

Good Morning Kashmir

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The holistic approach in developing urban infrastructure is focused on Individual's well-being, new avenues & opportunities for the people for more diversified incomes, improved service delivery, mobility, cleanliness & to achieve the objectives of sustainable urban development.

SIU raids multiple locations in Banihal

Ramban: The Special Investigation Unit (SIU) along with Ramban Police carried out raids at multiple locations in the areas of Banihal and Ramssoo falling under the jurisdiction of subdivision Banihal on Friday.

These raids were conducted to tighten the noose around those inimical elements who always try to vitiate the peaceful atmosphere in the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir, a police officer said.

Srinagar-Leh highway opens for traffic

Raja Syed Rather

Srinagar: The Srinagar-Leh highway, which was blocked due to multiple avalanches at Zojila Pass, has been restored for traffic after four days on Friday.

An official said the highway was blocked after multiple avalanches that occurred on May 08. He said that now traffic has been restored, after four days, and people are advised to travel with caution.

Markets in Srinagar to soon resemble those in metro cities: LG Sinha

Inaugurates newly renovated Polo View market

GMK News Network

SRINAGAR: The markets in Srinagar will soon resemble those in metro cities, Lt Governor Manoj Sinha said on Friday after inaugurating the Polo View Market, redeveloped under the Smart City project.

"The Polo View Market has been redesigned under the Smart City project. The electric wires and telecom fiber have all been laid underground. The market can be kept open even during the night," LG Sinha said.

Of the three Smart City Projects, Polo View has been transformed into Pedestrian-Oriented Shopping Street, Abi Guzar Shiv temple has been renovated and dedicated to the people and Smart Advanced Traffic Management vehicles have been included in the fleet for Srinagar Smart City.

Of the Urban Local bodies (ULB) projects dedicated to the public today, 16 are development projects in 11 ULBs and 9 Solid Waste Management facilities in 10 ULBs.

On the occasion, the Lt Governor said, these projects will significantly boost urban infrastructure and give an impetus

to ease of living. "Polo View in the heart of Srinagar has been transformed into pedestrian-oriented high street that will attract more footfall, increase in retail sale, road, Lal Chowk, and the old city, he added.

"The holistic approach in developing urban infrastructure is focused on Individual's well-being, new avenues and



improve experience of visitors and it will make the area more liveable," said the Lt Governor. Sharing the efforts to create facilities at par with other big cities of the country, the Lt Governor said, the Polo View market is just the beginning. In coming days, Srinagar Smart City is developing similar markets in areas like Residency

opportunities for the people for more diversified incomes, improved service delivery, mobility, cleanliness and to achieve the objectives of sustainable urban development," the Lt Governor said.

The Lt Governor also highlighted the steps taken to fulfill the aspirations of all 40 ULBs of Kashmir Division. "We have put people at the centre of cities and the projects both development and solid waste management, are offering unprecedented opportunity to improve the lives of millions of urban residents," he said.

The newly inaugurated projects are the testimony to our commitment to improve urban environment, he further added. Speaking on the development journey of J&K over the past few years, the Lt Governor expressed gratitude to the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji.

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The Polo View Market has been redesigned under the Smart City project. The electric wires and telecom fiber have all been laid underground. The market can be kept open even during the night."LG Sinha said.

Pakistan chaos will not impact J&K: BJP

Srinagar: The situation in Pakistan will not have any impact on Jammu and Kashmir, the J-K BJP said on Friday after some regional political parties expressed concern about the state of the affairs in the neighbouring nation and its ramifications.

"Whatever the situation is in Pakistan, it will not have any impact on the situation of Jammu and Kashmir. Whatever Pakistan has done in the last 30 years, it will fall into its own pit," a BJP leader said.

Mughal Road opens for one-way traffic

Srinagar: The historic Mughal Road was on Friday thrown open for one way traffic from Bufflaz to Peer Ki Gali. As per the order, District Magistrate ordered one-way traffic on Mughal Road from May 12.

"In view of clearance of snow accumulation and landslides from 19 KM (Dogrian) to KM 43 Peer Ki Gali as intimated by Chief Engineer," the order said.

'G20 event set to showcase J&K's tourism to world'

GMK News Network

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Department Secretary, Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, said on Friday that the forthcoming G20 event will showcase the union territory's tourism to the world.

On Friday, the Tourism Secretary kickstarted a range of captivating tourism related activities, aimed at showcasing the mesmerising charm and immense potential of Jammu and Kashmir.

The event began with the exciting launch of a hot air balloon, an enchanting addition to the attractions

available for tourists on the serene shores of the world famous Dal Lake, nestled beneath the majestic Zabarwan mountain range. Besides, Secretary Tourism inaugurated a cyclothon, the Zabarwan Trek, and a cleanliness drive, all designed to engage



tourists. A group of eight people from Mumbai had planned a visit

'Soaring' airfares a concern, cause decline in bookings: Tourism stakeholders

Mubashir Aalam Wani

Srinagar: Several tourism stakeholders have expressed concern over the soaring air prices which they say have dampened the tourist inflow with the arrival of the peak season.

The tourism stakeholders said they are facing a massive decline and cancellations of fresh bookings.

Many tourists aspiring to visit the valley have cancelled their plans due to skyrocketing airfares, said Nisar Shah, chairman of the Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Alliance. "None of our fresh queries are maturing and all our potential clients are turning down the travel programme due to skyrocketing airfares," he said.

A group of eight people from Mumbai had planned a visit

to Kashmir with my agency but due to the "extremely high price" of air tickets, they changed the destination. The air tickets for each individual cost them around Rs 40,000



for the two-way trip, so they dropped the plan, he said.

Shah said the halting of operations by Go First airlines has also added to their woes. Those who had booked tickets in ad-

vance are yet to get alternatives while the air prices are soaring with every passing day, he said. Earlier in the week, Go First airlines in a tweet informed that their flight operations will re-

main cancelled till May 19, 2023, citing operational reasons. Following this, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) directed the cash-strapped airline Go.

G20 will be held in peaceful manner: ADGP Kashmir

Agencies

Srinagar: Amid terror threats emerging ahead of the crucial G20 meeting, the top cop of the Kashmir Valley took a surprise round of the city during the night to check the preparedness of the police force and said night-and-day domination by security forces would be ensured to make the prestigious programme a grand success.

Passing through the lanes and bylanes of the interior city, Additional Director General of Police (Kashmir Range) Vijay Kumar reached a checkpoint at Panthachowk, an area always bustling with traffic as it forms part of the National Highway connecting the Valley with the rest of the country. A 1997-batch IPS officer,

Kumar took out time to stand with his jawans who have been tirelessly maintaining tight vigil along the crucial highway, a possible route for terrorists to enter the city.



Kumar, who was accompanied by Senior Superintendent of Police Rakesh Balwal, found out about the difficulties of the personnel besides guiding them in performing

Gulmarg decked up to welcome G20 delegates

GMK News Network

BARAMULLA: International tourist resort Gulmarg of Baramulla is all set to welcome tourism delegates from the G-20 nations in the last week of May 2023.

In this regard, the District Administration Baramulla is finalizing all the related arrangements, and the district is undergoing a major makeover amid a stringent security plan for the high-profile event.

It is worth mentioning here that the grand event will have a large impact in the history of Baramulla district and there will be no curbs anywhere while schools, colleges and the markets will remain open.

The traffic on all routes will ply normally and to facilitate the foreign delegates, a proper traffic advisory will be issued in advance.

Welcome boards and signages were erected in Gulmarg. The road to Gulmarg from Srinagar, the Narbal-Gulmarg stretch, is

being given a new look.

To enhance the aesthetic value of the existing structures, footpaths and medians have been developed, traffic roads are being furnished, hoardings



are installed and government buildings and commercial building walls are being painted in the district.

Meanwhile, all the developmental and beautification works are being supervised by the District Development Commissioner (DDC) Baramulla,

Dr Syed Sehrish Asgar. She has asserted that the stage is set and all preparations are in the final stage. Dr Sehrish exhorted the departments to push for a double shift of working in

all the existing works in a time bound manner. She emphasized on greater coordination and synergy among line departments for timely completion of developmental activities in Baramulla. Moreover, the DDC issued instructions

to ease of living. "Polo View in the heart of Srinagar has been transformed into pedestrian-oriented high street that will attract more footfall, increase in retail sale, road, Lal Chowk, and the old city, he added.

Kashmir buzzing with activity, ready to welcome G20 delegates

Kirmani Aafaq

Srinagar: Kashmir is all set to welcome tourism group delegates from the G-20 nations later this month while the administration has set a deadline to complete all pending projects under the smart city mission. The Summit is set to usher in a new positive phase in Jammu and Kashmir UT.

The citizens of Jammu and Kashmir are upbeat and are extending full support to the Jammu and Kashmir Administration to make the program a grand success, believing that the event is going to be historical in showcasing Jammu and Kashmir's potential as a tourism destination, not just for India, but also for the entire world.

It's for the first time in the past 70 years that J&K would be hosting an international event like G-20, and the occasion of-

fers UT a chance to rise to the occasion of exhibiting its market prospects, and ecotourism ventures.

"G20 Summit in Kashmir is set to boost tourism, providing a platform for the region to showcase its beauty to the world. It is a proud moment for every Kashmiri and a significant milestone for the tourism sector," said Mukhtar Ahmad, a hotelier in Srinagar.

