

# Good Morning Kashmir

**Office of LG J&K**  
@OfficeOfLGJandK



Today, the Dairy sector is making enormous social and economic contribution and developing vibrant ecosystem of rural milk producers through Cooperative Societies and Self-Help Groups to generate significant economic activity & employment.

Srinagar • Friday 17, March 2023 • Vol: 14 • Issue No:65 • Page:12 • Price: ₹ 5/- (Air Surcharge for Delhi, Jammu & Ladakh 50/- Paisa) RNI No. JKENG/2010/36998

## Light Rain Forecast In J&K

**GMK News Network**

Srinagar- Amid forecast for generally cloudy weather with light rain at isolated to scattered places till March 20, the minimum temperature recorded further rise at most places in Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday.

A meteorological department official said that Srinagar recorded a low of 5.5°C against 5.1°C on the previous night and it was 1.8°C above normal for the summer capital.

Qazigund, he said, •P-02

## Elderly Woman Escapes Unknown Attacker In Srinagar

**GMK News Network**

Srinagar- An elderly woman claimed to have escaped narrowly after being attacked by some unknown person in Shalimar area in Srinagar.

In a video clip, now viral on social-media, the woman a resident of Puzalpura Shalimar, said, "She was taken aback... I was in shed when someone

# Dairy sector major contributor in growth of rural economy: LG Sinha

Addresses inauguration ceremony of Saran Dairy Producer Co. Ltd in Bihar

**GMK News Network**

BIHAR: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Thursday said that the dairy sector has been a major contributor to the growth of the rural economy in India.

Addressing the inauguration ceremony of Saran Dairy Producer Co. Ltd at Gopalganj, Lt Governor highlighted the role of Dairy Sector in uplifting the rural economy, lives of small and marginal farmers and strengthening the spirit of Cooperatives.

"Dairy Sector has strengthened the rural economy and enhanced the economic condition of millions of small and marginal farmers of the country. This sector has empowered the women through Self Help groups and they are playing the key role in delivering social and economic benefits to the rural economy," said the Lt Governor.

The Lt Governor remembered the valuable contributions of great personalities like Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Tribhuvandas and Verghese Kurien in strengthening the Cooperative movement and laying the foundation of Milk Revolution in India.



After Independence, Gujarat and Bihar witnessed the rise of the Cooperative revolution. Cooperatives have worked as a strong pillar for economic and social development of the poor & marginalized sections, he added.

Today, the Dairy sector is making enormous social and economic contribution and developing vibrant ecosystem of rural milk producers through Cooperative Societies & Self-Help Groups to generate significant economic activity & employment, the Lt Governor further added.

The Lt Governor appreciated the endeavour of the Saran Dairy Producer Co. Ltd for bringing together the unorganized rural milk producers under the structure of Dairy Cooperative Societies, Self-Help Groups and providing them an opportunity •P-02

▶▶ 'Prime Minister's mantra of 'Sahkar Se Samridhhi' will guide us on our path to improving rural economy'

▶▶ 'Dairy Sector has enhanced economic condition of millions of small, marginal farmers'

▶▶ 'Dairy sector is making enormous social, economic contribution'

▶▶ 'Developing vibrant ecosystem of rural milk producers through Cooperative Societies'

## B'pora-Gurez road re-opens for traffic after two months

**GMK News Network**

BANDIPORA, MARCH 16: After remaining closed for more than two months due to heavy Snowfall in Gurez valley, Bandipora-Gurez road was thrown open for traffic on Thursday.

Lt. General Rajeev Chaudhry, VSM DGBR formally opened the road by flagging-off the first caravan of vehicles. Major General Girish Kalia, VSM GOC 28 Inf Div, Brigadier Pranav Kumar Cdr 109 Inf Bde, Lt. Col. Abhishek Kumar, OC 56 RCC Beacon. ADDC Bandipora Ali Afsar •P-02

## Man posing as top PMO functionary arrested in Srinagar

**Agencies**

Srinagar: In a high profile case, Jammu and Kashmir police have arrested a man from 'Gujarat' posing as Additional Director (Strategy & Campaigns) Prime Minister's Office, New Delhi, in summer capital Srinagar. Reliable sources said that after getting

## Synergy among security agencies scuttled evil intentions of Pak in J&K: DGP

**GMK News Network**

Jammu: Synergy between security and intelligence agencies has frustrated the evil intentions of Pakistan in Jammu and Kashmir, Director General of Police Dilbag Singh said on Thursday as he reviewed the security situation along the borders in the twin districts of Poonch and Rajouri.

Singh said the neighbouring country is using all methods to involve the local youth in the drug menace. He directed the officers to maintain alertness on the borders and in the hinterland to keep a check on transportation of drugs and

weapons as well as other criminal activities.



The DGP was addressing a joint meeting of police, Army and CRPF officers in the border district of Rajouri, a police spokesman said.

The meeting, among others, was attended by Additional Director General of Police, Jammu zone, Mukesh •P-02

## Historic T5 Panthyal tunnel opens for traffic

**JahangeerGanaie**

Srinagar: In a very much relief step to the commuters, the historical T5 tunnel of the four-lane road project at Panthyal between Ramban and Banihal has been thrown open for traffic on Thursday.

An official of the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) said that the approach road to the tunnel along other allied works were completed successfully on Wednesday and the tunnel has been thrown open for traffic on Thursday.

He said that the tunnel is going to help commuters to bypass the most vulnerable spots on the National Highway in Pan-

## Strategic Srinagar-Leh highway thrown open for traffic

**GMK News Network**

Zojila pass: The strategic 434 km long Srinagar-Leh highway was thrown open by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) in a record 68 days, officials said Thursday. Talking to reporters after throwing the highway open for traffic officially, Director General Border Roads Organisation (BRO) Lt General Rajeev Chaudhary,said, it is always a toughest challenge to throw open Zojila pass. "It was due to the hardwork of BRO officials and men that we were able to throw the pass open in a record

•P-02

thayal.

He said that the work on the twin-tube 880-metre tunnel, part of the highway realignment project, started in 2020.

Our focus will be on Jaiswal Bridge and the double-lane of Ramban Flyover and the Bani-

## Made-in-India ATAGS

## Govt clears defence acquisitions worth Rs 70,500 cr

**IANs**

New Delhi: The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) on Thursday has accorded Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) for capital acquisition amounting to over Rs 70,500 crore under Buy Indian-Indigenously Designed, Developed and Manufactured, an official statement said.

Out of the total proposals, Indian Navy proposals constitute more than Rs 56,000 crore, which largely includes indigenous BrahMos missiles, Shakti Electronic Warfare (EW) systems, Utility Helicopters-Maritime etc

A Defence Ministry statement said that to keep pace

with the emerging technologies and counter the adversaries in the western and northern fronts, •P-02



## GSI proposes more exploration in J&K to identify lithium resources

**IANs**

New Delhi: The Geological Survey of India (GSI) proposed to carry out more exploration activities in J&K for identifying lithium resources, J&K will be estimated on completion of further exploration, it said.

GSI generates baseline geoscience data through mapping, e.g. geological, geochemical, geophysical which is pre-requisite for identifying lithium resources, district during current field season 2022-23 and the work is in progress, the reply said.

Based on the mapping outcome, more exploration programmes on various mineral commodities in-



the Parliament was informed.

GSI, an attached office of Ministry of Mines, carried out a G3 stage mineral exploration project during Field Season 2020-21 and 2021-22 in Salal-Haimna areas of Reasi district, Jammu & Kashmir and estimated an inferred resource (G3) of 5.9 million tonnes of lithium ore and the report has been handed over to the J&K government, Coal and Mines Minister Pralhad Joshi told the Lok Sabha in a written reply.

The estimated value of lithium in

ing the potential area for systematic mineral exploration. Based on the mapping data, GSI carries out systematic mineral exploration activities for various major mineral commodities including lithium.

As a follow up of lithium exploration in SalalHaimna areas of Reasi district, the GSI has taken up another reconnaissance G4 stage exploration programme on lithium and associated mineral in Panasa-Dugga - Baldhanun - Chakar - Sangarmarg (Saro-da-Bas) area of Reasi

cluding lithium will be taken up in future in different parts of the country including Jammu & Kashmir.

The GSI and Mineral Exploration & Consultancy Limited (MECL) have taken up a number of exploration projects of lithium and will take up more projects in future. Ministry of Mines provides 100 per cent funding from National Mineral Exploration Trust (NMET) to state governments and private exploration agencies, if they take up lithium exploration projects.

**INOX** LIVE the MOVIE SRINAGAR

www.inoxmovies.com | @inoxsrinagar | #inoxsrinagar

## MOVIE SCHEDULE

**FRIDAY, 17<sup>th</sup> MARCH**

TU JHOOTHI MAIN MAKKAR	MRS. CHATTERJEE VS NORWAY	PATHAAN	SHAZAM: FURY OF THE GODS
			
6:00 PM (Hindi)	3:30 PM, 6:30 PM (Hindi)	3:00 PM (Hindi)	2:40 PM (English) 5:30 PM (Hindi)
U/A	U/A	U/A	U/A

**INOX CINEMA SHIVPORA SRINAGAR**

Call 95416 13868  
For assistance with tickets

## ADC B'pora leads market checking team; takes spot action against violators

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Bandipora, Waseem Raja on Thursday urged the people of Bandipora to report the unethical practices of the shopkeepers to the administration and assured of strict action.

He said this while interacting with customers during a market checking in Bandipora town conducted on the directions of Deputy Commissioner.

A Joint inspection team of different departments including Revenue, Municipal Council Bandipora, Animal and sheep Husbandry, DCS&CA, legal metrology, Drug Control Office, ARTO, Food Safety and Police conducted an intensive market checking to review and monitor the fair functioning of various markets of Bandipora besides ensuring availability of quality products and to curb black marketing, profiteering of essential commodities in view of the rising demand during the upcoming holy month of Ramadan.

ADC interacted with

shopkeepers of different trades and also got the first hand feedback from the consumers present there. He also checked the bills of the customers at shops selling essential commodities to check the pricing.

He urged the consumers to know their rights and pay only according to the rates notified by the government while purchasing essential commodities.

While interacting with the customers he urged them to be aware about their rights as consumers. He asked them to get proper receipts against each shopping and if they feel they are duped they can report concerned consumer courts and also report to district administration, concerned departments and other relevant forums.

ADC appreciated the shopkeepers who were following all the rules and regulations and complimented them for being fair in their business.

During the inspection, different departments also fined some erring shopkeepers for different violations and realized an amount of Rs 17000 as fine.

Huge quantity of polythene was recovered from the shopkeepers and destroyed on spot to curb the menace of polythene pollution.

During the inspection, the ADC stressed on the traders to follow the rules in letter and spirit and avoid illegal and unethical practices.

The ADC directed all the concerned officers to ensure regular inspections of markets falling within their respective jurisdiction and take strict action against those indulging in overpricing and other malpractices especially during the holy month.

He said that the drive will continue on a regular basis across all district markets to keep a check on traders and shopkeepers for indulging in overcharging and other unethical activities.

Meanwhile some vehicles parked on roadside were also lifted and black listed on spot by ARTO Bandipora. On spot directions were provided to the department for regular checkings and surprise visits to end illegal parking and congestion on roads.

## Two Days Management Dev Programme Concludes at GMC B'la

GMK NEWS NETWORK

Baramulla, March 16: Valedictory function of Two Days State Level Management Development Programme (MDP) for Nursing Professionals and Tutors of Nursing Colleges in Baramulla, Kupwara and Bandipora districts Organized By Academy of Hospital Administration (AHA), India in Collaboration with Government Medical College Baramulla Thursday concluded at GMC Baramulla.

The Valedictory function was presided over by Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Dr Syed Sehrish Asgar as the chief guest while as Principal Government Medical College Baramulla, Dr (Prof) Iffat Hussain, Joint Director Planning, Mohammad Yousuf Rather, Chief Medical officer Baramulla, Dr Bashir Ahmad Malik, Medical Superintendent Gandhi Nagar Hospital Jammu, Medical superintendent GMC Baramulla, Dr Parvaiz Masoodi, Doctors, Nurses besides a large number of participants including students were present in the function.

Topics of Two Days State Level Management Development Programme (MDP) for Nursing Professionals and Tutors of Nursing Colleges include Medical Negligence, Communication & Soft Skills,

Disaster Management Role of Nursing Staff, Skilled Based Methods of Teaching and Learning & Bridging the Theory and Clinical Gap, Quality Assurance in nursing.

ly results in improvement of health. Dr Sehrish emphasized the importance of MDP programmes as it trains the doctors, nurses and other paramedical staff to deal with the patients.

kind in Health & Medical education department. Other speakers also highlighted the importance of organizing the programme and expressed hope that the programme will benefit the Nursing Profes-



Role of Nursing In Prevention of Hospital Infection, Ethical & Legal Issues Related to Nursing Management in Hospitals, Challenges in Management Clinical Services (Accident and Emergency Services Operation Theater), HR & Conflict Management,

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Sehrish Asgar advised the doctors and nurses to adopt the humble approach while dealing with the patients. She said that the Development of trust enables the patient to comply with the doctor's guidance, which consequent-

She impressed upon all nurses and doctors to further forward whatever they have learned to many other in there down lines and become master trainers to spread the message of AHA, which is continuing education programme, first of its

sionals and Tutors to a large extent in all the relevant matters. Meanwhile, the DC distributed the mementos and certificates among the Management team members and delegates, besides honouring the speakers and moderators.

### from FRONT PAGE

#### Light Rain

recorded a low of 4.2°C against 3.0°C on the previous night and it was 1.9°C above normal for the gateway town of Kashmir.

Pahalgam, he said, recorded a low of 0.8°C, the same on the previous night and it was 2.0°C above normal for the famous tourist resort in south Kashmir's Anantnag district.

Kokernag recorded a low of 6.3°C against 5.9°C on the previous night and it was 3.8°C above normal for the place, the officials said.

Gulmarg recorded a low of 1.5°C against 1.4°C on the previous night and it was 4.8°C above normal for the world famous skiing resort in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, he said.

In Kupwara town, he said, the mercury settled at 3.2°C against 2.6°C on the previous night and it was 0.9°C above normal for the north Kashmir area.

Jammu recorded a low of 15.0°C against 15.6°C on the previous night. It was 1.0°C above normal for J&K's winter capital, he said.

Banihal, he said, recorded a low of 5.6°C (above normal by 1.4°C), Batote 9.5°C (above normal by 2.8°C), Katra 14.2°C (2.5°C above normal) and Bhardarwah 7.4°C (4.4°C above normal).

Ladakh's Leh and Kargil, he said, recorded a low of minus 3.6°C and minus 4.9°C respectively.

He said "generally cloudy" was expected during the next 24 hours.

"Afternoon thunderstorms at isolated places can't be ruled out," the official said, adding, "Generally cloudy with intermittent light rain with thunder at scattered places was expected during March 17-20." (GNS)

#### Elderly Woman

came and took me by my neck... The person had left the gate open and without saying anything (he aimed at my neck) with a knife in his hand."

"When I called for help, the person kept his knife down and instead tried to strangle me."

When contacted, a police official said that a police team has reached the spot to ascertain the facts. (GNS)

#### Dairy sector major

to earn a better livelihood.

He further called upon the women self-help groups to join this noble initiative in large numbers to become socially and financially empowered.

All the stakeholders, Dairy units must come together to support small & marginal farmers, youth and women to create a strong and vibrant force of dairy entrepreneurs in the country, the Lt Governor observed.

It will be a significant step to strengthen the spirit of cooperation. The Hon'ble Prime Minister's mantra of 'Sahkar Se Samridhhi' will guide us on our path to improving the rural economy and protecting the interest of the farmers, said the Lt Governor.

The Lt Governor called upon the dairy farmers & milk production units to focus on value-addition to meet the increasing market demand and to make the sector more lucrative.

Total milk production had reached 221 million tonnes in 2022 from 138 million tonnes in 2013 which has also increased the income of the farmers and other stakeholders associated with the sector, he noted.

The growth rate of milk production in India is more than 6% per year which is more than the milk production rate of other countries. There has also been an increase of 6% in the number of total milch animals which is an encouraging sign for the dairy sector, added the Lt Governor.

Sh Kumar Rakesh, Director Saran Dairy Producer Co. Ltd; milk producers, farmers and prominent citizens from all walks of life were present on the occasion.

#### B'pora-Gurez

Khan, SDM Gurez Dr Mudasar, DDC member Tulail Raja Aijaz, DDC member Gurez Tasleem and other senior officers of the district were present on the occasion.

The officers invited two female siblings Maryam Mudasar and Fatima Mudasar to formally throw open the road for traffic.

Officials said the traffic on the 85 kilometer road

stretch will be allowed in a controlled manner and the decision came as Border Roads Organisation (BRO) completed the Snow clearance operation in a record time this year.

He said the road remained closed for about 58 days at a stretch due to heavy accumulation of Snow in the Gurez valley, especially at Razdan top. Officials said Snow clearance started soon after the weather improved and was completed in a record time.

Officials said that the first convoy of vehicles was allowed as a trial run towards their destination with proper precautionary measures, including the use of chains at certain places.

ADDC said traffic will be allowed in a restricted and regulated manner and for restricted hours till the weather improves fully and the road is not slippery.

The road remains closed owing to heavy snowfall in Gurez Valley. "The road usually opens in April but this year, the road was opened early."

The ADC Ali Afsar Khan lauded the efforts of BRO and MED for overtime to ensure early opening of the road.

Earlier, during road closure the District Administration put in helicopter services to different locations of Gurez to ensure evacuation of patients and other emergency situations including airlifting students who had to appear in different exams besides airlifting employees.

#### Man posing as top

specific information regarding a man identified as Kiran Patel son of Jagdish Patel posing as Additional Director (Strategy & Campaigns) PMO, New Delhi, the police acted swiftly and arrested the person.

Accordingly, an FIR no 19 of 2023 was registered by Srinagar police in Police Station Nishat reads "on 02-03-2023 a reliable information received by Police Station Nishat has revealed that a fraudster namely Kiran Bhai Patel son of Jagdish Bhai Patel resident of Gujarat has by virtue of criminal intention indulged in activities within the jurisdiction of this police station and other parts of Kashmir valley and by employing high degree of forged means. Kiran Bhai has impersonated himself as senior government official of India."

"The said individual, by resorting to cheating, forgery and impersonation has duped gullible people and also intentionally induced people to do and also to omit to do activities, under a well-knit plan for securing monetary as well as material benefits," the FIR reads.

As per reports, Patel was also able to get a security from the Jammu and Kashmir police and was staying at Hotel Lalit in Room no 1107. The 'fraudster' as per reports had visited multiple places in Kashmir including Doodpatri in central Kashmir's Budgam district. At Doodpatri the 'fraudster' was accompanied by an SDM rank officer.

