To Security Agencies In Karnah

KUPWARA, MAR 27: The Jammu Kashmir police on Wednesday booked a Karnah resident for acting as a 'double agent' and misleading enforcement agencies about counterfeit heroin in north Kashmir's Kupwara district.

According to a statement issued to KNS, reads that Today, on 26/3/2024, reliable information was received at PS Karnah that one Aazam Shah S/O Ghulam Hussain Shah R/O Pingla Haridal is using urea fertilizer, Nishashat and white cosmetic powder etc and is making artificial Brown Sugar like substance. Thereafter, the said person is giving wrong information to

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Most Of PM Modi's Schemes Are Women & Youth-Centric: Jitendra

HT News Network

JAMMU, MAR 27: Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh and BJP Candidate for Udhampur Lok Sabha constituency on Wednesday said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi gave women 'Suvidha', 'Swastha' and

'Samman'.

In other words he provided facilities for the convenience of women folk thereby also taking care of their healthy well-being and at the same time accord them the respect and esteem that they deserve, Dr Singh said addressing the



public rally at Hiranagar.

In his very first Independence Day address after taking over as Prime Minister, Dr Jitendra Singh recalled that Narendra Modi gave a call for building of toilets, especially women toilets.

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8 More Candidates File Nomination For Udhampur Lok Sabha Seat

HT News Network

KATHUA, MAR 27: On the last day of nomination papers for the Udhampur Lok Sabha constituency, eight more candidates today filed their nominations papers.

The candidates, including Mehraj Din as Independent Candidate, Rajesh Manchanda from Rashtriya Krantikari Samajwadi Party,

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'New Age Epidemic': 90 pc Colorectal Cancers Preventable, Says Onco Surgeon

'20 pc colorectal cancer patients below 35 yrs, 50 pc present in Stage-3'; doctors call for awareness, screening

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 27: Colorectal cancer, a major health challenge globally, is



increasingly becoming a cause for concern in Kashmir, with medical experts raising concern over the rising incidence rates and a growing number of young patients.

Speaking with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Dr Shabnam Bashir, a senior consultant specialising in breast and colorectal cancer surgeries, revealed startling statistics

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Tulip Garden Attracts Over 51,000 Tourists In 5 Days Despite Ramadan

Garden Offers 20 pc Off On Tickets For Students

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 27: Asia's largest tulip garden in Kashmir Valley has seen a remarkable influx of tourists, with more than 51,000 visitors gracing its vibrant blooms since its

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Stakeholders Fear Impact Of Airfare Hike On Spring, Summer Tourism Season In Kashmir

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 27: With airline companies hiking airfare, tourism players fear it could impact the ongoing spring and summer seasons during which Kashmir receives a major chunk of tourists.

As per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), for the last few weeks airline companies have made a steep hike in airfare. It has worried the tourism players,

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7 Kashmir Districts Record Deficient Rainfall In Ongoing Season

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 27: At least seven districts of Kashmir division have recorded deficient rainfall in the ongoing season till Wednesday (March 27) while Shopian district has become the only place where large deficient precipitation has been recorded during the period.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the data prepared by the Meteorological department (MeT) said that Srinagar, Anantnag, Budgam, Bandipora, Ganderbal, Kulgam and Kupwara have recorded deficient rainfall from March 01-March 27, 2024.

Srinagar, as per the data has recorded a precipitation of 80.5 mm rainfall against the normal precipitation of 102.2, recording a deficit of 21 per cent during the period.

Anantnag however, has recorded a rainfall of 74.0 mm against the normal precipitation of 125.6 mm while Budgam recorded 58.2 mm rainfall against the normal of 103.0 mm during the period.

Bandipora and Randerbal recorded a deficient rainfall of 49 per cent and 24 percent respectively, the data

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No Eid Namaz at Eidgah Srinagar: Chairperson J&K Waqf Board

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 27: Chairperson of Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board, Dr. Darakhshan



Andrabi on Wednesday said Eid prayers will

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49 Drowning Incidents In 14 Months In Kashmir: SDRF

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAR 27: The Kashmir Valley has witnessed an alarming surge in drowning incidents over the past 14 months, raising concerns and an urgent need for preventive measures to curb such tragedies.

Data accessed by the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) from the State Disaster Response Force (SDRF) department reveals a total of 49 drowning incidents reported in the Kashmir Valley from January 01, 2023, to March 06, 2024.

SDRF officials said that out of the 49

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THREAT OF CYBER ATTACKS

J&K Govt Tells Departments To Undertake Security Audit Of Websites Within 1-Month

HT News Network



SRINAGAR, MAR 27: The Jammu & Kashmir government has directed its

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CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

Mulling AFSPA....

could go for big confidence building measures (CBMs) on Kashmir if it is voted to power for the third consecutive term.

Statehood after assembly elections in JK Reiterating the commitment of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to establish democracy in Jammu and Kashmir, Shah affirmed that assembly elections would take place in the region before September and later statehood would be returned. He underscored that Prime Minister Narendra Modi had made this pledge in Parliament, a promise he himself supported. "If there is any person who can safeguard Kashmiriyat, it is Prime Minister Modi," he said.

Shah emphasized that democracy would flourish once again in Jammu and Kashmir, but it would not be dominated by a few families. He asserted that this democracy would truly represent the people of Jammu and Kashmir. "The political landscape will no longer be dominated by dynasties. The new leadership will emerge and I want people to support this leadership and strengthen it," Shah said.

No immediate political goals in Kashmir The Union Home Minister also indicated that BJP has no immediate electoral goals in Kashmir. "Our intent is not about strengthening the BJP in Kashmir. We don't have any such immediate electoral goal," he said.

No talks with Hurriyat, highest number of fake encounters have taken place in NC, PDP rule

Union Home Minister Amit Shah clarified that discussions would be held with Kashmiri youth but not with organizations affiliated with Pakistan. "There will be no talks with Hurriyat and Pakistan agents," Shah said.

Shah said that highest number of fake encounters have taken place in NC and PDP rule.

"Check the data yourself and you will find the highest number of fake encounters have taken place in their tenure," he said, adding that they have ensured that FIRs are lodged against the persons responsible for one or two such incidents in the BJP rule.

He added that in order to curb terror related activities in Kashmir, the union government has banned 12 organizations, 36 individuals have been declared as terrorists, Rs 150 crore worth properties have been seized, 90 properties have been attached and 134 bank accounts have been frozen.

Shah also clarified that the BJP and the entire Parliament believe that the POK is an integral part of India. "The Muslim brothers are also Indians and the Hindu brothers living in POK are also Indians and the land which has been illegally occupied by Pakistan also belongs to India. It is the goal of every Indian, every Kashmiri to get it back," he said.

Kashmir's Culture, Identity Safe and Secure Regarding opposition's "misconceptions" about Article 370, the Home Minister highlighted that despite initial concerns about its abolition, the past five years have shown positive outcomes. He pointed out that Kashmir has experienced increased freedom, with the Kashmiri language and cuisine gaining prominence. Additionally, he said, the region has seen a surge in tourism. Shah debunked the misconception that the abolition of Article 370 would lead to the destruction of Kashmiri identity, noting instead the progress and development that have reached every household in Jammu and Kashmir. "There are more Muslims in Gujarat than in Jammu and Kashmir. There are more Muslims in UP than in Jammu and Kashmir. Everyone is living peacefully. Therefore, it must be understood that there is no harm in living in harmony."

The Home Minister noted that opposition parties including Congress, National Conference and PDP had consistently spread misconceptions regarding Article 370 in the valley.

Shah emphasized that many had previously claimed that abolition of Article 370 would lead to the destruction of Jammu and Kashmir's culture and language. However, it has been five years since its abolition, and no such outcomes have occurred, he said. "There was a fear psychosis created that the lands and jobs of people will go away. The culture will be devastated. Five years have passed and Feroz Khan Noon and Mehbooba Mufti must answer how much land has been taken away. All this was being done by the opposition parties so that they could safeguard themselves from getting punished for the plethora of graft charges they are involved in," Home Minister Shah said.

Peace Thriving, Chaos Thing of Past The Home Minister said that from 2564 incidents of stone pelting in the year 2010, the number has gone down to zero in 2023. "From 2004 to 2014, the number of terror related incidents were 7217 and in the last 10 years, they have decreased to about 70 percent and were recorded to be merely 2227. Also total deaths due to terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir from the year 2004 to 2014 was 2829 and from 2014 to 2023, the number has decreased to mere 915 which means 68 percent of reduction. And please know that those who have died in Jammu and Kashmir due to militancy, 85 percent of them were Muslims. Those who are propagating terror must be asked about their motives."

Reservation to Paharis, OBCs

The Union Home Minister also talked about reservation given by BJP-led Union Government to Paharis and Other Backward Classes without affecting the share of Gujjars.

He said for the first time, the OBCs of Jammu and Kashmir have been given reservation by the Union government.

"OBC reservations have been ensured in the Panchayats and the urban local bodies. Without reducing the share of the Gujjars and Bakewals, the Paharis have been given 10 percent reservation. Further, special provisions have been made to accommodate the displaced people from Pakistan-occupied Kashmir," he said.

Modi 3.0 regime to have special Kashmir focus Shah said in Modi 3.0 regime, Dal Lake is going to be the most beautiful lake in the entire world and Srinagar's Tatoon ground is going to be turned into Disneyland where at least a tourist would spend 3-4 days to explore it to the fullest. "You will find Gulmarg like Davos and there will be tourist home stay facilities. The filmmakers will make a beeline to Kashmir. All this is going to happen in the next two to three years. You will see a complete transformation in the coming three years. The Prime Minister has a vision for Jammu and Kashmir and its Kesar (saffron), Pashmina and apples will be most sought after entities across the world," Shah said.

PM Modi's rally most successful rally Shah noted that the recent rally of Prime Minister Modi in Srinagar was the most successful rally any Prime Minister has conducted in the history of Jammu & Kashmir. Furthermore, said Shah, 34 thousand people provided with government jobs and seven new mega hotels are opening in Kashmir which are going to give a boost to the tourism in the region. "We have provided licenses to 10 thousand tourist taxis, 90 thousand crores are being spent on infrastructure. The total GDP of Kashmir has risen from one lac crore to 2.23 lac crores. More than 250 crores have been earned by the tourism sector in Kashmir."

J&K Sees....

The comprehensive checklist of bird species found in Jammu & Kashmir, the report said, is based on a meticulous collation of ornithological literature, specimen collections, online and published sources with photographic evidence, call recordings, and sight documentation supported by detailed field notes.

"We report 592 species in 21 orders and 88 families, of which 555 are supported with media documentation, 326 have been either examined in hand or deposited in museums across the world, and six species have been accepted based solely on documentation considered credible. 586 species have been validated either through specimens or photographs, and 564 species are listed on eBird, accounting for 95% of all the birds reported from Jammu & Kashmir," the report said.

The study found that 25 species are classified as globally threatened by the International Union for Conservation of Nature's (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species.

The study reveals that the areas that remained unexplored for a long time have lately emerged as the top bird watching destinations in Jammu & Kashmir. These include the north and central Kashmir Valley, the Shiwaliks and parts of the Lesser Himalaya, and the southern plains of Jammu Division. (UNI)

Kashmir Valley....

from March 27 to March 31. There is a possibility of landslides, mudslides, and shooting stones during the above period. Thunderstorms and lightning activity, with the possibility of hailstorms and gusty winds, can also occur during March 27-30.

The night temperature in Srinagar improved and was recorded at 9.5 degree Celsius against the 5.4 degree Celsius, and it was 3.4 degree Celsius above normal for the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir during this period of the season on Wednesday.

The tourist hot spot of Pahalgam in south Kashmir's Anantnag district recorded a low of 1.6 degree Celsius against the 0.7 degree Celsius, and the famous ski resort of Gulmarg in north Kashmir's Baramulla district recorded 3.0 degree Celsius against the 2.6 degree Celsius recorded the previous night. (UNI)

Most Of PM....

The impact was so magical that within the first year itself more than four lakh toilets were built and it turned into a mass movement. In doing so, Modi not only provided facilities to the deprived women but also gave them a dignified and healthy option, he added.

Similarly, Dr Jitendra Singh said, when Prime Minister Modi provided gas cylinders under "Ujjwala Scheme", there was no discrimination on the basis of caste, creed and religion or even vote bank consideration. The Pucca houses being constructed are being given to the deserving families without any political consideration and by doing so Modi has introduced a new political culture in this country.

Most of Prime Minister Modi's schemes, said Dr. Jitendra Singh, are women-centric and youth-centric without any terms and conditions or mortgage and the only guarantee is "Modi ki Guarantee". Therefore, he was sure that Nari Shakti will be the guarantee for the Modi mandate of 400 Plus, he said.

As far Hirangar is concerned, Dr Jitendra Singh said, for the last nearly seven decades, the then governments of Congress and its ally parties deliberately neglected this region, because it was the land of Pandit Nath Dogra known for patriotism and nationalism of its people who had traditionally stood in support of Bharatiya Jan Sangh and later Bharatiya Janata Party.

Being close to the International Border, Dr Jitendra Singh recalled the times before 2014 when after every border firing incident, people of the border areas would be at last to find shelter and they would seek refuge in Panchayat Ghar or Government School or relative's houses. Today, there is a family bunker for every household which is like a one room flat, he said.

Dr Jitendra Singh recalled, it was the Congress government which cancelled the Dogra Certificate, thus depriving the marshal race youth of this belt from getting recruited in the forces. Again, it was

the government of Congress and its allies which gave 4% reservation to the youth along LoC but denied the same to the youth along the International Border of Hiranagar because it did not find its voteback there. There can be no greater inhuman injustice to the youth , he said.

Dr Singh said, it is the Modi government which has undone all these anomalies and given equal justice to all. Today, roads have been constructed up to the zero line international border and all this has happened only in the last 10 years.

He recalled that only last December, he had laid the foundation of four important road projects and inaugurated nine roads in the Hiranagar sector. The four road projects of more than 25 Kms are at a cost of Rs.2594 Lakh Crore, while the nine roads measuring 73.57 Kms area at a cost 546.8 Lakh Crore. With the construction of these roads, 74 habitations and more than 11,000 people in the border region will be benefited.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Jitendra Singh informed that 60-65 percent of PMGSY road projects allotted this year to J&K at a cost of over Rs 3,700 cr belong to his Lok Sabha Parliamentary constituency.

He said that several far flung areas have been connected with all-weather roads for the benefit of people living in these locations. Work is underway in full swing to complete the remaining projects, he said.

About the proposed Arun Jaitley Sports Stadium, said Dr Jitendra Singh, there is some delay due to transfer of land and other formalities but now BCCI has agreed to take up the project and bring up a stadium of international standards.

Raghuveer Singh Babloo, DDC Vice Chairman, Gopal Mahajan BJP District President, Kuldip Raj former MLA, Adv Vijay Sharma former Chairman Municipal Committee, Abhinandan DDC member, senior leaders Prem Nath Dogra, Janak Bharati , among others, spoke on the occasion and hailed Dr Jitendra Singh as "Vikas Purush" who had developed and transformed the entire region under PM Modi. (UNI)

8 More....

Ch Lal Singh from Indian National Congress, Divya Suraj Partap Singh from Indian National Congress, Sachin Gupta from Inqalab Vikas Dal (I.V.D), Manoj Kumar from Ekam Sanatan Bharat Dal, Balwan Singh from J&K National Panthers Party and Dr Pankaj Sharma as Independent, filed their nomination papers in the office of Returning Officer.

With the filing of nomination papers by these eight candidates, the total tally of candidates who have filed their candidature for 4-Udhampur PC goes to fifteen.

The scrutiny of the nomination papers will be held on March 28, 2024 at 01:00 PM.

The candidate can withdraw their nomination before 03:00 PM on March 30, 2024 in the office of Returning Officer.

The constituency is scheduled for Elections in the first phase of General Elections to be held on April 19.

'New Age....

which shows the severity of the situation. "Ninety percent of colorectal cancers are preventable, yet we are witnessing a surge in cases, with 20 percent of patients being below 35 years of age," she said.

Dr Shabnam described colorectal cancer as a "new age epidemic", saying approximately 2 crore new cases are detected worldwide annually, resulting in 1 crore deaths.

Despite advancements in medical science, she lamented that a major portion of these cases could have been prevented, with colorectal cancer being one of the most common types alongside oral, lung, breast, and cervical cancers.

"March is observed as Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month globally," Dr Shabnam said. She shed light on the prevalence and impact of this disease.

According to the GLOBOCAN 2020 report, colorectal cancer ranks as the 3rd most diagnosed cancer in men and the 2nd in women worldwide, with around 15 lakh new cases detected annually.

In India, Dr Shabnam revealed that approximately 75,000 new cases are detected annually, with a concerning trend of younger patients being affected. "In a study conducted at the State Cancer Center SKIMS, we found that 20% of colorectal cancer patients are below 35 years of age, with 50% of cases being diagnosed at Stage 3," she added.

About regional variations, Dr Shabnam said that Southern Europe, Australia and Northern Europe are among the regions with the highest incidence rates globally.