"Entire valley is excited for the grand G-20. This is the first time such a grand venue is happening in the valley. Earlier no such event has taken place in this paradise. Our handicrafts and tourism destinations will be highlighted on the global platform," he said.

The general public of Jammu and Kashmir, including students, are widely participating in various events in the run-up to the main meet.

An official said that the peo-

ple have understood that Kashmir is gearing up to host an important summit that would transform UT into a tourist centre of global importance.



"People of Kashmir want development at a fast pace. It is due to the people's will that peace is prevailing in the length and breadth of Jammu and Kashmir UT. It is an exciting prospect that our youth is eagerly anticipating the speech of Prime Minister Modi. People here in Kashmir believe this event will be a milestone in the history of the region and will pave the way for lasting peace and prosperity," he said.

He said that there are no shutdowns being witnessed in Jammu and Kashmir against the visits of foreign dignitaries or any important persons.

"Srinagar has always held a special place in my heart, I've been closely following developments across the UT. You won't believe, I, as a citizen was delighted to hear the news last year that our Srinagar City will be hosting a G20 Conference," said, Zubair Ahmad, a local resident of north Kashmir's Baramulla district. Adding that G20 Tourism Working Group meeting in Srinagar will be a significant occasion that will highlight the region's potential as a tourism destination.

"The authorities have been successful in giving a makeover to the valley. Kashmir is transforming into a Brand new UT. And it's heartening to see the international community recognizing the potential

6 drug peddlers arrested in Kashmir: Police

GMK NEWS NETWORK

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir Police on Friday claimed to have arrested six drug peddlers in Baramulla & Handwara and recovered contraband substances from their possession. A police party under the supervision of SDPO Tangmarg assisted by SHO PS Kunzer during patrolling at Dhoibwan Kunzer intercepted two suspicious persons who tried to flee from the spot, but were apprehended, a police spokesman said in a statement issued.

During the search, 225 grams of charas-like substance was recovered from their possession. They have been identified as Bilal Ahmad Khanday son of Bashir Ahmad Khanday resident of Utikoo & Sahil Ahmad Lone son of Riyaz Ahmad Lone resident of Ferozpora Tangmarg. They

have been arrested and shifted to a police station where they remain in custody, police said. Meanwhile, a police party of PS Handwara arrested four drug peddlers including a juvenile, while patrolling at New Bus Stand Handwara. They have been identified as Aijaz Ahmad Dar son of Mohd Shafi resident of Braripora, Moomin Masood Qureshi son of Masood Ul Hussain Qureshi

resident of Zargar Mohalla Handwara, Imtiyaz Ahmad Bhat son of Nazir Ahmad resident of Herpora Handwara and a juvenile (name withheld). During the search, 338 grams of Charas was recovered from their possession, police said. Accordingly, police said that cases under relevant sections of law have been registered at respective police stations and investigations have been initiated.

“Community members are requested to come forward with any information regarding drug peddling in their neighbourhood. Persons found indulging in drug peddling will be dealt as per law. Our consistent actions against drug peddlers should reassure the community members that we are making efforts to keep our society free from the scourge of drug menace,” police said.

Notorious drug peddler, OGW booked under PSA in Poonch

GMK NEWS NETWORK

Poonch: Authorities in Poonch said to have booked notorious drug peddler and an Over Ground Worker (OGW) under Public Safety Act on Friday. In an official statement, Poonch police said that a man identified as Nizam Din, son of Gulab Din of village Bagyalara of Tehsil Haveli in Poonch has been booked under Public Safety Act by

the order of Deputy Commissioner Poonch (Competent Authority) and various FIRs are already registered against him under NDPS Act and other sections of law. The accused was indulged in anti-national activities and was working as an active guide, facilitator for militant organisations and was actively involved in providing logistics support to the militant outfit, said police. Keeping in view the activi-

ties of the accused as he poses threat to the security of the state and under these circumstances he was ordered to be detained under Public Safety Act, police said. “Finally today in compliance with the directions by Deputy Commissioner Poonch in Public Safety Act detention warrant was executed and the said accused has been lodged in District Jail Poonch under Public Safety Act, police stated.

.....from FRONT PAGE

SIU raids multiple

spokesman said in a statement issued. In run-up to upcoming G20 meeting at Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir Police is leaving no stone unturned to defeat all the nefarious designs of ANEs and make this event a grand success, the statement said, adding that it is in this connection that Ramban police has raised its ante against these militant sympathisers and the enemies of peace. Seven different houses belonging to OGWs, relatives of Pak settled terrorist and terror sympathisers were raided today where digital incriminating material was recovered as well, the statement said.

Srinagar-Leh

with precautions in order to avoid any untoward incident.

Meanwhile, the J&K Traffic police on its official Twitter handle said, “Traffic released on SSG road after clearance avalanche. People are advised to follow lane discipline.”—(KNO)

Markets in Srinagar

for the unparalleled growth of the UT. Today, economic development is gaining new momentum, pace of completion of projects has increased 9 times and every section of the society is feeling empowered, said the Lt Governor. Citizens are now co-constructing policies so that infrastructure projects are developed as per needs of the people, he added.

The Lt Governor called upon the elected representatives of the ULBs and the common people to work shoulder to shoulder with the administration in the mission to rejuvenate the cities and make them more vibrant, efficient, clean and sustainable.

Infrastructure should become a strong base to improve the quality of life of every citizen. We must ensure that infrastructure development meet the needs of the 21st century and reflect the priceless heritage & traditions of our cities, the Lt Governor said.

He further emphasized on encouraging maximum public participation in beautification of cities and swachhata campaigns.

At the Polo View, the Lt Governor interacted with the shop-keepers and presented a token of appreciation to the Traders association for their cooperation.

Bicycle-sharing facilities for different locations in the city was also inaugurated on the occasion by the Lt Governor.

Sh H Rajesh Prasad, Principal Secretary Housing & Urban Development Department gave a detailed overview of the projects inaugurated today.

Ms Mathora Masoom, Director Urban Local Bodies Kashmir informed about the ongoing projects for the development of urban areas of the region.

Sh Junaid Azim Mattu, Mayor SMC; Sh Vijay Kumar, ADGP Kashmir; Sh Vijay Kumar Bidhuri, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; Sh Athar Amir Khan, Commissioner SMC and CEO Srinagar Smart City; ULB members, senior officials and prominent citizens were present.

Pakistan chaos

BJP general secretary organisation, Jammu and Kashmir, Ashok Koul was quoted as saying by news agency PTI.

He also told reporters that the regional parties in the Union Territory are worried about Pakistan and had made statements that the worsening situation there would have an adverse impact on Jammu and Kashmir.

“They are just harping on their old tunes. as far as India’s stand on the relationship with Pakistan is concerned, it is as it was that unless they stop supporting militant activities, India cannot think about having dialogue with them,” Koul said.

On exit poll surveys for the Karnataka assembly elections giving an edge to the Congress over the BJP, Koul said winning or losing an election will not have any impact on his party. “Wherever elections are conducted, someone wins and someone loses. But, we believe that the BJP will come out as the number one party in Karnataka,” he said.

In the past, like in the cases of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, the BJP leader said, it has been seen that exit poll surveys showed something but it did not happen. “We believe in our work and determination, and we will come out as victorious. Winning or losing elections will not have any impact on the BJP,” he said.

Koul said it cannot be said when assembly elections will be held in Jammu and Kashmir, but it could be held along with the panchayat polls or the parliamentary elections or even before.(Agencies)

Mughal Road

Mughal Road Wing and Executive Engineer Mechanical Engineering Division, Rajouri-Poonch, the movement of one way traffic is hereby allowed on Mughal Road from Buffliaz to Peer Ki Gali w.e.f 12-05-2023,” the order reads.

“Furthermore, Sr. Superintendent of Police Poonch, Sub Divisional Magistrate Surankote and Dy.SP Traffic Rajouri-Poonch shall deploy sufficient personnels at Behramgalla, Buffliaz and Poshana Checkposts to ensure smooth movement of vehicles with strict compliance of this order,” it added—(KNO)

G20 will be held

their job in pressing circumstances. “This is a high-pressure job but, in the end, we have to be 100 per cent alert. Any failure can prove costly,” Kumar told the police personnel on duty.

Talking to news agency PTI, Kumar said the police force is completely geared up to meet any challenge.

“Generally, we have a naka (checkpost) for 365 days but whenever an important event happens, every one of us is on the roads to ensure that people sleep peacefully.

“The number of checkposts has definitely increased and many of my senior officers are moving around the city in the last 15 days. Today, I have come out myself to boost their morale and stand next to my jawans on the road,” Kumar was quoted as saying by PTI.

He said patrolling is part of maintaining night domination of the areas and helps in countering any threat of a terrorist sneaking into the city from South Kashmir.

He accepted that there is a threat from terror groups in view of the forthcoming G20 meeting.

“Obviously, the threat is there but what are we here for? Let us not forget the motto of J-K Police that says ‘A saga of sacrifice and courage’. Nothing untoward will happen,” Kumar said.

Kashmir will host the third G20 tourism working group meeting from May 22 to 24. The first working group meeting on tourism was held at the Rann of Kutch in Gujarat in February and the second one in West Bengal’s Siliguri in April.

This is the first international meeting being held in Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370 and the bifurcation of the erstwhile state into two Union Territories – Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

Kumar also went into the interiors of the Nowgam area in Srinagar where the threat, mainly from the banned Jaish-e-Mohammed terror group, has been higher. He met the police and CRPF personnel posted there and took stock of the situation.