Sources also revealed that Patel also met at least two Deputy Commissioner during his stay in the valley.

On Thursday, a local court in Srinagar sent Patel to judicial custody.

The fraudster as per FIR has been booked under section 419, 420, 467, 468, 471 IPC at police station Nishat while further investigation into the matter is going on. (KDC)

#### Govt clears defence

the necessity of the new weapons and its integration with the delivery platforms was felt by the government. To achieve the same objectives, the DAC, in its meeting chaired by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, accorded the approval to Indian Air Force's proposal for Long Range Stand-Off Weapon (LRSOW) which will be indigenously designed, developed and integrated on SU-30 MKI aircraft.

For artillery modernisation, in addition to the ongoing Dhanush Gun System and K-9 Vajra-T Gun System, AoN for procurement of 155mm/52 Caliber Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS) along with High Mobility Vehicles (HMs) and Gun Towing Vehicles (GTVs) for the Indian Army was accorded.

The DAC also accorded AoN for procurement of Advance Light Helicopters (ALH) MK-III from Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL) for the Indian Coast

Guard. The helicopter will be able to carry a suite of surveillance sensors which will enhance the surveillance capabilities. It will also give full night capability and Instrument Flight Rules (IFR) capability for operations of the Indian Coast Guard.

Including these proposals, the total AoN granted for capital acquisition in financial year 2022-23 is over Rs 2.71 lakh crore, out of which 99 per cent of the procurement will be sourced from Indian industries. Such quantum of indigenous procurement will galvanise the Indian industries towards achieving the goal of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat'.

The defence Ministry of officials said that While this additional procurement of BrahMos missile system will enhance the maritime strike capabilities and anti-surface warfare operations, the addition of utility helicopters will multiply the operational readiness of the Indian Navy in the domain of Search and Rescue operations, Casualty Evacuation, Humanitarian Assistance Disaster Relief (HADR) etc. Similarly, Shakti EW systems will equip and modernise the frontline naval ships to counter the adversaries.

Accordance of AoN for Medium Speed Marine Diesel Engine under Make-I category is a significant step as, for the first time, India is venturing into the development and manufacturing of such engines indigenously to achieve self-reliance & leverage the capabilities of the Industries towards the goal of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat', the Defence Ministry official added.

#### Historic T5 Panthyal

"3cheers for @NHAI Official and its terrific Ground Zero team for diverting traffic thru Tunnel T5. Bye Bye Panthyal's treacherous stretch!" DC Ramban Mussarat Zia tweeted.

Officials said that opening this tunnel will put an end to the threat of shooting stones which have consumed numerous human lives.

He said that opening of the T5 tunnel would end the fear of shooting stones forever along with frequent traffic jams on the stretch.

Pertinently in February, Chief Secretary Arun Kumar Mehta while taking stock of the construction works on the tunnel had directed the NHAI to make all efforts to open the T5 tunnel on the Panthyal stretch of the highway by March 15, Jaiswal Bridge by March 31, and the double-lane of Ramban Flyover and the Banihal Bypass by April 15.

Notably, the four-lane project of the 270-km highway, the only all-weather road linking Kashmir with the rest of the country, started in 2011. The work, which included a number of small and major tunnels, bridges and flyovers is likely to be completed by next year after missing several deadlines over the past decade—(KNO)

#### Strategic Srinagar-Leh

number of 68 days. For the past three years, we



have been breaking our own records," he said, adding that first the road was thrown open in 110 days, then in 78 days and now in just 68 days.

"Our efforts will be make the road through in just 60 days (two months)," he said. "BRO officials and men are fully acclimatized and familiar with the area. No equipment was damaged during the road opening process."

He said the locals who work with the BRO are be-

ing provided with adequate wages, shelter and food besides warm clothes. "Some people are with us since 25 years. We are like a family," the DG BRO said.

He said that early opening of this road helps save RS 7 Crore a day for the government. "This road helps to send defence equipment including guns, bullets and tanks besides troops to Ladakh. Similarly, the early road opening helps give an economic push to the Ladakh region who remain cut-off from the rest of the world for six months," the DG said, adding that "people of Ladakh can come to Srinagar through this road and carry out their economic activities—(KNO)

#### Synergy among security

Singh; General Officer Commanding, 25 Infantry Division, Y S Ahlawat; General Officer Commanding, Romeo Force, Mohit Trivedi; Deputy Inspector General of Police, Rajouri-Poonch range, Mohammed Haseeb Mughal, he said.

The spokesman said the meeting discussed infiltration attempts by terrorists, supply of weapons and narcotics from across the border, besides other issues of security concerns.

"The need and means to further augment the security grid was also discussed," he said.

The DGP appreciated the synergy between the security forces and Intelligence agencies and said the coordinated efforts have marred many evil intentions of Pakistan and its terror agencies.

He stressed on further strengthening the intelligence network at the grassroots level.

Singh also enjoined upon the officers to put in more efforts to track down the terrorists responsible for the deadly attack on Dangri village early this year. Seven people were killed and 14 others injured when terrorists attacked the village on January 1.

Directing alertness on borders and hinterland, the DGP emphasised on using the border Special Police Officers (SPOs) for creating a strong intelligence network besides utilising the services of Village Defence Guards more efficiently and in an organised way to counter terrorism.

"Pakistan is using all methods to involve our youth in the drug menace but regular seizure of various consignments of narcotics has spoiled its evil intentions. Stern action and synchronised efforts of all forces will definitely demolish the whole network of drug trade," he said.

He said Pakistani agencies are indulging in narcotics and weapons smuggling besides transportation of cash across the LoC for funding terrorist activities.

"Many of such consignments have been intercepted by police and the security forces," Singh said, emphasising on strengthening checkpoints on national highways to stop transportation of drugs

and weapons as well as other criminal activities.

The spokesman said the officers of the twin border districts briefed the police chief about the present security scenario along the LoC and in the hinterland.

They also presented a detailed briefing about the ongoing anti-terror operations and security grid developed post Dhangri incident, he said.

## UIDAI makes online Aadhaar document updation process free till June 14

**GMK NEWS NETWORK** Identity and Proof of Address documents. Much to the relief of the residents, UIDAI has waived off the charges for the online Aadhaar document update service for a limited period of 3 months and Aadhaar Online services can be



SRINAGAR: The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has made online Aadhaar document updation process free of cost, a move that is expected to benefit millions of residents. A people-centric move, has been taken as part of the Digital India initiative where the users can avail the free document update facility on 'myAadhaar' portal for the next three months upto June 14, 2023 starting from March 15, 2023. According to the UIDAI, no fee will be charged from the residents for online updation of the Proof of Identity and Proof of Address in Aadhaar during the limited period. The Residents who have not updated their Aadhaar in the last 8-10 years are required to upload their Proof of

availed from the myAadhaar portal (myaadhaar.uidai.gov.in) and through mAadhaar app where also the list of documents acceptable as Proof of Identity and Proof of Address, is available. Meanwhile, the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar has appealed to the general public of the District to take maximum benefit from this free window opportunity and keep their Aadhaar updated. He also asked the residents to keep their mobile numbers updated in Aadhaar in order to avail hassle free online services.

## ECI assured us that they will do something soon on polls: Farooq Abdullah

**NASIR AZAM** Srinagar: National Conference president and MP from Srinagar Lok Sabha seat, Dr. Farooq Abdullah on Thursday said that the



Election Commission of India has assured them they will do something soon on their demand of holding elections in Jammu & Kashmir. The former CM of J&K

said that they assured the delegation that they will do something soon on their demand. "They assured everyone that they will do something soon," he said. A delegation of regional political parties and national parties met the poll-body today in New Delhi and sought immediate restoration of democracy in the Union Territory. The memorandum submitted by the parties today to the ECI states that the Panchayat elections and other PRI elections cannot be a substitute to legislative assembly elections and the government or for that matter the ECI cannot avoid and delay assembly elections on that ground—(KNO)

## Ramadan ul Mubarak, Navratra arrangements reviewed in Ganderbal

**GMK NEWS NETWORK** GANDERBAL: The Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Ganderbal, Mehraj-ud-Din Shah Thursday convened a meeting to review arrangements for the forthcoming Holy Month of Ramadan and Navratra in the district. charging by traders, the ADC directed the concerned to intensify drive against erring traders. PDD was directed to ensure uninterrupted electricity in the month of Ramadan ul Mubarak especially during Sehri and Iftar hours. He also directed Municipal Council Gan-



derbal to conduct sanitation drive in and around Mosques and Shrines. While discussing the arrangements for Navratra, the ADC directed the concerned officers to conduct sanitation drive in and around the Kheer Bhawani shrine besides PDD and Jal Shakti were directed for ensuring power and water supply for devotees. The meeting was attended by ASP, Feroz Yehya, SDM Kangan, Javid Ahmad Rather, CMO, CAHO and other concerned officers.

## Sorry State of Education

# 60 students crammed in 2 rooms in Sopore

**WARIS FAYAZ**

Sopore: Despite the education department's initiative of a special enrollment drive at government schools, the upgraded government boys primary school is witnessing a grim situation as the school is functioning in two rooms only.

Established in 1985, the school functioning in the jurisdiction of Zone Danglepora in Bomai Tehsil has only two rooms for six classes and has about 60 students, while the school building has already been declared unsafe in the year 2014.

A teacher pleading with anonymity at the school said that the school has three rooms, one for teachers and two for students. Also, the school has only two teachers. "We are facing an accommodation crunch and can't give proper accommodation facilities to the students enrolled here," he said.

"The condition of the school is deplorable as the floors are damaged and windows and tables are broken", he said. Adding that the building was already declared unsafe.

Iffat, a student said that

the government only claims to provide the best quality education to students but you can see here what the quality education government is providing to us.



Due to the dilapidated condition of the school, the students are being forced to study under an open sky, said a local. "The issue has already been brought into the notice of concern in the school education department, but to no avail," he said.

The school was recently upgraded as the students were merged to this primary school building, how-

ever, no additional building has been given to the school, said Ali Mohammed, another resident. "It is the need of an hour for the school to be shifted as there lies every

that he is not aware about the building being declared as unsafe. However, there is a provision of a new school building but due to land unavailability, it could not

be executed. The ZEO added that the Tehsildar concerned was asked to demarcate the land for the construction of a school building.

Notably, the school education department has started a 10 days special enrollment drive, with the director pinning hopes of the highest number of new entrants in the government schools—(KNO)

steps and work done for implementation of HADP projects in Jammu and Kashmir. A power point presentation was also given highlighting various components of the projects.

ACS directed the concerned officers to take every step to ensure preparation of implementation of HADP projects at ground level. He also directed to ensure process of tendering, expression of interest (EOI), preparation of DPRs etc where ever required on priority basis.

ACS also directed the concerned to ensure procurement of root stock material for high density planting material, seeds, livestock, Agriculture Business Centre etc.

ACS gave one week time to the concerned officers to include any required change in the project documents.

## Take benefit of declining terrorism by starting dev projects in J&K: Azad to Centre

**JAHANGEER GANAIE**

Shopian: Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) president, Ghulam Nabi Azad on Thursday said that Centre must take benefit of the declining terrorism in J&K by conducting elections, start developmental projects and take steps to provide jobs to local youth.

Addressing a gathering at Trenz area of Shopian, Azad said that the situation is much better in J&K as terrorism is on decline and very few terrorism related incidents are being reported here now and government must take benefit of it.

"Yes, terrorism is on decline but there is a need that the central government must start developmental projects and if such things won't happen then there is

no benefit of this peaceful situation," he said.

While reacting about sacking of employees on terrorism charges, he said that there is no doubt that this government is sacking more people and providing jobs to very few people.

He said people of J&K are going through tough times due to unemployment and other issues and it is the right time for the government to create more and more employment opportunities for youth and start developmental projects and conduct elections as well.

He said restoration of Statehood, land rights and the security of government jobs for the local youth is the priority and if voted to power, he will ensure all these rights again to J&K people through the assembly—(KNO)



## Govt orders pay recovery of ReTs who acquired degrees through regular mode

**BHAT IMRAN**

Srinagar: School Education Department has decided to recover the salary and defer the regularization date of those teachers found involved in pursuing course in regular mode during service as EV or ReT," reads the order.

The department, however, has said that in backlog cases the number of days available in appearing in examination would be treated as leave, whichever is due.

According to the official documents, the department has directed the concerned authorities to recover the honorarium for the period of dual enrollment or overlapping.

It was also directed to recover the salary drawn by the ReT for the period the regularization is

deferred by. "The amount of honorarium as well as the salary shall be recovered shall be worked out and recovered by the concerned DDO," it reads.

The documents further states that the DDO shall furnish the certificate to the effect that the honorarium for overlapping period and the salary for the period of regularization is deferred has been worked out and recovered from the RReT before transition to Grade II or Grade III whichever is applicable under rules.

Pertinently, the born graduates, at the first instance were promoted and transitioned to Teacher Grade-II.

However, those RReTs who had enhanced their qualifications during services were identified to be of

two type's including those who had enhanced their degrees through distance mode or private mode and the second category was identified as those who had enhanced their qualification via regular mode.

The RReTs who had enhanced their qualification via distance or private mode were given post-facto sanction and were transitioned to teacher Grade-II.

However, those teachers who had enhanced their qualifications through regular mode, the cases of all such teachers were referred to administrative departments wherein the administration had decided to award them with teacher Grade-III at the first instance with the direction to submit the cases after case to case study of their overlapping period—(KNO)

## 8 years on; authorities fail to repair filtration plant in Pulwama, locals suffer

**JAHANGEER GANAIE**

Pulwama: The residents of three villages in South Kashmir are consuming contaminated water as authorities have failed to repair a filtration plant that has been defunct for the past eight years.

The residents of Zahid Bagh, Rakh, and Darbagh villages said the scheme was started in 2012 and started facing glitches after two years.

The filtration plant of the

supply got defunct in 2014 since then around 500 households have been suffering," they said, adding that authorities have failed to take cognizance of the issue. They said despite the scheme being started a decade ago, dozens of households in Darbagh and Zahid Bagh are yet to be connected with the pipeline. According to locals, the scheme is functioning without filtration plants, forcing people to consume contaminated water.

In the absence of a filtration plant, water from Nallah Tongri, which is highly contaminated, is directly being supplied to us, Javid Ahmad a local said.

He said that by using contaminated water continuously, there are chances that water-borne diseases can break out anytime.

Locals also alleged that not even 30 percent of the funds sanctioned for the scheme were spent on it.

Even the funds sanctioned after the 2014 floods were not utilized but went in the pockets of contractors and officials who were hand in glove with them, they alleged.

The locals demanded an inquiry into the issue and said that strict action must be initiated against those involved.

They also demanded intervention of DC Pulwama for installing fresh filtration plant there so that locals too can get potable water—(KNO)

## Dulloo chairs Project Grounding & Monitoring Committee meeting

**GMK NEWS NETWORK**

JAMMU: Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Agriculture Production Department, Atal Dulloo, Thursday chaired Project Grounding and Monitoring Committee meeting regarding implementation of HADP projects here at Civil Secretariat.

and millets & nutri-cereals, oil seeds, formulation of 300 FPOs, Innovation extension approaches for promotion of agriculture and high density plantation and rejuvenate of orchards etc.

The concerned officers of Agriculture and allied departments briefed the meeting about the



Director Extension, SKUAST-J, Dr. S K Gupta; Director, Horticulture Jammu, Ram Sevak; Director Fisheries, Mohammad Farooq; Director Agriculture, Jammu, K K Sharma; Director, Sheep Husbandry Jammu, Krishan Lal; MD Horticulture, Planning & Marketing, attended the meeting besides, Director Agriculture Kashmir, senior/ Technical Officers of concerned departments also attended the meeting in person and virtually.

Threadbare discussions were held on various issues regarding 29 projects under HADP including development of seed and seed multiplication, promotion of Niche crops and vegetables/ exotic vegetables under protected cultivation, strengthening Agriculture Marketing in JK UT, promotion of Sericulture

steps and work done for implementation of HADP projects in Jammu and Kashmir. A power point presentation was also given highlighting various components of the projects.

## After 'positive' feedback, RTO to streamline all Sgr routes with numbers

**AGENCIES**

Srinagar: Regional Transport authorities on Thursday said they will begin the integration of all routes for minibus operators in Srinagar as well as the allocation of route numbers. Three routes have already been integrated to "streamline" the minibus service.

Syed Shahnawaz Bukhari, the Regional Transport Officer (RTO) for Kashmir said that after integrating three routes in Srinagar, they received positive feedback from commuters and minibus operators and now they plan to integrate the entire minibus service in the city with route numbers within the next ten days.

"With this process, the people no more will have to change multiple buses to reach their destinations," Bukhari said.

He, however, said that for the time being, eight to

nine routes won't be covered under the plan as modalities for their integration are under discussion.

RTO Kashmir said Srinagar city has a fleet of around 1,200 minibuses operating on various routes in and around the district. "There will be around nine routes in Srinagar and their number allocation is likely to be from 1-9," he informed, adding, "We expect the process to hit the roads by the next ten days."