In India, Bangalore sees a higher prevalence among men, while Aizwal district in the northeast reports more cases among women, she informed.

She further said the projected increase in colorectal cancer cases globally by 2030 is alarming and stressed the need for better screening programs and awareness campaigns.

Despite advancements in screening tests, the doctor said mortality rates are still high. She cited factors such as late presentations, lack of awareness and inadequate access to healthcare facilities.

She also highlighted the importance of understanding risk factors associated with colorectal cancer, including age, gender, family history, lifestyle habits, and genetic predisposition. She urged people to adopt preventive measures such as maintaining a healthy lifestyle, regular exercise, and avoiding tobacco and alcohol consumption.

"Early screening and diagnosis play a critical role in improving survival rates. So, the people need to be vigilant about the signs and symptoms of colorectal cancer and go for regular screenings for early detection and timely intervention to combat this disease effectively," Dr Shanman

added.

Tulip Garden....

opening on March 23, officials said. They said that despite the ongoing holy month of Ramadan, tourists, both local and international, have flocked to witness the spectacular display of tulips.

As per the details available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the garden, managed by Khan Mudasir, has witnessed an unprecedented response from visitors within the first five days of its opening, with 51,786 enthusiasts exploring its winding pathways and colourful floral arrangements.

To further enchant visitors, the floriculture department has introduced five new varieties of tulips, adding to the garden's allure.

To streamline the visitor experience and reduce long queues, the garden's management has introduced online ticket processing, a move that has been warmly welcomed by tourists. Additionally, to promote educational visits, a special 20% discount on tickets has been extended to students until April 10, announced by the contract overseeing the garden.

Moreover, visitors have lauded the efforts of the government in ensuring a seamless and enjoyable experience, expressing their satisfaction with the arrangements made.

"Despite challenges such as pre-booked accommodations hindering travel to Kashmir, the garden is expected to surpass last year's record of 366,000 visitors," the officials said, adding, "With an all-time high in tourist numbers, they anticipate a further surge in visitors after Eid."

Stakeholders....

who claimed that their packages are getting costlier, following which the majority of the tourists cancel their plans.

"Airfare hikes have always been an issue with Kashmir tourism. It becomes one of the major deterrents to our promotion activities. We have been always requesting the government to curb the menace as we lose a huge chunk of tourists due to the unaffordable air tickets," said President Travel Agents Association of Kashmir Rauf Tramboos.

He said the Kashmir packages have become costlier due to the airfare hike by the airline companies. "Such is the situation that a trip to Dubai or Thailand becomes cheaper than a Kashmir trip. Tourists prefer international trips over Kashmir due to the airfare hike," Tramboos said.

He said the number of queries has dipped for the last few weeks due to the airfare hike. "If we were receiving 1000 queries from tourists every day we now get some 300-400 queries a day. We appeal to the government to deploy additional flights and regulate airfare," Tramboos said.

Pertinently, with the arrival of the Spring season, Kashmir is witnessing a rush of tourists particularly from Maharashtra and Gujarat following which the hotels and houseboats are booked till the month of April.

For the last two weeks, the airfare from various destinations to Kashmir has been increasing and has now hiked by more than 60 per cent.

A cursory look at the airfare chart by portals including MakeMyTrip and EaseMyTrip shows that the tariff from the nearest destination New Delhi to Kashmir for the next two weeks has gone up to Rs 13,000.

Barely one or two weeks before, the airfare from the same destination to the valley was just Rs 5000-5500 per passenger.

The return ticket from Kashmir to Delhi has also witnessed a hike of nearly 30 per cent and sells at Rs 83,00 per person.

A one way air ticket from Maharashtra, where from the valley receives bulk tourists during ongoing season, sells between Rs 15000 to 18000 per person. The return ticket from Srinagar to Mumbai too has hiked between 18000 to 25000 per person.

From Gujarat and Kolkatta, which too contribute to the growing tourists number in Kashmir, the airfare too has skyrocketed. From both these destinations, the airfare has gone up by more than 50 percent in the last two weeks.

7 Kashmir....

said, adding that Kulgam and Kupwara have recorded a deficient rainfall of 44 per cent and 46 per cent respectively.

According to the data, Shopian district in South Kashmir have recorded a large deficient rainfall of 76 percent as against the normal precipitation of 101.2 mm, the station has recorded just 24.3 mm rainfall.

Baramulla and Pulwama stations have, however, recorded normal precipitation during the period, the data added.

Pertinently, the weatherman has predicted intermittent wet spell in Jammu and Kashmir till March 31, saying that two back-to-back Western Disturbances are affecting the Union territory from this evening. The light rains and snow are expected in J&K intermittently till March 31, the weatherman has said.

No Eid Namaz....

not be offered at Eidgah Srinagar, as the condition of the Eidgah ground is not up to the mark.

Dr. Andrabi, while speaking to the media, here in Rajbagh, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), said this year the 'Namaz E Eid' is not possible to be offered at Eidgah Srinagar, as the condition of the ground is not up to the mark.

She added that they are working on improve the condition of the ground and soon Namaz will be offered at Eidgah Srinagar.

Meanwhile, reliable sources in the Jammu and Kashmir Waqf Board told KNO that a major renovation project of Eidgah Srinagar is in the pipeline, and would like to be started soon.

49 Drowning....

reported incidents, the bodies of 35 victims have been successfully recovered. However, the status of nine individuals remains unknown, while efforts to retrieve the remaining bodies are ongoing, they said.

Breaking down the incidents by district, an official of the SDRF said that Srinagar recorded the highest number of casualties, with 19 drowning incidents reported. Baramulla followed closely with 11 incidents, while other districts also reported varying numbers of cases.

The rise in drowning incidents underscores the critical need for enhanced water safety measures and public awareness campaigns throughout the Kashmir Valley, the SDRF officials said.

"There is a need for collaborative efforts among stakeholders to prevent further tragedies and ensure the safety of residents, particularly during recreational activities near water bodies," they said.

They urged the people to remain vigilant and prioritise safety protocols when engaging in activities near water bodies. "Proactive measures are essential to mitigate risks and prevent loss of life," they said.

Threat Of....

departments to undertake security audit of their departmental websites/applications through CERT-In empanelled agencies within a period of one month.

As per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), in a move aimed at the protecting the government websites/applications against cyber threat, the General Administration Department (GAD) has directed all administrative departments/heads of departments/deputy commissioners/managing directors of various public sector undertakings (PSUs)/Boards/Corporations to ensure security audit of their departmental websites/applications.

The Information Technology department has time-and-again issued instructions to all the administrative departments/heads of departments/deputy commissioners/managing Directors of various

PSUs/Boards/Corporations etc. to ensure security audit of their websites/applications periodically, at least once a year, in compliance with security policy, guidelines, and procedures, laid down by the CERT-In and Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology, Government of India.

The GAD, however, noticed that many such websites are still unaudited.

"Notwithstanding the instructions, it has been observed that large number of websites hosted on State Data Centre by different departments are still unaudited resulting in increased risk of cyber-attacks as also reported by the CERT-In," it said.

CERT-In stands for Computer Emergency Response Team - India. It serves as the national nodal agency for responding to computer security incidents.

WB Resident....

Malda, West Bengal, presently staying at Kanispora, who was arrested.

Similarly, a police party at a checkpoint established at Hardu Shooru Kunzer intercepted two persons identified as Nazir Ahmad Mir of Chukar Pattan and Riyaz Ahmad Mir of Ratnipora Tangmarg.

During their search, 105 grams of contraband Charas-like substances were recovered from their possession. Both the accused have been arrested and shifted to a police station, where they remained in custody.

Accordingly, cases under relevant sections of law have been registered at police stations Baramulla and Kunzer, and investigations have been initiated. (UNI)

Police Registers....

on social media there by disrupting public peace and tranquility," police said.

In this regard a Case under section 505(b) Indian Penal Code was registered in Police Station Rajpora Pulwama and investigation set into motion. (UNI)

Case Against....

security agencies in order to falsely implicate innocent persons. Accordingly, FIR No. 14/2024 US 420 IPC has been registered in Police station Karnah and investigation taken up.

During search of his premises, incriminating material (urea fertiliser, starch powder, white cosmetic powder) and cell phone of the said accused has been seized for expert analysis.

Further investigation in the case is underway.



DEO Srinagar Takes Polling Station Wise Review Of Preparedness For Lok Sabha Elections

Stresses On Ensuring All Requisite Facilities/AMF At All 929 Polling Station In The District

SRINAGAR, MAR 27: In order to review the progress of preparation being put in place with regard to conduct of upcoming Lok Sabha Elections for 02-Srinagar Parliamentary Constituency, a meeting was today held under the Chairmanship of the District Election Officer (DEO) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat at Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex here.

The DEO took a detailed appraisal from all Assistant Returning Officers about the arrangements being made at Polling Stations, Strong Rooms and Counting Centres in Sri-

nagar. He also took stock of the ongoing SVEEP campaign in the district.

On the occasion, the DEO stressed on ensuring all requisite/Assured Minimum Facilities(AMF) facilities at the all 929 designated polling stations, besides making welfare measures for the polling staff on polling day as per the laid guidelines of the Election Commission of India (ECI). He asked them to formulate a comprehensive action plan for the welfare of polling staff well in advance.

He also asked the Nodal Officer SVEEP/AMF to further



intensify awareness campaigns to encourage young voters for maximum voting turnout.

The DEO directed the AROs and Officers of R&B, PDD, PHE and others concerned to work with utmost coordination to complete all assigned tasks related to the conduct of the Lok Sabha elections-2024. He stressed that Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) should be ensured for PwD Voters at each and every Polling Station viz. Permanent ramps, drinking water, toilet facilities as per norms of ECI.

Dr Bilal enjoined upon the

Nodal Officer Postal Ballot and all AROs to take up all necessary arrangements for facilitating voting by Postal Ballots by various categories of Voters including service voters, personnel on Poll Duty (EDC), migrant electors, absent electors, etc so that they exercise their franchise without any difficulty.

He stressed the officers to focus on meticulous preparations and maximum voter participation to reflect the commitment of conducting a successful Lok Sabha Election in 2024 in the district.

The DEO emphasised offi-

cers to uphold electoral laws, regulations and ethical standards to ensure the integrity and fairness of the electoral process.

With regard to the training of polling staff, the DEO asked for setting up of facilitation centres in all tanning centres of all 9 Assembly segments of the District.

The meeting was attended by all Assistant Returning Officers, Superintendent of Police, Deputy District Election Officer, Nodal Officer, SVEEP/AMF, Officers of R&B, PDD, PHE, besides other concerned.

Lok Sabha Elections 2024 Poll Staff imparted Training on handling of EVMs, VVPAT machines in Srinagar

SRINAGAR, MAR 27: Ahead of the upcoming Lok Sabha Elections, series of training sessions on proficient handling of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) machines for Polling staff were today held in all Assembly Segments of Srinagar District.

At Government College of Education, the Training session was conducted under the supervision of District Election Officer (DEO), Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat to impart the necessary training to the designated polling staff on efficient operation of EVMs and VVPAT machines in the upcoming elections.

On the occasion, practical demonstration was given to the participant trainees regarding the functioning of EVMs and VVPAT machines to boost their understanding and proficiency in managing the voting process.

Speaking at the occasion, the Deputy District Election Officer highlighted the importance of election training to the polling staff. He said training enables polling officials to understand the election system, learn handling and operation of EVMs to ensure an error-free election process. He also educated participants about their role and responsibilities in the fair and free conduct of elections.

The DEO said that training is pivotal to familiarize the staff with EVM & VVPAT operations and get acquainted with necessary knowledge and skills for effectively carrying out their duties during the electoral process.

Similar Training sessions were also held at other designated places at all eight Assembly segments of the District under the supervision of respective Assistant Returning Officers (AROs) during which the Master Trainers imparted hands-on training to the participants and acquaint them with necessary knowledge of EVM handling and operation.

During the training, collection of polling material, collection and installation of EVMs, setting up of polling stations and commencement of polls was thoroughly discussed with the trainees. The process with regard to sealing, installation and functioning of the EVMs was also demonstrated by the master trainers.

During his visit to the College of Education, the DEO was accompanied by Deputy District Election Officer, Mir Imtiyaz ul Aziz, Nodal Officer Trainings, Riyaz Ahmad Shah and other Officers.

FFRC Warns Private Institutions Not To Charge Fee From Students On Retrospectively Basis

SRINAGAR, MAR 27: J&K Committee for Fixation and Regulation of Fees of Private Schools (FFRC) has warned the private education institutions not to charge fees retrospectively for the period a student has not been on the rolls of school.

"Any violation shall warrant action in accordance with law, which may include recommending to the government the de-recognition or disaffiliation of the

school," an order issued by FFRC Chairperson Justice Sunil Hali on Wednesday.

It said that complaints are pouring in from the parents that some schools are charging fees retrospectively for the months the students have not been on the rolls of the school and have not availed of any service from the school.

The private education institutions are either in the process of



completing the admissions process or have completed the same, it said.

"In this regard, all the private schools are put under orders not to charge fees retrospectively for the period a student has not been on the rolls of the school," the order said and added, "the school shall charge fees from the date a student is actually admitted in the school." (UNI)

Sopore's Tawheed Bagh Residents Urge Authorities To Macadamise Roads

Say Neighbourhood Lacks Proper Drainage System

SOPORE, MAR 27: Inhabitants of Tawheed Bagh locality in Sopore town have raised concerns over the dilapidated road conditions and improper drainage system, urging higher-ups to intervene into the matter to redress the longstanding issue.

Speaking to news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the aggrieved Ward 06 inhabitants said that their roads, which have been macadamised several years ago, have fallen into disrepair and are causing a great inconvenience and adding misery to them.

"The road is in bad condition. Big potholes filled with water dots, making the movement of people very hectic," said Junaid, a local of Tawheed Bagh.

He added that the dilapidated condition of the road is speaking of



the incompetence of the authorities. The residents said that they took up the matter several times with the concerned authorities to no avail. "The authorities seem least bothered in addressing their issues", they lamented.

Further highlighting the lack of

proper drainage system in the locality, the residents said that they are facing immense problems especially during the rainy season.

The residents appealed to higher-ups to intervene in redressing their genuine demand of mending the roads and improving the drainage system.

Higher Edu Deptt Seeks Clarification On Assigning Charges Of Principals Amid MCC

SRINAGAR, MAR 27: The Jammu and Kashmir Higher Education Department has sought clarification as to whether it can assign look after charges of principals of colleges during the Model Code of Conduct (MCC).

The department in a communique to government has informed that a large number of principals of the government degree colleges are attaining the age of superannuation during the months of March and April, 2024.

"In order to run the affairs of these colleges smoothly, the Department intends to allow senior most faculty members amongst the faculties of the same college to look after the charge of the principal in addition to their own duties till permanent arrangement is made by the Department," it reads.

In a communique the official said that the Higher Education Department may be advised as to whether assigning of the look after charge to the senior most faculty members in the respective colleges can be made by the department during the currency of the Model Code of Conduct in the interest of administration and students.

"The Higher Education Department has received select lists from the JKPSC for the appointment of Assistant Professors in respect of various subjects, which may also involve their postings in the department," it reads.

It also said that the Department is receiving the character and antecedents verifications from CID.

"The Election Commission of India in a communication regarding enforcement of MCC, Dos and Don'ts, wherein Point No. 22 allows regular recruitment or appointments or promotion through the UPSC, State Public Service Commissions or the Staff Selection Commission or any other statutory authority can continue," it reads.

The communique further reads that the recruitment through non statutory bodies will require prior clearance of the Commission.

"In this regard, the Department may kindly be advised as to whether the appointments on the recommendations of the JKPSC could be effected."

"The Higher Education Department may be advised whether the placement of the eligible Assistant Professors to the next higher grades under Career Advancement Scheme could be considered or otherwise, during MC or not," it reads.

Rural areas in Budgam face severe waste management crisis

BUDGAM, MAR 27: Residents of rural areas of Central Kashmir's Budgam district are facing a severe waste management crisis, with road sides and several designated dustbin sites turning into dumping sites despite numerous government initiatives, while the situation has raised significant environmental and health concerns. The news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) has found that several places in rural areas of district Budgam are struggling with the issue of waste management, with villages, roadsides, and recently installed dustbin sites becoming overwhelmed with garbage.

Despite the implementation of various government schemes, the problem persists, highlighting a collective failure to safeguard the environment.

As per the data, under the Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen initiative, as many as 6,535 waste

collection and segregation sheds were constructed in the UT as part of the initiative and around 50,000 dustbins, soak pits, compost pits were set up for the first time to manage solid liquid waste. However, despite these efforts, the intended waste segregation and disposal processes have not been effectively executed.

Government officials had envisioned residents segregating their waste and depositing it in designated dustbins, which would then be transported to the sheds for composting. However, the reality is far from this ideal scenario.

Instead, residents are filling the sheds indiscriminately with various types of waste, including sanitary pads, food items, plastic items, medical waste, electronic waste, and other things.