During his visit to the area, Kumar pointed to an under-construction building and directed the officers to post a sniper there to ensure that the eventuality of a suicide terror attack is averted.

The Valley’s top police officer also pointed out that women cops were also present in the likelihood that female passengers need to be searched.

“We are religiously following all the Standard Operating Procedures and are hopeful that the event will pass off peacefully,” Kumar said.

He also said some preventive arrests of over-ground workers and suspects were made as a precautionary measure.

‘Soaring’ airfares a concern, cause

First to stop the sale of tickets with immediate effect, asking the airline to issue refunds to passengers against cancelled flights.

In a tweet Go First airline said, “Due to operational reasons, Go First flights until 19th May 2023 are cancelled. We apologise for the inconvenience caused and request customers to visit https://bit.ly/42ab9la for more info. For any queries or concerns, please feel free to contact us.”

Attributing the decline in fresh tourist booking to “soaring” airfares, the Chairman of the Kashmir Houseboats Owners Association—KHOA, Manzoor Pakthoon said that despite already existing issues with tourist bookings, they are now witnessing a huge decline in fresh bookings. He said that aspiring visitors find Dubai or other destinations economical as compared to the Kashmir Valley.

The tourism stakeholders said they have been demanding a cap on airfares for a long time now. Despite our pleas and repeated representations on the issue, nothing positive has happened to address our concern, he said.

Meanwhile, many netizens on social media highlighted the issue of skyrocketing prices of air tickets.

It is pertinent to mention that a parliamentary standing committee on Transport, Tourism, and Culture in 2021 in its report stated that the airfares to J&K during peak season go equivalent to those on foreign destinations as a result of which people prefer visiting foreign countries—(KNO)

‘G20 event set to

and delight tourists and locals alike. Director of Tourism Kashmir, Raja Yaqoob Farooq, Deputy Directors of Tourism Kashmir, senior officers, and enthusiastic school children from government-run schools were present on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering, Dr. Abid emphasized the immense opportunities presented by the upcoming G20 Tourism Working Group meeting, stating that the event is an opportunity for all of us to promote Jammu and Kashmir Tourism on a global scale and showcase our beautiful region to the world.

“It has the potential to increase international and domestic tourist footfall,” he said.

Envisioning the significant economic impact, he further added that the G20 event is set to propel Jammu and Kashmir’s economy by leaps and bounds, benefiting sectors such as handicrafts, handloom, trade, travel, and, of course, tourism.

“With over 150 foreign and national delegates participating, this event provides an unparalleled global platform for Jammu and Kashmir to demonstrate its potential, with the delegates acting as ambassadors for our region,” he added.

He also commended Director Tourism Kashmir and his team for their relentless efforts in organizing these remarkable activities.

He expressed his appreciation for their commitment to creating additional attractions for tourists, with initiatives like the hot air balloon ride further enhancing the allure of the picturesque city of Srinagar.

nagar.

Earlier, speaking at the launch of tourism related activities, Director Tourism Kashmir, Raja Yaqoob Farooq said that the event marked a significant step towards enhancing the region’s tourism offerings.



He said that the series of pre-G20 activities in Srinagar are not only set to captivate visitors but also serve as a testament to the vibrant and inviting atmosphere of Jammu and Kashmir.

“As the G20 event approaches, the region eagerly awaits the opportunity to showcase its unique blend of natural beauty, rich culture, and warm hospitality to a global audience,” he added.

Kashmir buzzing

of our Jammu and Kashmir UT and the efforts of the government to develop our UT,” he said.

Official sources said the Union Territory (UT) administration is expecting to host over a 100 non-ministerial members representing the G-20 nations. “It’s a tourism stakeholders’ meeting and will give a boost to J&K’s tourism prospects too,” a senior official said.

Dignitaries from 20 different countries will attend the meeting and discuss tourism, unemployment, and socioeconomic development in different regions. The three-day second Tourism Working Group Global (TWG) meeting, under India’s G20 presidency, is scheduled to begin in Srinagar from May 22 to 24.

Elegant arrangements have been made beforehand to make this event special and memorable. In many places, walls are being painted brilliantly with colorful designs and colors to showcase our culture during the G-20 journey. Streets, roads, and parks are revamped and designed to openly welcome special guests.

In Srinagar, preparations are in their final stages. A security plan has been worked out for the event, with multi-tier security arrangements and traffic diversions, officials said. The main venue, Sher-i-Kashmir International Conference Centre (SKICC), situated on the banks of the Dal Lake, is getting a 7.5-crore makeover, which includes upgrading the digital infrastructure and refurbishing the exteriors and interiors.

In addition to glossy G20 logos installed at multiple places, the visitors will be greeted by rows of lampposts illuminated in the green, white and orange of the national flag.

The UT administration is planning to take delegates, scheduled to stay in Kashmir for four days, on sightseeing trips to Gulmarg, Baramulla, and the Dachigam National Park, known for the Kashmir stag.

Official sources also said that elaborate security arrangements have been put in place to ensure smooth passage of the event. “Administration is of the belief that G-20 is a great opportunity to showcase the tourism potential of Jammu and Kashmir at the global platform, so elaborate security arrangements have been put in place to ensure smooth passage of the event,” the official said. Adding that everything is on the right track and there will be no curbs anywhere while educational institutions and the markets will remain open.

Tourism is the backbone of Jammu and Kashmir’s economy and the maximum share of the Union territory’s GDP comes from tourism, with this tourism players are hopeful that the summit would provide further opportunities for growth to the sector.

Chamber of Commerce and Industry Kashmir (CCIK) president Tariq Ghani Bedaba said that they

are hopeful that it would provide opportunities for growth to the tourism sector here.

“G-20 tourism meeting in Srinagar is the best thing happening in Kashmir. It will send a strong message that Kashmir is a safe tourist destination and people



should visit the picturesque place to enjoy its natural beauty and hospitality of locals,” he said.

Like CCIK chief, Ali Mohammad too is hopeful that the G-20 meeting would prove helpful in showcasing Jammu and Kashmir’s potential as a tourism destination.

He said Kashmir will witness an increase in footfall of foreign tourists. “This meeting will ensure foreign tourists visit Kashmir in large numbers as used to be the case before 1990s,” Ali said.

The upcoming G20 Tourism Working Group meeting in Srinagar will be important for showcasing Jammu and Kashmir’s potential as a tourism destination, not just for India, but also for the entire world.

The diplomats and other officials are said to have prepared a comprehensive plan to use this conclave for boosting tourism in Jammu and Kashmir UT.

An official aware of the preparations for the conclave said, “While Kashmir is already popular as tourist hotspot for whole country, the government is working on a robust and effective plan under ‘tourism diplomacy’ to increase tourist influx from abroad to Jammu and Kashmir. Furthermore, the idea is to generate more employment opportunities for the youth.”

Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha earlier on May 04 had described G20 summits as a matter of pride for the country and impressed upon the officials to make concerted efforts to ensure successful conduct of one of the meetings in Srinagar.

“G20 is a matter of pride for the country. We should make concerted efforts to ensure successful conduct of the G20 meeting in Srinagar,” Sinha said.

The LG asked the departments to contribute enthusiastically to make the historic occasion a memorable one.

India assumed the Presidency of the powerful grouping G20 from Indonesia on December 1 and is hosting about 200 meetings in 32 different sectors in multiple locations across the country. The third G20 tourism working group meeting will be held in Srinagar between May 22-24.

The G20 or Group of 20 is an intergovernmental forum of the world’s major developed and developing economies. It comprises Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the UK, the US, and the European Union (EU).

Pertinently, this year Rs 447 crore has been allocated to the tourism sector to develop J&K as a modern and smart tourist destination.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has said under “Tourism Mission” initiative, 75 new destinations, 75 Sufi/religious sites, 75 new cultural, and heritage sites, and 75 new tracks are being developed in the UT to open up new economic avenues for fulfilling the aspirations of the people.

Gulmarg decked up to

concerned authorities for grass cutting along roads, routes, footpaths, closing manholes with lids, colour iron grills, making water fountains functional, smooth operation of streets lights, removing of debris and construction material from roads so that the establishments get charm and to boost aesthetics.

Div Com reviews arrangements for Mela Mata Kheer Bhawani

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri Friday convened a meeting of officers to review arrangements for the celebration of Mela Mata Kheer Bhawani at Tulumulla Ganderbal and other districts including Kulgam, Anantnag and Kupwara.

The meeting was attended by Deputy Commissioners of Ganderbal, Kulgam, Kupwara and Anantnag, Director Health Services, Kashmir, officers of FCS&CA, KPDC, Tourism, Transport, PHE, Fire & Emergency Services, SMC, SRTC, Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner, Police besides representatives of Jagti Tenement Committee/ Soan Kashmir Front UT J&K and Mata Kheer Bhawani Ji Yatra Welfare Society.

Addressing the meeting, Div Com directed officers to ensure cleanliness and proper sanitation at Tulumulla Ganderbal and other locations where thousands of Kashmiri Pandits are

expected to visit during the religious event.

He also directed concerned to ensure availability of drinking water, electricity and transportation facilities to the devotees so they do not face inconvenience during the observance of festivity.

Besides, he directed SMC to provide mobile toilets to the trust during the period of Mela and also asked concerned agencies for completion of renovation and upgradation works at Tulumulla before the start of Mela Kheer Bhawani.

Div Com instructed DC Ganderbal to provide blankets to the management of the temple for devotees besides making arrangements of tents and chairs to facilitate participants of Mela Mata Kheer Bhawani.