For the integration of all routes in Srinagar, a review meeting was conducted in which Additional Transport Commissioner Reyaz Ahmad and a detailed discussion was held with stakeholders from minibus associations of the city, Bukhari said. Earlier this week, RTO authorities, on a trial basis, started the integrated minibus service on three routes which according to them covered most of Srinagar City—(KNO)

## Entire staff of PHC Ashtingoo found absent, MO suspended

**AGENCIES**

Bandipora: Almost the entire staff of the Primary Health Centre (PHC) at Ashtingoo in Bandipora district was found absent from their duties and have been put on notice by the Block Medical Officer Bandipora. Reports said that ten out of 12 staff members including two medical officers (MO), two pharmacists, three nurses, one BHW, one driver and one sweeper were found absent during a surprise inspection at PHC by the BMO Dr Masarat Iqbal on 13 March. A show-cause notice has been served to the employees asking them to explain their position before action shall be taken against them. He impressed upon the officers to ensure the punctuality of their subordinate staff to ensure effective service delivery. "During a surprise visit on 13-03-2023 at around 11:00 Am, the officers / officials of PHC Ashtingoo, who were found late on duty are directed to explain their position and why action under rules shall not be initiated against them," the order said, adding that they shall submit the reply in the office u/sd within a day positively. "Also their RDA (2 1/2 Days salary) will be deducted for the month of March 2023 reads the order," it said. Meanwhile, in a separate order, the BMO said that in view of the unauthorised absence from his legitimate duties on 13-03-2023, Dr Saboor Sikandar (Medical officer) PHC Ashtingoo is hereby placed under suspension with immediate effect. "He is directed to report to the office of u/sd with immediate effect," the order said—(KNO)

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

# VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

In a bizarre incident in Central Kashmir's Budgam district, a 30-year-old woman was killed and chopped into multiple pieces allegedly by a 45-year-old murderer. The murder has shocked the whole of Kashmir Valley as it is the first time that such a gruesome act has taken place. The would-be bride lived in her own happy world and had no barriers to the outer world. She had no idea of what was going to happen the next moment. It was a nightmare for the people of the entire Kashmir. While others were performing Shab prayers, Devil was chopping her body into pieces. Hats off to the Jammu and Kashmir police who immediately investigated about the missing lady and caught the criminal. He accepted the offense of murdering her lady. As soon as the news spread across the valley people became aggressive and started protesting on the streets demanding justice for the young lad. Men, women, and children from District Budgam carried the candlelight march with blood-stained banners and paintings of the brutal murder. The horrible murder gave goosebumps to the people of Kashmir. This kind of murder was not expected for ages. Political leaders and police officials were seen visiting the residence of the victim. They ensured the family that justice will prevail and the case will be taken to the higher authorities. Many leaders expressed grief and regret for the blind murder. Life has been taken mercilessly and the criminal has destroyed a family. The General public has complete faith in the judiciary. Death sentence must be given to Arifa's murderer so that the people will take a lesson for life and honor the women folk. If this man is not given strict punishment then others will gain confidence to commit such a crime. We hope strict action will be taken against the culprit.

HILAL BUKHARI



Someone has rightly said, "Because of your smile, you make life more beautiful." Smile has the great power to adorn the world and make all the beings more vital and witty with its holy touch. Smiling is the best medicine for every kind of ailment and every kind of negativity. A smiling face always seems pretty. A hadith has been reported where the prophet PBUH has said that smile is one of the best kinds of charity. So it is no less than a kind of prayer for us to keep sharing gracious smiles for making this world more beautiful and pretty all around. Everybody likes a smiling face. I have always been admired when I had a smile on my face and on the other hand, I was always reproached whenever I had anger on my face. Keep this thing in your mind. Our life must be a blessing for all those who live around us that is possible mainly when we share the shining and radiant smile on our faces. Smile has great aesthetic value also. It can be prettier than the prettiest flowers and more fragrant than the best smells in this world.

In every story of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) there is a reminder of how he would treat people with a soft heart, affection, concern, love, and most of all, a smile. They say that He once said something magnificent- "Even a smile is charity."

It is through learning about the Prophet (PBUH) and how he dealt with people that we can learn to love again and treat our loved ones with respect and a kind word. It is not easy to do but it can be attained. The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) who had a prayer for everything one could think of conveyed stories of how he dealt with his people including the non-Muslims, travelers, the poor, the passerby, his friends and his loved ones and so on. And we learn from his history that he took everyone's situation

into consideration and dealt with them with a gentle word and not with harshness as we are so accustomed to these days. As the Prophet said, "one who is devoid of mercy is not shown any mercy (Sahih Muslim)."

It has thus a great medicinal and healing value for those who feel hopeless and depressed. A smiling face helps us a lot during those times when gloom and despondence suppress our beings and is about to defeat us. However, people around us have become so tense and stressed nowadays due to many reasons that they feel it so hard to smile. A human being must be very brave and courageous to keep smiling even when his or her heart is forced to lament due to many reasons. We have

most popular figures among the masses and the people love to attend their sermons with great curiosity and eagerness. However, most of our preachers do not have this great habit to adorn their faces with smiles. Thus many of them seem to preach hatred rather than love, affection, and compassion. Our preachers must understand this simple saying, "There is fear when frowning. There is love when smiling."

Mother Teresa used to say, "Peace begins with a smile." All the burning



heard about our great Prophet (PBUH) that he used to smile even during those times when he had to face a lot of problems. He never eschewed the habit of constant smiling during his life. This pious habit made Prophet (PBUH) a favorite even among his enemies. But we claim to be his loyal followers and those who preach the great religion he (PBUH) taught us, never use this pretty blessing of a smile as we were taught. Otherwise, we can witness that those preachers who preach with smiling faces become the

fire of inner and outer conflict and hatred among human beings can be extinguished with the help of a delicate and cool ray of a smile. Thus as someone has suggested to us brilliantly, "Share your smile with the world. It's a symbol of friendship and peace." It is our foremost duty to use our smiling faces to make this world more peaceful, radiant, and meaningful.

The author can be mailed at [bukhari.hilalahmad5@gmail.com](mailto:bukhari.hilalahmad5@gmail.com)

## Budgam Murder

# WAKE-UP CALL TO PEOPLE OF KASHMIR

AUBAID AHMAD AKHOON



"We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented." - Elie Wiesel

A gruesome incident from district Budgam where a 30-year-old was murdered and mutilated has left a deep scar on our conscience, shattering our faith in humanity and ethics. The pain and restlessness that we feel in our hearts and souls are a testimony to the magnitude of this tragedy. The perpetrator of this heinous crime has exposed the fact that our society harbors criminals who have no regard for human life and dignity.

As we mourn the loss of a 30-year-old, we must also take responsibility for ensuring the safety and protection of our daughters. It is time for us to speak out against this injustice, to unite our voices and actions, and demand justice for the young murdered woman, a soon-to-be bride, and for all the other daughters who may fall victim to such brutality. We must empower our daughters to stand up against such atrocities and fight for their rights to education, freedom, and dignity. We must encourage them to pursue their dreams and aspirations without fear or hesitation.

It is important to reflect on the larger societal issues that contribute to such heinous crimes. One such issue is the prevalence of toxic masculinity, which encourages men to exert power and dominance over women, often resorting to violence to assert their control.

This toxic mindset is reinforced by patriarchal structures that prioritize men's interests over women's and limit women's access to education, employ-

ment, and other opportunities. Such structures also perpetuate harmful gender stereotypes, such as the notion that women are weak and submissive, and that violence against them is acceptable. To tackle this issue, it is essential to promote gender equality and challenge these harmful beliefs and attitudes. This can be done through education and awareness-raising initiatives

It is time for us to awaken the youth of our nation and to instill in them a sense of responsibility and accountability. We must inspire them to become agents of change and to take practical steps towards creating a safer and more just society for all. Let us not be discouraged by the narrow-mindedness of a few, but let us instead rise above the negativity and work towards a brighter future for

due to the collective guilt of the people who remained silent and did not condemn the act.

Bottom line: it is up to all members of society to take a stand against gender-based violence and work towards creating a world where women can live free from fear and oppression. By speaking out against injustice and working towards change, we can honor the young



that encourage men and women to work together towards creating a more just and equitable society.

Additionally, stronger laws and policies are needed to hold perpetrators of violence against women accountable for their actions. This includes measures such as harsher penalties for offenders, improved access to justice for victims, and greater support for survivors of violence.

our daughters. Let us strive towards creating a society where every sister and daughter can live without fear and where justice prevails for all.

The tale of Prophet Saleh recounts the killing of a miraculous she-camel granted to him by Allah, which sustained the people of Thamud. Despite the fact that only four individuals physically committed the crime, the entire community was held accountable by Allah. This was

murdered woman's memory and ensure that her death was not in vain.

"A person who lacks empathy and compassion is not a human being. They are a monster with a human face."

Author is a Motivational Speaker. He can be mailed at [akhoun.aubaid@gmail.com](mailto:akhoun.aubaid@gmail.com)

# Is HIV self-test among the missing links to reach the #endAIDS goal?



SHOBHA SHUKLA  
BOBBY RAMAKANT

Almost half the countries worldwide have not yet included HIV self-test in their AIDS response. Only one-fourth of all nations globally do HIV self-test routinely. This is despite the strong evidence which exists not only for HIV self-test, but also how self-tests for COVID-19, diabetes, or pregnancy, have yielded major public health and development gains. Then why wait to expand HIV care cascade by including HIV self-test, asks Dr Ishwar Gilada, who was the first medical doctor to begin HIV medical management when first case got diagnosed in the country in 1986.

#### WHY HIV TESTING IS AN ENTRY POINT?

It is worrisome that globally, 15% of people living with HIV did not know their status in 2021. In India one in four people living with HIV did not know their HIV status in 2021. The COVID-19 pandemic had further negatively impacted the pace of HIV testing.

"Unless we ensure that all people living with HIV know their status, how will every person with HIV receive full cascade of HIV care services and stay virally suppressed (maintain undetectable viral load)? HIV testing is the key entry point to HIV care cascade. Ensuring that every person with HIV has undetectable viral load, as "undetectable equals untransmittable," is the only pathway towards ending AIDS," said Dr Ishwar Gilada, President of 14th National Conference of AIDS Society of India (ASICON) in Delhi, India, and also President of the AIDS Society of India (ASI) and Governing Council member of International AIDS Society. ASI is the nationwide network of HIV medical experts and researchers.

"Almost half of the countries (98) have included HIV self-testing policies, and one-fourth nations globally (52) are routinely implementing it. Self-tests for COVID-19, pregnancy, diabetes, etc have not only proven successful in increasing the uptake

of tests but also how it links to care services, said Dr Ishwar Gilada. "There is no reason at all to delay full scale rollout of HIV self-testing in India as well as other countries which are missing leveraging upon this evidence-based intervention."

In 2019, the UN health agency, the World Health Organization (WHO) recommended HIV self-testing as part of HIV care cascade as it is an important approach to address gaps in HIV diagnoses, especially among key populations.

14th National Conference of AIDS Society of India (ASI) and ASI calls upon the government of India and over half of other countries that have not yet included HIV self-testing in their HIV response, to do so without delay – as clock is ticking! All governments worldwide

HIV everywhere must know the status and receive full spectrum of HIV care services.

#### BRIDGE THE GAP

Since most nations could not meet 2020 AIDS targets, now the eyes are set on 2030 goalpost of 95-95-95 targets (95% of people living with HIV to know their status, 95% of them should be on ART, and 95% of these be virally suppressed). HIV self-test is one of the key cog-in-the-wheel to "reaching out to the last mile" for first-95 target.

Globally, 85% of all people living with HIV knew their HIV status in 2021. Among people who knew their status, 88% were accessing treatment. And among people accessing treatment, 92% were virally suppressed. In other words of all people living with HIV 85%

In India, as on March 2022, 77% of people living with HIV knew their status, 84% of them were on antiretroviral therapy, and 85% of them had viral suppression. This translates into 55% of total people living with HIV in India being virally suppressed in 2021-22 against the target of getting 86% of them virally suppressed by 2025-26.

According to Government of India's National AIDS Control Organization 2022 report, between 2010 and 2021, new infections declined by 46% whereas the goal was to reduce new HIV infections by 80% by 2025 - clearly we need to do a lot more to turn the tide.

#### KEY POPULATIONS CANNOT BE LEFT BEHIND

While the overall adult prevalence remains low (0.21%

HIV prevalence among migrants is 4 times, among truckers is 5 times, among inmates in central jails and female sex workers is 9 times, among men who have sex with men (MSM) is 16 times, among hijra/transgender people is 18 times and among people who use drugs is 43 times of the overall adult HIV prevalence.

The studies presented at International Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI 2022) showed that even virtual approaches provided an additional entry point to increase uptake of HIV testing in those who are currently getting missed by traditional healthcare services – especially those from key populations. PATH report launched in 2022 showed HIV self-testing is acceptable to key populations and their partners in India.

#### HIV SELF-TESTING IN INDIA MUST BECOME A REALITY WITHOUT DELAY

India is among the countries that have not yet developed a national policy on HIV self-testing. ASICON and ASI call upon the government to do so without delay and ASI leaders nationwide are willing to offer their technical support in doing so.

Dr Gilada is right in reminding us that "All HIV testing services should continue to be provided in line with WHO's essential 5 Cs: Consent, Confidentiality, Counselling, Correct test results, and Connection/linkage to prevention, care and treatment."

It is important to remember that HIV self-testing is not a standalone initiative but integrated into HIV care cascade where HIV testing services include: counselling (pre-test information and post-test counselling); linkage to appropriate HIV prevention, treatment and care services, and other clinical and support services; and coordination with laboratory services to support quality assurance and the delivery of correct results, among others.

Shobha Shukla and Bobby Ramakant are part of the editorial team at Citizen News Service. Follow them on Twitter @Shobha1Shukla or @BobbyRamakant



have promised to end AIDS by 2030, for which it is vital to ensure everyone living with

knew their status, 75% were accessing treatment and 68% were virally suppressed in 2021.

in 2021), HIV prevalence among high-risk groups and the bridge population remains very high.

# Div Com reviews progress on mega road projects executed in Jammu division

Also reviews JMRDA Projects, discusses news projects to be taken up under Capex Budget of JMRDA

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar Thursday reviewed the status of road projects being executed in the districts of Jammu Division by National Highway Infrastructure Development Corporation, National Highway Authority of India, Border Road Organization, Sampark etc.

The meeting was attended by Chief Engineer Sampark, Brig Tej Pal Singh; Director Geology and Mining, OP Bhagat; GM, NHIDCL, Col S.S. Sangwan; Assistant Commissioner Central, Pritam Lal Thappa, Deputy Director Planning, Munish Dutta; besides senior officers of NHAI, Chief Engineers of PWD, JPDCL, JPTCL and other concerned, while Deputy Commissioners of Jammu division along with concerned officers participated in the meeting through video conferencing.

The Divisional Commissioner had an elaborate discussion on the status of all major road projects undertaken by NHIDCL, NHAI, Sampark, BRO. He inquired about the bottlenecks, if any, hampering progress of these vital projects.

While discussing executed



projects the concerned officers apprised the Div Com about the present status of work on all the ongoing projects and also put forth issues needs to be resolved.

Responding on the project-related issues the Div Com instructed concerned DCs to resolve land issues if any pending in their respective districts and early complete disbursement of compensation.

The Div Com asked Executive Agencies to stay in regular touch with Deputy Commissioners for resolving

minor issues on priority. He also instructed executing agencies to expedite the pace of work on all the ongoing projects for their timely completion.

Earlier in another meeting Divisional Commissioner who is also the Additional Chief Executive Officer-Jammu Metropolitan Region Development Authority (JMRDA) reviewed the progress of work on the projects executed under JMRDA in five associated districts and discussed additional projects

to be taken up under the Capex budget of JMRDA.

During the meeting, the Div Com took stock of the present status of ongoing projects and the concerned executing agencies apprised the Div Com about the progress on each project. It was informed that the work was in progress on the projects while some projects are at different stages of execution.

The Div Com directed all the concerned departments to expedite the pace of work on all the ongoing projects for their timely completion.

The Div Com also instructed the DCs to personally monitor the pace of work and also resolve land issues if any.

During the meeting Div Com also discussed new projects to be taken up under the Capex Budget of JMRDA.

The Deputy Commissioners apprised the Div Com about identified projects for the infrastructural development in their respective districts.

Threadbare discussions were held on various projects already identified by the DCs and recommended for approval. The Divisional Commissioner considered some of the important projects which were proposed

including sewerage treatment plants in major towns of Jammu district (R. S Pura, Bishnah, Arnia, Akhnoor etc), bridges in Samba and Udhampur district and other projects of infrastructure development in 5 associated districts.

The Div Com asked the DCs and concerned departments to identify the works which could be included in the plan like development of parking spaces, development of rotaries, road connectivity, sewerage network, public utility etc. He also directed them to immediately submit the proposals/ DPRs after consultation with the executing agencies of their respective districts for timely approvals of the same.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioner Jammu, Avny Lavasa; VC JDA, Pankaj Magotra; MD J&K Housing Board, Shabir Hussain; Financial Advisor & CAO JMRDA, Namisha Dogra; Chief Architect JMRDA, Devinder Gupta; besides officers of Urban Local Bodies, Engineers of PWD, UEED, and other concerned while Deputy Commissioners of Kathua, Samba, Udhampur and Reasi attended the meeting through video conferencing.

# Intra-district exposure tour of newly covered fish farmers flagged-off

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**KUPWARA:** The Department of Fisheries Kupwara organized an intra-district exposure-cum-training tour for a group of 25 newly covered fish farmers Thursday under ATMA (Agriculture Technology Management Agency) 2022-23 scheme.

The Chief Agriculture Officer Kupwara, Ghulam Mohammad Dhobi in presence of Assistant Director Fisheries, Sajad Hussain Dar flagged-off the group of newly covered farmers.

The group will visit different fish farms of the district including Government as well as private fish units to learn the ways and means adopted for better fish production.

Addressing the farmers, the Chief Agriculture Officer Kupwara, expressed that such exposure visits are organized to acquaint farmers with new technologies in the Fisheries sector. He appealed to farmers to learn the latest know-how of good Aquaculture practices during their visit to leading Trout and Carp fish farms.

He called for replicating the success stories of the farms visited during the tour in their farming practices by implementing the acquired knowledge in their respective farms and



also share their knowledge to the fellow farmers for enhancing their income and upliftment of their socio-economic condition.

On the occasion, Assistant Director Fisheries said that special attention has been given to the capacity building of the farmers under different schemes wherein the farmers acquire technical skills in the field of fish farming and develop entrepreneurship in aquaculture.

While interacting with the farmers on the occasion, the Assistant Director said that the visit has been organized to make the farmers aware of the latest techniques for commercial Aquaculture and entrepreneurship development, recent advances in fish farming and cultivation of different fish species on

scientific lines in Kupwara district.

He impressed upon them to interact with the farm scientists, experts, and extension functionaries and progressive fish farmers of the district to get acquainted with up to date methodologies in fish farming for increasing their production.

He said that the farmers will be imparted practical knowledge for better management regarding feeding, cleanliness and better growth of fish under latest technology.

Newly covered fish farmers will visit the Trout rearing unit Zoonershi Chowkibal, Carp fish farm Kohru, Trout fish farm Moonabal, Trout rearing unit Kultari, Trout fish farm Nowgam on their day long exposure tour.

# DC Shopian chairs Mega Public Darbar at Moaj Park Vehil

Inspects PHC Vehil, takes review of functioning of the hospital

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SHOPIAN:** The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Sachin Kumar Vaishya Thursday chaired a Mega Public Darbar at Moaj Park Vehil Shopian, where he met locals and public representatives to take first hand appraisal of public issues at their doorsteps.

At the outset, PRI members, village elders from the area raised various public welfare issues and developmental requirements in the area.

The locals demanded upgradation of schools, improvement in HT, LT lines and health-care facilities, repairs of irrigation canals, upgradation of



Water Supply Schemes, etc.