"Given dustbins are either overflowing or have been taken back to various places. Locals



throw trash everywhere—including in local rivers, canals, and roadsides—because there is no effective waste management solution in place, putting at risk our environment constantly," said Chadoora resident Mushtaq Ahmad.

The surplus trash bins in several villages paint a grim picture of the situation, with sanitation

standards plummeting due to prolonged neglect. Both locals and officials are being held accountable for the worsening condition, emphasizing the urgent need for action.

"We are deeply concerned about the deteriorating waste management situation in our district," said Manzoor Ahmad, a local resident from Budgam. "It

is disheartening to see our beautiful villages marred by garbage, and it is high time we all take responsibility for our actions."

Another resident Nisar Ahmad Malik from Beerwah echoed the sentiment, stating, "We urge both the residents and officials to work together to address this crisis. It is imperative that we act responsibly and dispose of our waste properly in designated soakage and compost pits."

KNO spoke with Anoo Malhotra, the Director General of Rural Sanitation for J&K, and she assured to look into the matter while sanitising the areas until the first week of April. "I recently visited a number of districts, and in every case the issue was resolved and the department continues to work on it. If there are any concerns in Budgam district, I will take action and ensure that the garbage is removed till the first week of April," she said.

Lok Sabha Elections 2024: Zonal, Sectoral magistrates imparted training at Poonch

HT News Network

POONCH, MARCH 27: In preparation for the Lok Sabha Elections-2024, a comprehensive one-day training session was conducted here today to empower Zonal/Sectoral Magistrates with essential knowledge and skills required to carry out their duties effectively.

The training, held in the meeting hall of the DC office here, was supervised by the District Election Officer,

Yasin M. Choudhary.

The training session witnessed presence of Additional Deputy Commissioner Poonch, Tahir Mustafa Malik, and Deputy District Election Officer, Mohammad Saleem, alongside all zonal and sectoral officers.

The aim of the training was to ensure that the officials are well-equipped to perform their responsibilities during the electoral process, maintaining the highest standards of efficiency, impartiality, and transparency.



During the session, the Deputy Commissioner issued series of instructions to Zonal/Sectoral Magistrates, covering a wide array of topics like election laws, procedures, and protocols that must be adhered to during polling.

The magistrates were briefed on their roles and responsibilities, with strong emphasis on significance of upholding law and order, overseeing polling stations, and ensuring safety and security of voters.

The interactive training allowed

the magistrates to raise various queries pertaining to their duties. One of the focal points of discussion was detailed training on usage, operation, counting of votes using Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and various other issues. The aim of the training was to ensure that the officials are well-equipped to perform their responsibilities during the electoral process, maintaining the highest standards of efficiency, impartiality, and transparency.

ازدفترا نواب تحصیلدار کریری

با اجلاس نائب تحصیلدار کریری درخواست منجانب سائل فیاض احمد چوپان ولد محمد شعبان چوپان ساکنہ پتہ پورہ تحصیل کریری برادھصول OBC سرٹیفکیٹ بحق خود

اشتہار بمراد آگاہی

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصد میں درخواست سائل فیاض احمد چوپان ولد محمد شعبان چوپان ساکنہ پتہ پورہ کریری دفتر ذمہ داروں کے نام سے اس نسبت رپورٹ پتہ پورہ سے عیاں ہوتا ہے سال کا کنڈ (07) افراد پر مشتمل ہے کنڈ کی سالانہ کی سالانہ آمدنی 144000 تک ہے سال کے افراد نامہ مندرجہ ذیل ہے

1. محمد شعبان چوپان ولد غلام محمد چوپان 60 سال مزدوری
2. فضی بیگم زوجہ محمد شعبان چوپان 50 سال گھریلو کام
3. فیاض احمد چوپان ولد محمد شعبان چوپان 35 سال زیر تعلیم
4. غلام محمد الدین چوپان ولد محمد شعبان چوپان 32 سال مزدوری
5. جوڑہ بیگم زوجہ غلام محمد الدین چوپان 30 سال گھریلو کام
6. علم جان دختر غلام محمد الدین 02 سال نوزید
7. اعجاز احمد چوپان ولد محمد شعبان چوپان 27 سال مزدوری اس کے علاوہ کوئی بھی افراد میں بتلایا گیا ہے لہذا تمام عوام خاص و عام کو زریعہ اشتہار مطالعہ کیا جاتا ہے کہ اگر کسی کو سرٹیفکیٹ نکالنے میں کوئی عوریا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عوریا اعتراض ساتھ دن کے اندر راندہ پیش کریں معاد کرنے کے بعد کوئی عوریا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا

نائب تحصیلدار کریری

ازدفترا نواب تحصیلدار کریری

درخواست منجانب سائل فاطمہ گل دختر غلام محمد آہنگر ساکنہ کریری برادھصول OBC سرٹیفکیٹ تحت ایس اراو 126/294 بحق خود

اشتہار بمراد آگاہی

معاملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصد میں درخواست سائل فاطمہ گل دختر غلام محمد آہنگر ساکنہ کریری دفتر ذمہ داروں کے نام سے اس نسبت رپورٹ پتہ پورہ سے عیاں ہوتا ہے سال کا کنڈ (4) افراد پر مشتمل ہے کنڈ کی مہانہ آمدنی 19000 تک ہے سال کے افراد نامہ مندرجہ ذیل ہے

1. غلام محمد آہنگر ولد عبدالغفار آہنگر 71 سال مزدوری
 2. زریفہ بیگم زوجہ غلام محمد آہنگر 66 سال گھریلو کام
 3. عنایت اللہ ولد غلام محمد آہنگر 26 سال مزدوری
 4. فاطمہ گل دختر غلام محمد آہنگر 26 سال (شاگرد)
- اس کے علاوہ کوئی بھی افراد میں بتلایا گیا ہے لہذا تمام عوام خاص و عام کو زریعہ اشتہار مطالعہ کیا جاتا ہے کہ اگر کسی کو سرٹیفکیٹ نکالنے میں کوئی عوریا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عوریا اعتراض ساتھ دن کے اندر راندہ پیش کریں معاد کرنے کے بعد کوئی عوریا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا

نائب تحصیلدار کریری

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE TEHSILDAR KREERI (Executive Magistrate 1st Class)

Subject: Issuance of Registration Orders in respect of delayed Birth/Death certificate.

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Registrar Births and Deaths (Block Development Officer Wagoor) / chokedar has submitted case file pertaining to Birth of NISARA BEGUM/O MOHD IBRAHIM SOFI R/O AUTHOORA Tehsil kreeri Distt. Baramulla having verified the date of Birth, as 02/01/1972 and event has been shown to be occurred at home for issuance of delay order. In this connection, if anyone has any objection to the issuance of delay order of birth certificate shall present his/her claim this office within 07 days, after that no objection shall be entertaine

EXECUTIVE MAGISTRATE
1ST CLASS KREERI

Public Notice

My DOB has been wrongly written in my Aadhar Card as 20--10-2006 while my correct DOB is 30-10-2006 according to school records which needs to be corrected. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the concerned office within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Adil Rashid Mir R/o Abdul Rashid Mir R/O Dapal Machil

Public Notice

My DOB has been wrongly written in my Aadhar Card as 01-09-2010 while my correct DOB is 13-09-2013 according to school records which needs to be corrected. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the concerned office within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Sehrish Jan D/o Gh. Mohammad Mir R/O Dapal Machil

ازدفترا نواب تحصیلدار کریری

عنوان درخواست منجانب ماہدہ بیگم زوجہ محمد احمد برت ساکنہ تحصیل جاگیر نسبت ابراہانی لیگل ہیر (وارث جائز) سرٹیفکیٹ

اشتہار بمراد آگاہی

ماملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصد میں پتہ پورہ سے رپورٹ طلب کی گئی۔ مطابق رپورٹ پتہ پورہ سے رپورٹ سرٹیفکیٹ محمد احمد برت ولد عبداللہ برت ساکنہ تحصیل جاگیر مورثہ 04/04/2023 کو فوت ہو چکا ہے متوفی اپنے چچے مندرجہ ذیل وارثان جائز چھوڑ گیا

1. ماہدہ بیگم زوجہ محمد احمد برت 62 سال گھریلو کام
 2. وجاہت حسین پسر 30 سال مزدوری
 3. عادل حسین پسر 25 سال مزدوری
 4. رفیق حسین پسر 20 سال زیر تعلیم
 5. عابدہ بیگم دختر 43 سال گھریلو کام (شادی شدہ) ہیرن خانہ
 6. عاصیہ دختر 35 سال گھریلو شادی شدہ ہیرن خانہ
- اس طور کنڈنگ 16 افراد پر مشتمل مطابق رپورٹ پتہ پورہ وارثان جائز کے علاوہ اور کوئی وارثان جائز نہیں ہے سرٹیفکیٹ زریعہ بحث اجراء کرنے سے پہلے کسی شخص یا شخص کو کوئی عوریا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عوریا اعتراض ساتھ دن کے اندر پیش کرے معاد کرنے کے بعد کوئی عوریا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا

نائب تحصیلدار کریری

Public Notice

I informed to general public that My daughter namely HAFSA ASHRAF D/O MOHAMMAD ASHRAF KHAN R/O VIZER her mothers name in school record has been wrongly written as RUKAYA BRGUM bearing registration No DSEK -55477-78 while her correct mothers name is RUKHSANA BEGUM which needs to be corrected. If anybody has any objection in this regard he /she may file his/her objection in the office of RAINBOW PUBLIC SCHOOL WAGOORA / (Z E O) office wagoora within a period of seven days from the date publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

Name....MOHAMMAD ASHRAF KHAN
F/o ..HAFSA ASHRAF
R /OVIZER
ZONE.....WAGOORA

Public Notice

I have changed my name from (old name). RIZWAN NAYEEM, to (New name) RIZWAN NAYEEM ITOO. In future I will be known as (New name). RIZWAN NAYEEM ITOO. If any body is having any objection he/she may contact Passport Office, Srinagar with in 7 days. After 7 days no objection will be accepted.

Name:-Rizwan Nayeem Itoo
S/o Nayeem Hussian Itoo
Passport No:-L-1917515

Lok Sabha Elections 2024: Voters' awareness programme hosted for students at Rajouri under SVEEP

HT News Network

RAJOURI, MARCH 27: A special awareness program was today organized for the students here under the Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP).

The (SVEEP) team, led by Prof. Iqbal Raina (DNO), Dr. Khalid Reyaz, Prof. Ajaz Nazir, and Tanweer Ahmed Chowdhury organized the SVEEP awareness program, in collaboration with the management of Down Public Higher Secondary School.



The program aimed to encourage registration of voters, particularly among young people and marginalized groups.

During the program, students were informed about the importance of voting and their role in the democratic process. They were

also educated about the procedure to register as a voter and importance of updating their voter information.

The program was attended by over 200 students of the school. The students actively participated in the discussions and asked

questions about the electoral process.

Nodal Officer SVEEP, while speaking on the occasion, said that the SVEEP program is an important initiative to engage with young people and encourage them to participate in electoral process. He said that this program will help to create a more informed and active electorate in the district.

The SVEEP program will continue to be conducted in schools and colleges across the district in the run-up to the general elections.

اطلاع عام

بجلی کنٹن زریں id no 02090200006271 جو کہ اس وقت عبدل سلام حجام ولد بی بی محمد حجام کے نام پر درج ہے اسے تبدیل کر کے عاصم احمد حجام ولد عبدل سلام حجام کے نام پر درج کرنی مطلوب ہے اگر اس بارے میں کسی کو کوئی اعتراض ہو تو وہ سات دن کے اندر راندہ پد سب ڈو جن عشم حجام کے دفتر میں پیش کرے بعد از معاد کوئی اعتراض قبول نہیں ہوگا

المشترہ
عاصم احمد حجام
ولد عبدل سلام حجام ساکن پھلگام

ازنیابت پھلگام

عنوان درخواست: ساکن چوپان ولد یوسف چوپان پسر محمد زینب جان ساکنہ سرہن بیہلگام نسبت ابراہانی لیگل ہیر وارث جائز سرٹیفکیٹ

اشتہار بمراد آگاہی

ماملہ مندرجہ عنوان الصد میں درخواست سائل کی ماں زینب جان ولدہ محمد یاسین چوپان زوجہ یوسف چوپان مورثہ 16/01/2024 کو فوت ہو چکی ہے اس نسبت سائل خواہاں ہے کہ اس کے لیگل ہیر سرٹیفکیٹ ابراہانی جائزہ سے رپورٹ پتہ پورہ سے رپورٹ سرٹیفکیٹ محمد یاسین چوپان

1. محمد یاسین ولد یوسف چوپان
2. محمد مرزا
3. ... ساکن

اس طور کنڈنگ (03) افراد پر مشتمل ہے اس کے علاوہ کوئی بھی افراد کنڈ نہیں بتلایا گیا ہے سرٹیفکیٹ زریعہ بحث اجراء کرنے سے پہلے کسی شخص یا شخص کو کوئی عوریا اعتراض ہو تو وہ اپنا عوریا اعتراض ساتھ دن کے اندر پیش کرے معاد کرنے کے بعد کوئی عوریا اعتراض قابل قبول نہیں ہوگا

نائب تحصیلدار پھلگام

MIRANDA PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL CHINKRAL MOHALLA, HABBA KADAL, SRINAGAR

EMPLOYMENT NOTICE

Applications are invited for the below mentioned posts:

English Teacher	Science Teacher
Mathematics Teacher	Social Science Teacher
Urdu Teacher	Kashmiri Teacher
General Line Teacher	Peon

Submit your Resume in the office of the undersigned along with Xerox copies of the qualification certificates between 10 A.M to 1:30 P.M.

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OPPOSITE CITY MALL SHOPPING COMPLEX -190014
Branch Office: 1st Floor Hibra Complex Main Road Ganderbal 191201
Note: Male and Females both can apply and preference will be given nearby areas.
INTERVIEW WILL TAKE PLACE AT OUR BOTH OFFICES

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Libra Educational Institute

Zoohama, Chadoora

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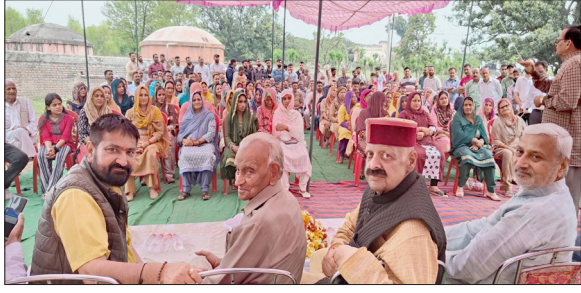
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Congress responsible for J&K turmoil: Rana

HT News Network

MATHWAR MARCH 28: Blaming the Congress for history's worst type of turmoil in the Valley, Senior BJP leader Mr Devender Singh Rana today said the party is responsible for murder of democracy in J&K that created havoc in the lives of the people, especially during the past several decades.

"The Congress is the sole architect of separatist build-up in connivance with the local political partners, resulting in destruction and death of over 40,000 youth post 1990 turmoil", Mr Devender Rana said while addressing public meetings in ten Pan-



chayat of the Mathwar Block along with Senior BJP leader and former minister Mr Shyam Lal Sharma, DDC Chairman Bharat Bhushan, District President Jammu North Omi Khajuria and Ex-MLA Shiv Dev Singh during their two day tour of the Nagrota Assembly Constituency. He held the Congress responsible for all that happened in the paradise on earth and said that

bringing back the Valley on the right track during the past five years, since the abrogation of Article 370, has been a remarkable achievement of the visionary Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi. He said the effective and the people centric BJP led NDA government has brought about a discernible change in the overall situation and put J&K on fast track develop-

ment, economic resurgence and opening up of avenues to progress and prosperous every segment of society, irrespective of religion, region and caste as per the cherished agenda of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas. As a result of path breaking initiatives the people of J&K in general and the Valley in particular have developed huge stakes in peace, by saying good bye to hartal and stone pelting culture, which has positively impacted the economy of the entire Union Territory.

Mr Rana said Jammu and Kashmir is close to the heart of the BJP leadership that has been striving for the socio-economic upliftment.

HT News Network

KUPWARA, MARCH 27: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan today chaired the District Road Safety Committee meeting (DRSC) meeting at Mini-Meeting Hall of DC Office Complex Kupwara to deliberate on enforcement of road safety measures and ensuring smooth traffic flow in the district.

The meeting extensively discussed better management of traffic, including identification of black spots, blind spots, improvement of lighting on vital roads, clearance of ROWs, provision of Trauma centre on national highway. The DC also took a



detailed report about the tasks assigned to different departments during the previous Road Safety Committee meetings.

She directed all the members to make coordinated efforts to ensure safety on roads and prompt emergency care. Ayushi stressed upon all the stakeholder departments to be proactive, work in complete synergy and take all

required measures to decongest the main towns of the district for smooth flow of traffic. She stressed on repairing black spots, initiating remedial measures at blind spots, installation of signage and painting of roads at appropriate spots. OC Beacon on the occasion appraised the chair that Beacon will soon install crash bearers on 12-km road area, as they have

procured the crash bearers. He further said that Beacon is also procuring steel wire row-lines for roads of snowbound areas.