During Mela Kheer Bhawani, thousands of Kashmiri Pandits visit five famous temples of Tulumulla, Ganderbal;

Tikka, Kupwara; Laktipora, Aishmuqam, Anantnag and Mata Tripursundri Devsar and Mata Kheer Bhawani Manzgam in Kulgam district in Kashmir valley.

Dulloo concludes discussions regarding implementation of HADP

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Agriculture Production Department, Atal Dulloo, Friday concluded discussions with the heads of Project Grounding and Monitoring Committees regarding implementation of schemes under Holistic Agriculture Development Plan (HADP) in Jammu and Kashmir.

ACS, while addressing the meeting held in this regard here, exhorted upon to the officers to implement HADP in its entirety keeping its aims and objectives in mind. He asked them to complete all the preliminary work before hand regarding issuing of tenders, procurement and management of human resources. He asked them to maintain transpar-

erated transformation of Agriculture.

Some of the works which were deliberated upon during the meeting includes EoI for Nursery Development over 134 Ha, establishment of Mother Block Development over 170 Ha, New High Density orchards over 5500 Ha, rejuvenation of 2000 Ha orchards, establishment of Tissue Culture, Plant testing and virus testing labs.

Similarly, the meeting discussed creation of new semen stations, increase in number of AI centres, deployment of additional AI and A HELP workers, establishment of 500 new milk FPOs/SHGs. The avenues like import of 2700 elite stud animals, establishment of 2000 commercial sheep farms and 72 breed based farms across J&K, establishment of



breeder farms and hatcheries, horti-poultry units, Trout hatcheries and trout feed mills also came up under discussion.

The plan included a total of twenty-nine projects based on the principles of economy, equity and ecology which shall transform the agricultural economy of J&K putting it on a new trajectory of growth, almost doubling the output of the sectors, boosting exports and making the sectors sustainable and commercially viable. This will herald a new phase of farmer prosperity and rural livelihood security in J&K. The agricultural output which stands at Rs 37600 crore shall increase with a resultant increment in sectoral growth rate to 11%.

Moreover, the interventions would result in creating employment opportunities for over 2.8 lakh youth and establish around 19,000 enterprises. More than 2.5 lakh persons shall be skilled in various agri-enterprises. In the next five years, the UT shall have a motivated workforce with agri-entrepreneurial skills in a commercially viable and ecologically sustainable agri-ecosystem, as is envisaged with the completion of this holistic development plan.

J&K poised for huge transformation: Rana

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Devender Singh Rana, Senior BJP leader Friday said that Jammu & Kashmir under Prime Minister Narendra Modi is poised for a huge transformation with equitable political, economic and social empowerment of all regions, sub-regions and

Rana said Jammu is destined to play equal role in the political discourse of the Union Territory and expressed happiness over realization dawning on the entire political spectrum of Jammu and Kashmir that political role of Jammu cannot be downplayed or put under the carpet anymore because of the self-centric politics of chosen and privileged few.

He exuded confidence that the J&K people will now become part of the country's growth story by extending their support to the landmark initiatives being taken by the government for heralding a new era of development wherein all regions, sub-regions of J&K will be equitably politically, economically and socially empowered.

Devender Rana along

with Mr. Munish Sharma, Prabhari BJYM and Smt. Anju Dogra, BJP State Secretary were interacting with the people during the public grievances redressal camp—a mechanism held on weekly basis—at the BJP headquarters at Trikuta Nagar.

Mr Devender Rana said



that Jammu and Kashmir is witnessing a new era of hope and promise with the era of despondency becoming a nightmare of the past. He dwelt in detail about various path-breaking initiatives taken across Jammu and Kashmir during recent years with an avowed objective of ensuring development, creating infrastructural facilities, strengthening utility ser-

VICES and giving fillip to growth as a result of massive investments. Mr Rana said the investments will manifest in industrialization on a mega scale thus opening vistas of opportunities for economic empowerment and generation of jobs for professionals, technocrats, educated unem-

ployed besides skilled and unskilled workforce. Mr Rana asserted that the BJP believes in inclusive Jammu and Kashmir, with every segment of society, irrespective of region, religion, race or caste having equal opportunities to prosper and progress and equal rights in the governance. The party does not believe in the political hegemony of any region or a

particular section of elites. The people's power will triumph under the cherished agenda of Modi's Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas.

Mr. Rana said the Prime Minister's vision of Atma Nirbhar (self-reliant) Bharat is Sashaktikaran (empowerment) of all,

irrespective of religion, region or caste. It is with this mantra that every BJP Karyakarta is reaching out to the people, making them aware about the schemes tailored by the government for their welfare, listen to their problems and make every effort in getting these resolved by taking up the grievances or issues with appropriate forums in the administration.

BGSBU shunts out tainted officials as LG office orders probe into 'financial irregularities'

AGENCIES

Srinagar: In a significant development, the authorities at Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University (BGSBU) sacked two officials in a week's time after the Office of Lieutenant Governor, J&K, ordered probe into the alleged large-scale financial irregularities in the varsity, especially in the whopping Rs 12 Crore TEQIP project.

The probe has been ordered as a special audit report of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir pertaining to Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University, Rajouri, earlier pointed out large-scale financial irregularities in the centrally-sponsored Rs 12 crore TEQIP-III project, besides several other financial matters. In wake of this, the Registrar BGSBU in an order issued on Friday has stated that the process of Special Audit regarding allegations of Financial Misappropriations, besides verification and audit of Service Books including Pay-Fixation of Permanent, Regular, Superannuated, Deputationist employees including that of Suneet Gupta has been initiated by the University "in pursuance to instructions received from Lieutenant

Governor's Secretariat". "All the concerned sections are therefore required to keep the relevant data available for perusal of the special audit team," the order reads.

The probe has been launched days after the authorities at BGSBU relieved a retired official of the University after outcry over his continuation as Dean Academic Affairs (contractual) in the University. The Registrar BGSBU in his order stated that the outgoing retired official Iqbal Parwez opted to get relieved from the affairs of the University.

"On his own request Prof. Iqbal Parwez, Dean Academic Affairs (Contractual) is hereby relieved from the services of the BGSBU University with immediate effect," the order reads.

As per the order Iqbal Parwez shall be required to properly handover the record pertaining to charges he was looking after.

Sources said the retired official was handling the TEQIP project and was told to put in his papers after teachers resumed their strike this week seeking his removal. Notably no official can continue on any administrative posi-

tion after attaining age of 65. The BGSBU official had attained the age of 70.

As already reported, the Vice Chancellor BGSBU earlier stripped the official of all administrative and financial powers, amid the weeklong strike launched by the teaching faculty of the university.

Prof. Parwez Iqbal retired as Dean Academic Affairs of the varsity in 2018 but he was reengaged as Dean academic affairs, much to the annoyance of the University faculty.

Meanwhile in another fresh order, the BGSBU authorities have shifted Suneet Gupta to Camp office Jammu.

"The Vice Chancellor has been pleased to approve transfer and posting of Sh. Suneet Gupta Joint Registrar to Camp Office Jammu. Consequently, he is relieved of the additional assignment of OSD (Nursing Colleges)," the order reads. Earlier, Suneet Gupta was removed as special secretary to VC following allegations of favouritism and corruption.

"In pursuance to instructions received from Hon'ble Lieutenant Governor's Secretariat, the process of Special Audit regarding allegations of Financial

Misappropriations, besides verification/ audit of Service Books including Pay-Fixation of Permanent/ Regular/ Superannuated / Deputationist employees including that of Mr. Suneet Gupta has been initiated by the University," the Registrar's new order has stated.

Notably, the Teaching Association of Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University (BGSBU) has already called for an indefinite strike over allegations of bungling and the demand for career progression. The strike has been initiated by the university's teachers, who claim that the institution established in the name of the famous saint Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah is going through a tough phase.

The Vice-Chancellor of BGSBU however has claimed that an inquiry into allegations of financial bungling before his tenure had already been ordered by the office of the Chancellor through the Jammu and Kashmir Finance Department.

Meanwhile, teachers of BGSBU welcomed the decision to sack "tainted officials" and said that will work hand in hand with VC to weed out all corrupt elements—(KNO)

Health and Family Welfare workers in J&K without salaries since Dec 2022

JAHANGEER GANAIE

Srinagar: Thousands of employees of Health and Family Welfare in J&K are without salaries since the last five in Jammu and Kashmir due to which they have been going through a very tough time.

The employees, including deputy Chief Medical Officers, educators and FMPHWs, said that they are without salaries for the last five months and even they didn't get salaries on Eid-ul-Fitr eve.

Official sources said that thousands of employees working in health centres across J&K Health & Family Welfare under a centrally sponsored scheme have never got their salaries in time.

They said employees working under 2210 head never face such issues and get salaries in time but on the other hand workers working under 2211 head have to bear the issue of delay in salaries.

They said that despite being the permanent

employees of the Union Territory (UT), they have to come on roads for their salaries.

President of Health and Family Welfare J&K Neolar said that education of their children gets affected since they are not able to pay their fee regularly and despite putting in best efforts during the COVID pandemic they have to literally beg for salaries.

"Neither DPCs are being considered in stipulated time nor salaries are being released in time," she said. "Some of our employees are suffering from chronic diseases but they too are facing problems and their treatment gets delayed in absence of salaries."

Vice-president of the association Masarat Jabeen told KNO that health and family welfare employees had to wait for DPC and salaries years together.