The DC, on the occasion, called for holistic development of the area by synergistic approach of all stakeholders and impressed upon the concerned to ensure prompt redressal of public issues raised during the public Darbar.

He also asked for active participation of Pani Samitis in better implementation of JJM works in the area, aimed to provide drinking water to all households.

Later, the DC inspected PHC Vehil and took stock of the health care facilities being provided to the patients there and directed the health functionaries to work with dedication and provide all amenities and facilities to the patients and people visiting the centre.

Among others, Joint Director Planning, Khurshed Ahmad Khatana; ACD, Hilal Ahmad Jeri, BDO and concerned officers and officials were present on the occasion.

# Training, Workshop on 'Early Identification, Prevention & Rehabilitation of Specially-abled persons' held in B'pora

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**BANDIPORA:** On the overall guidance of Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, the District Disability Rehabilitation Centre in collaboration with District Administration Bandipora on Thursday organised a daylong training cum workshop for Asha, Anganwadi workers and supervisors for early identification, prevention and rehabilitation of specially abled persons.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Bandipora, Waseem Raja was the chief guest on the occasion, while officers of social welfare and other departments were also present.

Speaking on the occasion,

ADC appreciated the DDRC for holding the program and said such training will help the staff to deal with disabilities in a better and more professional manner. He said most of the disabilities among children can be treated or detected at an early stage of life through proper management and treatments.

He said training will equip the ground staff with skills that will help them to identify disabilities at the early stage so that the government can identify the victim and give focused attention to such children.

Earlier during the programme, the experts deliberated on different aspects of the disabilities and the

ways to detect the disabilities in the early stage of life.

Resource Person, Nusrat Habib talked about the early identification of children with special needs while Abrar Ahmad, HoP, gave a brief introduction about the District Disability Rehabilitation Center and Hope Centre.

Javed Ahmad talked about the services under DDRC besides holding a discussion about perceptions and realities regarding disabilities.

He also discussed physical disabilities, identification of disabilities, types of physical rehabilitation services, causes of disabilities and prevention of disabilities.

# Three week training on Cyber Security commences at NIELIT Jammu, Srinagar



GMK NEWS NETWORK

**JAMMU:** Three week training programme on Cyber Security commenced here Thursday at National Institute of Electronics & Information Technology (NIELIT) Jammu and Srinagar.

The training programme is being organized by Information Technology (IT) department of Jammu and Kashmir Government under Centre of Excellence (CoE) established by the department in collaboration with NIELIT J&K.

The training programme is focusing on myriad range of cyber security topics like cybercrimes, network security, cyber hygiene, cyber forensics, mobile and end user security, web security and information security audit, among others.

The programme will enable the participating officials to understand the applicability of security controls for system/network confidentiality and applying problem-solving skills to detect cyber-attacks.

# Horticulture Deptt Kashmir organises Training, Awareness programme under ATMA scheme

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** One day Training cum Awareness programme was Thursday organized by the Horticulture department under ATMA (Agriculture Technology Management Agency) scheme at Horticulture Complex Lal Mandi, here.

The training programme was chaired by Director Horticulture Kashmir, Ghulam Rasool Mir. Besides, Chief Horticulture Officer Srinagar, V.K. Gupta; District Horticulture Officer Srinagar, Shiekh Iftikhar Hussain, DL-SMS Srinagar, Saima Hameed and Horticulture Development Officer

Zakura, M Maqbool Pandit were also present. More than 50 orchardists from district Srinagar participated in the awareness camp.

Director Horticulture presented the overall review of horticulture schemes with special reference to modified high density plantations. He stressed the orchardists to take advantage of the schemes of Horticulture.

Chief Horticulture Officer Srinagar while addressing the gathering stressed upon the use of recommended pesticides.

Later, the District Horticulture Officer Srinagar gave the detailed overview of the departmental schemes.

# MVD starts Sticker pasting campaign under 'NMBA for Drug De-addiction' in Kupwara

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**KUPWARA:** On the directions of Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, the Motor Vehicle Department (MVD) Kupwara Thursday started sticker pasting campaign from main bus stand Kupwara under Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyan (NMBA) - for Drug De-addiction.

The aim of this awareness campaign is to disseminate the message of NMBA - for Drug De-addiction in Kupwara district.

Speaking on the occasion, ARTO Kupwara, Anees Ahmad said that more than 3000 stickers carrying the

message that 'Drugs Kill' are being pasted on vehicles and in coming days all the vehicles plying in Kupwara district shall be covered under this campaign.

The ARTO stressed the need to sensitize the commuters as well as people about the hazards of drug addiction, adding that the commuters have to play a pivotal role to curb this menace.

He said that the main objective of organizing this awareness campaign was to reach out to masses and spread awareness about the impact of drug abuse on the individuals as well as on the society.

**UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR,**  
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI DEPARTMENT**  
**(PHE) MECHANICAL RURAL DIVISION BALGARDEN SRINAGAR**  
 TELE: 0194-2473956. E-Mail: xenphemrd@gmail.com  
**NOTICE INVITING TENDER**  
**e-NIT No. PHE/MRD/TS 168 OF 03/2023 Dated: -03-03-2023\_**

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of UT of J&K, Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Mechanical Rural Division Balgarden Srinagar, invites e-tenders from reputed and resourceful Bidders/ Firms/Companies/ Joint Ventures/ Consortiums between bidder/firm and Financier of all classes registered in JKPWD/CPWD/Railways or any other state Government or GST Registration for Elect/Mech. Works for "Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Electro-Mechanical equipments for various WSSs of Sub-Division Budgam under JJM". The bidding process shall be completed online on www.jktenders.gov.in in two covers viz. Cover 1st consisting of Pre-Qualification Criteria, General Terms and Conditions and Technical Specifications and Cover 2nd shall consist of Financial Bid on item rate basis, in the prescribed BOQ.

Sr No	Particulars of the work	Estimated Cost (Lacs)	Tender fee (in Rs)	Earnest Money Deposit	Bid Validity	Time of Completion of work (days)
1	Supply, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of Electro-Mechanical equipments for various WSSs of Sub-Division Budgam under JJM	Work/scheme wise details given in FORM I of tender document	Rs. 200/-	In the Shape of Bid Security Declaration (enclosed as FORM-XII)	180 days	As per FORM I

Position of funds: Approved Under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) Status of AAA : Accorded  
 The tender inviting authority is Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Mechanical Rural Division, Balgarden, Srinagar.  
 The awarding authority is District Jal Jeevan Mission (DJJM) Budgam.

**Critical Dates:**

i.	Publish Date	03-03-2023 (5.00PM)
ii	Document Download/sale start Date	03-03-2023 (5.00PM)
iii	Date of Pre-bid meeting	13-03-2023 (11.30AM)
iv	Bid submission start date	03-03-2023 (5.00PM)
v	Document Download/sale end Date	23-03-2023 (5.00PM)
vi	Bid submission end date	23-03-2023 (5.00PM)
vii	Date and time of Bid opening	25-03-2023 (11.45AM)

1. Other details can be seen in the bidding documents from the website www.jktenders.gov.in.  
 2. Queries by email if any, should be made at xenphemrd@gmail.com.  
 No: PHE/MRD/5017-28  
 Date: 03-03-2023  
**DIPK-18405-22**  
**DT: 16-03-2023**

Sd/-  
 Executive Engineer,  
 Jal Shakti (PHE) Mech.  
 Rural Division, Srinagar.

**FORM I**  
**SCHEME WISE LIST OF WORKS OF DISTRICT BUDGAM**

Sr No	Name of Water Supply Scheme	Description of work	District	Estimated cost	Tender fee (in Rs.)	Time of completion (Days)	Status of AAA
1.	Sheikhpora New Well	SITC of Electro Mechanical Equipments	Budgam	Rs.20,09,810/-	200/-	60 Days	Accorded
2.	Arthchurpora	SITC of Electro Mechanical Equipments	Budgam	Rs.2,10,77,770/-	200/-	90 Days	Accorded

Sd/-  
 Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Mech.  
 Rural Division, Srinagar.

**Government of Jammu and Kashmir**  
**OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGER,**  
**DISTRICT INDUSTRIES CENTRE, SRINAGAR**  
 PHONE NO. 0194-2427478  
**PUBLIC NOTICE**

M/S Jasmine Industries I/E Zainakote Srinagar stands formally registered with this office under No. 07/09/03406/PMT/SSI dated. 26.05.1988, for the activity of "Sheet metal items and general fabrication viz, angle iron, tanks, gates, grills and steel structures, steel trusses, furniture items steel/wood joinery items, furniture, huts as additional activity subject to installation of required machinery particularly small band saw with trolley " as proprietorship concern of Manzoor Ali S/O Mohammad Abdullah R/O Qamerwari, Chattabal., Srinagar.  
 The promoter of the unit has approached this office for transfer of lease hold rights to Sahil Ahmad Labroo S/O Bilal Ahmad Labroo R/O Mansoor Colony Bemina, Srinagar  
 Any person having any objection, for the said change shall contact to General Manager DIC Srinagar within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice.  
**DIPK-18418-22** General Manager  
**DT: 16-03-2023** District Industries Centre  
 Srinagar.

Email: zeomattan321@gmail.com  
**UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR,**  
**OFFICE OF THE ZONAL**  
**EDUCATION OFFICER, MATTAN**

Subject: Engagement / Hiring of Helpers / AAYAs under ECCB for the year 2022-23.  
 Reference: This office advertisement notice No, ZEO/M/7314-35/23 dated 02/03/2023.  
**CORRIGENDUM**  
 Please read "Rs.5000/= (Rupees Five thousand only)" instead of "Rs. 15000/= (Rupees Five thousand)" in this office advertisement notice No. ZEO/M/7314-35/23 dated 02/03/2023 published in Daily Aftab on 06/03/2023.  
 No: ZEO/M/7364-70/23 Zonal Education Officer  
**DT: 08-03-2023** Mattan  
**DIPK-18424-22**  
**DT: 16-03-2023**

# ISRO chairman, Bhutan's ministers inaugurate Ground-Earth station for India-Bhutan satellite

THIMPHU: Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) chairman S Somnath, Bhutan's Foreign Minister Lyonpo Tandi Dorji, Bhutan's Minister for Information and Communication Lyonpo Karma Donnen Wangdi and Ambassador of India to Bhutan Sudhakar Dalela inaugurated a Ground-Earth station for the India-Bhutan satellite in Thimphu, The Bhutan Live reported.



BhutanSat will be used for assessing inland water quality, forest and biomass cover, snow and glacier cover, and Bhutan's geology and hydrology.

The Indian Embassy in Bhutan wrote, "The data from the India Bhutan satellite, launched last year, will be used for assessing inland water quality, forest & biomass cover, snow and glacier cover, Bhutan's geology and hydrology, benefiting people of Bhutan."

It further said, "The ground-earth station is a testament to the vision of His Majesty the King and

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to take the India-Bhutan partnership into new and emerging areas critical to the 21st century."

A delegation of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) led by the chairman S Somnath on Monday held a meeting with dignitaries from Bhutan, including Minister for Foreign Affairs and External Trade Dr Tandi Dorji and discussed strengthening India-Bhutan space cooperation and different ways to further bolster tech ties, The Bhutan Live reported. The delegates from ISRO

and Bhutan reviewed the experience and milestones achieved, including the launch of the India-Bhutan joint satellite in 2022, as per the news report.

Indian Embassy in Bhutan in a tweet wrote, "Wide ranging discussion on expanding space tech cooperation through capacity building & focus on the application of space data & tech across sectors for the benefit of people. Both sides reviewed experience & milestones achieved, including the launch of a joint satellite last year." (MILAP NEWS NETWORK)

# India, Bangladesh first cross-border oil pipeline is real manifestation of friendship: Deputy High Commissioner

NEW DELHI: India and Bangladesh's first cross-border oil pipeline is the real manifestation of the wonderful friendship that these two countries share, Bangladesh Deputy High Commissioner Andaleeb Elias said on Tuesday.

"That's a real manifestation of the wonderful friendship that these two countries enjoy and the deep relationship of trust and mutual respect that the two Prime Ministers have with each other," Elias said.

This statement came after Bangladesh's Foreign Minister AK Abdul Momen announced that Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Bangladeshi counterpart Sheikh Hasina would jointly open the first cross-border oil pipeline on March 18 for transportation of diesel to Bangladesh, stated Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS).

Confirming the news, the Bangladesh Deputy High Commissioner said, "PM Modi and my PM Sheikh Hasina first initiated this pipeline a few years ago. On 18th March, it will be formally launched. The oil will start going through it."

That's a huge step



forward in the wonderful friendship that we have." Earlier, on Thursday, Bangladesh's Foreign Minister told reporters at a briefing, "Good news is India will send us diesel the (Oil) pipeline has been completed."

He added: "The two premiers will inaugurate the pipeline on March 18 (through video conferencing)." Momen's announcement came a week after he held talks with External Affairs

Minister S Jaishankar in New Delhi on the sidelines of the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting last week, as per BSS.

According to Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC), officials in India would export diesel through the 130-km India-Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline (IBFPL), built at a cost of about 3.46 billion INR drawn from the Indian line of credit (LoC).

The pipeline stretches 125 km inside Bangla-



des territory and 5 km inside India while the two premiers joined the ground-breaking ceremony for the IBFPL in September 2018 through video conferencing.

Bangladesh used to import diesel from India through railway carriages. The foreign minister said he also urged New Delhi to ensure an uninterrupted supply of essential products to Bangladesh, reported BSS.

Momen said India gave high respect to the Bangladesh delegation throughout the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting reflecting the excellent Dhaka-Delhi bilateral relations. (MILAP NEWS NETWORK)

# Uyghur women face systematic repression under Chinese control

WASHINGTON: Uyghur women in China are facing systematic repression where they were not allowed to speak their language or who they want to marry and were even sent to "Chinese concentration camps," the United States Institute of Peace reported citing an Uyghur reporter.

Uyghur journalist Gulchehra Hoja was discussing the human rights situation for Uyghur women in the Xinjiang region of China.

In a video, journalist Hoja said, "We were saying that there is no door that cannot be opened by women. But today Uyghur women are forced to give up their right to choose anything under CCP's total control. They can't even choose to speak their language or who they want to marry. Even Uyghur children have been ripped away from their families for CCP's assimilation."

"Many of my former colleagues were sent to Chinese concentration

camps. But in my case, my family paid the price when 24 of my family members were arrested in one night, including my parents and my brother," she added.

She further stated that the reason those authoritarian states feel threatened by women as the female community represents love and peace which are very powerful and ready to sacrifice if need be.

World leaders must demand China allow independent investigations and that foreign journalists be allowed in the Uyghur region. "Spread awareness about we were Women's plight under the CCP's rule. Encourage more we were Women to speak out by providing platforms and opportunities."

"Never in my life had I imagined to be witnessing genocide, let alone genocide carried out against your own people. Not only me. We are witnessing and allowing history to repeat itself. This is a human trag-



edy," the journalist added. Uyghur women are always China's easy victims. Uyghur woman,

Ayshemhan Abdulla, for over two decades, has been serving a sentence in jail for sending her three

teenage children to a local home-based religious school, Radio Free Asia (RFA) reported.

Abdulla, now 62, thought she was doing what was best for her two daughters and one son by ensuring they received Islamic religious instruction in keeping with their Muslim Uyghur identity in China's far-western Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.

Uyghur Times recently reported that to eradicate the Uyghurs, the Chinese authorities are now openly executing Uyghurs but the world is not taking action against China. The author warned that soon the world will face what Uyghurs have been going through.

Abdullah, a resident of Ghulja county, or Yining in Chinese, was sentenced to 21 years in prison in 2017 for sending her children to a house religious school, said a security chief from her village in Qarayaghach township.

"She is serving her prison term in Baykol Women's Prison in Ghulja city. For each child she sent, she received seven years in prison," said the man who declined to be named, RFA reported.

According to the village security chief, the authorities also took Abdulla's children to a camp and held them for more than a year, but later released them. But Abdulla is not the only one who got entangled in Chinese authorities' dragnet in Xinjiang, where more than 11 million Turkic-speaking, mostly Muslim Uyghurs live, over 60 Uyghurs were arrested and sentenced to harsh prison sentences for sending their children to religious schools though they had done so more than a decade ago, according to the Xinjiang Police Files, a cache of millions of confidential documents hacked from Xinjiang police computers and released in May 2022. (MILAP NEWS NETWORK)

# UN Chief urges world to support Afghan women

NEW YORK: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has urged the world to support Afghan women, stating that it is a struggle on "many fronts" in Afghanistan, Khaama Press reported.

Guterres, while addressing the UN Committee on the Status of Women on Monday, said that they have been "supporting schools wherever it is possible, schools with girls in the secondary level."

"The donor community has said there will only be aid where women are involved. Where women are not involved, the aid will not be present. So, the pressure goes on to guarantee that we have women working in the humanitarian sector. In the public services, few women are working, and we are fighting hard to increase it," he said, stated Afghanistan-based Khaama Press.

The UN Commission on the Status of Women started on Monday to assess the situation of women around the world and will continue till March 17. The situation of women, particularly in Afghanistan, will be discussed by representatives worldwide, according to Khaama Press.

Guterres also raised concerns about closing universities and secondary schools for women and girls.

It has been more than 530 days since the schools for female students have remained closed. The Islamic Emirate also in



a recent decree banned female students from going to universities, Tolo News has reported.

The UN Secretary-General had last week said that the United Nations would continue demanding the fundamental rights of women and girls in Afghanistan under any circumstances.

The UN recently said that since the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan, the country has become the most repressive in the world for women and girls, depriving them of many of their basic rights.

The UN mission in Afghanistan in a statement released on International Women's Day on March 8, said that the new Taliban leaders have "demonstrated an almost singular focus on imposing rules that leave most women and girls effectively trapped in their homes."

Roza Isakovna Otunbayeva, UN Special Representative and head of the UN's Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) strongly condemned recent

Taliban decrees that have further eroded the rights of Afghan women.

Afghanistan under the Taliban remains the "most repressive country in the world (for) women's rights", the senior UN official in Kabul told the Security Council on Wednesday, while nevertheless voicing a nuanced position on the importance of continuing to engage with the group.

"Afghanistan under the Taliban remains the most repressive country in the world regarding women's rights, and it has been distressing to witness their methodical, deliberate, and systematic efforts to push Afghan women and girls out of the public sphere," said Roza Otunbayeva.

Since taking power in August 2021, the new leaders have banned secondary and university education for girls and women, banned women from working in national and international nongovernmental organizations and ordered women to be covered from head to toe. (MILAP NEWS NETWORK)

# Delay in IMF deal may cause Pakistan to pause repayments, US bank warns

ISLAMABAD: A United States bank warned Pakistan that it will need to pause debt repayments if it does not secure funding from the International Monetary Fund soon enough, the Dawn reported.