Ex. Engineer R&B Handwara was directed to fill the potholes on Handwara-Sopore road and other important roads of the district, install the longitudinal gradients to control the speed and erect road signage at proper places.

Emphasizing on putting a check on over-loading, curbing other traffic rule violations, and enforcing strict actions against violators, DC said "Over-loading is one of the reason of the accidents in the district, it needs to be checked, and all police nakas in the district will check and challan.

Lok Sabha Elections 2024 Refresher Training course for AROs of District Anantnag held

HT News Network

ANANTNAG, MARCH 27: To strengthen the electoral process and enhance proficiency regarding duties of Election Expenditure Monitoring (EEM), Media Certification & Monitoring Committee (MCMC), Model Code of Conduct (MCC), usage of C-vigil, ESMS (Election Seizure Management System), ENCORE (Enabling Communications on Real-time Environment), a comprehensive training sessions for AROs was organized today at conference hall of the DC office Complex, here.

The training was held under the guidance of District Election Officer (DEO) Anantnag, SF Hamid.

Notably, the ESMS is the interface for various election teams to submit their reports to the Assistant Returning Officers or the Returning Officer. The details of the reports could be simultaneously viewed by officials of various departments like the State police, Excise, Central and State GST, Income Tax, Enforcement Directorate, and various security agencies and service agencies.

With regard to C-Vigil application, which allows the members of public to lodge complaints on violation of model code of conduct or issues of distribution of money, materials to voters, the control room would alert the Flying Squads which then need to act and report on the incident in a time bound manner.

The DEO directed all the designated Nodal Officers to work with due diligence and dedication to ensure smooth, free and fair elections to Lok Sabha from Anantnag.

Lok Sabha Elections 2024 Nukkad Natak under SVEEP campaign organised at Kishtwar

HT News Network

KISHTWAR, MARCH 27: In view of the upcoming Lok Elections 2024, a spirited Nukkad Natak performance took center stage today at DC Office Complex here.

Organized under the ongoing Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) awareness campaign in the district, the event unfolded under the guidance of District Election Officer (DEO), Dr. Devansh Yadav.

The initiative operated seamlessly under the close supervision of District Nodal Officer SVEEP, Idrees Lone.

The event was a testament to collaborative efforts, spearheaded by the diligent team from District Information Office, led by District Information Officer, Dr. Kuldeep Kumar. Through the captivating



medium of street theatre, the artists skilfully illuminated audiences, comprising both visitors and officials of the DC Office Complex, about the essence of ethical voting. Amidst the vibrant setting, the performers adeptly conveyed crucial messages encapsulating the principles of ethical voting. Emphasizing the fundamental rights of voters and the significance of Universal Adult Franchise, the narrative underscored the pivotal role of

every citizen in strengthening the democratic fabric of the nation. The Nukkad Natak served as a dynamic platform to engage and educate diverse segments of society. By transcending barriers of age, gender, and socio-economic status, the performance fostered a sense of collective responsibility towards electoral participation. Through compelling storytelling and interactive dialogue, spectators were not merely passive observers but active

participants in the discourse surrounding electoral ethics and civic duty.

Later, the team of Nukkad Natak had an interaction with DEO, Dr Devansh and Dy DEO, Idrees Lone.

The DEO emphasised that the initiative resonates with the overarching commitment of the District Administration Kishtwar to ensure inclusive governance and participatory democracy. By leveraging innovative approaches to civic education and community engagement, such endeavours aim to empower citizens with knowledge, thereby fostering a culture of responsible citizenship and democratic stewardship. He added that as the countdown to the Lok Sabha Elections 2024 gains momentum, initiatives like the Nukkad Natak performance stand as beacon of inspiration, rallying communities towards informed and ethical electoral.

Lok Sabha Elections 2024 SVEEP programme organised at PM Shri GHSS Bhalra

HT News Network

DODA, MARCH 27: Systematic Voters Education & Electoral Participation (SVEEP) programme was today organised in PM Shri Government Higher Secondary School (GHSS) Bhalra here under the theme "Value of Individual Vote/Importance of Voting and Role of Citizen in Voting".

SVEEP is a flagship programme of Election Commission of India to promote Voters Education and participation in elections and to make significant enhancement of Voter turnout for greater participation in Lok Sabha Elections 2024.

On this occasion, different activities under SVEEP programme were carried out in the institution like Debate, Painting, etc in which many NCC cadets and students participated.

Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Koul, Associate NCC Officer/Zonal Counselling Incharge briefed the congregation about importance of voting, role of citizens in voting as well as procedure of online pledge of the same.

During the programme BLOs Neeraj Kotwal, Sunil Raina, Puran Singh, Dr. Nitán Kotwal and staff members of the institution also spoke on various electoral procedures.

The whole programme was organized under the direction of Chief Education Officer Doda, Parkash Lal Thapa and guidance of Pardeep Singh Billawria, Principal of the Institution. The programme culminated with a Pledge, symbolizing commitment towards democratic values and the exercise of voting rights.

PM Shri Govt. Higher Secondary School Bhalra Organises "SVEEP Programme"

Amir Iqbal Khan

Bhadarwah, March, 27: In order to bring awareness in respect of SVEEP (Systematic Voters Education & Electoral Participation) under the theme "Value of Individual Vote/Importance of Voting and Role of Citizen in Voting, Govt Higher Secondary School Bhalra Bhadarwah today organised a program at Bhalra.

On this occasion, different activities were carried in the Institution in which many NCC cadets and students participated. The main activities included Debates, Paintings etc. Dr. Sanjeev Kumar Koul (Teacher/Associate NCC Officer/Zonal Counselling Incharge) briefed the participants about the importance of voting, participation of Citizens in Voting and role of students in procedural Online Pledge for it. During the programme (BLOs) namely Neeraj Kotwal, Sunil Raina, Puran Singh, Dr. Nitán Kotwal and staff members of the Institution also highlighted various electoral procedures.

The whole programme was organized under the direction of Chief Education Officer Doda Parkash Lal Thapa and under the guidance of Pardeep Singh Billawria (Principal of the Institution).

'One Day Yog Shivir' under SVEEP organised at Udhampur

HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, MARCH 27: The SVEEP Cell of District Election Office Udhampur, in collaboration with the Department of Ayush and the Department of Youth Services and Sports, today organized a vibrant 'One Day Yog Shivir' in the Sports Stadium here.

The event was spearheaded by District Election Officer, Saloni Rai and Deputy District Election Officer, Dr. Anirudh Rai. The primary objective of the event was to foster awareness and active participation in the upcoming Lok Sabha Election. Witnessing a remarkable turnout, members of the community enthusiastically engaged in various yogic practices and exercises.

DC Udhampur reviews arrangements for three day Devika Baisakhi Mela

HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, MARCH 27: A meeting of District Officers and civil society members was today chaired by Deputy Commissioner Udhampur, Saloni Rai here in the Conference Hall of DC Office Complex, to discuss the necessary arrangements for three day historic Devika Baisakhi mela. Senior Superintendent of Police Joginder Singh; Additional Deputy Commis-



sioner, Joginder Singh Jasrotia; Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Dr Umesh Shan; Additional SP, Baljit Singh and other district officers of different departments besides representatives of Beopar mandal and prominent citizens were present in the meeting.

During the meeting, threadbare discussions were held on arrangements related to security; safe drinking water; power supply; First-aid; sanitation and directions were issued to district heads of stakeholder departments to ensure fool-

proof arrangements pertaining to their respective departments well before the start of the mela. It was decided in the meeting that Executive Engineer PHE would ensure drinking Water arrangements while Chief Executive Officer, Municipality was asked for ensuring proper cleansing of the site. Similarly, CMO was asked to depute a team of doctors along with the ambulance during mela day for better health care services.

DEO Samba inspects polling stations

HT News Network

SAMBA, MARCH 25: District Election Officer (DEO), Samba, Abhishek Sharma today inspected different polling stations in sub division Vijaypur to assess and review Assured Minimum facilities in view of upcoming Lok Sabha Elections 2024.

The DEO meticulously inspected the polling stations at Higher Secondary School Vijaypur, Girls Higher School Samba, Samba fort and Government High School Jatwal.

During the visit, the DEO had detailed assessment of essential facilities for smooth conduct of

Lok Sabha Elections 2024 in these polling stations.

He engaged with the stakeholders to ensure all necessary arrangements are put in place to facilitate smooth and efficient voting process. He inspected provision of basic amenities like electricity, water supply, sanitation and accessibility for differently-abled voters at the polling stations.

Interacting with the stakeholders, the DEO emphasised on importance of adherence to prescribed standards in all polling stations as per ECJ guidelines. The DEO was accompanied by SSP Samba, Vinay Kumar; Nodal Officer Training Management, Dr. Kusum Chib and other district and sectoral officers.

NIT Srinagar student bags prestigious MITACS Globalink Research Internship award

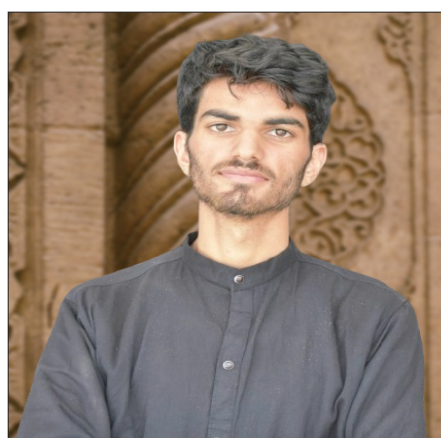
HT News Network

Srinagar, Mar 27: A student from Civil Engineering Department from National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar has bagged 2024 MITACS Globalink Research Internship award.

Mohammad Ibrahim Salaria is a B.Tech student in 3rd year Civil Department. Under the terms of this award, he will be joining the University of Northern British Columbia in Canada for a short-term engagement.

Director NIT Srinagar, Prof. A. Ravinder Nath and Registrar Prof. Atikur Rahman congratulated the B.Tech student Mohammad Ibrahim Salaria for securing the prestigious opportunity.

"Bagging of this global internship oppor-



tunity not only brings honor to CE student but also to NIT Srinagar, showcasing the institute's commitment to fostering an environment that encourages academic

excellence and research innovation," they said.

They further said that achievements like these serve as an inspiration to fellow students and underscore the institute's role in preparing students to make significant contributions on the global stage.

Meanwhile, this opportunity is facilitated through an agreement with the University of Northern British Columbia, wherein the Mitacs organization will administer the funding grant for the student's project. Specifically, Mohammad Ibrahim Salaria has been selected to participate in the Mitacs Globalink Research Internship program.

Mitacs Globalink Research Internship is a competitive program that pairs top-ranked international students with specific research expertise with faculty at

Canadian academic institutions for a twelve (12) week research project of mutual interest between May and July 2024.

Ibrahim expressed his gratitude, stating, "I am deeply honored and thrilled to have been chosen for the Globalink Internship Program. This opportunity is truly a dream come true for me, and I am enthusiastic about contributing to impactful research while immersing myself in Canada's academic environment."

"I am profoundly grateful to my mentor, Dr. Khalid Muzamil Gani, whose steadfast support has been invaluable throughout this entire journey," he added.

According to the official communication, the student from NIT Srinagar will be under the supervision of Prof. Mauricio Dziedzic, a faculty member at the University of Northern British Columbia, Canada.

EDITORIAL

Nurturing Kindness and Empathy: A Vital Imperative for Government Offices

In the corridors of government institutions, where bureaucracy reigns supreme, a crucial aspect often fades into obscurity: the human touch of kindness and empathy. While administrative efficiency remains paramount, the true measure of service quality lies in the warmth and compassion with which it is delivered.

When citizens, burdened with grievances and aspirations for resolution, enter the hallowed halls of government offices, they deserve more than mere adherence to protocol and indifferent gazes. Regrettably, they all too frequently encounter a chilling absence of empathy that undermines their trust in the system.

Behind the austere facades of office chambers, countenances once expected to exude compassion now bear only detachment, further isolating the visitor. The absence of basic courtesies fosters an unsettling atmosphere, turning supposed places of refuge into barriers of discomfort. Even unwittingly, staff contribute to this complex environment with bureaucratic delays and rigid adherence to procedures.

Amidst this bureaucratic inertia, a compelling need arises to infuse the corridors of power with a dose of humanity; to imbue every interaction with genuine concern and empathy.

However, beyond addressing service issues lies a deeper imperative: the smooth transition and fostering of a culture of compassion and camaraderie. Irrespective of their station in life, every individual should feel valued and respected within these walls. It is through these small acts of kindness that the true spirit of public service flourishes, transcending the limitations of bureaucracy to touch the lives of those in need.

Behind the desks of government offices sit not mere functionaries, but beacons of compassion, illuminating the path in service of the public good.

By nurturing these qualities of kindness and empathy, we not only enhance the quality of service provided but also reaffirm the fundamental humanity that unites us all. Thus, it is incumbent upon us to acknowledge the profound importance of kindness and empathy within the realm of government offices.

Let us, therefore, pledge ourselves to cultivate a culture of kindness and empathy at every level of governance, ensuring that our institutions remain bastions of compassion and understanding amidst an increasingly impersonal world.



By MooL Raj

By cherry-picking students based on arbitrary criteria, many schools not only violate the principles of inclusivity but also undermine the very foundation of a democratic and equitable society

In the serene valley of Kashmir, where every snow-capped peak tells a story of resilience and beauty, there lies a darker narrative within the education sector. It's a tale of exclusion, discrimination, and the erosion of equal opportunities for every child, starkly contrasting the principles of the Right to Education.

As a concerned educator and a passionate advocate for equal access to quality education, I find the prevalent practice of entrance exams in Kashmir's private schools deeply troubling. These exams, disguised as a measure of "merit," function as a discriminatory barrier, segregating students and undermining their fundamental right to education. The irony is stark. Education, the cornerstone of progress and individual empowerment, is being weaponized to create a divide. Entrance exams, often biased and arbitrary, become tools for cherry-picking "genius" students, leaving the "rest" ostracized and relegated to what are often deemed inferior options. This creates a two-tiered educational system, one for the privileged few and another for the vast majority.

In recent years, a troubling trend has emerged in the region's private schools: the imposition of pre-admission tests to filter and select students. Ostensibly framed as a means to ensure academic excellence, these tests serve as gatekeepers, admitting only the cream of the crop while leaving others to fend for themselves in less privileged institutions or government-run schools. This practice not only perpetuates a sense of elitism but also widens the chasm of inequality among Kashmiri students and goes against the spirit and letter of the RTE Act, perpetuating educational inequalities.



The ramifications of this discriminatory practice are manifold. Firstly, it institutionalizes a divide between students based on their perceived academic prowess, effectively labelling some as 'genius' and relegating others to the margins. Such categorization not only affects a child's self-esteem but also reinforces societal stereotypes and prejudices, further entrenching the cycle of inequality.

Moreover, this selective admission process runs counter to the spirit of the Right to Education, enshrined in Article 21-A of the Indian Constitution, which mandates free and compulsory education for all children aged 6 to 14 years. By cherry-picking students based on arbitrary criteria, these schools not only violate the principles of inclusivity but also undermine the very foundation of a democratic and equitable society.

Furthermore, the consequences extend beyond the realm of education. Denied access to quality schooling, marginalized students are robbed of opportunities for holistic development, perpetuating cycles of poverty and social exclusion. This not only stunts individual growth but also hampers the overall progress and prosperity of the region.

To address this injustice, concerted action is imperative at multiple levels. Firstly, regulatory bodies and educational authorities must enforce strict guidelines to ensure fair and transparent admission processes in all private institutions. This includes prohibiting

The ramifications of this discriminatory practice are manifold.

Firstly, it institutionalizes a divide between students based on their perceived academic prowess, effectively labelling some as 'genius' and relegating others to the margins. Such categorization not only affects a child's self-esteem but also reinforces societal stereotypes and prejudices, further entrenching the cycle of inequality

discriminatory practices such as pre-admission tests that serve as barriers to entry for disadvantaged students.

Additionally, there needs to be a concerted effort to invest in and uplift government schools, providing them with the necessary resources and infrastructure to deliver quality education to all students, irrespective of their socio-economic background. This requires a comprehensive overhaul of the public education system, with a focus on teacher training, curriculum development, and community engagement.

At the societal level, there is a need for greater awareness and advocacy to challenge entrenched attitudes towards education and meritocracy. Embracing diversity and inclusivity should be championed as fundamental values, with initiatives aimed at promoting empathy, tolerance, and equal opportunities for every child.

In conclusion, the issue of discriminatory admission practices in Kashmir's private schools strikes at the heart of the fundamental right to education. It is imperative that we confront this injustice head-on, recognizing that every child deserves an equal chance to learn, grow, and thrive, irrespective of their background or circumstances. Only through collective action and unwavering commitment to equity can we truly uphold the principles of justice and equality in education.

The author is a columnist and freelance writer

The Virtues of War!



M S Nazki

The soldier is in the Army. No army is better than its soldiers. The Soldier is also a citizen. In fact, the highest obligation and privilege of citizenship is that of bearing arms for one's countryGeneral George S. Patton said this!