She said the claims of women empowerment and Beti Bachaw, Beti Padhaw are just proving to be hoax on the ground as despite providing primary promo-

tive and curative health care for almost all the national health programs, they have to suffer.

"We have never received salaries on time especially



on festivals like Eid and despite working day and night like other employees, we are being given a step motherly treatment due to unknown reasons," She said.

"We are unable to submit the fee of our children, bring clothes and other necessary items in the absence of salaries since December last year," Jabeen said. "The other members of the association said that

despite meeting the Chief Secretary, Secretary Health and other higher officials in this regard nothing is being done on ground."

They requested LG Manoj Sinha and other concerned officials to intervene in the matter and take immediate step so that this issue gets resolved once for all.

Chief Accounts officer Directorate of Health and Family Welfare while acknowledging that employees are without salaries from the last 5-6 months told KNO that they have already taken up the issue with higher ups and employees will get salaries within next 15 days definitely.

"It is a centrally sponsored scheme but since 2021, Government of India has issued a circular that States/UTs must spend the amount first on themselves. But that is not being done in J&K yet," he said. "We have submitted all details in Delhi and we expect all liabilities will be cleared in the next few days and employees will get salaries in next two weeks."—(KNO)

IUST Celebrated International Nursing Day

GMK NEWS NETWORK

Awantipora: The three-day State Level Management Development Programme (MDP) for doctors and nurses concluded at Islamic University of Science and Technology Friday

Bhupinder Kumar, Secretary to J&K Govt. Health & Medical Education Department was the Chief Guest, while Basharat Qayoom

from medical/nursing colleges of J&K, faculty and students of nursing colleges of IUST.

Applauding IUST for organizing the program, Bhupinder Kumar appreciated the placement records of the nursing colleges of IUST. He also acknowledged the role played by the health care professionals, especially nurses during the emergency situations like



(Deputy Commissioner Pulwama) and Dr. Yashpal Sharma (Director (Coord.) New Medical Colleges, J&K) were the Guests of Honour during the valedictory function of the program.

The program also marked the commemoration of International Nurses Day which was attended by participants

Covid-19 Pandemic. While addressing the participants, Basharat Qayoom lauded the contributions of the nurses for providing efficient healthcare services to the society. Calling nursing profession full of challenges, he said that professionalism and dedication shown by the nurses is commendable.

DC Shopian tours Mughal Road; reviews preparedness for its opening

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SHOPIAN: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Faz Lul Haseeb Friday conducted an extensive tour of Mughal Road up to Peer Ki Gali stretch wherein he inspected ongoing slide clearance and development works.

During the tour, the DC enquired about the feasibility of opening of Mughal Road for regular traffic movement.

Notably, early opening of Mughal Road was high on demand of local people as it eases the movement of vehicles and significantly reduces the travel time compared to Jammu Srinagar National High-

way. However, due to a long span of bad weather conditions, intermittent rainfall/ snowfall, sliding along the vital road, the road had remained closed. The DC directed the Ex. Engineer Mughal Road to speed up the work by deploying more men and machinery so that it can be made through for traffic.

Directions were given to concerned for early clearance of the slides along the roadside, after the improvement of weather conditions.

The DC was accompanied by ADC, Shopian, Yar Ali Khan, Ex. Engineer Mughal Road and other concerned officers of departments.

Meet pebble artist from Ganderbal whose art connects with nature

RAJA SYED RATHER

Ganderbal: Meet Manzoor Ahmad a 34-year-old pebble artist hailing from the village of Guzarbal in this central Kashmir's Ganderbal district.

After losing interest in studies, he found "art calling" him and "started creating beautiful pieces using pencil waste". "But it was during the unrest in the valley that I discovered my true passion for pebble art," Manzoor said.

With a deep love for nature, Manzoor uses his art to express his feelings and connect with others.

"Art is a way of communicating," Manzoor explains. "It's a wonderful way to connect with nature and for people to connect with each other."

His latest creation 'Pastel Box', showcased at his shop near the police station in Ganderbal on the inner link road of Guzarbal, highlights the beauty of nature. He draws inspiration from the natural world around him and often creates images that are inspired by what he sees. One of the main attractions at his shop is a statue of a ship that he created using a group of pebbles.

"Creating pebble art is not an easy task, especially when it comes to finding the right colours and shapes of pebbles," Manzoor said, adding that he is joined by his friends who help him in his search.

"We often travel to various places in Kashmir to find the perfect pebbles for his art. Despite the challenges, Manzoor's pebble art continues to improve, and I believe that it will soon be recognised internationally," his friend Aasif told KNO. "His artwork is truly magical. His pebble creations are flawless, and one can't help but be drawn in by the conversation that seems to be happening within them," Asif elaborates.

Manzoor said his dream is to create opportunities for youth to engage in creative projects and promote a livelihood of peace, dignity, and order.

"Pastel Box" was created as a platform for him and his friends to express their feelings through art and inspire others to do the same. Through his art, Manzoor hopes to bring a sense of serenity to the world and give a new platform to the artists of Kashmir.

When asked about pebble or stone art in Kashmir today, Manzoor said, "Kashmir has been an epicentre of art and artists for centuries, and even today, the conditions cannot suppress the artists or their work. However, in Kashmir, people often pursue mainstream professions like medicine or engineering because there is little exposure to the arts. I hope my colourful pebble art will give me a new platform and inspire other Kashmiri youth to explore their creativity."—(KNO)

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

G20: COMING TO KASHMIR

Kashmir is all set to host a G20 meeting this month, at the summer capital Srinagar. The G-20 delegates will assemble together to discuss the open challenges related to socio-economic issues in the valley. It will be an amazing moment for people to witness an international meeting for the first time in Kashmir. The heart of the valley 'Srinagar' will be a perfect spot for the G-20 junction. The valley has been given a makeover like a "bride". Many areas are being beautified and redeveloped for the arrival of the dignitaries. Graffiti art is being plastered all over blank walls and streets to express cultural diversity and scenic beauty. Flags are being painted to showcase unity and strength among people. It is good news that delegates would be visiting famous tourist spots including "Gulmarg" which pops in the top list of the most popular resort of the world. Therefore, the current administration making efforts for the beautification and maintenance of the Srinagar to Gulmarg roadway from where the delegates shall travel. The beauty will leave a long-lasting effect in their minds. They will not only admire the beauty of Kashmir but also help in boosting our economy through tourism. The twenty countries will definitely try to bring in new changes so that we can progress in the future. It is good news that the smart city project is walking hand in hand with the G-20 event. It is like icing on the cake. Srinagar a commercial city required a makeover for a long time but no attention has been paid. With the advent of the LG administration, arrangements have been made to strengthen the preparations for G-20 under the smart city project. Lal Chowk, (a business hub) and ancient Srinagar will replicate to modern places like Delhi, Chandigarh, etc. People will have a Mumbai or Delhi feeling while shopping in bazaars. More new markets will be set up to improve the appearance of the city. It will be a great experience for people as well as the tourists. The G20 meeting in Kashmir is hope for thousands of unemployed youth and will create new job avenues and investment opportunities in the near future. It will also focus on development in different regions. It is a golden chance for talented youth to show their skills and willpower to delegates from different countries. This is a time to prove our mettle in front of the world. These 20 delegates will help to take our skills to the next level. They will give a face-value response to the valley. Tourism, Handicrafts, Art, etc will be noticed by them. Everyone has to be prepared for the event so that we can reap its fruit.

REVOLUTIONISING NON-INVASIVE TECHNOLOGY

DR ADITYA GUPTA



Radiosurgery is a non-invasive, high-precision medical procedure that uses a focused beam of radiation to treat tumors and other medical conditions. It is an advanced and very special form of radiation therapy that delivers high doses of radiation with extreme accuracy to a small volume targeted area. Radiosurgery is used to treat a wide range of medical conditions, including benign and cancerous tumors of the brain, spine, lungs, liver, and prostate, as well as non-cancerous conditions such as arteriovenous malformations (AVMs), and trigeminal neuralgia.

This cutting-edge system combines advanced imaging technology with a robotic arm that delivers high doses of radiation to tumors with sub-millimeter accuracy. The M6 CyberKnife can treat tumors anywhere in the body, including the brain, spine, lungs, liver, pancreas, and prostate. The system uses real-time imaging to track the position of the tumor and automatically adjusts the radiation beam to ensure that the tumor receives the correct lethal dose of radiation.

One of the key advantages of the M6 CyberKnife is its precision. The system can deliver high doses of radiation with extreme accuracy, which minimizes damage to surrounding healthy tissue. This precision also allows the M6 CyberKnife to treat tumors that may be difficult to access with traditional surgery, such as tumors located deep in the brain or spine. All this is accomplished without any pain, as this technology is frameless, and does not need a frame to be fixed into the head.

Benign tumors - are non-cancerous growths that can occur in various parts of the body, including the brain, spine, and lungs. While these tumors are typically not life-threatening, they can cause significant discomfort and affect a person's quality of life. Traditional surgery can be effective in removing benign tumors, but it can also be invasive and involve significant recovery time. CyberKnife offers

a non-invasive alternative that delivers a high dose of radiation to the tumor with extreme accuracy, destroying the tumor cells while minimizing damage to surrounding healthy tissue. The compelling reason to avoid traditional surgery is also when the tumor is small, which is when radiosurgery is most effective.