The Bank also stated that China, which is said to be a close ally of Pakistan, can rescue the country because of its close ties with the country.

The bank's team of experts, which includes its economist Kathleen Oh, wrote: "China holds the key for relief in the near term as it is the largest creditor. With closer ties between China and Pakistan, the hope is rising for China to come on board to provide a backstop to its long-time ally", according to Dawn.

On Monday, Pakistan and IMF held a virtual meeting for moving towards striking a staff-level agreement between the two sides, as per the news report.

Pakistan's Ministry of Finance and State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) tabled the external financing plan before the IMF with the goal of increasing the dwindling foreign exchange reserves, held by the SBP up to the USD 10 billion mark till the end of June 30, 2023, The News International reported.

A top official source said the revival of the IMF programme will allow Islamabad to increase required

dollar funding from all possible avenues, including getting rollover of upcoming China's SAFE deposits to the tune of USD 2 billion under the planned schemes, stated the news report.

Further, as per the news report, the total Chinese SAFE deposits stood at USD 4 billion and the



remaining maturity will become due in the coming months.

According to The News International, the top official source said, "Under the planned schemes of things, the revival of the IMF program will enable Islamabad to muster up the required dollar funding from all possible avenues including multilateral, bilateral and commercial financing as well as getting rollover of upcoming China's SAFE deposits to the tune of USD 2 billion."

The Pakistani side informed the IMF that Islamabad implemented all harsh measures and both sides should move towards signing the state-level agreement, as per the news report.

Last week, Pakistan's

Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said that external financing confirmation was not part of the prior action of the IMF for signing a state-level agreement, as per the news report.

Citing sources, the report said there were nine tables under the Memorandum of Economic and Financial Policies (MEFP) that require to be fulfilled with the official figures.

However, one of the tables related to envisaging the Net International Reserves (NIR) could not be fulfilled without incorporating the external financing needs of the programme period.

Last week, the State Bank of Pakistan increased the interest rate by a massive 300 basis points (bps) taking it to a record-high level of 20 per cent, in accordance with the conditions set by the International Monetary Fund, The News International reported.

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has taken the decision to raise the policy rate to its highest level since October 1996 in an attempt to "anchor inflation expectations as it is critical and warrants a strong policy response," as per the news report. Pakistan's Central Bank increased the interest rate by 300 bps taking the total increase to 1,050 bps since January 2022 to counter rising inflation. (MILAP NEWS NETWORK)

# Women holding rallies for their rights ridiculed in Pakistan: Report

PAKISTAN: Patriarchal dominance in Pakistan was witnessed again when women in the country were asserting their rights in the wake of International Women's Day. Pakistani women holding rallies for their rights and seeking protection from gender violence and sexual harassment were ridiculed and even beaten by police, Just Earth News reported. The Pakistani government authorities did not allow the women for holding peaceful rallies until the courts intervened in the matter. The male-dominated society of Pakistan has caused widespread exploitation of women among all age groups, as per the news report.

About 63,000 cases of gender-based violence were recorded in the past three years in Pakistan, according to the Pust Earth News report. According to Pakistan's Human Rights Commission, 80 per cent of these complaints were about domestic violence and 47 per cent were regarding domestic rape where married women experienced sexual abuse. About 90 per cent of Pakistani women are reported to have faced domestic violence once in their lifetime and 50 per cent of them have ignored them. Only 0.4 per cent of these women go to court to file cases. As per the Just Earth News report, Pakistani minister Senator Rehman said, "Our society is layered with patriarchy, and it subjugates women through a series of institutional, social, and cultural norms that allow and normalise violence against women."

Notably, Pakistani women have been holding 'Aurat March' every year since 2018 to express their anger, seek protection as well as equal status. However, women face fierce opposition from a major section of Pakistani society. The government authorities have also opposed the march. Furthermore, a curfew was imposed in some places. Lahore Court intervened in the matter and granted permission to women to hold a march. However, police authorities attempted to stop

the rallies and beat women participants. Even religious extremists reportedly attacked the women in



the Aurat march which led to widespread criticism.

Human Rights Commission criticized police authorities for the use of force. It said that they are concerned about the reports that religious organizations have attempted to hinder women from participating in the march, as per the news report. Human Rights Commission tweeted, "We are also concerned by reports that religious organizations have tried to hinder women from taking part in the march. Women have as much right to peaceful assembly as any citizen."

Aurat March was held in Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi, Hyderabad, and Multan. Women chanted slogans against sexual exploitation, and domestic violence, and in support of women's empowerment, and equality, as per the news report. "We speak of socialist feminism. We speak of democracy. We speak of anti-enforced disappearances. We speak of equality and access to public spaces for women. These are the reasons why the state will always have a problem with us," Imaan Zainab Mazarri-Hazir, one of the organisers in Islamabad said as per the Just Earth News report.

In 2020, a group of hardliners hurled stones at the women attendees of the Aurat March. Even this year, the Aurat March received criticism. (MILAP NEWS NETWORK)

# Ayush Ministry signs MoU with Ministry of Rural Development to empower rural youth

AGENCIES

**NEW DELHI:** The Ministry of Ayush and the Ministry of Rural Development on Thursday signed an MoU to transform the rural youth into economically independent and globally relevant workforce.

The MoU was signed at Transport Bhawan by Manoj Nesari, Advisor, Ministry of Ayush, and Karma Zimpha Bhutia, Joint Secretary, Rural Skills, Ministry of Rural Development in the presence of Union Minister of Ayush Sarbananda Sonowal and Giriraj Singh, Union Minister of Panchayati Raj.

Minister of State for Ayush, Munjapara Mahendrabhai Kalubhai, Secretary Ayush, Rajesh Kotecha, Pramod Kumar Pathak, Special Secretary Ministry of Ayush and Shailesh Kumar Singh, Secretary, Ministry of Rural Development, Prof. (Dr) Tanuja Manoj Nesari, Chairperson of Ayush Sub Sector Skill Council and Director, All India Institute of Ayurveda were also present at the occasion.

Sarbananda Sonowal welcomed the Rural Development Minister Giriraj Singh and said that both the ministries will collaborate in boosting the spirit of self-employment.

Singh in his speech praised the Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Ayush Ministry for the growth seen in the Ayush sector, which scaled from \$3 billion in 2014 to \$19 billion in the year 2022.



The minister also thanked PM Modi for scaling and giving the opportunity.

Talking about DDU-GKY (Deen Dayal Upadhyaya-Grameen Kaushal Yojana), he said that he would empower self help groups of women and the collaboration with the Ministry of Ayush will help the achieving growth in self-employment and skill development.

Speaking on the occasion, Director of All India Institute of Ayurveda Prof (Dr) Tanuja Manoj Nesari said that the collaboration between both the ministries will play an important role in enhancing the skill and service sector related to Ayurveda.

Training to Rural Poor Youth will be provided in collaboration with the Ayush Ministry in the following courses on a pilot basis:

- Panchakarma Technician
- Panchakarma Assistant
- Ayurvedic Masseur

- Kshara Karma Technician
- Cupping Therapy Assistant

To be a milestone in the history of skill development

The purpose of this collaboration is to help in developing skilled personnel for AYUSH Healthcare system and AYUSH management sectors, training will be benchmarked to global standards, to enable growth of skilled human resources in such sectors, to serve both national and international demand.

The association between the two Ministries will

help in providing training to Rural Poor Youth in the National Skills Qualification Framework aligned courses available on National Qualification Register under DDU-GKY Scheme.

Mission of the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) to skill rural youth from the humble background will combine with the Ministry of Ayush (MoA) through Deen Dayal Upadhyaya-Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDUGKY) it will open new doors in the horizon of opportunities and development empowering rural youth.

# Automotive platform myTVS picks Oracle Fusion Cloud to boost business efficiency

AGENCIES

**MUMBAI:** Automotive aftermarket digital platform myTVS, part of the \$2 billion TVS Mobility group on Thursday said it has selected Oracle Fusion Cloud Applications to unify operations and improve business efficiency.

With Oracle Fusion Applications for finance and supply chain, myTVS can integrate and digitise processes, enhance business insights, and improve decision making to support future expansion.

myTVS is the leading digital aftermarket AI platform that provides a unique business model by decoupling customer value chain and delivers digital services to 3 million customers, 20K retailers and 25K garages across the country.

"With Oracle Fusion Applications, we can standardise processes and create a single source of truth to improve the speed and quality of decisions



and enable our organisation to quickly respond to changes in supply and demand," said G. Srinivasa Raghavan, Managing Director for myTVS.

myTVS' finance and operations data were dispersed across multiple siloed on-premises applications and selected Oracle Fusion Applications to improve financial insights and better match inventory with customer demand.

Oracle Fusion Cloud Supply Chain and Manufacturing (SCM) will give its supply chain leaders real-time visibility into inventory across various distribution centres and items in transit, streamline the procurement process,

and significantly reduce the ordering cycle time.

"With the depth and breadth of Oracle Fusion Applications and continuous quarterly updates, myTVS will be able to increase efficiency and reduce costs as it scales up operations to meet demand," said Adrian Johnston, Senior Vice President, Cloud Applications, Japan & Asia Pacific, Oracle.

Oracle Fusion Applications helps organisations take advantage of the cloud to break down silos, standardise processes, and manage financial, supply chain, HR and customer experience data on a single integrated cloud platform.

# Indian unicorns excel in offering maternity benefits, OPD coverage: Report

**NEW DELHI:** Indian unicorns excel in offering maternity benefits, OPD coverage, and telehealth consultations, as compared to early-stage start-ups, high-growth businesses, and mature-stage companies, a new report said on Thursday.

According to employee health insurance platform Plum, almost all unicorns are concerned about their female employees' well-being, with 96 per cent of them offering maternity benefits, and around 80 per cent providing a maternity limit above Rs 50,000.

Additionally, half of the unicorn companies have covered their employees' families, offering a plan that includes all immediate family members including spouse, children, and parents.

"Indian unicorns

have taken a positive step towards prioritising employee well-being and have established a model for modern work culture," said Abhishek Poddar, co-founder and CEO of Plum.

"Amid the current environment of uncertainty, it is essential for companies to pay heed to their employees' holistic health. The costs of healthcare in India are rising and a single illness can drain a family's lifetime savings. Therefore, as employers, it is important to cover employees and their families healthcare costs," he added.

Moreover, the report found that about 16 per cent of unicorn companies have included OPD (outpatient department) coverage in their standard employee health benefit plan, which is nearly double the 8 per

cent of all segments combined.

Offering OPD coverage is crucial since 65 per cent of healthcare expenses in India are paid out of one's own pocket, said the report.

Further, the report mentioned that all unicorns have included other employee health benefits on top of the health insurance coverage, with telehealth consultations being the most essential health benefit offered.

Around 75 per cent of unicorn companies preferred to offer it to their employees, and 30 per cent of them believe in planning a holistic combination of Health Insurance, Accident and Disability Insurance, Term Life Insurance, and comprehensive telehealth consultations for their employees. (AGENCIES)

# Scientists unearth remains of modern glacier near Mars' equator



**NEW YORK:** Scientists have unearthed the remains of a modern glacier near Mars' equator, raising the possibility that ice may still exist at shallow depths in the area.

The possibility of ice on Mars could have significant implications for future human exploration on the Red Planet, but speaking at the 54th Lunar and Planetary Science Conference held in Texas, the scientists noted that its "a salt deposit" with "features of a glacier" and not ice.

The surface feature identified as a "relict glacier" is one of many light-toned deposits (LTDs) found in the region. Typically, LTDs consist mainly of light-coloured sulphate salts, but this deposit also shows many of the features of a glacier, including crevasse fields and moraine bands.

The glacier is estimated to be 6 kilometres long and up to 4 kilometres wide, with a surface elevation ranging from 1.3 to 1.7 kilometres. This discovery suggests that Mars' recent history may have been more watery than previously thought, which could have implications for understanding the planet's habitability.

"What we've found is not ice, but a salt deposit with the detailed morphologic features of a glacier. What we think happened here is that salt formed on top of a glacier while preserving the shape of the ice below, down to details like crevasse fields and moraine bands," said lead author Dr. Pascal Lee, a planetary scientist with the SETI Institute and the Mars Institute.

The glacier's fine-scale

features, its associated sulphate salts deposit, and the overlying volcanic materials are all very sparsely cratered by impacts and must be geologically young, likely Amazonian in age, the latest geologic period which includes modern Mars.

"We've known about glacial activity on Mars at many locations, including near the equator in the more distant past. And we've known about recent glacial activity on Mars, but so far, only at higher latitudes. A relatively young relict glacier in this location tells us that Mars experienced surface ice in recent times, even near the equator, which is new," said Lee.

It remains to be seen whether water ice might still be preserved underneath the light-toned deposit or if it has disappeared entirely.

"Water ice is, at present, not stable at the very surface of Mars near the equator at these elevations. So, it's not surprising that we're not detecting any water ice at the surface. It is possible that all the glacier's water ice has sublimated away by now. But there's also a chance that some of it might still be protected at shallow depth under the sulphate salts," Lee noted. (AGENCIES)

# India's GDP to grow at 6% in FY24, inflation will moderate to 5%: CRISIL report



UNI

**NEW DELHI:** Credit rating agency CRISIL on Thursday forecast India's gross domestic product (GDP) growth at 6% in fiscal 2024, down from 7% estimated by the National Statistical Organisation (NSO) for fiscal 2023.

"A complex interplay of geopolitical events, stubbornly high inflation and sharp rate hikes to counter that have turned the global environment gloomier," the agency said.

On the domestic front, the peak impact of the rate hikes, 250 basis points since May 2022, which has pushed interest rates above pre-Covid-19 levels, will play out in fiscal 2024, it said.

According to the agency, consumer inflation is expected to moderate to 5.0% on average in fiscal 2024 from 6.8% in fiscal 2023, owing to high-base effect and some softening of crude and commodity prices.

A good rabi harvest

would help cool food inflation, while the slowing economy should moderate core inflation, it said.

The risks to inflation are tilted upward, given the ongoing heat wave and the World Meteorological Organization's prediction that an El Niño warming event is likely over the next couple of months, the agency said.

"India's medium-term growth prospects are healthier. Over the next five fiscals, we expect GDP to grow at 6.8% annually, driven by capital and productivity increases. What is also good to see is the increasing sustainability footprint of capex," Amish Mehta, Managing Director and CEO of CRISIL Ltd, said.

"At present, nearly 9% of the infrastructure and industrial capex is green. We see this number rising to 15% by fiscal 2027. Down the road, the impact of climate risk mitigation will be felt across revenue, commodity prices, export markets and capital spending," he said.

# Stock markets across Asia fall as global banking fears widen

AGENCIES

**HONG KONG:** Stock markets across Asia fell on Thursday as troubles at international banking giant Credit Suisse intensified fears of a wider bank crisis.

Major indexes in Japan, Hong Kong and Australia fell by over 1 per cent amid heavier losses in bank shares, the BBC reported. This comes as Credit Suisse said it would borrow up to \$54 billion to shore up its finances.

Shares in the bank plunged after it found "weakness" in its financial reporting.

As a result, Japan's Nikkei 225 index fell by 1.1 per cent at mid-day Asian trading. The Topix Banks share index fell by more than 4 per cent after recording its worst day in three years earlier this week.

Shares in Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group, the country's largest lender by assets, were down by 3 per cent. This was in line with losses at counterparts Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group and Mizuho Financial Group, the BBC reported.

Indexes in Hong Kong and Sydney fell by over 1.5 per cent, while the Shang-



hai Composite was 0.5 per cent lower.

Problems in the banking sector surfaced in the US last week with the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank, the country's 16th-largest bank, followed two days later by the collapse of Signature Bank, the BBC reported.

Developments at Credit Suisse were "amplified" by problems at the smaller

banks, Sayuri Shirai, an economics professor at the Keio University in Tokyo said.

"Investors and creditors are concerned about risk. Banks may suffer from raising funds, which in turn will affect the cost of funding for SMEs and start-ups globally," she added.

"Markets could return to normal quickly once the US centric episode fades to the back burner. Broader contagion fears at this stage are limited as banks are so much better capitalised in Asia," said Stephen Innes, managing partner at SPI Asset Management.

# Snapchat 'Content Controls' tool to help parents limit content for their kids

**SAN FRANCISCO:** Snap, the parent company of Snapchat, has rolled out a new feature for Family Center, called "Content Controls", which will allow parents to limit the type of content their teens watch on the application.

Last year, the company introduced "Family Center" on Snapchat to offer parents a way to gain insight into who their teens are communicating with on the app, and now it has added a new Content Controls feature to help par-

ents customise their teens' individual experiences and needs.

"Our new Content Controls in Family Center will allow parents to filter out Stories from publishers or creators that may have been identified as sensitive or suggestive. To enable Content Controls, parents will need to have an existing Family Center set up with their teen," Snapchat said in a blogpost.

Parents can enable the feature by turning on the "Restrict Sensitive Con-



tent" filter in Snapchat's Family Center. Teens will no longer

be able to see the blocked content on Stories and Spotlight, the platform's short video section, once enabled.

Meanwhile, Snap has introduced its new artificial intelligence (AI) chatbot for Snapchat, powered by the latest version of OpenAI's GPT technology.

The "My AI" chatbot is available as an experimental feature for Snapchat+ subscribers and will be rolling out this week, the company said in a blogpost. (AGENCIES)

# French Parliament debates pension reforms amid nationwide strikes

AGENCIES

**PARIS:** As hundreds of thousands of people protested across France over controversial pension reforms, a joint committee of Parliament debated the draft text of the bill.

After eight hours of talks, the committee of seven senators and seven members of the National Assembly reached a consensus late Wednesday night on details of the text of the bill, particularly articles concerning long careers, mothers, and long-term contracts for seniors, reports Xinhua news agency.

The final version of the text will be sent to the French Senate on Thursday morning, and the National Assembly later in the afternoon for a decisive vote.

The French Senate, which is dominated by ring-wing parties, adopted the bill on March 11.

Since then, unions and people working in France have been putting pressure on the National Assembly to maintain the current legal retirement age of 62.

The Interior Ministry announced on Wednesday evening that 480,000 people across the country had participated in the eighth general mobilization against the reforms, organised by the unions.

However, the country's largest union, the General Confederation of Labor (CGT), said the figure was much higher.

CGT said that more than 1.7 million people took to



the streets to defend their retirement scheme.

French workers also went on strike on Wednesday, to support their unions and push deputies to consider dropping the pension reforms.

Following Wednesday's general mobilisation, many public service sectors announced that they would extend their strikes, but services will be less disrupted.