A lion is born knowing how to hunt, but has to learn how to hunt well.

This is another one, 'a cavalryman's horse should be smarter than he is. But the horse must never be allowed to know this.'

Yet another one, 'he laughed outright, a grim, calculating gesture as hard! I asked him Kancha why are you laughing! The reply was in a typical Gurkha style, 'unfeeling as cold steel. There is something brittle in me that will break before it bends. Perhaps if the [the enemy] had brought a smaller army I might

have had the sense to run. But he overdid it. We will beat them! And we did!

The final one from none other than George. Patton...It is a proud privilege to be a soldier - a good soldier ... [with] discipline, self-respect, pride in his unit and his country, a high sense of duty and obligation to comrades and to his superiors, and a self-confidence born of demonstrated ability."

The most dangerous people in the world are not the tiny minority instigating evil acts, but those who do the acts for them. For example, when the British invaded India, many Indians accepted to work for the British to kill off Indians who resisted their occupation. So in other words, many Indians were hired to kill other Indians on behalf of the enemy for a paycheck. Today, we have mercenaries in Africa, corporate armies from the western world, and unemployed men throughout the Middle East killing their own people - and people of other nations - for a paycheck. To act without a conscience, but for a paycheck, makes anyone a dangerous animal. The devil would be powerless if he couldn't entice people to do his work. So as long as money continues to seduce the hungry, the hopeless, the broken,



the greedy, and the needy, there will always be war between brothers. A soldier does not think this way! That is what the Indian Army teaches to young kids! This is clearly depicted in the

picture with the story! A wise bird does not lend even the smallest of its feathers to a hunter."The World comes Like a lover, courting. But a seeker only sees a hunter, circling its

prey. I have a story to tell here! She was a little girl Aysha when she first saw me! She thought I was different from others! I was just on an errand to Kuliyan (a village next to my home

but now a busy bee market) and she asked me, 'Are you in Army?' since the kid was small, my answer was smaller. Once upon a time I was little Red riding hood! hr mom interrupted, 'Yeh Bhi Army mein Jaana Chahiti Hai!' My answer was in two words, 'Study First!' I thought I was rude but the kid grew up! One day (Saturday since it is a holiday for me), years later, she asked, 'Uncle will you train me, I want to join the Indian army!' 'I will but do not become like me!' 'But you are different to others' was her immediate response! My reply was being different means you have to pay a price! I trained him for a month! she did what I had told her and today she is in Officers Training Academy!

On a mid term break she did visit our house and the first question she asked was, 'is uncle at home!' My mom called me and there she stood with a box! In it were an OG Green T-shirt and a cap! This will make a difference to others! I know what it is to look different, lazy, elegant and as sharp as a tigress..... Thank you very much and I handed over to her two five hundred Rupees notes..... I do not want a reward..... she said! I told her camouflaged T-shirts suit you..... They will make you different! Indian Army Zindabad!

Seaweed: Sea of opportunities

The ocean's wonder plant with untapped economic potential



By Ms. Neetu Prasad

Weeds are, plant considered undesirable, unattractive, or troublesome, especially one that grows where it is not wanted and often grows or spreads fast or takes the place of desired plants. So, What comes to your mind, when you hear the word Seaweed? For most of us they are marine version of water hyacinth clogging Indian ponds posing obstruction to navigation. Little is known about the tremendous economic potential of this family of marine algae.

Seaweed has been gaining global recognition as a wonder plant of the ocean. It supports marine biodiversity by acting as breeding and feeding grounds. It absorbs carbon, de-acidifies the ocean and soaks up excess nutrients that could cause harmful algae blooms. It can also be a renewable resource for coastal communities, offering them a more stable income compared to fluctuating fisheries markets that are increasingly affected by climate change. It is anticipated that one tonne of seaweed may absorb 120 kilograms of carbon dioxide (CO₂), two kilograms of Nitrogen (N) and two and a half kilograms of Phosphorus (P). Further, it required practically zero fresh water. Thus, it can be huge force multiplier for BLUE ECONOMY and Green Agricultural practices. Owing to its innate properties, seaweed is valued as a natural

ingredient in food, medicines, fertilizers, cosmetics, biomaterials, etc and the current global market is of 17 billion dollars.

Historical background: - Seaweed was first consumed in Japan at least 1500 years ago according to early written records. Until the middle ages, there was only wild seaweed, which limited it as a food source.

During the Tokugawa era (1600-1800 AD), the seaweed cultivation was born when the fishermen built an offshore fence and started a fish farm to supply the king fresh fish everyday. They also found that seaweed preferred growing on this fence.

In India, the cultivation of seaweed started under the aegis of the Centre for salt and Marine Chemicals Research Institute (CSMCRI) which brought Kappaphycus alvarezii, to India from the Philippines for experimental purposes during the 1980s. It didn't take long for the seaweed to jump from the experimental farms to commercial ones. With the help of CSMCRI, Pepsi started commercial farming seaweed in the coastal areas of Tamil Nadu in the early 2000. Kappaphycus alvarezii is an important source of carrageenans which are used in a variety of foods, such as a stabilising agent in dairy products. Industrial products like chocolates, ice creams, packaged food, toothpaste and even medicines, to name a few, utilize this jelly like agent.

It gave the locals of Tamil Nadu a new farm of employment especially women. In 2008, the Pepsi co-exited the business. An ex-Pepsi co employee, Abhiram Seth, took over the business by setting up a company called Aquagri. Since then, numerous sea weed companies and startups grew to explore the commercial usages of seaweed.

Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojna (PMMSY) was launched by Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, in year 2020



which is not only meant for strengthening the infrastructure and value chain in the fisheries sector but also became cornerstone of brand new activities unraveled in the Indian Fisheries segment. PMMSY envisages that artificial reefs, sea ranching along with Seaweed are going to bring a sustainable, climate resilient and profitable model which will not only help in improving the fishermen's income, provide livelihood to coastal women but also, be a perfect way to sustainably manage our fish stocks.

India is endowed with a long coast line of more than 8000 km and traditionally Tamil Nadu, Gujarat, Andaman and Nicobar, Lakshadweep, Odisha and Maharashtra have been blessed with various species of naturally growing Seaweed. Rich Seaweed beds occur around Mumbai, Ratnagiri, Goa, Karwar, Uarkala Vizhinjam, Pulikat, Rameshwaram in Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Chilika in Odisha.

Present Scenario: Under PMMSY, projects with a total cost of Rs. 193.80 crores with a central share of Rs. 99 crores were approved for the cultivation of

seaweed and related activities. Funds are allotted to coastal states, UTs and research institution for establishment of 46,095 rafts, 65,330 mono-lines and development of seaweed park in Tamil Nadu worth 127.7 crores.

This seaweed park aims to provide an enabling ecosystem for researchers, entrepreneurs, startups and SHC women. The foundation stone was laid last year by the Hon'ble Union Minister Shri Parshottam Rupala Ji and the work is going at a brisk pace.

Future Perfect:

As a wonder plant of the sea, Seaweed can grow at an exponential rate, ready for harvesting in 45 to 60 days. Department of fisheries aims to produce around 11 lakh tons of seaweed annually through wild catch and aquaculture. With increased awareness, the domestic demand for seaweed has grown manifold and we are importing almost 70% of our requirements. Significant steps need to be taken to reverse this trend, attain self-sufficiency and become a net exporter. Towards this end the following can be done;

- Achieve strong collaborations between the states, research institutes (CMFRI, CSMCRI, NIOT) and the Private enterprises/ startups.
- Detailed mapping and identification of potential zones/ areas for seaweed cultivation can be taken up by the coastal states which are clear of fishing zones, tourism activities and trade routes.
- Formulation of water leasing policy for organized growth and better regulation by the States is important.
- Participation of women SHG groups through the convergence of National Rural Livelihood Mission scheme and upgrading their skills.
- Availability of seed is the biggest issue. Hence development and scaling up of high yielding seed materials by R&D institutes to be taken up with funding from their own source and PMMSY.
- Private sector and

entrepreneurs to take up large scale production under schemes (PMMSY, FIDF) and own resources.

- Government should take policy measures to allow import of high yielding planting materials by the private sector. Presently there are some technical problems exist in export and import of seaweed.
- Research institutes should collaborate with Private partners to grow high yielding planting materials of different species of seaweed so dependence upon any specific species can be overcome. Similarly, post-harvest technologies and advanced technology of cultivation are to be adopted.
- To establish a proper integrated eco-system, more seaweed parks may be approved under PMMSY in all the coastal states on lines similar to Tamil Nadu seaweed park.
- Seed Banks of seaweed may be created at a scale all along the coastline.

Rightly recognizing its potential to transform the way farming is done, honorable Prime Minister has exhorted Self Help Group women and farmers to take up cultivation of sea weed for its pharmaceutical nutritional and other values. Philosopher Goethe said "Whatever you do, or dream you can do, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it". Our attempt to make India a world leader in seaweed production may be a dream now, but with bold measures and initiatives under honorable Prime Minister's powerful leadership, these beginnings may just bring the magical transformation.

Joint Secretary (Marine Fisheries) Department of Fisheries, MoFAHD, GoI

8 Ways To Manage Rejection

Michelle P. Maidenberg

Rejection is a fact of life. I often share with my patients that if they want to avoid rejection then they must avoid relationships altogether as it's inevitable. Our reaction to rejection will vary based on our attachment style, the type of rejection (resulting from relationships, life events, etc.), whom we were rejected by, and the impact the rejection has on us.

For individuals with an insecure attachment style, and who generally view themselves as unlovable, unworthy and inadequate, the fear of rejection and the impact of being rejected tends to be more emotionally intense.

Why Does Rejection Hurt?

In a study measuring neurological responses to social rejection, the brain system showed significant activations in certain regions. The results indicated that our experience with rejection is similar to that of physical pain, impacting the endogenous opioid system of the brain. Because our basic human needs include social acceptance and connection, when that's threatened, it literally hurts.

In her book, *Maybe You Should Talk To Someone*, Lori Gottlieb explained that this deeply rooted in our evolutionary history. We lived in cooperative societies, and for most of history, we depended on those groups for survival. She stated that "when somebody rejects us, there's a very primal piece to it, which is that it goes against everything we feel like

we need for survival."

It's understandable when our relationships are threatened, we tend to feel intensely sad, shameful and disappointed. Despite the feelings that get evoked, we need to manage them to the best of our ability.

How to Manage Rejection

1. Practice Acceptance. Instead of ruminating over why it happened, how it happened or how it shouldn't have happened, which helps your mind avoid the pain, sit with that it did happen. Be willing to sit with the discomfort and get in touch with the emotions it's bringing up, what it's triggering for you, and how you want to show up in your life and be.

2. Process Your Feelings and Link Them Directly to Your Values. Recognize the feelings that are being evoked and contemplate as to which value(s) they are rubbing up against for you. For example, if you were rejected by a partner, acknowledge that because you highly value connection and intimacy, you're likely to feel sad and disappointed. Reframe and shift your mindset to connect to the pride you feel for your higher order values.

3. Instead of Solely Focusing on What You Didn't Get, Also Expand to Consider What You Need and Deserve. We tend to take things personally and feel wounded after being rejected. Empower yourself to think about what needs aren't being met and what you want and need going forward. Sometimes this requires flexing and considering plan B, C or D.



4. Treat Yourself Compassionately. While you're acknowledging the pain and grieving the loss, give yourself kind and empathic words of support and encouragement. For example, you can say, "In this moment I'm struggling. It's understandable for me to feel this way based on what's important to me, I honor myself and my needs."

5. Don't Allow Rejection to Define You. It's not indicative of your power or worth. It's a human phenomenon because of our plethora of needs and expectations. Keep in mind that you're not for everyone and everyone is not for you. Just as you're selective and judge others, others do the same.

Also, not everything will go your way because we have limited control over most things. You inevitably have a choice as to how you choose to behave and whether you decide to move forward with a sense of self-belief and self-worth.

6. Be Curious About Your Expectations and Attachments. Notice what they are. Recognize if your "shoulds" "ought to" and "musts" are putting you in a position of being rejected or rejecting. For example, you may need to exercise greater flexibility and expansiveness so that you can cope with circumstances and people not turning out to be the way you expected.

7. Keep Putting Yourself Out There No Matter What. There are

obvious health benefits to being socially connected. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Research shows that social connectedness can lead to longer life, better health, and improved well-being." People who avoid relationships and rejection often pick up maladaptive behaviors such as cutting themselves off, people pleasing and not setting boundaries or expressing their needs.

If it's understood that rejection is part of life, it's not to be avoided. Lean in when it happens and be proactive. Continue to make strides to build your confidence and resilience by taking risks and proving to yourself that you can effectively cope with rejection or

any other challenge that crosses your path.

8. Take Away a Lesson from Your Experience. There's always something to be learned from our experiences. You may better understand why you were passed up for a promotion, why your friend was disappointed by your behavior, or why your child is suddenly distancing him/herself from you. These lessons can contribute favorably to better understanding yourself and facilitating your personal growth and improved future.

Rejection is not to be avoided, but rather to be noticed, understood, and learned from. The pain can forge a path toward greater resilience and better connecting to your values and what's fundamentally important to you. Seize the moment when it happens as these are prime growth and learning opportunities to facilitate being your best you.

To fortify more connected relationships, here is a Manifesting Connected Relationships Guided Meditation led by me.

Michelle P. Maidenberg, Ph.D., MPH, LCSW-R, CGP maintains a private practice in Harrison, NY. She is an adjunct graduate professor of Mindfulness Practice at New York University and the president and clinical director of the Thru My Eyes Foundation. My new book is *ACE Your Life: Unleash Your Best Self and Live the Life You Want*.

No Immediate Relief From High Court, Arvind Kejriwal To Stay In Custody

HT News Network

New Delhi: Arvind Kejriwal will spend at least another night in jail after the Delhi High Court refused a petition Wednesday, challenging his arrest by the Enforcement Directorate in the alleged liquor policy scam.

The court has issued a notice asking the ED to respond to Mr Kejriwal's petition, and given the probe agency time till April 2 to do so. The next hearing in this case is on April 3.

Mr Kejriwal is currently in ED custody; he is being held in the lock-up at the agency's Delhi office.

On Thursday the agency's 7-day custody of the AAP leader expires and he will be back in court (this time in Delhi's Rouse Avenue Court), where, most likely, the authorities will ask for further custody.

In a long-drawn and intense hearing today, Mr Kejriwal's legal team slammed the Enforcement Directorate's "delaying tactics" after the agency asked for three weeks' time to respond.

Additional Solicitor General SV Raju, appearing for the ED, said the copy of the petition had been



served late, and that he needed time to study the document. Senior lawyer Abhishek Singhvi, appearing for Mr Kejriwal, said the petition had been filed on March 23. "Defects were cured later. I am sure Mr Raju does not want us to serve a defective copy to him... we shared petition with him."

In his petition, Mr Kejriwal had said his arrest had violated his human rights, and that the Enforcement Directorate had failed to prove the alleged crime.

"Arrest without interrogation shows the current action is politically motivated," Mr Singhvi

argued, underlining the AAP's claim that Arvind Kejriwal's arrest was timed to disrupt the party's campaign for next month's Lok Sabha election.

Arvind Kejriwal Unwell In Probe Agency Custody, Wife Says Sugar Level Down

In response, Mr Raju said the ED sought to file replies on the main matter and on the petition for interim relief. When the court pointed out it had already said it will issue a notice in the former, he said, "On interim relief also, I have the right to file a reply. If I am not entitled to file a reply, then

there is no need to hear me. I can't be deprived of my right to file a reply." Arvind Kejriwal was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate last week in connection with the alleged liquor policy scam that has roiled his AAP and provoked furious protests from the opposition ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha election. Mr Kejriwal was this week sent to jail till March 28.

The Enforcement Directorate believes the now-scrapped liquor policy provided an impossibly high profit margin of 185 per cent for retailers and 12 per cent for wholesalers. Of the latter, six per cent - over 600 crore - were bribes and the money was allegedly used to fund the AAP's poll campaigns.

The ED has labelled the Chief Minister as a key conspirator in this case, but Mr Kejriwal and party colleagues arrested in this matter - ex-Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia, Rajya Sabha MP Sanjay Singh, and former Health Minister Satyendar Jain - have all denied the charges.

The AAP and the opposition have hit out at the BJP-led central government for using central agencies, like the ED, to target rivals and critics before the general election.

"I Don't Have Money To Contest Lok Sabha Elections": Nirmala Sitharaman

HT News Network

New Delhi: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said she declined the BJP's offer to contest elections pleading that she did not have the 'kind of fund' required to contest the Lok Sabha polls.

BJP President JP Nadda gave her the option to contest either from Andhra Pradesh or Tamil Nadu, she said. "After thinking for a week or ten days, I went back to say, 'Maybe not'. I do not have that kind of money to contest. I also have a problem whether it is Andhra Pradesh or Tamil Nadu. It's also going to be a question of various other winnability criteria that they use... Are you from this community or are you from that religion? Are you from this? I said no, I do not think I am going to be able to do it," she said at the TIMESNOW Summit 2024. "I am very grateful they accepted my argument... So I am not contesting," she added.