AVMs - are a rare condition that occurs when there is a malformation of the blood vessels in the brain or spinal cord. AVMs can cause a variety of symptoms, including headaches, seizures, and neurological deficits. Traditional surgery to remove an AVM can be risky

high dose of radiation to the tumor with extreme precision while minimizing damage to surrounding healthy tissue.

Another advantage of the M6 CyberKnife is its non-invasive nature. Unlike traditional surgery, which requires incisions and can result in significant pain and recovery time, the M6 CyberKnife does not require any incisions or anesthesia. Patients can typically return to their normal activities immediately after treatment, within MINUTES!

The CyberKnife is a relatively new technology in India, and while there is limited data on its usage, it is steadily

types of tumors and cancers.

The M6 CyberKnife also offers a number of other benefits compared to traditional radiation therapy. For example, the M6 CyberKnife can deliver high doses of radiation in fewer sessions, which reduces the overall treatment time. The system can also adjust the radiation beam to account for patient movement or changes in tumor size, which ensures that the tumor receives the correct dose of radiation.

Overall, the M6 CyberKnife is a highly advanced and effective tool for treating a wide range of medical conditions. Its



and may involve significant recovery time. CyberKnife offers a safe and effective alternative, delivering a high dose of radiation to the AVM with extreme accuracy, leading to a gradual closure of the blood vessels.

Metastatic tumors - are tumors that have spread to other parts of the body from their original location. Metastasis is a common complication of many types of cancers, including breast, lung, and prostate cancer. Traditional treatments for metastatic tumors include surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation therapy. CyberKnife offers a targeted approach to treating metastatic tumors, delivering a

precision, non-invasive nature, and ability to deliver high doses of radiation with extreme accuracy make it an excellent choice for treating neuro and spine tumors, as well as other medical conditions. If you or a loved one is facing a medical condition that may benefit from radiosurgery, be sure to speak with your doctor to learn more about the M6 CyberKnife and other available treatment options.

While more research is needed to fully understand the impact of CyberKnife on cancer treatment in India, the initial findings suggest that it is a promising option for patients who require precise and non-invasive treatment for various

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TOWARDS AN ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PATH

BHARAT DOGRA



An alternative education path (ATP) which is well integrated with the creation of a better and safer world is presented here. One part of ATP can be called Core 1 and the essence of this remains the same from the beginning of school education to post-graduation, although of course the learning is different for various classes and age-groups. This core 1 is concerned with the teaching of certain universal values such as peace, non-violence, justice, protection of all forms of life and environment, attitude of caring and co-operation towards all human beings, non-discrimination, equality, gender equality, social harmony etc. Various aspects of these universal issues are learned in various classes so as to gain a comprehensive view of universal values by class five (approximately the first half of school education). Then this is taken to an advanced level in higher school, and then to college in various interesting and meaningful ways. This is to be considered the most important part of education which is also well integrated with other parts. Core 1 should be integrated at advanced levels increasingly with solutions to most pressing problems facing humanity.

Core 2 consists at school level of three compulsory subjects—Two languages and their literature, science with human health and basic math and thirdly, social studies and humanities. The basics of all these three subjects are to be emphasized in interesting ways and at the same time, at more advanced levels, these are to be linked in very creative ways with core 1 as well with various problems facing humanity.

Component 3 consists of non-compulsory subjects from which students can make a choice according to their special interests. These subjects can include a third language, advanced math, drawing

and crafts, sports, social service, applied democracy, dance, music, theatre, cinema and videos, radio, photography, debating and writing skills, tracking, thoughtful walks etc. Care should be taken not to burden students with too many subjects and non-compulsory should be treated as truly non-compulsory without anything being imposed on students. If a student is not particularly interested in competitive sports, for example, and would instead prefer to take a long walk in the school for exercise, he or she should be perfectly free to do so, with the option of changing midway also available.

course in which those who have passed can also join, and those who have done exceptionally well are encouraged to join as voluntary teachers, helpers and guides for students who have not done very well, all in a spirit of help and cooperation. After the end of this revision course, all are promoted to the next class. There is a board exam only at the end of school with two chances given with a gap of a month. Those who fail also get a school completion certificate, but if they want to repeat they are welcome to do so.

In the last class of school there is an additional subject called future options

needs and opportunities, giving students more opportunities to study and prepare to work as doctors or nurses or engineers or teachers or entrepreneurs within their own communities or remaining very close to them.

The responsibility of providing good quality, well-equipped education at all levels with adequate budgeting and community support should be accepted by the government, with the private and philanthropic sectors free to make their contribution to education at various levels, accepting some essential government regulation (without trying to dominate the



In all aspects of education, the approach should be interesting, creative, participative, reflective, thoughtful and non-imposing, avoiding stress, imposition and tensions of any kind, allowing students to learn at their own pace and in their own ways, with adequate space being provided also for learning from each other. Exams can be held once a year without making them too competitive or tense, along with some routine periodic tests. Those who fail to meet certain minimum norms at the end of the academic year have to attend a one month revision

education sector and influence the government-administered education system adversely), using their own resources. Financial burden on students should be very low, and in any case there should be adequate scholarships to make education accessible to all at all levels. (C-Counter Currents)

Post-school education does not start immediately. Students have about 9 or 10 months partly to think and reflect, partly to take up some independent group activity with friends, partly to give various entrance exams. These entrance exams are not just centralized national level exams but also exams at state and perhaps even district levels keeping in view local

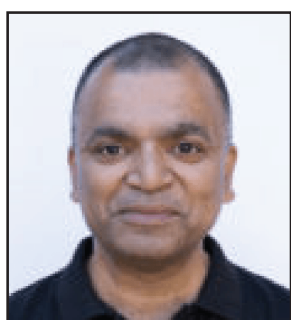
Bharat Dogra is Honorary Convener, Campaign to Save Earth Now. His recent books include Protecting Earth for Children, Planet in Peril and A Day in 2071.

IDEAS, OPINIONS AND VIEWS EXPRESSED IN ARTICLES PUBLISHED ARE WRITERS' OWN AND MAY NOT BE FOUND IN ACCORD WITH THOSE OF GOOD MORNING KASHMIR

Pandemic is over but the fight to end corporate capture of healthcare intensifies



SHOBHA SHUKLA



BOBBY RAMAKANT

When 99% of the people worldwide were reeling under the severe COVID-19 pandemic and cascading humanitarian crises, 1% of the corporate elites continued to sinistinely push for the privatization of public services and minted even more profits. More shocking is the fact that corporate plunder peaked (even in healthcare) during the severest of public health emergencies in recent times.

When the lockdown was clamped in many countries worldwide, several activists who have been fighting against the privatization of public health services for several years, had to go online to expose the corporate loot. They connected online from Latin American nations to southeast Asian nations and leveraged upon a wide array of digital tools to expose corporate capture of healthcare, and produced powerful online comics, digital animation videos and e-campaigns, and media events.

Two of such inspiring activists, Maha Abdallah of Palestine and Debbie Stothard of ATSEAN Burma, are among the nominees of the coveted 2023 Unite Health COVID-19 Social Media Influencers Awards (www.socmedawards.

com). Both of them (along with both authors of this article) are part of the International Network for Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ESCR-Net).

Corporate capture of government decision-making on healthcare poses one of the most dangerous threats to people's right to health. For decades, under the guise of liberalization of the market, innovation, and safety, corporate and economic elites have lobbied national and international decision-making spaces to influence legislation and policy-making toward profit. While governments are obligated under international law to ensure the right to health for all people without discrimination, the privatization of healthcare - as a result of corporate capture - is leading to the dismantling of public healthcare at the expense of health workers, who are disproportionately women, and ultimately, of people's equitable access to healthcare.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a staggering example of how corporate capture is at the heart of the inherent failure of healthcare systems globally. At a time when

Digital comic series on corporate capture launched in 2021

ESCR-Net members of the Corporate Accountability Working Group had collectively worked online with the art studio Zago Brothers on the digital comic series "The Power of the 99% to Stop Corporate Capture", to shed light on the widespread global phenomenon of how corporations are capturing government institutions and decision-making, including in international spaces such as the United Nations.

The comic series was launched online on 22 February 2021 on www.escr-net.org, coinciding with the start of the 46th session of the Human Rights Council (HRC).

The message in this comic series is clear: "if we - the 99% - work together, we can overcome corporate capture and build a new normal."

Online video animation on corporate capture

A year before the pandemic had struck, members of ESCR-Net had collectively developed a powerful online video animation on corporate capture in several languages (English, Spanish, French,

toms of corporate capture and the severe impact on people's right to health:

- ▶ The privatization of healthcare;
- ▶ The lack of transparency
- ▶ The protection of intellectual property
- ▶ The theft of emergency funds by the wealthiest 1%

The demand worldwide from people's struggles and social movements was loud and clear: end corporate capture; adopt and implement intersectional approaches in health financing; guarantee the universal, equal right to healthcare; use maximum available resources, as well as international assistance and cooperation, to realize the highest attainable standard of healthcare; protect healthcare and other essential workers; implement full labour protections for all workers; nationalize healthcare systems and medical supply chains; invest in strengthening country-level capacity for monitoring and analyzing relevant disaggregated data throughout the healthcare system; among others.

Legally binding treaty on human rights and business: will it work?

binding human rights treaty to regulate the activities of transnational corporations and other business enterprises.

But several governments in the Global North are prioritizing corporate interests that would undermine the very purposes of the treaty process. Moreover, as hundreds of social movements and organizations have repeatedly denounced, the treaty process is threatened by corporate capture, often through the inclusion of corporate lobbyists and associations in the negotiations, who present faulty and biased arguments to weaken the text and the process.