The public transport operator in the Ile-de-France region (RATP) said traffic will be as normal on Thursday, except for the express trains that connect Paris and the suburbs.

The country's national railway company SNCF said that two out of three fast trains and three out of five inter-city trains would operate on Thursday, but rail traffic in Ile-de-France will remain heavily disrupted.

Meanwhile, air traffic authorities have also ordered airlines to cancel 20 per cent of their flights leaving Paris Orly Airport

on Thursday, as they did on Wednesday.

However, garbage is likely to continue accumulating in the capital, since refuse collectors and street cleaners will be on strike until March 20.

According to the city hall, some 76,000 tonnes of garbage are to be collected as of Thursday in Paris.

Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin has asked Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo to use administrative measures to force refuse collectors and street cleaners to come back to work, but she has refused.

Darmanin told the Senate on Wednesday that if the city hall continues refusing to make staff requisitions in order to maintain a minimum service, the Paris Police would do it, as it is a "question of public health".

Major unions also announced on Wednesday evening that they would be marching in front of the National Assembly on Thursday to try "one last time" to influence depu-

ties to reject the pension reform bill.

In 2021, France's expenditure on the pension system equaled 13.8 per cent of the country's gross domestic product (GDP).

However, the country's Pensions Advisory Council (COR) has warned that the share of pension expenditure will rise sharply from 2027 to 2032 due to a sharp contraction in GDP, to between 14.2 per cent and 14.7 per cent.

In a report published by the COR in September 2022, the pension system watchdog said that from 2022 to 2032, the country's pension system would be in deficit.

Prime Minister Elizabeth Borne laid out details of the pension reform plan in January, under which the legal retirement age would be progressively raised by three months a year from 62 to 64 by 2030, and a guaranteed minimum pension would be introduced.

Under the plan, as of 2027, at least 43 years of work would be required to be eligible for a full pension.

# S.Korean President in Japan, calls for closer cooperation against Pyongyang's threats

AGENCIES

**TOKYO:** During his highly symbolic trip to Japan, visiting South Korean Yoon Suk-yeol on Thursday said Seoul and Tokyo should work together to deal with threats from North Korea, as he opened a summit with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida amid a thaw in the long-strained relations between the two nations.

The summit took place at the Prime Minister's official residence hours after the President arrived in the country on a highly symbolic trip in the wake of the resolution of a protracted row over wartime forced labour, reports Yonhap News Agency.

The two-day visit is South Korea's first bilateral presidential trip to the neighboring nation in 12 years, an illustration showing how long the relations between the two countries have been frayed over historical disputes.

Yoon said in his opening remarks that South Korea and Japan should cooperate closely to counter increasingly sophisticated nuclear and missile threats from North Korea, while Kishida said the two countries have an opportunity to open up a new chapter in their relations.

Ahead of the summit, which was preceded by a joint inspection of an honor guard at the prime min-



ister's residence, the two governments and business communities announced a series of agreements aimed at improving the bilateral relationship.

Japan agreed to lift its restrictions on exports of key industrial materials for semiconductors and displays, which had been placed on South Korea in 2019 in apparent response to the forced labor dispute.

The two countries' big business lobbies also said they would each create a fund to promote joint research and youth exchanges.

Shortly before Yoon's departure, North Korea fired an intercontinental ballistic missile into the East Sea, a provocation that underlined the need for closer security cooperation between Seoul and Tokyo as well as for trilateral cooperation with the

US. Upon arriving in Tokyo, he visited a situation room set up at his hotel to receive a virtual briefing from military and security officials on the latest developments following the missile launch, a presidential official said.

This week's trip came less than two weeks after Seoul announced a solution to the long-running dispute over compensation for Koreans forced into hard labour for Japanese companies when Korea was under Japan's colonial rule from 1910-1945.

Under the plan, a public foundation affiliated with the interior ministry will compensate the victims with donations from domestic businesses, a solution that has already been rejected by some of the victims for the lack of participation by Japanese

firms. Yoon kicked off his working visit by meeting with Korean residents over lunch.

This is his first visit to Japan since taking office and the first by a South Korean president in nearly four years.

Former President Moon visited Osaka in 2019, but that trip was for a G20 summit, not a bilateral visit. The last bilateral visit was by former President Lee Myung-bak in December 2011.

Yoon and Kishida have held bilateral summits on the sidelines of multilateral gatherings.

They met during the UN General Assembly in New York last September and again during a gathering led by Southeast Asian nations in Cambodia in November.

# Germany met emissions targets in 2022 despite more coal power

**BERLIN:** Germany met its emissions targets in 2022 despite the increased use of coal-fired power during the energy crisis, according to preliminary calculations published by the Federal Environment Agency (UBA).

Following an increase in 2021, UBA said that Germany's greenhouse gas emissions in 2022 fell slightly by 1.9 per cent year-on-year, to around 746 million metric tonnes, reports Xinhua news agency.

Compared to 1990, emissions fell by around 40.4%.

However, the decline in emissions does not involve all sectors. There has been a "significant increase" in the energy sector, with emissions rising by 4.4 per cent, according to UBA.

In response to the energy crisis, the German government has reactivated coal-fired power plants which were previously running on reserve.

Nevertheless, Europe's largest economy is sticking to its goal of phasing out



coal by 2030.

Germany is seeking to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 65 per cent by 2030 compared to 1990 levels. By 2045, it hopes to achieve climate neutrality.

In order to reach these targets, UBA President Dirk Messner called for a "much faster pace in the expansion of renewable energies".

"To achieve the German government's targets by 2030, emissions must now be reduced by 6 per cent per year. Since 2010, the average has not even been 2 per cent," he added.

Coal remained the country's most important energy source for power generation last year, accounting for one-third of electricity generated in Germany, according to preliminary results published by the Federal Statistical Office (Destatis).

Meanwhile, the transport sector saw a slight increase in emissions despite high fuel prices, the temporary introduction of a 9-euro ticket in public transport, and a record year for new registrations of electric cars.

"We need to make prog-

ress on climate protection in all areas," a spokesperson for the Ministry for Digital and Transport (BMDV) told Xinhua, emphasizing that the latest UBA data on emissions "underlines this urgency".

It is "of crucial importance that we also convert the vehicles in the existing fleet to climate neutrality", the spokesperson added, underlining that the Ministry is strongly committed to ensuring that internal combustion vehicles powered by e-fuels can be registered in Europe beyond 2035. (AGENCIES)

# 11 killed, 10 missing after Colombia coal mine blast



AGENCIES

**BOGOTA:** At least 11 people were killed and 10 others remained missing after an explosion ripped through a coal mine in Colombia's Cundinamarca, local authorities said.

"We are making every effort with the Cundinamarca government to rescue the trapped people alive," President Gustavo Petro said on Twitter late Wednesday.

"The nation, department, municipality and relief agencies continue working to rescue the ten miners who are still trapped. The Ubaté hospital is treating nine miners, six of whom have already been discharged," Cundinamarca governor Nicolas Garcia Bustos said on social media.

He added that rescue

teams were working to locate the missing miners at the risk of a secondary explosion, which could be caused by gas accumulation.

When the incident occurred, 30 miners were inside the five interconnected 900-meter-deep mines for carbon.

Fortunately, seven escaped on their own, said Alvaro Farfan, commander of the Cundinamarca Fire Department.

Farfan said that rescuers were trying to establish communication with the trapped miners to determine their state of health and facilitate the rescue.

Family members of the missing miners gathered outside the coal mine, while the relatives of the deceased received psychological aid, Cundinamarca's government said.

# Turkey to continue talks for extending Black Sea grain deal by 120 days



AGENCIES

**ANKARA:** Turkey will continue its contacts with relevant parties for extending the Black Sea Grain Initiative for 120 days, Defence Minister Hulusi Akar said.

"We started negotiations in line with the initial version of the agreement, with the idea of extending it for another 120 days... we will continue our contacts over extending the grain corridor deal for 120 days, instead of two months," he told reporters in Ankara following a parliamentary group meeting of the ruling Justice and Development party.

Akar added that parties to the deal will evaluate and make their decision on a further extension of the agreement.

On Monday, Russia agreed to extend the deal only by 60 days after talks with UN representatives in

Geneva. Since March, the UN and Turkey have been facilitating the negotiations for extending the deal one more time.

The deal was reached in July 2022 and was extended by 120 days on November 17 to allow Ukrainian and Russian food and fertilizer to be shipped safely from three key Black Sea ports despite the ongoing war between Moscow and Kiev.

The agreement has allowed the exports of more than 24 million metric tonnes of grain and over 1,600 secure vessel voyages through the Black Sea, with 55 per cent of food exports going to developing countries.

According to the Turkish Defence Ministry, at least 790 ships have left Ukrainian ports so far carrying nearly 23.5 million tonnes of grains since the initiative came into being.

# Syrian conflict enters 13th year amid positive signs of political settlement

**DAMASCUS:** The ongoing Syrian conflict is entering its 13th year with some positive signs that the deadlocked political settlement could see a nudge this year.

The first three months of 2023 witnessed some crucial developments that raised hopes about a possible detente in the 13th year of the crisis, reports Xinhua news agency.

The main headline was the success of the Russian and Iranian efforts to break the ice between Syria and Turkey as the relations between the two neighbouring countries have seen much tension over the past 12 years.

Deputy foreign ministers of Syria, Turkey, Russia, and Iran are set to meet soon to pave the way for the meetings of Syrian and Turkish foreign ministers for the first time since the beginning of the conflict.

In December last year, the Defence Ministers of the two rivals met in Moscow.

A possible rapprochement between Syria and Turkey is crucial for peace-



fully defusing the crisis. Turkey enjoys considerable sway over key rebel groups in northern Syria as it's

one of the opposition backers.

Another unexpected positive development was the China-backed reconc-

iliation between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Both are regional powerhouses and key players in the Syrian war,

with Iran supporting the government of President Bashar al-Assad while Saudi is a key opposition backer.

On top of that, the devastating earthquakes, which jolted Syria and Turkey on February 6, have pushed Arab countries to shelve former policies toward Damascus, creating the so-called "disaster diplomacy".

For the first time in more than a decade, Saudi planes landed in Syrian airports delivering relief aid to the earthquake victims.

Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry also made an "ice-breaking" visit to Syria after the quake, expressing the most populous Arab country's support for Syria.

On Wednesday, the 12th anniversary of the Syrian war, Russian President Vladimir Putin hosted his Syrian counterpart for talks that are believed to touch upon Syrian-Turkish reconciliation.

Positive signals can be felt domestically, regionally, and globally, said

Mohammad Al-Omari, a Syrian political observer and writer.

"Moscow and Tehran exert efforts to find a mediation formula between Syria and Turkey and reflect that on the political track in Syria. The earthquake's devastating impact on Syria has provided chances for some countries to communicate and cooperate with Syria," he told Xinhua.

The analyst pointed out that the current positive vibe could push the stalemated political talk forward, noting that a comprehensive political solution demands a broader international and regional alignment based on cooperation and stability.

According to Unicef estimates, 90 per cent of people in Syria live in poverty, most are unable to make ends meet or bring food to the table.

Families have had their resources depleted, with limited employment opportunities, skyrocketing prices, and a shortage of basic supplies. (AGENCIES)

# President Murmu arrives on two-day visit to Kerala



**AGENCIES**

**KOCHI:** President Droupadi Murmu arrived in Kerala on Thursday, her maiden visit to the state after taking over the new post. She was received by Governor Arif Mohammed

Khan, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and other top officials. Soon after her arrival, all the three left for naval air station INS Garuda. She is slated to visit the indigenous Aircraft carrier INS Vikrant and would

later award the President's Colour to INS Dhrnocharya, after which she will leave for the state capital city. Today, she has multiple programmes lined up and after that she will return to Kochi and from there leave for Lakshadweep.

# India welcomes confirmation of Eric Garcetti as U.S. Ambassador to New Delhi: MEA

**UNI**

**NEW DELHI:** India on Thursday welcomed the confirmation of former Los Angeles mayor Eric Garcetti as the US' Ambassador to India and said it looks forward to working with him to take forward the multi-faceted bilateral ties.

Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Arindam Bagchi, answering questions on the issue, also said that a viral video showing some comments by Ambassador-designate Garcetti purportedly saying at a Senate hearing that he will actively take up the issue of human rights in India if confirmed for the post, is "pretty old".

"We welcome the confirmation of Mr Eric Garcetti as Ambassador to India and we look forward to working with him to take forward our multi-faceted bilateral relations," said the spokesperson.

To a question on Garcetti seen saying in the viral video that alleged human rights violations in India would be at the centre of his tenure, the spokesperson said: "I am not aware of any comments by Ambassador-designate Eric Garcetti recently on this issue. I think there is something on social media, which is



pretty old."

He added "Our position on many of the issues is well known to the world." Last year in April, after the India-US 2+2 meeting, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken had remarked about a "rise in human rights abuses" in India. External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in a sharp rebuttal had said that while people are entitled to have views about India's policies, New Delhi is "equally entitled" to have views about them.

On Wednesday, the US Senate voted 52-42 to confirm former Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti to be the next US ambassador to India. Garcetti will be the first permanent ambassador to India under President Joe Biden.

In a video that has gone viral on social media, Garcetti is purportedly seen stating that he will "actively engage" with civil society

groups working on democracy in India if he is confirmed, and that the Citizenship Amendment Act (2019) will be a "core part" of what he plans to take up with his Indian counterparts.

To another query, on the bipartisan resolution moved by US Senators Bill Hagerty and Jeff Merkley reaffirming the US' recognition of Arunachal Pradesh as an "integral part of the Republic of India", the MEA spokesperson said that they are finding out the details of the resolution. He added they have not heard anything specific on it from the US government, and that the resolution had only been tabled as of now.

"We have seen reports of such a resolution in the US Senate. We are finding out the details. But we have not seen anything specific on this from the American government. For now we are seeing the details of the resolution, it has only been tabled so far," Bagchi said.

On Wednesday, US Senators Bill Hagerty and Jeff Merkley introduced a bipartisan Senate resolution reaffirming the US' recognition of Arunachal Pradesh as an integral part of India and condemned China's military aggression to change the status quo along the Line of Actual Control (LAC).

# Nadda to visit poll-bound Karnataka today

**AGENCIES**

**NEW DELHI:** BJP National President J.P. Nadda will be on two-day visit to poll-bound Karnataka from Today

Nadda will be on two-day tour to Karnataka to attend multiple events. As per the source, "Nadda will hold a rath yatra and address today in Chitradurga district. Next day, He will again hold a rath yatra and address public rally in Tumakuru, Karnataka."

Along with this, there will be several meetings. Nadda will also meet 'karyakartas' (party workers) to motivate them ahead of elections.

Many central leaders including Prime Minister Narendra Modi have visited the state in view of Assembly elections due in Karnataka before May.



Prime Minister Modi during a one-day visit to Karnataka on March 12 held a 2-kilometre long roadshow in Mandya district. BJP supporters and locals showered flowers on Modi as he held the roadshow in Mandya.

The Prime Minister also dedicated to the nation Bengaluru-Mysuru Expressway and IIT Dharwad and laid the foundation stone for various other projects.

**EXCISE POLICY SCAM**

# Delhi court extends bizman Arun Pillai's ED custody

**NEW DELHI:** A Delhi court on Thursday extended Hyderabad-based businessman Arun Ramchandra Pillai's Enforcement Directorate (ED) custody till March 20 in the excise policy case. Special Judge M. K. Nagpal of the Rouse Avenue Courts noted that the ED has gathered some new details after a confrontation with Butchi Babu Gorantla, Hyderabad-based chartered accountant, on March 15.

The court further noted the ED's submissions that these confrontations are not yet over as the same person has been re-summoned on March 17.

Gorantla is the former auditor of Telangana Chief Minister K Chandrashekar Rao's daughter MLC K Kavitha, who was also summoned by the ED on Thursday.

Magunta Reddy was also summoned on March 18. Pillai needs to be confronted with him, said the probe agency.

The ED informed the court that Kavitha has been called on March 20.

The agency's request for prolonged remand was

contested by Pillai's lawyer, Manu Sharma, who argued that such confrontations between the accused are a never-ending process.

The court had extended Pillai's ED custody by three days in the case on March 13. The ED had arrested him late night on March 6 post questioning him for hours in the case.

On March 10, Pillai moved an application before the same court seeking to retract his statements given to the probe agency in the case. This led to issuing a notice to the ED by the court. His arrest marks the 11th arrest in the matter by the ED.

The probe agency has alleged that Pillai was involved in forming a cartel (now called South Group) of manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers which controlled more than 30 per cent of the liquor business in the national capital.

The ED named the cartel, South Group, which includes BRS leader K. Kavitha, Sarath Reddy, the promoter of Aurobindo Pharma, YSRCP MP from Ongole, Magunta Srinivasulu Reddy, his son Raghav Magunta and

others. The South Group was represented by Arun Pillai, Abhishek Boinpalli and Butchi Babu, the agency has claimed.

Pillai is a partner in Indo Spirits with a 32.5 per cent stake and he represented K. Kavitha's interests, said the ED.

Pillai and another person have revealed the same in their statements. Pillai on paper invested Rs 3.40 crore in Indo Spirits.

As revealed in the investigation, out of this amount Rs 1 crore was given to Pillai on the instructions of Kavitha.

In exchange for kickbacks given by the South Group to Vijay Nair and AAP, Indo Spirits was made the wholesaler of Pernod Ricard which made it one of the most profitable LI.

Thus the fund of Rs 3.40 crore which was used to show investment in Indo Spirits (a special purpose vehicle to recoup the kickbacks paid by the South Group and channel the illegal gains) is proceeds of crime, the ED added.

Kavitha is a member of the Telangana Legislative Council.(AGENCIES)

# K'taka Cong MLA abuses PSI in public, says he won't leave him

**AGENCIES**

**BAGALKOT:** An incident of a Karnataka Congress MLA Anand Nyamagouda abusing and threatening a police sub inspector (PSI) came to light on Thursday in Jamkhandi town of Bagalkot district.

According to sources, PSI Basavaraj Konnur was targeted by the Congress

MLA in connection with the building of a circle in Jamkhandi town.



The video about the incident has gone viral invoking sharp reactions against the

MLA who is heard using foul language against the on duty PSI in a public place in the presence of his supporters. The PSI tries to convince the MLA that if the circle is built it will become an issue. This enrages the Congress MLA.

"You be quiet. What do you know? Let me tell you. The present government might be supporting you. I won't leave you," he says.

# Delhi Police bust gang of cyber cheats, arrest 9

**NEW DELHI:** With the arrest of nine persons, Delhi Police on Thursday claimed to have busted a gang of cyber cheats who indulged in allegedly duping youths on the pretext of providing them jobs in private airlines.