When asked why the country's finance minister



does not have enough funds to fight elections, she said that the Consolidated Fund of India does not belong to her.

She said, "My salary, my earnings, and my savings are mine and not the Consolidated Fund of India". The ruling BJP fielded several existing Rajya Sabha members in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections, beginning April 19. These include Piyush Goyal, Bhupender Yadav, Rajiv Chandrasekhar, Mansukh Mandaviya, and Jyotiraditya Scindia. Ms Sitharaman is a Rajya Sabha member from Karnataka. The minister said that

she will be campaigning for other candidates.

"I will attend a lot of media events and go with the candidates - like tomorrow I will be going for Rajiv Chandrasekhar's campaign. I'll be on the campaign trail," she added. BJP President JP Nadda gave her the option to contest either from Andhra Pradesh or Tamil Nadu, she said. She said, "My salary, my earnings, and my savings are mine and not the Consolidated Fund of India". The ruling BJP fielded several existing Rajya Sabha members in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

"Our Preparedness Levels Of Very High Order": Army Chief On China Border Row

HT News Network

New Delhi: In the backdrop of the nearly four-year border row with China in eastern Ladakh, Army Chief General Manoj Pande on Wednesday said the Indian Army's preparedness levels are of a "very high order" and the force is keeping a "very close watch" on developments across the border.

In response to questions asked during a panel discussion at Times Now Summit in New Delhi, General Pande also said he believed that it was "only through talks" that one can find a resolution of the balance issues that are currently at hand.

The eastern Ladakh border standoff erupted on May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong Lake area.

The ties between the two countries nose-dived significantly following the clash in the Galwan Valley in June 2020 that marked the most serious military conflict between the two sides in decades.

"We are prepared in every manner. Our levels of operational readiness, and operational preparedness is of a very high order. In terms of our deployments along the entire length of 3,488 km (LAC) of our borders, I would say is both robust as well as balance. We have also ensured that we have adequate reserves in terms of dealing with contingencies... We have our response mechanism firmly in place," General Pande said.

He was asked how well is the Indian Army prepared in the backdrop of the eastern Ladakh border standoff.



"We have talks at two levels. One is at the military level, at the level of our corps commanders, we have had 21 rounds of talks. At the diplomatic level, where we have the mechanism, WMCC (Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs)," he said, adding several rounds of WMCC talks have taken place post the event of mid-2020.

The 28th meeting of WMCC was held on November 30, 2023. "It is my belief that only through talks you will find resolution of the balance issues that are currently at hand. While these talks are progressing, we are also focusing on capability development along our northern borders, of which technology infusion, modernisation are important," the Army chief said.

General Pande said the Army is also focusing on infrastructure development and "I believe, we are moving in the right direction".

Elon Musk To Pay Indian-Origin Doctor's Rs2 Crore Legal Fees Over Covid-Tweets

HT News Network

New Delhi: In the summer of 2020, when the world came to a standstill because of the coronavirus pandemic, Indian-origin doctor Kulvinder Kaur Gill spoke out against government-imposed lockdowns and vaccination mandates. But her stance was met with lawsuits by medical bodies and censorship by X/Twitter's previous management.

Dr Gill, a physician in Canada specialising in immunology and paediatrics, is now embroiled in a legal battle stemming from her Covid-related tweets. Facing a daunting CAD 300,000 (Rs 1,83,75,078) in legal fees, she received support from X, which has pledged to cover her expenses.

"Because she spoke out publicly on Twitter (now X) in opposition to the Canadian and Ontario governments' COVID lockdown efforts and vaccination mandates, she was harassed by the legacy media, censored by prior Twitter management, and subjected to investigations and disciplinary proceedings by the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario that resulted in "cautions" being placed on her permanent public record," X said in a



statement. "When Elon Musk learned earlier this week about her crowdfunding campaign to pay the judgment (https://givesendgo.com/kulvinder), he pledged to help. X will now fund the rest of Dr. Gill's campaign so that she can pay her \$300,000 judgment and her legal bills," it added.

The ensuing legal proceedings drained Dr Gill's life savings, leaving her with a substantial debt. The Indian-origin doctor is a vocal critic against vaccination. "If you have not yet figured out that we don't need a vaccine, you are not paying attention. #FactsNotFear," she posted on X in August, 2020. Her posts were heavily criticised by the medical community and also by many in the mainstream media. Dr Gill sued 23 doctors, journalists, and news outlets, claiming that they were part of a defamation campaign against her.

Congress' Supriya Shrinete, BJP's Dilip Ghosh Get Election Commission Notice

HT News Network

New Delhi: The Election Commission has issued show-cause notices to Congress leader Supriya Shrinete and the Bharatiya Janata Party's Dilip Ghosh over "derogatory" remarks against actor Kangana Ranaut - the BJP's candidate for Himachal Pradesh's Mandi Lok Sabha - and Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee. "... on careful examination, the comment(s) have been found to be 'undignified and in bad taste', and to be prima facie violative of provisions of the Model Code of Conduct..." the poll panel said. Ms Shrinete and Mr Ghosh have been given till 5 pm Friday to explain why action should not be taken against them. "In the event of no response... it will be presumed you have nothing to say..." the ECI said.

Supriya Shrinete-Kangana Ranaut Row Controversy erupted after a crude and sexist post targeting Ms Ranaut appeared on Ms Shrinete's Instagram account. The Congress leader issued a video clarification on her X



handle, in which she said she had deleted the inappropriate post. Ms Shrinete said the post had been made without her knowledge.

"Many people have access to my Facebook and Instagram accounts. Someone from them made an extremely inappropriate post today. As soon as I came to know, I deleted that post. Everyone who knows me knows I can never

make personal and indecent comments towards any woman," she said. She also blamed a parody account bearing her name for the post.

"Someone copied it from there and posted it on my Instagram and Facebook accounts. I am trying to know who has done this... I have also reported this parody account to Twitter," she said. However, by then the post and the photograph had kicked up a storm, including a letter from the National Commission of Women to the Election Commission calling for action against Ms Shrinete. NCW Chairperson Rekha Sharma also called on Sonia Gandhi to take "stringent action" against Supriya Shrinete and another Congress leader, HS Ahir, for similarly distasteful comments. "We must free our daughters from the shackles of prejudices, we must rise above the curiosity about their body parts and above all we must refrain from using sex workers' challenging lives or circumstances as some kind of abuse or slur... every woman deserves her dignity," she said.

"Look Forward To...": Vice President To Sudha Murty On Her Rajya Sabha

HT News Network

New Delhi: Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar has written to engineer-turned-philanthropist Sudha Murty congratulating her on her nomination to the Rajya Sabha.

Mr Dhankhar, who is ex-officio chairman of the Upper House, exuded confidence that Murty will effectively utilize her cross-cultural experiences in the hallowed precincts of the temple of democracy.

"Congratulations on your nomination to the Council of States, reflecting the resolute faith and confidence in your spirit of public service. My best wishes for success in this constitutional responsibility. I am confident that you will avail this opportunity to effectively utilize cross-cultural experiences in the hallowed precincts of temple of democracy," Mr Dhankhar said in the letter.

"I look forward to working with you, leveraging your rich knowledge and domain expertise, in legislative proceedings through wholesome debate, discussion and deliberation. May your term be characterized by growth, progress and memorable experiences that exemplify discipline and decorum worth emulation and admiration," he added. Ms Murty, 73, took oath as Rajya Sabha MP on March 14. The former chairperson of Infosys Foundation and the author of several books, mostly for children, was nominated to the Rajya Sabha on International Women's Day.

"Padma Awards Were Driven By Patronage Earlier": Vice President

"In Two To Three Years, India Will Move Ahead Of Japan, Germany": Vice President "In Two To Three Years, India



Will Move Ahead Of Japan, Germany": Vice President

She is also renowned for her contribution to Kannada and English literature and is a recipient of the Sahitya Akademi Bal Sahitya Puraskar, the Padma Shri (2006) and the Padma Bhushan (2023).

Ms Murty, who was the first woman engineer to have worked with TELCO, is famously known to have provided the seed capital of 10,000 from her emergency funds to her husband N R Narayana Murthy to start Infosys, which now has a market cap of over USD 80 billion.

Her daughter Akshata is married to British Prime Minister Rishi Suna. She is also renowned for her contribution to Kannada and English literature and is a recipient of the Sahitya Akademi Bal Sahitya Puraskar, the Padma Shri (2006) and the Padma Bhushan (2023).

Bizarre Accident At Kolkata Airport Damages Wingtips Of 2 Aircraft

HT News Network

New Delhi: Two aircraft came dangerously close to each other on the runway in Kolkata this morning, in a narrow escape for hundreds of passengers.

A Darbhanga-bound IndiGo aircraft, taxiing at the Kolkata Airport, hit a stationary Air India Express flight waiting for clearance to enter the runway. A part of the Air India Express aircraft's wing that was hit fell on the runway, while the IndiGo aircraft's wing was dented.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation, or DGCA, has off-rostered both the IndiGo A320 VT-ISS pilots and ordered a detailed probe, reported news agency ANI.

"We have ordered a detailed investigation into the matter and both the pilots of IndiGo airlines have been off-rostered. The ground staff will also be questioned during the investigation. Both the flights have been grounded for detailed inspection," a DGCA official said.

Arvind Kejriwal's Arrest Will Benefit AAP Electorally: Atishi

HT News Network

New Delhi: Delhi minister Atishi on Wednesday said the arrest of Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal will benefit the AAP electorally in the Lok Sabha polls as the party is getting a lot of sympathy. In an interview with PTI, Atishi termed the arrest of Arvind Kejriwal by the Enforcement Directorate in an excise policy-linked money laundering case as an attack on democracy that was "never seen before" in the democratic history of the country. "The good thing is that it has benefited us electorally," she said, adding before the arrest of Arvind Kejriwal, the result of Lok Sabha polls was a forgone conclusion as people were of the view that the BJP was going to win.

"But after Kejriwal's arrest, the level of public sympathy has gone up for us. There is just one sentiment that the BJP has gone one step too far. So, I would feel it has benefitted us electorally," Atishi told PTI.

Sri Lanka PM says China to develop strategic infrastructure

HT News Network

Sri Lanka's prime minister said on Wednesday that China has pledged to develop the island nation's strategic deep sea port and the capital's airport after talks with his counterpart in Beijing.

Prime Minister Dinesh Gunawardena said China — the island's biggest bilateral creditor — would "assist" Sri Lanka's restructuring of external debt, a key condition to maintaining a \$2.9 billion IMF bailout.

Beijing's position on debt restructuring has not been made public, but Sri Lankan officials have said China was reluctant to take a haircut on its loans but could extend the tenure and adjust interest rates.

Sri Lanka in 2022 ran out of foreign exchange to finance essential imports and declared a sovereign default on its \$46 billion foreign debt.



Months of protests forced then-president Gotabaya Rajapaksa out of office. Gunawardena's office said Premier Li

Qiang had promised China would "assist Sri Lanka's debt restructuring process continuously and help Sri Lanka to devel-

op its economy". Gunawardena said Beijing had offered "assistance to develop" Colombo International Airport and Hambantota port, the statement added, without giving further details. A Japanese-funded expansion of Colombo airport had been on hold since Sri Lanka's sovereign debt default. The southern sea port of Hambantota was handed to a Chinese state-owned company in 2017 on a 99-year lease for \$1.12 billion, sparking security concerns in Beijing's regional rival India.

India and the United States are both concerned that a Chinese foothold at Hambantota, on the island's southern coast, could boost its naval advantage in the Indian Ocean.

Sri Lanka has insisted its ports will not be used for any military purposes, but New Delhi has objected to Chinese research vessels calling at Hambantota fearing that they could be used for espionage.

"Don't Bet On This Pressure, Won't Work": Israel's Netanyahu To Hamas

HT News Network

Jerusalem: Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Wednesday his cancellation of a planned visit to Washington by top aides this week was meant to show Hamas that Israel would not bend to growing international pressure to halt the war in Gaza.

"It was a message first and foremost to Hamas: 'Don't bet on this pressure, it's not going to work,'" he said in videoed comments at a meeting with visiting US Senator Rick Scott. "It was a message first and foremost to Hamas: 'Don't bet on this pressure, it's not going to work,'" he said in videoed comments at a meeting with visiting US Senator Rick Scott.

18 Gazans die trying to collect airdropped aid

HT News Network

GAZA STRIP: Twelve people drowned and at least six were killed in stampedes trying to recover aid airdropped into Gaza, local authorities said on Tuesday.

The deaths occurred in the north of the besieged territory on Monday, with people rushing to collect packages dropped from planes along Gaza's Mediterranean coast.

The UN humanitarian office called on Tuesday for Israel to revoke a ban on food deliveries to northern Gaza from the UN Palestinian refugee agency UNRWA, saying people there were facing a "cruel death by famine".

Israel had earlier said it would stop working with UNRWA in Gaza, accusing the aid agency of perpetuating conflict. The agency said Israel told it that it would no longer approve its food convoys to north Gaza. Four such requests were denied since March 21, it said.

"The decision must be revoked," United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) spokesperson Jens Laerke told a UN briefing in Geneva. "You cannot claim to adhere to these international provisions of law when you block UNRWA food convoys." A UN-backed report this month said famine was imminent and likely to occur by May in northern Gaza. James Elder, spokesperson for the UN children's agency Unicef in Gaza, described seeing "paper thin" children in a hospital in northern Gaza and incubators full of underweight babies from malnourished mothers.

China moves WTO against US subsidies to EV industry

HT News Network

GENEVA: China has initiated dispute settlement proceedings against the United States at the World Trade Organisation to safeguard its interests in the electric vehicle industry, the Chinese mission said on Tuesday and the WTO confirmed.

China said it was contesting "discriminatory subsidies" under the US Inflation Reduction Act that it said resulted in the exclusion of goods from China and other WTO countries.

The wide-ranging law provides billions of dollars in tax credits to help consumers buy electric vehicles and companies produce renewable energy, as President Joe Biden aims to decarbonise the mighty US power sector. "Under the guise of responding to climate change, reducing carbon emission and protecting environment, (these subsidies) are in fact contingent upon the purchase and use of goods from the United States, or imported from certain particular regions," the Chinese mission said.

It said it was launching the proceedings "to safeguard the legitimate interests of Chinese electric vehicle industry and to maintain a fair level playing field of competition for the global market".

A WTO official confirmed that a request from China for dispute consultations on the matter had been received, without providing details.

In Beijing, a spokesperson for China's Ministry of Commerce said it urged Washington to "promptly correct discriminatory industrial policies, and maintain the stability of the global industrial and supply chains for new energy vehicles".

Pakistan joins calls for immediate action on UN resolution

HT News Network

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan has joined other nations in urging for the prompt implementation of a UN Security Council (UNSC) resolution that calls for a Ramadan ceasefire, paving the way for a lasting and sustainable peace in Gaza. Alongside the ceasefire, the resolution underscores the necessity for the immediate, unconditional release of all prisoners. UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has said the resolution "must be implemented" to secure a ceasefire and the "immediate and unconditional release" of all prisoners.

Expressing solidarity with the resolution, Pakistan's UN ambassador Munir Akram also underscored "the urgent need to expand the flow of humanitarian assistance to and reinforce the protection of civilians in the entire Gaza Strip." The resolution "must be implemented immediately," he said, while emphasising the need for a sustainable ceasefire in Gaza.

Calling this the first step in halting Israel's brutal campaign in Gaza, Ambassador Akram said Pakistan would continue to work actively for a just, comprehensive, and durable solution through the establishment of a secure, viable, contiguous.

Thailand Parliament Passes Bill To Legalise Same Sex Marriage

HT News Network

Bangkok, Thailand: Thai advocates for LGBTQ rights hailed a major step forward Wednesday as the parliament passed a same-sex marriage bill in a landslide, paving the way for the nation to become the first in Southeast Asia to recognise marriage equality.

While Thailand enjoys a welcoming reputation for the international LGBTQ community, Thai activists have struggled for decades against conservative attitudes and values. The bill sailed through on 399 to 10 votes in the lower house, although it must still be approved by the Senate and endorsed by the king before becoming the law of the land.

"Thailand is finally accepted and recognised as truly 'paradise for LGBTQ!'," Chanya Rattanathada, 27, told AFP in the halls outside the voting chamber.

Inside, a small burst of cheers and clapping accompanied the final vote, with one representative waving a rainbow flag.

"Today, society has proved to us that they care about LGBTQ rights," said Tunyawaj Kamolwongwat, an MP with the progressive Move Forward Party, which has long



pushed for LGBTQ rights.

"Now we finally will have the same rights as others."

The proposal will change references to "men", "women", "husbands" and "wives" in the country's marriage law to gender-neutral terms.

Prime Minister Srettha Thavisin said he was "proud of our pride" following approval of the bill. "The passing (of this law) in the parliament today is a proud moment for Thai society who will walk together towards social equality and respect differences," he wrote on social media website X. Across Asia only Taiwan and Nepal recognise same-sex marriage. Last year, India's highest court deferred the decision to parliament, and Hong Kong's top court stopped just short of granting full marriage rights.

"Was Punched, Dragged": Israeli Hostage Recalls Sexual Assault In Hamas Captivity

HT News Network

Tel Aviv, Israel: Israel's military on Wednesday said an Israeli woman's first-hand account of sexual assault in Gaza captivity requires international "pressure" on Palestinian group Hamas to free the remaining hostages.

A UN report in early March found "reasonable grounds to believe" rapes were committed by Hamas who stormed southern Israel on October 7, in a deadly attack that triggered the ongoing war, and that hostages taken to Gaza have also been raped.

Israeli officials and groups have also relayed evidence of sexual violence during the unprecedented Hamas-led attack, but Amit Soussana's testimony published Tuesday by the New York Times appears to be the first time a survivor has spoken out publicly.

Soussana, an Israeli lawyer who was released during a one-week truce in November, told the US newspaper she was abducted from Kfar Aza near the Gaza border and taken to the Hamas-ruled territory, where one of her captors forced her "to commit a sexual act on him".

"He sat me on the edge of the bath. And I closed my legs. And I resisted. And he



kept punching me and put his gun in my face," Soussana told the New York Times.

"Then he dragged me to the bedroom."

In a statement early Wednesday, military spokesman Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari said the reported abuse "is a wake up call to the world to act, to do everything and pressure Hamas, to free our hostages."

The non-governmental Association of Rape Crisis Centers in Israel said on social media platform X that Soussana's "heart-wrenching testimony compels the world to act." The Israeli government and world government must do whatever it takes to bring home "the remaining hostages," it said. Soussana is one of about 250 Israeli and foreign hostages seized during the October 7 attack. Israel believes about 130 remain in the Gaza Strip, including 33 who are presumed dead.

Ukraine's Foreign Minister On Two-Day India Visit From today: Centre

HT News Network

New Delhi: Ukraine's Minister of Foreign Affairs Dmytro Kuleba is slated to arrive in New Delhi on Thursday for a two-day official visit during which he will have meetings with his Indian counterpart and others to discuss matters related to the bilateral relationship.

His visit comes at the invitation of External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in a statement.

During his visit, Kuleba



will have "a number of engagements, including official meetings with External Affairs Minister and Deputy NSA to discuss matters pertaining to the bilateral partnership and cooperation on regional and global issues of mutual

interest," the statement said. He is also expected to interact with the business community.

Dmytro Kuleba's visit comes amid the Russia-Ukraine war. Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 20 had held separate

conversations with Russian President Vladimir Putin and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and asserted that dialogue and diplomacy were the way forward for the resolution of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. PM Modi had spoken to Putin over a telephone call to congratulate him for winning a fifth term in office in the recent elections, and followed it up with a phone call to Zelenskyy to convey India's "consistent support" for all efforts for peace and bringing an early end to the ongoing conflict.

Nigerian Woman Faces Jail for Reviewing Tomato Puree Online

HT News Network

A scathing online review of tomato puree has landed a Nigerian entrepreneur, Chioma Okoli, in hot water. The 39-year-old Lagos resident faces jail time after the product's manufacturer accused her of violating cybercrime laws with a "malicious allegation" that damaged their business. This unusual case has sparked outrage in Nigeria, with many believing Ms Okoli is being punished for simply exercising her right to free speech, CNN reported.

Chioma Okoli, a children's clothing importer, turned to her 18,000 Facebook followers on September 17th for their thoughts on a tomato puree substitute she'd recently purchased. Disappointed by its sweetness, she sought their opinions. Ms Okoli's post featuring a photo of an opened can of "Nagiko Tomato Mix" by Erisco Foods, a local company, drew mixed reactions from her followers. A comment read, "Stop spoiling my brother's product. If (you) don't like it, use another one then bring it to social media or call customer service." Reacting to the comment, Ms Okoli wrote, "Help me advise your brother to stop ki***ing people with his product, yesterday was my first time of using and it's pure sugar."

India Summons US Diplomat Over Comments On Arvind Kejriwal's Arrest

HT News Network

New Delhi: The government has objected strongly to remarks by a US State Department spokesperson on Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal's arrest last week in connection with the alleged liquor policy scam.

The External Affairs Ministry summoned Gloria Berbena, the US' Acting Deputy Chief of Mission, to a 40-minute meet at its office in Delhi on Wednesday afternoon. In a brief statement released shortly afterwards, the MEA warned of "unhealthy precedents and against "unwarranted aspersions".

"States are expected to be respectful of the sovereignty and internal affairs of

others, and this responsibility is even more so in case of fellow democracies. It could otherwise end up setting unhealthy precedents," the External Affairs Ministry said.

"India's legal processes are based on an independent judiciary which is committed to objective and timely outcomes. Casting aspersions on that is unwarranted," the statement stressed. On Tuesday the US State Department said it is monitoring reports of Mr Kejriwal's arrest, and called on New Delhi to ensure "a fair and timely legal process" for the jailed Aam Aadmi Party leader. The US State Department's comments came, in turn, days after Germany's Foreign Office stressed that Mr Kejriwal, like any other Indian citizen facing charges, is entitled to a fair and impartial trial. The Indian government



reacted strongly to the comment, summoning the German envoy and labelling the Foreign Office spokesperson's remark "blatant interference in internal matters". "We see such remarks as interfering in

our judicial process and undermining the independence of our judiciary," the External Affairs Ministry said. "Biased assumptions are most unwarranted."

Asked about India's protest to Germany, the State Department spokesperson told Reuters, "We refer you to the German Foreign Ministry for comment on their discussions with the Indian government." Earlier this month the Indian government also took exception to comments by its counterpart on the changes to the citizenship law, calling them out as "misplaced, misinformed, and unwarranted".

Arvind Kejriwal was arrested by the Enforcement Directorate last week in connection with the alleged liquor policy scam that has roiled his AAP and provoked furious protests from the opposition.

Lok Sabha Elections 2024; Debate competition on Voters Awareness under SVEEP held at Women's Nawakadal

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MARCH 27: On the directions of the District Election Officer (DEO) Srinagar, a debate competition on Voters Awareness under the banner of Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) was today organised at Government College for Women Nawakadal, here to sensitize students about the significance of participation in electoral process.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Dr. Khalid Hussain Malik; Principal of the College, Prof. Dr.

Mohammed Farooq Mir and Chief Education Officer Srinagar/Nodal Officer SVEEP, Ab Hamid Fani; Officers of District Election Authority, staff of the College and other concerned were present in the event.

The Debate competition was held on the topic 'Is Political Parties' Inter-action a Threat to the Integrity of Adult Franchise'.

The event witnessed an overwhelming participation of the student community. The purpose of the debate was to foster critical thinking, informed discourse, civic engagement among the students regarding the functioning of political parties and



their impact on the integrity of adult franchise. The Additional Deputy Commissioner Srinagar while speaking at the event also acknowledged the deliverance of the student speakers. His remarks served as a rallying call for the students to become active agents of change in building and sustaining a healthy democracy.

Chief Education Officer Srinagar, who is also Nodal Officer SVEEP in his remarks emphasized that the progress of a culturally rich and diverse nation relies upon its youth and their active participation in all democratic engagements, especially in voting and highlighted the pivotal

role of the younger generation in shaping the country's future trajectory. In his opening remarks and welcome address, the Principal of the College emphasized to the students the paramount importance of healthy participation for a thriving democracy. He underscored that democracy thrives on the active engagement of its citizens, and it is through their participation that the democratic process is enriched and strengthened.

Head, Department of Political Science emphasized the pivotal role of political parties within a democratic framework and underscoring the essence of voting.

Lok Sabha Election-2024 HOIs, BLOs of AC-Zainapora imparted Election training

■ HT News Network

SHOPIAN, MARCH 27: In view of upcoming Lok Sabha Elections 2024, Head of Institutions (HOIs), Booth Level Officers (BLOs) and In charge polling stations were today imparted training at Mini Secretariat, Shopian.

The training was held under the supervision of District Election Officer, Shopian, Faz Lul Haseeb.

The main objective of the training was to provide necessary know-how to the staff detailed for election duties in order to prepare them for the smooth conduct of elections in the district. Speaking on the occasion, DEO briefed the staff about their significant role in the election process and directed them to take full benefits of the training program and implement the same throughout their election related duties. BLOs and HOIs were imparted training by the Master Trainers designated for the purpose. Additional Deputy Commissioner, Shopian, Dr. Zakir Hussain Faaz; Assistant Commissioner, Revenue, Shakoor Ahmed Dar; Dy. District Election Officer, Shopian, Jahangir Ahmed; Assistant Commissioner, Panchayat (Nodal Officer, Trainings) Shopian, Manzoor Ahmed, SDM Zainapora, Nisar Ahmad and other concerned were present at the event.

Lok Sabha Elections 2024 EVM/ VVPAT Training conducted for Sectoral/ Zonal Magistrates at Baramulla

■ HT News Network

BARAMULLA, MARCH 27: In view of the upcoming General Elections to the Lok Sabha 2024, a comprehensive hands-on training for Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) for all the Sectoral/Zonal Magistrates of the district Baramulla was today held at Dak Bunglow, here. The training conducted under the guidance and supervision of Deputy District Election Officer and Nodal Officer SVEEP aimed to equip the participants with hands-on experience of utilizing EVMs and VVPATs effectively during the elections. The training imparted by the master trainer focused on detailed working on EVMs and VVPATs, providing detailed operational knowledge to Sectoral/Zonal Magistrates with an aim to enhance competence and confidence in utilizing these essential electoral tools. The session also discussed in detail the administrative procedures and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) laid down by the Election Commission of India (ECI).

Lok Sabha Election-2024 DEO Baramulla visits AC 13-Pattan; inspects SSTs & availability of AMFs at polling stations

■ HT News Network

BARAMULLA, MARCH 27: To review the preparations for the upcoming General Elections to Lok Sabha 2024, the District Election officer (DEO) Baramulla, Minga Sherpa today undertook an extensive tour of Assembly Constituency (AC) 13-Pattan in Baramulla.

During the visit, the DEO inspected several designated polling stations within AC Pattan to ensure that Assured Minimum Facilities (AMF) is available for both voters and polling staff ahead of the upcoming elections.

Minga Sherpa also toured the Temporary Strong Room in Pattan where Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and poll-related materials will be stored during the conduct of the elec-



tions, ensuring strict compliance with the guidelines set by the Election Commission of India.

Meanwhile, the DEO conducted comprehensive inspections of Static

Surveillance Teams posted in AC 13-Pattan to evaluate their preparedness in fulfilling their duties towards ensuring the fair conduct of the election process.

CSE, Civil, Electrical, Electrical & Electronics Aryans Students shine in IKGPTU Examinations

■ HT News Network

Srinagar 27th, March Students of Aryans College of Engineering, Rajpura, Near Chandigarh brought laurels to the college by giving excellent results in the semester 's examinations conducted by I. K. Gujral Punjab Technical University, Kapurthala, Jalandhar.

In B.Tech CSE 7th Sem : 1st Position was bagged by Manisha Choudhary with 9.09 SGPA; 2nd Position by Rajwant Kaur with 8.65 SGPA & 3rd Position bagged by Diksha with 8.52 SGPA. In B.Tech Electrical Engineering, 1st Position was bagged by Akshay Kumar with 8.25 SGPA, 2nd Position by Nisar Ahmed with 8.13 SGPA & 3rd Position by Ganesh Kumar with 8.00 SGPA. In Electrical & Electronics Engineering, first posted was bagged by Vijayinder 8.50 with SGPA, 2nd Position by Gourav Guleria & Waseem Fayaz with 8.38 SGPA, while 3rd position by Jeevan Singh 8.38 SGPA. In Civil Engineering, First Position bagged by shib sunder thakur with 8.88 SGPA, second by sonali Kapoor with 8.42 SGPA & 3rd by Davinder Singh with 8.33 SGPA.

Dr. Anshu Kataria, Chairman, Aryans Group said that such excellent results by the students regularly makes the College one of the most preferred destinations among students. Quality education is the motto of Aryans and the result of the students has proved that we have been successful in our endeavours.

Police arrests 4 gamblers in Sopore, stake money seized

■ HT News Network

Spore March 27: Continuing its drive against social crimes, police have arrested 04 gamblers in Sopore and seized stake money from their possession.

During the patrolling at village Nowpora Kalan, a police party headed by Incharge Police Post Fruit Mandi under the supervision of SDPO Sopore Shri. Sarfaraz Bashir-JKPS apprehended 04 gamblers identified as Abdul Majeed Dar son of Ghulam Nabi Dar, Muhammad Yousuf Dar son of Abdul Rehman Dar, Bashir Ahmad Dar son of Sona Ullah Dar all residents of Nowpora Kalan Sopore and Farooq Ahmad Kundu son of Abdul Rashid Kundu resident of Mohalla Telyan Sopore.

Officers have seized stake money of 23790/- and playing cards from the gamblers. They have been shifted to police station where they remain in custody.

Accordingly, a case under relevant sections of law has been registered at Police Station Sopore and further investigation has been taken up. People found indulging in criminal activities shall be dealt as per law. Community members are requested to share information regarding the crimes in their neighbourhood with the local police units.

Lok Sabha Elections 2024 DEO Bandipora chairs meeting on Absentee Voter Essential Services

■ HT News Network

BANDIPORA, MARCH 27: The District Election Officer (DEO) Bandipora, Shakeel ul Rehman on Wednesday chaired a meeting of Officers to discuss various provisions of Absentee Voter Essential Services (AVES).

The meeting discussed the facility of voting through postal ballots as absentee voters in the category of persons employed on essential services.

The DEO said this measure aims to facilitate the voting process for individuals employed in critical services who may not be able to visit polling stations due to their work commitments.

On the occasion, the concerned departments were asked to submit the list of employees who may not be able to visit their concerned polling stations.

The DEO directed the concerned to take all necessary measures well in advance as per ECI guidelines to facilitate those eligible as absentee voters.

The meeting was attended by Nodal Officer MCC, Umar Shafi Pandit; Dy DEO Mohammad, Rafeeq Bhat; ARO 15- Bandipora, Shabir Ahmad Wani; Nodal Officer postal ballot, Mehraj Wani; Nodal Officer MCMC, Dr. Naseer Ahmad and other concerned.

Lok Sabha Elections 2024 ADC Ganderbal supervises General Training for Poll Staff at GDC Kangan

■ HT News Network

GANDERBAL, MARCH 27: In preparation for the upcoming Lok Sabha Election 2024, the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Ganderbal, Gulzar Ahmad today supervised the ongoing general training for poll staff at Govt Degree College Kangan.

The training programme that began from March 25th is being conducted at three different venues across the district and will continue until March 30th, 2024.

The primary objective of this training program is to equip the poll staff with



essential skills and knowledge to facilitate a seamless and efficient election process.

It covers various facets of election duty, including

the operation of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) and Voter Verifiable Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT) machines, the polling process, and the handling of

election-related documents.

The training sessions are being conducted by District Level Master Trainers, ensuring comprehensive instruction and guidance for the poll staff.

During his visit to GDC Kangan, the ADC, along with the Deputy District Election Officer, inspected the arrangements and briefed the poll staff about their roles and responsibilities during the upcoming elections.

Emphasizing the importance of clarity and proficiency, he urged the staff to utilize the training effectively to enhance their skills and knowledge.

Lok Sabha Election-2024

Mega AC level Awareness programme under SVEEP held at GDC Sogam

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, MARCH 27: As part of the calendar of activities, a constituency level Mega Awareness program under Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) was organized today at Government Degree College Sogam.

The programme was organised to specifically target the female and first time voters of the Kupwara to enthusiastically participate in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

The programme was presided over by District Nodal Officer SVEEP (CEO Kupwara), Abdul Majeed Dar; ZEOs and Principals of Zone Sogam and Khumriyal, besides hundreds of women including young female voters participated in the mega program.

On the occasion, DNO SVEEP appreci-



ated the enthusiasm of voters of assembly constituency Lolab. While highlighting

the importance of the electoral process in shaping the future of the nation, he under-

lined the importance of voter registration and participation in voting for establishing a vibrant and truly peoples' democracy where there is accountability and transparency.

He also emphasized strengthening the democracy through greater electoral participation at the grassroots level.

Speakers, on the occasion urged the youth, women folk, especially young female voters to enthusiastically participate in the upcoming Lok Sabha election and contribute to the strengthening of the democracy. They also highlighted the significance of active participation of the women in the electoral process for betterment of the nation.

Cultural programmes by local Artists, felicitation of student achievers, skit on SVEEP and essay competition, were the main highlights of the program.

The Voting pledge was also administered to the participants.

Benefits of Basil Seeds (Babry Byool)



SAHIL MANZOOR

Fasting during the month of Ramadan is obligatory for every Muslim. Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar and is considered a pious month.

Muslims all over the world strictly follow and perform a number of religious rituals. The fasting time remains from dawn to dusk. Different, healthy, and tasty dishes are being cooked, and fruits, fresh vegetables, and dry fruits have been used in different recipes.