The accused were identified as Manvendra Singh Rajawat, Vinit Singh Bhadauriya, Ajeet Singh Rajawat, Deepak Singh Chauhan, Surendra Pratap Singh, Rajat Sengar, Abhay Yadav, Satyam Singh and Shivam Singh Rajawat.

According to the police, a complaint from Burari resident Sumit Singh was received at the Cyber North police station via the National Cyber Crime Reporting Portal (NCRP) wherein.

The complainant alleged that he posted his resume on the Shine.com job portal and after a few days he received a call from a person posing to be a representative of IndiGo airlines, informing that he had been selected for a job.

"Thereafter, he was made to speak with another person impersonating as an HR Manager and his tele-interview was conducted. After his interview, he was directed to deposit Rs 1,37,500 as fees for uniform, salary account activation, passport etc. Following this inducement, the

complainant deposited the amount in a bank account provided by the accused," said Sagar Singh Kalsi, the Deputy Commissioner of Police (North).

After a while when the complainant persisted with the job offer, he was informed that due to some internal emergency, the company had stopped hiring and when he asked to return his money, the accused switched off his phone.

During investigation, the police team tasked with the probe zeroed in on the accused persons location at Sector 49 Noida.

"Raids were conducted but the accused had left the premises just a day before the team reached there. However, after sustained technical analysis, their location traced at a flat in Nawada, Uttam Nagar. But on reaching there, it was found that they had already moved towards the Bundelkhand area of Uttar Pradesh," said the DCP.

However on March 14, the police team managed to nab all nine accused from Faridabad.

On interrogation, the accused told the police that they came to Delhi in search of jobs.

"It was revealed that absconding co-accused, Amir

and Shivam, were already cheating people through the same modus operandi and had been earning quick money. This sudden increase in their financial status of lured Manvendra Singh and he started doing this fraud on a large scale," said the official.

"Therefore, he along with the other accused hatched a plan to dupe job aspirants in the same manner to earn quick money. To execute his plans, he brought together his relatives, friends and started a call centre. Fear of being caught by police or to not create any suspicion in the eyes of neighbours, the accused persons kept on changing their location.

"Amir works for Shine.com and he used to provide data to the accused, who would call job aspirants for jobs in various private airlines based on their qualifications and experience. Fake tele-interviews were conducted on phones after which forged appointment letters were also transmitted to victims. Money in lieu of fee for uniform, opening of salary account, passport, security etc. were asked from victims on different pretexts in different bank accounts," the official added.(AGENCIES)

**GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR UT**

## OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JSD (PHE) RURAL WATER SUPPLY DIVISION, GANDERBAL/SGR.

**H.Q: CHEKI-DUDERHAMA GANDERBAL.**

e - mail: pherwsd@gmail.com, Phone/Fax: 0194 - 2416292,

**NOTICE INVITING e - TENDERS:**

**GIST Of e- NIT No: - 39/JS-PHE/RWSD/Civil of 2022-23.**

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of UT of J&K e-tenders (Two cover System) are invited on Itemized Turn Key basis from "A" Class - Reputed and resourceful contractors/ Firms/Companies/ Joint Venture of repute in PWD or Equivalent in CPWD/ Railways and other state Governments, which should be uploaded on the Procurement e- web portal <http://www.jktenders.gov.in> up to last bidding date i.e. 18.03.2023 up to 03:00 PM for the subjected work(s) referred below to be received by the Executive Engineer JS-PHE RWS Division Ganderbal/Sgr (HQ: Cheki Duderhama Ganderbal) and as per the details mentioned in this e-tender notification and to whom all the terms and conditions of detailed e-NIT /Tender Documents/ PWD Form No:- 25 double are accepted. The detailed tender document and Specifications etc. can be downloaded on the e-procurement Portal <http://www.jktenders.gov.in>. The cost of tender documents (Non-refundable/ Non-Transferable) should be in the shape of e-Challan or Treasury Challan/ Receipt in favour of the Executive Engineer JS-PHE Rural Water Supply Division, Ganderbal/Sgr (HQ: Cheki Duderhama Ganderbal)

S. No	Name of Work with Package No.	Tendered Cost including all Taxes (Rs in lacs.)	Cost of document (Rs in lacs.)	Earnest Money Deposit (Rs in lacs.)	Time of completion	Tender Call	Time and Date of opening of tenders online (Technical Bid)	Class of contractor
01	Design, Construction, successful testing and Commissioning of 0.04 MGD Slow Sand Filtration Plant, 0.20 lac gallons capacity RCC S.R, Sump cum pump house, Pre-settling tank, Anchor Blocks, Sluice Chamber, Laying/Fitting of DI/GI mains/ Sub mains, distribution system and providing, fitting, installation, testing and successful commissioning of electro-mechanical components for WSS Banjar Basti Bela Wussan under Capex on ITEMIZED TURNKEY BASIS including necessary soil testing as required at selected site, as per the Parameters / Specification mentioned in the tender document. Architectural aesthetics shall also be kept in consideration to make the structures appealing	₹146.68 Lacs	₹0.015 Lacs (Favouring Executive Engineer JS-PHE RWS Division Ganderbal/Sgr under MH 0215)	₹2.935 Lacs (Pledged in favour of the Executive Engineer JS-PHE RWS Division Ganderbal/Sgr)	07 months	1 <sup>st</sup>	Office of the Executive Engineer JS-PHE RWS Division Ganderbal/Sgr on 20.03.2023 at 12:00 PM	"A" Class - Reputed and resourceful contractors/ Firms/Companies/Joint Venture of repute in PWD or Equivalent in CPWD/ Railways and other state Governments.

Head of Account: - CAPEX. Position of Funds: Available

The tender inviting authority is the Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) RWS Division Ganderbal/Sgr  
The awarding authority is the Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) RWS Division Ganderbal/Sgr  
The Bidding Documents and other details can be downloaded from the website: <https://jktenders.gov.in>  
From 03.03.2023 (10:00 a.m.) UPTO 18.03.2023 (03:00 p.m)

**i) GENERAL CONDITIONS OF THE CONTRACT**  
The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings (if any), Book of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms, conditions of contract and other details can be seen / downloaded from the website: [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) As per schedule of dates given below

Sl No	Date of Publishing of Tender Notice	Date of downloading of bidding documents	Bid Submission Start date	Date of Pre-bid meeting	Last date of submission of bid Queries	Bid Submission end date	Date & time of opening Bids (Technical Cover)
01	02.03.2023	From 03.03.2023 (10.00 AM) To 18.03.2023 upto (03:00 p.m)	03.03.2023 From 10.00 AM	11.03.2023 (at 11: 30 am)	14.03.2023 up to 03.00 PM	18.03.2023 up to 03.00 PM	20.03.2023 at 12:00 PM
In the Office of the: - Executive Engineer Jal Shakti (PHE) Rural Water Supply Division Ganderbal/Sgr (HQ: Cheki Duderhama Ganderbal)							

Bids must be accompanied by bid security viz: Earnest Money in shape of CDR/FDR and (The date of CDR/FDR etc must not be prior to 1<sup>st</sup> Jan. 2020) and EMD Treasury Receipt (mentioning therein the NIT No., S.No. of work and Advertised Cost as per the NIT) as cost of Tender Document under M.H 0215 to be pledged in favour of the Executive Engineer PHE RWS Division Ganderbal /Sgr (H.Q. Cheki Duderhama Ganderbal) I (as specified in the table (i) (Page 1<sup>st</sup>) & all other requisite documents mentioned in the Detailed / Uploaded Tender document of the work. Bids will be opened in the Office of the Executive Engineer JS-PHE Rural Water Supply Division, Ganderbal/Sgr (HQ: Cheki Duderhama Ganderbal) on 20.03.2023 at 12:00 PM. If the office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids as specified, the bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue:

No: - JS-PHE/ RWSD/ Corrs. / 10659 - 83,  
Dated: - 02.03.2023.  
DIPK-18439-22  
DT: 16-03-2023

Sd/= Er. Samiullah Beigh Executive Engineer, JS (PHE) Deptt. RWS Division Ganderbal/Sgr.

# IPL 2023: Mumbai Indians will have a point to prove after last year's performance, says Sunil Gavaskar

AGENCIES

**MUMBAI:** Legendary India batter Sunil Gavaskar believes five-time IPL winners Mumbai Indians will have a point to prove in the 2023 season after last year's performance, where they finished at bottom of the points table.

"They'll have to forget what happened last season, this is a fresh season to believe that they can do it again. They've got the team, they are, you know probably going to miss Jasprit Bumrah, but otherwise, they've got a team that can win the championship once again."

"I see them being in the top two this time around or top three definitely because I think they have a point or two to prove after their last year's performance," he said to Star Sports, the official television broadcaster of IPL 2023.

Gavaskar also sees fast bowler Jofra Archer as a trump card for Mumbai over captain Rohit Sharma and wicketkeeper Ishan Kishan. Archer has been bowling impressively after his comeback to competitive cricket earlier in the year.

"Jofra Archer, one, defi-



nately. I think Ishan Kishan after his debut for India in one-day cricket getting a double hundred, he will be somebody to watch out for as well. And I think Rohit Sharma will do something really special this season."

"Their biggest strength is obviously going to be Jofra Archer coming back because Jofra Archer is a kind of bowler who can take you wickets at the start and who can bowl the overs, the final couple of overs where he can get the wickets and block the runs as well."

Gavaskar also spoke about his four overseas

players for Mumbai, and why he sees big-hitting Australian finisher Tim David as a game-changer.

"The four overseas picks would be the big signing Cameron Green. Another big signing, Jofra Archer. Tim David, three. And between the two, depending on form, depending on the opposition, either Tim or Stubbs or Dewald Brevis."

"Tim David is going to be the X-Factor because he is the kind of player who can change the game in a couple of overs. Cameron Green, he's again somebody who will make a big difference with both bat and ball. He

might even bat at number three because of the fact that when he's played for Australia, he's opened the batting and he's scored so many runs so quickly."

Gavaskar signed off by saying Mumbai's weakness could be in their spin department. "I think it would be perhaps the spin combination because they've really got a lovely new ball attack. The spin combination looks just a little bit light."

Mumbai will open their IPL 2023 campaign against Royal Challengers Bangalore at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium on April 2.

# J&K Sports Council celebrates International Women's Day

GMK SPORTS DESK

**SRINAGAR:** International Women's Day celebrations were held at Indoor Sports Complex Polo-ground Srinagar here Thursday.

Hundreds of female athletes accompanied by their families participated in the programme. Athletes from other districts were also part of the programme and included a good number of Khelo India Centre registered trainees as well accompanied by the mentors.

The programme began with the demo by players from the games of Pencak Silat, Yoga, Ta, Sqay Martial Art who had also participated in the events including Khelo India.

The Divisional Sports

Officer Kashmir, Nuzhat Farooq presided over the function as chief guest while as Kabra Altaf, member J&K Sports Council was the guest of honour on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, Nuzhat Farooq said that women have immensely contributed in making a robust and pragmatic society and that this programme is just a token of appreciation and gratitude to all the women for the different roles they are playing with perfection.

Female athletes and others highlighted the experience and contribution they are making for upliftment of society on various levels and brought attention towards the value addition that they as



women have made in different fields.

The chief guest felicitat-

ed women achievers on the occasion and presented certificates and roses to them.

# PV Priya announces 20-member squad for SAFF U-17 Women's Championship

AGENCIES

**NEW DELHI:** India U-17 women's national team head coach P.V. Priya on Thursday announced a 20-member squad that will travel to Dhaka, Bangladesh, for the SAFF U-17 Women's Championship starting on March 20.

The tournament will be held in collaboration with UEFA.

The India U-17 team has

been in a training camp in Indore, preparing for the tournament, for the past two months. The team played two friendlies against Jordan in February, winning both games in an emphatic fashion (7-0 and 6-0).

The tournament will be played in a single game round robin format with five teams participating in it - India, hosts Bangladesh, defending champions Nepal, Bhutan and Russia.

India will play the opener against defending champions Nepal on March 20.

**Squad:**  
Goalkeepers: Anisha Oraon, Khushi Kumari, Shreya Sharma

**Defenders:** Heena Khatun, Thoi Thoi Devi Yendrenbam, Juh Singh, Akhila Rajan, Vikshit Bara, Nishima Kumari, Thoibisana Chanu Toijam

**Midfielders:** Menaka Devi Lourembam, Shilji

Shaji, Babita Kumari, Shaulina Dang, Shivani Toppo, Shibani Devi Nongmeikapam, Lalita Boypai, Ribahunshisha Kharshing

**Forwards:** Pooja, Cindy Remruatpui Colney

**Schedule:**  
March 20: Nepal vs India  
March 24: India vs Bangladesh  
March 26: India vs Bhutan  
March 28: Russia vs India

## WOMEN'S WORLD BOXING C'SHIP

# Nikhat starts with a bang; Sakshi, Nupur also advance

**NEW DELHI:** Star boxer Nikhat Zareen kickstarted the defence of her title and India's challenge with an impressive win at the IBA Women's World Boxing Championships with a dominating victory while Sakshi Chaudhary and Nupur Sheoran also made winning starts at the Indira Gandhi Sports Complex here on Thursday.

The 26-year-old exuberant boxer from Telangana, who clinched 52kg gold in the last edition in Istanbul, began her title defence in style as she took just over four minutes to out-class Anakhanim Ismayilova with the Referee Stops Contest (RSC) verdict in the 50kg opening round contest. The pugilists from Azerbaijan looked clueless against Zareen's strong jabs and quick movement in a

thoroughly lopsided bout. The Indian will take on top-seeded Roumaysa Boualam of Algeria in the second round.

Zareen's dominating triumph, in the first bout of the day, provided a befitting start to the prestigious event, which is being hosted by the Boxing Federation of India for the record third time in the country.

Extending the hosts' domination further on the opening day, 2021 Asian Championships bronze medallists Chaudhary and Sheoran also registered emphatic wins with an identical 5-0 margin in their respective matches.

Sakshi dominated Colombian Maria Jose Martinez with supreme technical ability in the 52kg Round-of-32. Sheoran (+81kg), on the other



hand, proved too strong for Abiola Jackman of Guyana in the Round-of-16 bout. She will now face Kazakhstan's Urakbayeva Zhazira in the next round whereas debutant Nupur Sheoran will be up against tough Lazzat Kungeibayeva of Kazakhstan, the 2016 World Champion, in the quarterfinals.

**FRANCE'S WASSILA CAUSES AN UPSET**

Meanwhile, French boxer Lkhadiri Wassila caused a major upset of the day in the 50kg category when she sent the 2018 Asian Games gold medallist Chang Yuan of China packing with a 5-2 win in a thrilling bout after the review. The ongoing event is witnessing the participation of 324 boxers, including several

Olympic medallists, from 65 countries fighting for titles in the 12 weight categories.

Rio Olympic champion Estelle Mossely (60kg) of France is scheduled to begin her campaign on the second day of the tournament on Friday along with some other top boxers, including the five-time World Championships medallist Elif Guneri (75kg) of Turkey, reigning Asian Champion Oh Yeon-Ji (60kg) of South Korea, and former world champions Italy's Alessia Mesiano (60kg) and Lina Wang (81kg) of China.

Among Indians, Jaismine Lamboria (60kg), Shashi Chopra (63kg) and Shruti Yadav (70kg) will fight in the Round-of-32. The tournament has a massive prize pool of INR 20 crore.

# Important to grow as a team in FIFA windows, says fullback Akash Mishra

**KOLKATA:** While the Indian Super League (ISL) campaign is not yet over for nine of the players, who will join a national camp a day after the ISL final, it has very much come to a close for Akash Mishra, and the fullback is now motivating himself to make another push for a permanent place in the national team colours.

It is the end of the 2022-23 Indian Football season, and the FIFA International Window drawing ever so nearer, the Blue Tigers set camp in Kolkata to prepare for the upcoming Tri-Nation International Football Tournament in Imphal.

"It's always nice to be back (in the National camp). The best players in the country are here, and it's a great experience to learn from them every time," Mishra told the-aiff.com.

"The atmosphere is quite different from the league games. Youngsters like myself get to learn a lot from the senior players like Sunil Chhetri, or Gurpreet Singh, not just on the pitch, but off it as well."

The National team is currently preparing for the

AFC Asian Cup next year, and the matches against Myanmar (March 22) and the Kyrgyz Republic (March 28) in the Tri-Nation International Football Tournament, are part of the series of competitive International games planned by the Federation to help the team get up to the desired level to face the best in Asia.

"International games have a totally different intensity, they are nothing compared to league games. The motivation levels are different, and I believe these matches help us all improve as a team," Mishra is quoted as saying in a report by the AIFF website.

The 21-year-old fullback himself has come back from his club Hyderabad FC after the disappointment of being on the wrong end of an ISL semi final penalty shootout. However, the youngster has picked himself back up and is raring to go.

"It's difficult to come back from that kind of a loss. Playing the whole 120 minutes, and then losing on penalties takes its toll. But for me, a call-up to the National Team comes above everything else," said Mishra.

# Adrian Holdstock, Ahsan Raza included in Elite Panel of Umpires for 2023-24

**DUBAI:** South Africa's Adrian Holdstock and Pakistan's Ahsan Raza have been included in the Emirates ICC Elite Panel of Umpires even as veteran Aleem Dar has stepped down after 19 years on the Elite panel, standing in a record 435 mens international matches.

The ICC Elite Umpire Selection Panel headed by ICC General Manager - Cricket, Wasim Khan, made the additions during the annual review and selection process, increasing the number of umpires on the panel from 11 to 12.

Holdstock has officiated in five Tests, 42 ODIs and 48 T20Is while Ahsan has stood in seven Tests, 41 ODIs and 72 T20Is. Both umpires were part of the panels for the ICC Men's T20 World Cups in 2021 and 2022.

Holdstock and Ahsan were enthusiastic about being inducted into the panel.

"I'm excited about the upcoming opportunities and look forward to giving my all in the new position. I appreciate all my colleagues, the ICC and Cricket South Africa for their support over the



years. In addition, I want to thank my family, especially my wife Carmen, without whom I would not have been able to continue in a profession I love so much," said Holdstock.

Ahsan Raza hoped to put all his experience to good use and continue to learn from his senior colleagues on the panel.

"I've always wanted to officiate regularly alongside the best match officials. I have already officiated in international matches across formats as well as in ICC events, so am aware

of the enormous responsibility that this position entails. I hope to put all my experience over the years to good use but will continue to learn from my senior colleagues on the panel," he was quoted as saying by the ICC in a release.