Basil seed is one of the most famous and beneficial during this holy month. Today in this article, let's learn more facts about the basil seed, commonly called babry byool treash in Kashmiri.

Every edible has unique and different nutrient values. Our body needs all the essential components of food, like minerals, fats, proteins, vitamins, carbohydrates, and water. Every edible has its own importance in terms of its composition. Our body needs a balanced diet for its proper and normal functioning; we have to eat and consume all the basic components of food for proper growth and well-being. At the same

time, Muslims across the world practice fasting in the holy month of Ramadhan (Ramzan in Arabic). The fast starts at dawn and ends with dusk. Muslims have faith and believe that fasting cleans our body and purifies and bestows spirituality on the soul. During Ramadan month, only two meals are done, one at the Sehri time and the second at the Iftar. In between Sehri and Iftar, all food items are prohibited. Charity is given to needy people, and prayers are being performed by all the Muslims throughout the world during this holy month of Ramadhan. Muslims are fond of different dishes that are prepared at the time of Iftar and Sehri. Today I am going to enlighten you on the few benefits of basil seeds, commonly known as Babry Byool in the Kashmiri language. Babry Byool is loaded with proteins, minerals, etc. Many people don't get adequate amounts of calcium and magnesium; basil seeds could help them get these essential minerals. Basil seeds help to clean our stomach and gut due to the presence of fibers in them. Basil seeds may help your cholesterol by inhibiting cholesterol absorption in your gut. Basil seeds are rich in plant products like polyphenols and flavonoids. Flavonoids are antioxidants that protect your cells from damage from free radicals. These compounds have anti-inflammatory and anti-cancer properties. The preparation of basil seeds is very easy. Soak the seeds in water for 30 minutes, then add some sugar, coconut, or milk for a better taste. It will keep you hydrated and fill your stomach for a long period of time.

SAHIL MANZOOR
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NEWS

Weight Loss: Here's How Eating Breakfast Can Help You Lose Weight



Breakfast is an important meal that helps you start the day with optimal energy. It also plays a role in maintaining your energy levels throughout the day. Having a healthy, wholesome breakfast can also help you lose weight effectively. It allows your body to recover well after a workout, prevents you from consuming extra calories, keeps you energetic and helps you stay full until lunch. If you are trying to lose weight, read on to know some breakfast options and why breakfast is important for you.

In an Instagram post, Nutritionist Lovneet Batra explains how a healthy, wholesome breakfast helps with weight loss. She also shared some breakfast options to try.

"Skipping breakfast is a common habit. But starting your day-to-day activities without having breakfast pushes your body into stress mode. As a result, your body starts using your muscle mass to produce energy," she said in the video.

"To kick-start your metabolism and have great energy levels throughout the day, it is essential to have breakfast," she added.

Nutrients to focus

The expert recommends having at least 30 grams of protein with 5 grams of fibre for breakfast.

Some food combinations to try: sprouts with paneer, sattu roti with buttermilk or moong dal cheela with peanut chutney.

Benefits of having breakfast for weight loss

Batra mentioned the following ways breakfast is beneficial to your health, especially when trying to lose weight:

1. It helps provide sustained energy levels throughout the day
2. A balanced breakfast can help maintain healthy blood sugar levels
3. You might not experience energy crashes
4. Eating a healthy breakfast can help regulate mood and prevent mood swings
5. You will experience fewer cravings for sugar and caffeine
6. Breakfast supports muscle repair and growth
7. Your metabolism will also improve

It is crucial to eat a nutritious breakfast. Sugary foods with zero or minimum nutrition can make you tired and hungry soon after eating. Therefore, add all essential nutrients to your first meal of the day.

Why papaya is the best bet to break a fast and keep up energy levels

Eating a bowl of papaya every day on empty stomach can keep your constipation woes away apart from nourishing your body with a variety of vitamins and minerals. The wonder fruit is a natural laxative that can keep bowel movements smooth. The sweet and juicy fruit can also work wonders for your energy levels. It is a storehouse of Vitamin C and can also help reduce stress. Papaya, thanks to its digestive enzyme papain and loads of dietary fibre, is a superfood for your gut health as apart from constipation it can also help treat indigestion, heartburn, acid reflux, and stomach ulcers. A nutrient powerhouse, papaya has vitamin A, vitamin C, and vitamin E, folate, magnesium, folate, potassium, and copper. Papaya also makes sure you absorb nutrients of your meal better. Apart from that papaya can help detoxify the body naturally. Eating papaya in morning can boost satiety as it can keep hunger pangs at bay. Papaya is rich in enzyme Papain which lends many benefits to the fruit, especially in relieving constipation and aiding digestion. Consuming papaya in the morning on empty stomach can help in body detox and digestion. Papaya fruit is rich in antioxidants and one can consume papaya in breakfast or in the evening," says Shruti K Bhardwaj, Chief Dietician Zydus Hospitals, Ahmedabad.

Dr Rohini Patil, MBBS & Nutritionist,



Founder of Nutracry Lifestyle, who specialises in the field of diet and nutrition feels the ideal time of eating papaya is two hours post any meal. "Choosing to consume papaya on an 'empty stomach' typically refers to a period of about two hours post any meal. During this time, digestive processes are less active, creating an optimal environment for several benefits," says Dr Patil, as she elaborates on benefits of eating the fruit every day.

1. **Optimized digestion**
Enzymes like papain in papaya work more efficiently when digestive activity is reduced, enhancing protein digestion and minimizing the risk of indigestion.
2. **Increased nutrient absorption**
Consuming papaya two hours post-meal ensures that the fruit's nutrients are absorbed effectively, as there is less competition from other foods being processed in the digestive system.
3. **Natural detoxification**
The two-hour post-meal window aligns with a phase when the digestive system is less burdened, allowing papaya's fibre content to effectively support natural detoxification and the elimination of waste and toxins.
4. **Stabilized blood sugar levels**
Waiting 2 hours after a meal to consume papaya helps in avoiding potential spikes in blood sugar levels, promoting better glycaemic control.
5. **Enhanced satiety**
Consuming papaya during this period contributes to a sense of fullness, making it an ideal snack for those seeking weight management benefits.
6. **Improved nutrient utilization**
The body is in a state of heightened nutrient utilization during this time, ensuring that the vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants in papaya are effectively utilized by the body.
7. **Prevention of digestive discomfort**
Having papaya two hours post-meal reduces the likelihood of digestive discomfort or bloating that can occur when combining certain fruits with a heavy meal.

Women Should Add These Zinc-Rich Foods To Their Diet For Better Health

Incorporating zinc-rich foods into the diet is important for overall health, particularly for women, as zinc plays a crucial role in various bodily functions including immune function, wound healing, DNA synthesis, and reproductive health. Keep reading as we share the many benefits of consuming zinc-rich foods for women.

1. Poultry

Chicken and turkey are good sources of zinc, which is essential for proper immune function, wound healing, and cell growth. Choose skinless, lean cuts of poultry and prepare them by grilling, baking, or roasting.

2. Legumes

Legumes are rich in zinc and provide a host of other nutrients such as fibre, protein, and antioxidants. Zinc from legumes supports immune function and helps maintain healthy skin. Incorporate legumes



into salads, soups, stews, or curries for a nutritious boost.

3. Seeds

Seeds such as pumpkin seeds, hemp seeds, and sunflower seeds, particularly pumpkin seeds, are rich in zinc and also provide healthy fats, fibre, and antioxidants. Zinc from seeds supports immune function and may help regulate hormone levels. Enjoy seeds as a snack, add them to yogurt, salads, or homemade granola, or sprinkle them over dishes for added crunch and

nutrition.

4. Nuts

Nuts such as cashews, almonds, and pine nuts are a good source of zinc, along with healthy fats, protein, and fibre. Zinc from nuts supports immune function and aids in wound healing. Enjoy nuts as a snack, sprinkle them over salads or oatmeal, or use them as a topping for yogurt or smoothie bowls.

5. Dairy products

Dairy products like cheese and yogurt contain zinc, calcium, and protein,

which are essential for bone health, immune function, and muscle repair. Include moderate amounts of dairy products in your diet, opting for low-fat or non-fat options to reduce saturated fat intake.

6. Whole grains

Whole grains are a source of zinc as well as fibre, vitamins, and minerals. Zinc from whole grains supports immune function and helps regulate appetite and metabolism. Incorporate whole grains into meals such as salads, stir-fries, soups, or as a side dish with lean protein and vegetables.

7. Dark chocolate

Dark chocolate contains zinc along with antioxidants like flavonoids, which have been linked to numerous health benefits including improved heart health and cognitive function. Enjoy dark chocolate with at least 70% cocoa content in moderation as a treat or dessert.

Managing Diabetes During The Holy Month Of Ramzan

For those with diabetes, however, this sacred period brings forth a unique set of challenges. Balancing religious obligations with health considerations can be daunting, yet essential for maintaining well-being during this holiest month of the Islamic calendar.

Fasting from dawn until sunset is a fundamental pillar of Ramadan. However, for individuals managing diabetes, this abstinence from food and drink can cause fluctuations in blood glucose levels.

To sustain energy levels and nourish the body, rituals include pre-dawn meals and evening feasts. However, for individuals with diabetes, these meals require careful consideration to prevent any sudden spikes or drops. Alongside a well-balanced nutritional plan, regular monitoring is important for people living with diabetes.

Accurate and real-time blood glucose readings can be constantly tracked with the help of prick-free devices like continuous glucose monitoring (CGM). This combination of a balanced diet and regular monitoring is essential for those fasting during this time, ensuring effective management of blood glucose levels throughout the holy month.

Dr. Anil Ballani, MBBS, MD, Con-



sultant Physician, P.D. Hinduja and Lilavati Hospital, Mumbai said, "According to a recent ICMR study, 101 million people in India are living with diabetes, underscoring the importance of effective holistic management. Amidst the sacred observance of Ramadan, continuous glucose monitoring (CGM) emerges as an ally for people living with diabetes. Through real-time tracking of blood sugar levels, CGM empowers individuals to identify and manage any glucose spikes associated with pre- and post-fast meals.

By harnessing CGM insights, people can make informed diet decisions. This can help them navigate the portion sizes and meal timing along with making diabetes-specific nutrition choices that can address their needs. The symbiotic relationship between CGM data and dietary decisions fosters both effective blood glucose management and a sense of

empowerment.

Here are a few tips to manage your diabetes while you observe Ramadan this year:

Regularly monitor blood glucose levels: It is extremely important to consistently check your blood glucose levels. CGM devices support real-time glucose monitoring instead of capturing blood sugar levels at a particular point in time.

The data is easily accessible on your smartphone, too, and can support easier decision-making related to food, physical activity, and therapy. Utilizing data from these devices can enable individuals to take corrective actions with the meal plan and maintain health during this period. Properly recharge your body with nutrients during Iftar: According to tradition, the fast is broken with dates and fruits, which is followed by a properly balanced meal. Make sure to drink water and hydrate yourself well, and avoid highly caffeinated or sugary drinks like coffee, tea, and soft drinks.

It is important to have a stable meal plan striking a balance between intake of carbohydrates, protein, and fats. Have more nutrients and fibre-rich starchy foods like oats, multi-grain bread, vegetables, lentils (dal), and proteins like fish, tofu, and nuts.

PCB contests FICA claim of delayed player payments in PSL

Cricket's global union has described the landscape of T20 leagues as the 'Wild West' when it comes to player payments

MUMBAI: The PCB has denied that there has ever been a delay in player payments in the Pakistan Super League, following a report by cricket's global players' union which registered reports of late or non-payment across several major franchise leagues over the last 24 months.

The Federation of International Cricketers' Associations (FICA) launched a new 'leagues hub' on Wednesday morning, which is designed to be a resource for players, their agents and players' associations to help them navigate what they described as the "Wild West" of global franchise leagues.

FICA said that one player in four has experienced payment issues in sanctioned leagues and that it has received reports of

payment issues in a number of major franchise tournaments. These include the IPL and WPL, the Bangladesh Premier League, the Lanka Premier League, Canada's Global T20, Major League Cricket and the Abu Dhabi T10, as well as the PSL.

Usman Wahla, the PCB's director of international cricket operations, denied that the PSL has ever paid players late. He told ESPNcricinfo: "There is no - and never has been - any delay in player payments in any of our nine [PSL] seasons... we have written to FICA to rectify this in their document."

The PSL's contract terms stipulate that players should receive 70% of their fee within seven days of their arrival in Pakistan, and the remaining 30% within 40 days of their



final league match. The PCB previously denied any issue with late payments across the PSL's history when James Faulkner, the Australian allrounder, pulled out of the final stages of the 2022 season alleging that the board had failed to honour his contract.

"In the seven years of the HBL Pakistan Super League, no player has ever complained about the nonfulfillment of the PCB's contractual obligations," the PCB said at the time.

Tom Moffat, FICA's CEO, said in a press release: "The growth of domestic leagues around the world has been a great thing for cricket and has provided a number of new opportunities for players. However, inconsistencies with the treatment of players have led to the landscape being considered by many as the 'Wild West'."

"FICA continues to advocate for fit for purpose global regulation and increased accountability in the domestic leagues landscape to protect all stakeholders, including players. This should include contract mini-

mum standards and effective pay enforcement mechanisms, for example.

"In the meantime we want [to] play our role in supporting players, their associations, and agents, by providing information in the Leagues Hub to assist their decision making. We also welcome engagement from domestic leagues who wish to work directly with players collectively to raise standards and ensure their league aligns with international best practice in an increasingly competitive market."

The BCCI were contacted for comment in response to FICA's findings that players have faced late or non-payment issues in both of the major franchise leagues which it governs: the IPL and the WPL.

It's a near perfect game : Ruturaj on win against GT

CHENNAI: Having made two out of two after the baton was passed to him by talismanic M S Dhoni, five time champions and title holder Chennai Super Kings (CSK) skipper Ruturaj Gaikwad said last night's comprehensive 63 win over Gujarat Titans (GT) was a near perfect game as the team excelled in all the three departments.

Speaking after the team's victory, which took CSK to the top of the table, Ruturaj, who has now made it 2-0 as an IPL captain, said it was thrilling about the second win in a row.

In a repeat of last year's summit clash, CSK, asked to bat first, scored 206 for six, riding on a breezy start at the top and Shivam Dube's swashbuckling knock, and restricted GT to 143 for eight, with all the three medium pacers Deepak Chahar, Tushar Deshpande and Mustafizur Rahman

chipping in with two wickets each to ensure a comfortable win for the home team in front of a crowd of more than 30,000 at the M.A.Chidambaram Stadium.

"It was a near to perfect game, in the sense of batting-bowling-fielding, all three departments", he said.

"Against a team like Gujarat, we had to produce this kind of performance. (100+ runs in first ten overs)", the skipper, who scored 46 in 36 balls after a brisk opening stand with Rachin Ravindra (46, 20 balls), said.

"In Chennai when you are not sure how the wicket will be, you must bat well irrespective of when you're batting. Having wickets in the last ten (overs) really helps here", he observed.

"Personally, thought Rachin batted and put us against in the game. Jinx (Ajinkya Rahane) and Shivam Dube (51, 23 balls) played



Having figures in three franchisees, Shivam Dube, who was adjudged man of the match for his scintillating effort, said "this franchise is something different from all others. They are giving me the freedom. They want me to do better and I also want to win some matches."

On whacking the short balls, he said "I have worked in that way. It is helping me. I know they will bowl me some short balls and I'm ready for that. They want me to score with a higher strike-rate and that is what I'm doing."

Losing GT skipper Shubman Gill, who fell early in a tough chase, said his team was outplayed when the CSK was batting and then their bowlers were spot on and executed their plans well.

After losing three wickets by the eighth over, GT never really seemed to be in the hunt in the

run chase and lost wickets at regular intervals, amid mounting asking rate, as the CSK bowlers kept them on tight leash.

"They outplayed us when they were batting and when they bowled their execution was spot on. We backed ourselves to get a good powerplay score, but once we couldn't we were always playing catch up", he said.

About his team's bowling, Gill said "in T20 you can always talk about 10-15 runs here and there but eventually it is about how much they got. We were expecting to chase anything between 190 to 200 but we can talk about how we could've stopped a few more boundaries."

"Going into the match chasing on this wicket, we always expected to chase 190-200 because it was a good wicket with grass covering. We let ourselves down while batting", he added.

ISTANBUL TO HOST 2027 EUROPEAN GAMES

ANKARA: Istanbul will host the fourth edition of the European Games in 2027, Mayor Ekrem Imamoglu said on Wednesday.

Earlier in the day, the Executive Committee of the European Olympic Committees (EOC ExCOM) awarded the fourth edition of the games to Istanbul.



"Today we feel enthusiasm for a historic day in the name of sports, Istanbul, and our country. We feel proud that the 2027 European Games will take place in Turkey, in our city," the mayor told a press conference, adding that the city authorities are also preparing to host the 2036 Olympic Games as there is such a possibility.

The European Games are held every four years, and the first edition was held in Baku in 2015.

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- Pen/Caps
- T-Shirts
- Calendars
- Embroidery
- Door Hangers