The other members of the panel are Chris Gafaney (New Zealand), Kumar Dharmasena (Sri Lanka), Marais Erasmus (South Africa), Michael Gough (England), Nitin Menon (India), Paul Reiffel (Australia), Richard Illingworth (England), Richard

Kettleborough (England), Rodney Tucker (Australia), Joel Wilson (West Indies).

There is no change in the Emirates ICC Elite Panel of Match Referees, the ICC informed.

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Najam Sethi congratulated Ahsan Raza on his appointment.

"It is a moment of great pride and joy for the whole nation that Ahsan Raza has become the third Pakistan umpire to be appointed to the ICC Elite Panel of Umpires. I want to congratulate Ahsan on this wonderful achievement and I am sure he will continue to work hard with dedication and passion to enhance the image and profile of this noble profession," he said.

"Ahsan is a great inspiration for many young and upcoming umpires and his elevation demonstrates we have talented umpires in Pakistan who are skilled enough to break into the top category. I hope we, at the PCB, will continue to utilise his expertise, knowledge and experience in our domestic and international matches," he added.(AGENCIES)

# Gianni Infantino re-elected as FIFA president

AGENCIES

**KIGALI:** Gianni Infantino was re-elected as the president of the International Federation of Football Association (FIFA) for the term of 2023-2027 at the 73rd FIFA Congress, held here on Thursday.

As the only candidate for the position, 52-year-old Infantino will continue his tenure as the FIFA chief.

"Being a president is an incredible honor, privilege, and great responsibility. I'm so humble and touched. I promise I'm going to continue to serve for football, and for the member associations," said Infantino after being re-elected.

Since his election, FIFA has made significant progress in developing the game across the world and strived to implement a comprehensive strategy to make football truly global, a Xinhua report said.

As of the 2026 FIFA World Cup in Canada, Mexico and the United States, the football extravaganza will be expanded to a 48-team competition to give more opportunities to countries and regions which are willing to develop their local football levels.

FIFA approved the Annual Report 2022 in February with a record-breaking revenue of 7.6 billion U.S. dollars during the 2019-2022 cycle, and the FIFA Council expected to earn 11 billion U.S. dollars during the 2023-2026 period.

A huge growth in women's football is witnessed as the FIFA Women's World Cup in France in 2019 reportedly had over 1.1 million spectators in the stadiums and more than one billion TV viewers around the globe. The 2023 edition in Australia and New Zealand will be even bigger as it will be the first to be played with 32 teams.

Technology, education, transfer reform and new digital platform have made a massive impact on the game, and the fans are benefiting from the expansion of VAR, football program and FIFA+ to have more communication with each other from every corner of the world.

"It is FIFA's duty to ensure not only that global tournaments engage with girls and boys, women and men from all corners of the world, but also that football continues to provide opportunities to everyone, wherever they are born," said Infantino.

# Army's XIV Corps commander meets troops at Saichen

AGENCIES

**LEH:** Siachen, the world's highest battle ground, was the first port of call of Lt General Rashim Bali who took over as the corps commander of the strategically based XIV Corps of the Army earlier this week.

During his visit to the Siachen Glacier on Thursday, Lt Gen Bali interacted with the troops and commended them for their zeal and enthusiasm in the harsh terrain and inclement weather.

Lt Gen Bali took over the reins of XIV Corps, also known as the Fire and Fury Corps, from Lt Gen Anindya Sengupta.

Lt Gen Bali was earlier posted as corps commander of the Victor Force comprising Rashtriya Rifles of the Army that looks after the crucial South Kashmir area.

During his earlier tenure, his corps conduct-



ed successful operations leading to elimination as well as surrender of terrorists. It also educated parents to wean their children off militancy.

He then moved to the Army headquarters in the national capital and later got promoted to the rank of lieutenant general to head strategic army formations.

# RDSD&E organizes National Apprenticeship Awareness Workshop in Srinagar

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** In order to promote apprenticeship training and create awareness among Youth, Establishments about the Apprenticeship Scheme, the Regional Directorate of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, J&K, Ladakh, H.P, in collaboration with Directorate of Skill Development J&K organized a daylong "National Apprenticeship Awareness Workshop" here on Thursday.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad was the Chief Guest on the occasion.

While, Regional Director/Regional Central Apprenticeship Advisor, J&K and Ladakh, S. Santhimananal, Director, Apprenticeship, Union Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, General Manager DIC, Hamida Akhtar, Joint Director Skill Development, Farooq Ahmad Khan, Chief Planning Officer, Mohammad Yaseen Lone, Principal ITI, Bagh-i-Dilawar Khan, Anisa Parvaiz, Principal ITI, Bemina, Bilal Wani MGN Fellow Syed Jasirah and other concerned were present in the National Apprenticeship Awareness Workshop.

Addressing the workshop, the Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, said that such workshops are aimed to create awareness amongst establishments on apprenticeship training and benefits under Nation-



al Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS).

The DC hailed the efforts of the organizers for conducting the workshop in Srinagar District and stressed on conducting more such orientation programs to encourage skilling to meet the requirement of a qualified workforce for Industry.

Emphasizing on creating data and IT based skills, the DC said that the present era is the age of Information Technology and IT related interventions must be incorporated and adapted in Skill Development training in ITIs and Polytechnics so that trainees/pass outs become job creators rather than job seekers. He stressed that Apprenticeship Programs need to be remodelled to meet the needs of the time and Skills rather than just having Degrees will ensure

quality workforce for the same.

The DC emphasized on youth to update and upgrade themselves with knowledge base and acquire modern skill sets coupled with present market technological trends. He said that after the IT revolution, a global scenario has emerged that demands skilled human resources to meet the day to day market requirements and youth must adopt an enhanced skill set.

The DC further said that J&K especially Kashmir and Srinagar have a huge diversity of arts, crafts which can be learnt and preserved using Artificial Intelligence IOT, Big Data. He said this will also ensure quality production as well as help the Producers to reach markets beyond the geographical

limitations.

The DC also urged upon the youth to actively join Apprenticeship Programs which will help them to gain knowledge and tools needed on ground and will ensure Industry gains a trained workforce. He assured continuous support and monitoring to make it a success.

In his concluding remarks, the DC congratulated the Regional Director and the team for their efforts in promoting the Apprenticeship Programs.

During his speech, the DC also made a mention of Prime Minister's focus on skill development programmes and said that motivation keeps us guiding to involve youth in skill development training in an effective and efficient manner.

Earlier, Director/Regional Central Apprenticeship Advisor, J&K and Ladakh, highlighted the benefits of apprenticeship schemes and opportunities by the Government of India. The workshop, he said, focused on the registration of establishments in the J&K and asked the representatives of Industries to accommodate ITI pass outs/trainees under the Apprenticeship Act. He appreciated the efforts for organizing District level workshops for the benefit of youths of the district through Apprenticeship Scheme.

Assistant Director, BOAT (Northern Region) apprised about the achieve-

ments in the Apprentice Scheme. He advised establishments to register themselves on Apprenticeship portal to avail the benefits of this Nation Apprenticeship Scheme and thanked the establishment for their support in providing opportunities to the candidates.

Later, Assistant Apprenticeship Advisor, Govt. ITI Handwara, Intiyaz Ahmad Mir, briefed about the Apprenticeship scheme with PowerPoint presentation during the event and also highlighted the recent up-dation in the Apprentice Scheme. He briefed the stakeholders about the benefits of the scheme and requested to engage Apprentice trainees from the remote areas to address the issue of unemployment.

The Mahatma Gandhi fellows of Srinagar and Anantnag both were present and informed the group that they have met the Industrial Estate Presidents in their respective Districts for promotion of apprentices in different industries. In this regard, a report for the same has also been sent to Principal Secretary, Skill Development, J&K last year.

Deputy Director/Deputy Central Apprenticeship Advisor, RDSDE, Jammu V.K.Saxena presented the vote of thanks to all the dignitaries, staff, media persons and other stakeholders in organizing the event for a better tomorrow with good skills.

# Kulgam admin organises Sufi Musical event to pay tribute to Nooruddin Wali (RA)

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**KULGAM:** As a tribute to Sheikh Nooruddin Wali (RA) and to showcase the mystic tradition of sufism through music and poetry, the District Administration Kulgam in collaboration with Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts Thursday organised a grand sufi music event at Mini-secretariat, here.

The Sufi Musical Event was attended by Chairperson, DDC Kulgam, Mohd Afzal Parrey; Deputy Commissioner, Dr.Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat; SSP Kulgam, Sahil Sarangal; ADDC, Showkat Ahmad Rather; Regional Director IGNCEA, Shruti Awasti; DDC Member Kulgam, Gh Mohi Ud Din and DDC member Manzgam Jameela Chowdhary besides officers and officials from District Administration.

The renowned artists from Mehnaaz Sangeet Group, Gulshan Musical Group, Yamberzul sufiyana group performed at the event and sang beautiful sufi Kalams having mystic importance as well as depicting teachings of Sufis and Rishis.

The Chairperson DDC



while speaking on the occasion said that Kalam-e-Mutabarka (sacred poetry) of Sheikh Nooruddin Wali (RA) is unique in style and talks of universal brotherhood, love and compassion and we must follow his teachings religiously.

Speaking on the occasion, the Deputy Commissioner said that Kulgam is birth place of Hazrat Sheikhul Aalam Sheikh Nooruddin Noorani (RA),

popularly known as Nund Reshi, who is the most revered saint and this fest is a tribute to the saint and to showcase the mystic tradition of sufism through his music and poetry.

Later, a Book written by Dr.Nisar Nadeem, "Shruken Shruki Met-serith" was also released.

Artists who performed in the sufi fest were felicitated with mementos and certificates.

# 2 notorious thieves, drug peddler booked under PSA: Police

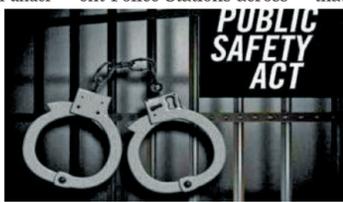
GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu and Kashmir Police on Thursday claimed to have booked two notorious thieves and a notorious drug peddler under Public Safety Act (PSA) after obtaining necessary sanctions from the authorities in Budgam & Baramulla.

In Budgam, two habitual notorious thieves namely Azad Mukhtar Son of Mukhtar Ahmad Hajam and Altaf Ahmad Dar son of Ghulam Mohammad Dar, both residents of Hanjiveera Pattan were detained under Public Safety Act by Police for their unrelenting criminal acts of burglary and theft. The booked notorious thieves have been detained and subsequently lodged in Kot Bhalwal Jail Jammu, a

police spokesman said in a statement issued.

Pertinent to mention here that the booked thieves were involved in 14 cases of burglary and theft in different Police Stations across



Kashmir, police said.

Meanwhile in Baramulla, notorious drug smuggler namely Rayees Ahmad Khan @Nano Khan son of Late Wazir Mohammad Khan resident of Trikangan Boniyar was booked under Public Safety Act after obtaining formal detention orders from the competent authority.

The booked drug peddler has been detained and subsequently lodged in Central Jail Kot Bhalwal Jail Jammu, police said.

"Pertinent to mention that 6 (Six) cases are registered against the said drug peddler and was involved in promoting drug trade by supplying drugs to local youth of Boniyar and other areas of District Baramulla. Despite his involvement in many FIR's he did not mend his activities and was again involved in promoting drug abuse by supplying drugs to local youth."

Meanwhile, spokesman said that the consistent actions of Police against the criminals should reassure the community members that police is making all efforts to eradicate social evils.

# DC Anantnag urges residents to avail free Aadhaar updation facility

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**ANANTNAG:** The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Anantnag, Dr. Basharat Qayoom Thursday made an appeal to the residents of the district to take advantage of the free opportunity to update their Aadhaar.

Appealing to all the residents of the district, he urged them to take advantage of this opportunity and update their Aadhaar documents online for free. He said it will not only save time and money but also ensure that Aadhaar information is up-to-date and accurate. He emphasized the importance of keeping mobile numbers updated in Aadhaar to access online services. It is worth noting that

the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has made a people-centric decision to allow residents to update their Aadhaar documents online for free. This move will benefit millions of residents.

As part of the Digital India initiative, the UIDAI is encouraging residents to take advantage of the free document update facility on the myAadhaar portal. This free service will be available for the next three months, from March 15 to June 14, 2023.

It is important to note that this service is only free on the myAadhaar portal and will continue to attract a fee of Rs 50 at physical Aadhaar centers, as was previously the case.

# CRPF SI among 2 injured in Poonch accidental firing

AGENCIES

**POONCH:** Two personnel of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) were injured on Thursday after the service rifle of one among the injured went off accidentally in Poonch.

The injured personnel include Sub Inspector Rajni Kanta and Constable Navjot Rai of CRPF's 200 Battalion, who were deployed near Poonch College in the main town.

Officials said that one of the injured received bullet injury in foot while other suffered injury in leg.

They said that both the injured personnel were taken to Poonch district hospital for treatment.

Meanwhile, Police said to have started investigation into the matter after taking cognizance of the incident at Poonch Police Station—(KNO)

# 'Narcotics worth crores recovered along LoC in Uri'

7 drug peddlers arrested in Kashmir: Police

AGENCIES

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu and Kashmir Police in a series of actions on Thursday claimed to have arrested seven drug peddlers in Kulgam, Baramulla & Awantipora and recovered contraband substances from their possession.

Besides, Police along with security forces recovered narcotics worth crores in a village near LoC in Uri, a police spokesman said in a statement issued here.

"In Baramulla, police along Army Dagger Division while conducting routine area domination patrols in general area of village Churanda Uri near LoC, found a suspicious bag. Accordingly, search of the surrounding area was also conducted and Narco Dog of BSF was called in. During search operation, about 01 Kg of narcotics worth crores concealed in suspicious bag was recovered."

During preliminary investigation it was learnt that under a well hatched conspiracy, Pakistan based handlers are pushing drugs

inside JK to spread drug addiction among the youth of JK, police said.

In another action, a police party of PS Baramulla at a checkpoint established at Khanpora intercepted a vehicle bearing registration number JK05L-2188 with two persons on board, police said.

They have been identified as Irfan Rasool Lone son of Gh Rasool Lone resident of Kralpora Fatehgarh & Amir Ahmad Wani son of Ab Gani Wani resident of Zandafaran Sheeri. During search, 20 grams of Brown Sugar was recovered from their possession. They have been arrested and the vehicle used in the commission of crime has also been seized.

In similar action, a police party of PS Uri following a specific information regarding hoarding of narcotics at a house belonging to Nokhaze Khan Awan son of Kalu Khan Awan resident of Parapeelan Uri, raided the specific location along with concerned Magistrate. During search, 1.260 Kgs of Charas was recovered from the said location. The

owner of the house has been arrested.

Meanwhile, a police party of PS Sheeri at a checkpoint established at Gantamulla Baramulla arrested a drug peddler identified as Mohd Amir Lone son of Naseer Ahmad Lone resident of Baila Boniyar. During search, 60 grams of Charas was recovered from his possession.

In Kulgam, a police party of Police Post Mirbazar at a checkpoint established at Al-stop on NHW-44 arrested a drug peddler identified as Mohammad Ashraf Bhat son of Ghulam Rasool Bhat resident of Rahpora, Khudwani. During search, 40 bottles of codeine phosphate have been recovered from his possession.

In another similar action, a police party of Police Station Kund during patrolling at Oreil Kund arrested a notorious drug peddler identified as Bilal Ahmad Bhat son of Mohammad Abdullah Bhat resident of Checki Badwani, Qazigund. During search, 218 grams of charas was recovered from his possession.

Similarly, a police party of Police Station Awantipora at a checkpoint established at Padgam-pora Bridge intercepted a vehicle (alto) bearing registration number JK13H-3155 driven by Amir Jabar Lone son of Late Mohd Jabar Lone resident of Buhoo Awantipora. During search, officers were able to recover 05 grams of Heroin from his possession. He has been arrested and the vehicle used in the commission of crime has also been seized.

All the drug peddlers have been shifted to respective police stations where they remain in custody, police said.

Accordingly, police said that cases under relevant sections of law have been registered at respective police stations and investigations have been initiated. Meanwhile, police urged people to come forward with any information regarding drug peddlers in their neighbourhood. "Persons found indulging in drug peddling will be dealt strictly under law," police said—(KNO)

# Forestry Deptt organises Mega-Plantation Drive at KU

GMK NEWS NETWORK

**SRINAGAR:** As part of "Green J&K Drive" the Department of Social Forestry Thursday organized a mega plantation event in collaboration with University of Kashmir at Zakura Campus, here.

More than 1000 plants of Deodar and other species were planted. University and school students, NCC cadets, school children, Eco Club members, Van Mitras, NGOs, Teaching faculty of University, Government officials, staff of Social Forestry Division Srinagar and local people participated in the plantation event.

The drive was kick started by Principal Secretary Forest, Ecology and Environment Department, Dheeraj Gupta who was also the chief guest at the event.

Speaking on the occasion, the Principal Secretary expressed satisfaction and appreciation for whole hearted support and participation of VPPCs, PRIs, Gram panchayat members, University administration and other stakeholders in carrying out the plantation event successfully.

He stated that under Social Forestry's various initiatives, efforts are



being made to scale up plantations within urban areas to create green assets which not only add to the aesthetic value of cities but also play a key role in mitigating climate change.

Gupta appreciated efforts of the Social Forestry Department for doing plantations inside educational institutions, on lands belonging to Gram Panchayats and also to promote plantation on farmer's land. Gram Panchayats are playing a proactive role in engaging local people to take up afforestation as a gainful farming enterprise to increase their income and enhance livelihood opportunities in rural areas, he added.

Speaking on the occasion, PCCF(HoFF), J&K Forest Department, Dr Mohit Gera appreciated the efforts of Social Forestry Department in enhancing the green cover of the UT.

greening the Srinagar city under 'Green JK Drive' and highlighted the importance of such plantation drives in educational institutions especially University Campuses under the component 'Institutional Plantation'.

Vice Chancellor of University of Kashmir, Professor Nelofer Khan in her address appreciated the efforts of the Social Forestry Department in organizing such drives under 'Institutional plantation' which has made the campus green and beautiful.

PCCF/ Director, Social Forestry Department J&K, Roshan Jaggi highlighted the achievements of the Social Forestry Department. He said that the Forest Department during the current year is aiming to plant 1.35 crore saplings, (84 Ponds) water harvesting structures constructed and Fodder augmentation activities are being taken up in all 4291 GPS across all districts of J&K.

Others who spoke on the occasion were Nazir be Nazir, Chairman NGO, VPPC members, PRIs, Vice chairman DDC Srinagar Bilal Ahmad. They hailed the efforts of the Social Forestry Department in enhancing the green cover of the UT.