Global South must champion the process to stop corporate impunity

The Global South can champion the process to help stop human rights and environmental abuses and violations caused by businesses. The currently negotiated draft of this treaty must ensure access to justice for individuals and communities facing business-related abuses and violations such as land grabbing, destruction of natural resources, and slave-like and risky working conditions.

Because of their economic predominance and growing influence on government decision-making, corporate elites and especially transnational corporations (TNCs) often escape accountability. This existing state of impunity has led social movements and civil society organizations around the world to seek legal liability for corporate acts and omissions and ensure that robust international legislation is in place to protect people's rights over economic interests and corporate power.

Voluntary measures are not enough. We have to ensure that individuals and communities affected by business activities - including indigenous peoples, human rights and environmental defenders - have effective mechanisms to access justice and reparations where abuses and violations occur. The primacy of human rights over trade and investment agreements must be respected.

Shobha Shukla and Bobby Ramakant are part of Citizen News Service editorial team. They can be mailed at ramakantbobby@gmail.com



sharing scientific knowledge, including patents, could save millions of lives - several pharmaceutical corporations and governments have opposed this, resulting in an inequitable distribution of vaccines.

Hindi, Arabic, and Portuguese). During the pandemic, this animation video was screened online in several civil society and intergovernmental side meetings, hosted by a range of organizations, to show four main symp-

As a result of this global push, in 2014 the UN Human Rights Council passed Resolution 26/9, which established an open-ended intergovernmental working group (IGWG) with a mandate to develop an international legally

VC DDC Kupwara reviews development schemes in Wavoora Block

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: The Vice Chairman, District Development Council (DDC) Kupwara, Haji Farooq Ahmad Mir Friday chaired a meeting of officers and field functionaries of Block Wavoora to review the status of developmental projects and schemes undertaken in the block.

BDC Chairman Wavoora, Choudhury Rafiq Kataria, Block Development officer Wavoora, Gouhar Arzoo Chand, besides all Panchayat Secretaries, Panchayat Accounts Assistants, Technical Assistants and other concerned officials of block Wavoora attended the review meeting.

During the meeting, the status of PMAY(G),

prioritisation and estimation of secure MGNREGA works and completion of spill-over works of different scheme were reviewed thoroughly.

After a comprehensive discussion, the Block Development officer Wavoora briefed the chair about the current status of developmental activities undertaken in different Panchayats of Wavoora block.

The Vice Chairman impressed upon the field functionaries to prioritise the important and much needed works and prepare the secure estimates on priority so that MGNREGA works are started well in time and employment is provided to the rural people as MGNREGA is the main livelihood security

programme in rural areas. VC stressed upon Panchayat secretaries to prepare the supplementary list of left out, deserving PMAY-G households after proper verification so that left out deserving families are geotagged and provided the benefit of PMAY-G.

He asked the Panchayat secretaries to ensure participation of officials of line departments in monthly review meeting which are held on the first Monday of every month.

He said that due to implementation of three tier Panchayat Raj institutions, and Local Democratic decentralisation, the government has reached out to the door steps of villagers as Panchayat Sec-

retariats are functional in every panchayat. VC impressed upon Panchayat secretaries to aware the rural population about the benefits of different programmes of centre government and UT Government.

V.C appreciated the efforts of District Development Commissioner Kupwara, Dr. Doifode Sagar Dattatray for taking Kupwara district to new heights of development.

Vice Chairman appreciated BDO Wavoora and field functionaries for working in coordination with PRIs and taking them on board both during the planning as well as during the implementation phase of the projects for better outcomes.

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Director Agriculture inaugurates Interaction programme for Apiculturists in Tangmarg

Says department endeavoring to attract more educated youth towards diverse Agriculture activities

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: The Director Agriculture Kashmir, Chowdhury Moham- Iqbal Friday visited Kunzar, Tangmarg areas of Baramulla District and inaugurated an Interaction programme for the apia- rists or bee keepers of the said areas.

Addressing the event, Director Agriculture highlighted the importance of small-scale agriculture cottage industries like Beekeeping, Apiculture and mushroom cultivation for small and marginal farmers. He asked the farmers to go for diversification in agriculture activities. He said that diversification contributes to the economic security of the farming community against changes in Climate and Soil resources.

Director Agriculture said multi-crore projects have been approved by the government under Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) for the promotion of apiculture in the UT of J&K. He said the promotion of apiculture and mushroom are among the 29 projects recently approved after being recommended by the UT level apex Committee for holistic agriculture development programme.

Chowdhury Iqbal assured the concerned farmers of every possible technical support from the department. He asked the concerned officers to put in all the efforts for the successful implementation of different programme aimed to promote the agriculture activities like apiculture and mushroom among the small and marginal farmers of the region.

He also marked the importance of raising the awareness among the farmers regarding the Apiculture/ Mushroom Centric Schemes & programmes so that more and more educated youth could be attracted towards these enterprises.

Director Agriculture assured bee keepers of different facilities including marketing facilities so that they could fetch maximum returns for their produce. He said that their genuine issues would be addressed on priority basis.

Joint Director Agriculture Inputs Mohammed Younis Chowdhury, DDC Kunzar Nazir Ahmad Shaikh, Tehsildar Kunzar, SDAO Tangmarg, Apiculture Development officers Baramulla, AEO Kunzar and a large number of apiculturists were present on the occasion.

Bhupinder Kumar visits Udhampur; Assesses progress on major departmental projects



GMK NEWS NETWORK

UDHAMPUR: Secretary, Health and Medical Education, Bhupinder Kumar, Friday conducted extensive tour of Udhampur and took stock of major ongoing departmental projects including construction of new Government Medical College in the district.

Secretary visited the construction sites of GMC Udhampur, 200 bedded teaching district hospital and makeshift building of GMC Udhampur. He issued on spot instructions to the executing agencies for expediting completion of these projects, in a time bound manner, by way of deployment of additional manpower and increasing number of shifts at the construction sites.

Bhupinder Kumar exhorted upon the Deputy Commissioner, Udhampur and Principal GMC Udhampur to monitor progress and regularly review these projects to ensure timely completion of these prestigious works. He also emphasized upon

them to ensure that the makeshift college building of GMC is completed by May-2023 in all respects so that the college would be ready to receive 1st batch of MBBS students from July-2023.

Secretary also interacted with the Principal and faculty members of GMC Udhampur and stressed upon them to render their services with utmost care, compassion and professional integrity, keeping patient care at the core. He also impressed upon the medical fraternity for improving public service delivery through various schemes including AB-PMJAY SEHAT, Janani Suraksha Yojana and leveraging the latest online initiatives of Health and Medical Education Department.

During his visit, Secretary was accompanied by Deputy Commissioner, Udhampur, Sachin Kumar Vaishya, Principal GMC Udhampur, Joint Director Planning, H&ME besides other officers of executing agencies and Health Department.

Distt Admin Kupwara issues vaccination schedule for Haj pilgrims of district

Manasik-e-Hajj training for Haj pilgrims of Karnah tehsil to be held today

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: The District Administration Kupwara Friday issued a vaccination schedule for the Haj Pilgrims-2023 of Kupwara district.

As per the schedule, Haj pilgrims belonging to Karnah tehsil will be vaccinated at Sub District Hos-

pital Tangdar on 14th May 2023. For pilgrims of Kralpora, Keran and Trehgam tehsils, vaccination will be held at PHC Trehgam on 15th May 2023.

For Haj pilgrims belonging to the tehsils of Handwara, Langate, Qalamabad, Vilgam, Tarathpora, Zachaldara, Qaziabad and Kralgund, vaccination will

be held at District Hospital Handwara on 16th May 2023.

Vaccination of Lalpora and Sogam based Haj pilgrims will be held at Community Health Centre Sogam on 17th May 2023.

At SDH Kupwara, vaccination for the pilgrims belonging to the tehsils of

Kupwara, Drugmulla and Machill will be held on 18th May 2023.

Meanwhile, the training programme for Manasik-e-Hajj of selected Haj Pilgrims of Tehsil Karnah shall be held on Saturday, 13th May 2023 at Government Degree College Karnah (Kandi) at 10 AM.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) DIVISION GANDERBAL

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

EE/R&B/Divn/Gbl/e-tender NIT No.16 of 2023-24 issued under endorsement No.1434-38 Dated.11.05.2023

For and on behalf of the President of India, e-tenders are being invited on Percentage age basis (as applicable) from approved and eligible Contractors registered with the J&K Government, CPWD, Railways, and other State/Central Governments for the following works:

S.No	Name of Work	Adv. Cost (with GST) (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/ Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest money (in rupees)	Time of completion	M.H of Account	Class of Contractor
1.	Improvement/Upgradation of Najar Mohalla Rampora under Potholes (Machine Mix laid with Mechanically).	8.73	Rs.600/=	Rs.17460/-	30 Days	Pot Holes	AAY with HMP0/ (DEE/CEE) Class Civil with Registered MoU with HMP0
2.	Upgradation of Inner Links of Gangterhama under Potholes (Machine Mix laid with Mechanically).	34.16	Rs.1100/=	Rs.68320/-	30 Days	Pot Holes	AAY with HMP0/ (BEE/AAY) Class Civil with Registered MoU with HMP0
3.	Upgradation of Sub Centre Link, Physical College Link, Stadium Link, Sikh Mohalla including Inner Links of Gadoora under Potholes (Machine Mix laid with Mechanically).	21.63	Rs.800/=	Rs.43260/-	30 Days	Pot Holes	AAY with HMP0/ (CEE/BEE) Class Civil with Registered MoU with HMP0
4.	Improvement/Upgradation of Beehama Inner Links under Potholes (Machine Mix laid with Mechanically).	21.36	Rs.800/=	Rs.42720/-	30 Days	Pot Holes	AAY with HMP0/ (CEE/BEE) Class Civil with Registered MoU with HMP0
5.	Improvement/Upgradation of Guzerbal Marigrar road under Potholes (Machine Mix laid with Mechanically).	12.95	Rs.600/=	Rs.25900/-	30 Days	Pot Holes	AAY with HMP0/ (DEE/CEE/BEE) Class Civil with Registered MoU with HMP0
6.	Improvement/Upgradation of Kashmiri Mohalla Guttabagh road leading from PMGSY road under Potholes (Machine Mix laid with Mechanically/Manually).	21.36	Rs.800/=	Rs.42720/-	30 Days	Pot Holes	AAY with HMP0/ (CEE/BEE) Class Civil with Registered MoU with HMP0
7.	Improvement/Upgradation of Inner link Sideeqabad Nagbal and Warpo right side of Main road under Potholes (Machine Mix laid with Mechanically).	21.36	Rs.800/=	Rs.42720/-	30 Days	Pot Holes	AAY with HMP0/ (CEE/BEE) Class Civil with Registered MoU with HMP0
8.	Improvement/Upgradation of Inner links of Rabitar under Potholes (Machine Mix laid with Mechanically).	17.57	Rs.800/=	Rs.35140/-	30 Days	Pot Holes	AAY with HMP0/ (CEE/BEE) Class Civil with Registered MoU with HMP0
9.	Improvement/Upgradation of Reshi Bab road Sehpora under Potholes (Machine Mix laid with Mechanically).	21.99	Rs.800/=	Rs.43980/-	30 Days	Pot Holes	AAY with HMP0/ (CEE/BEE) Class Civil with Registered MoU with HMP0
10.	Upgradation of Inner Links of Dagpora Mirpora road including Sheikh Bonil link under Potholes (Machine Mix laid with Mechanically).	21.63	Rs.800/=	Rs.43260/-	30 Days	Pot Holes	AAY with HMP0/ (CEE/BEE) Class Civil with Registered MoU with HMP0
11.	Upgradation of Road from District Hospital to Check Duderhama including Secretariat link under Potholes (Machine Mix laid with Mechanically).	17.77	Rs.800/=	Rs.35540/-	30 Days	Pot Holes	AAY with HMP0/ (CEE/BEE) Class Civil with Registered MoU with HMP0
12.	Improvement/Upgradation of Astan Mohalla Kujar and Link road from Middle School Kujar to Social Forestry Office under Potholes (Machine Mix laid with Mechanically).	17.46	Rs.800/=	Rs.34920/-	30 Days	Pot Holes	AAY with HMP0/ (CEE/BEE) Class Civil with Registered MoU with HMP0
13.	Improvement/Upgradation of Inner links of Fatehpura and Bamboora tone Mohalla under Potholes (Machine Mix laid with Mechanically).	17.46	Rs.800/=	Rs.34920/-	30 Days	Pot Holes	AAY with HMP0/ (CEE/BEE) Class Civil with Registered MoU with HMP0
14.	Macadamisation/Upgradation of Hatbura Chundina under Potholes (Machine Mix laid with Mechanically).	17.50	Rs.800/=	Rs.35000/-	30 Days	Pot Holes	AAY with HMP0/ (CEE/BEE) Class Civil with Registered MoU with HMP0
15.	Macadamisation/Upgradation of Inner links of Cogund under Potholes (Machine Mix laid with Mechanically).	17.50	Rs.800/=	Rs.35000/-	30 Days	Pot Holes	AAY with HMP0/ (CEE/BEE) Class Civil with Registered MoU with HMP0
16.	Macadamisation from Main Adda Baba Wayil (Chanhar Crossing) via GMS Babawayil upto the H/o. Jan Muhammad Khan and Others under Potholes (Machine Mix laid with Mechanically/Manually).	19.42	Rs.800/=	Rs.38840/-	30 Days	Pot Holes	AAY with HMP0/ (CEE/BEE) Class Civil with Registered MoU with HMP0
17.	Improvement/Upgradation of Various link roads of Shahjinaq Urshah under Potholes (Machine Mix laid with Mechanically/ Manually).	21.31	Rs.800/=	Rs.42620/-	30 Days	Pot Holes	AAY with HMP0/ (CEE/BEE) Class Civil with Registered MoU with HMP0
18.	Improvement/Upgradation of road from Jamia Masjid Sharief Malpora to Duderhama via Lalbab Sahib Shrine incl. Lateef Sheikh link under Potholes (Machine Mix laid with Mechanically).	26.19	Rs.1100/=	Rs.52380/-	30 Days	Pot Holes	AAY with HMP0/ (BEE/AAY) Class Civil with Registered MoU with HMP0
19.	Improvement/Upgradation of Balance Portion of Inner links of Shalabugh under Potholes (Machine Mix laid with Mechanically/ Manually).	29.33	Rs.1100/=	Rs.58660/-	30 Days	Pot Holes	AAY with HMP0/ (BEE/AAY) Class Civil with Registered MoU with HMP0

Project Authority: R&B Department

Position of AAA: Accorded

Position of funds: Available

1. The bidding documents, which would include qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications/drawings, a bill of quantities (B.O.Q), a set of contract terms and conditions, and other details, can be viewed/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in on the dates listed below: -

S.No	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	11/05/2023
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	11/05/2023 from 4.00 PM.
3	Bid submission Start Date	11/05/2023 from 4.00 PM.
4	Bid Submission End Date	16/05/2023 from 4.00PM.
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	17/05/2023 from 10.00 AM in the office of Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Ganderbal

- Bids must be accompanied by a Treasury Challan (dated between the bid submission start date and the Bid Submission End date) deposited in M.H. 0059 in the name of Executive Engineer R&B Division Ganderbal (tender inviting authority) as the cost of the tender document.
 - At the time of tendering, all bidders must upload earnest money/bid security equal to 2% of the Advertised Cost in the form of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to the tender receiving authority, i.e. Executive Engineer R&B Division Ganderbal. The successful bidder will have to provide Performance Security @ 5% at the time of contract award, strictly in accordance with the Government's circular instructions from time to time. The earnest money/bid security of 2% will be released to the successful bidder only after the submission of a Performance Security of 5% of the total cost, which will be released after successful completion of the DLP/Maintenance Period.
 - The date and time of bid opening shall be notified on the Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and automatically communicated to bidders via an e-mail message sent to their e-mail address. Responsive bidders' bids will be opened online on the same Web Site in the Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Division Ganderbal (tender receiving authority).
 - Bids for the work shall be valid for 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids.
 - Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.
 - Bidders are advised to download the bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as the "Bidders Manual Kit" option on the website www.jktenders.gov.in to familiarize themselves with the bid submission process.
 - In order to participate in the bidding process, bidders must obtain a "Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)" under the Information Technology Act of 2000. Any approved Vendor can provide bidders with a digital certificate.
 - Bidders must submit their bids in electronic format with a digital signature online. No physical bids will be accepted.
 - Bids will be opened online in accordance with the time schedule specified in Para-1.
 - Bidders must upload online scanned copy of all required documents (within the document upload limits) with their technical bid.
- Note: - Scan all the documents on 100 dpi with black and white option.
- The department will not be held responsible for any delays in online submission due to unanticipated circumstances.
 - The original Treasury Challan (Cost of tender document) and other Uploaded bid documents shall have to be produced on demand by the successful bidder at the time of contract signing, and in the case of unsuccessful bidders, 2% EMD in the form of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to the tender receiving authority, i.e. Executive Engineer R&B Division Ganderbal, will be released only after production of Original Treasury Challan of uploaded Scanned copy (Cost of tender document).
 - Bidders are advised not to change the contents of the BOQ (Bill of Quantities). They should never attempt to create similar BOQ manually.
 - Bidders should be fully cognizant that if the documents uploaded/submitted on the basis of which the contract was awarded are later discovered to be fake/not genuine, the contract will be cancelled and the Contractor/bidder will be blacklisted from participating in this Division/ Department for a period of three years, in addition to the performance security deposited for the said work being forfeited.
 - Price escalation and Taxes: -The bidder's percentage shall be deemed to include price escalation and all taxes up to the completion of the work. Taxes shall be deducted from the contractor's bills on the gross amount of the bill at the time of recovery at the rates in effect at the time of recovery.
 - Bidders are advised to use the "My Documents" area in their R&B e-tendering portal user account to store any required documents.
 - All bidders must UPLOAD the following information and documents with their bids, in addition to the qualification criteria / qualification information, (All documents pertaining to the bid must be in English):
 - All bidders must submit copies of original documents defining their constitution/legal status, place of registration, and principal place of business, as well as their cell phone number and e-mail address.
 - A valid Contractor/Firm Registration Certificate issued by a competent authority in accordance with the Contractor Registration Act.
 - Treasury Challan & Earnest money
 - Valid PAN Card
 - Scanned copy of Registration Card with latest renewal on JKPWOMS portal.
 - Scanned copy of GSTIN registration and most recent clearance certificate FORM GST-3B of the Latest Quarter i.e. January-March 2023/Qualifying Month i.e. March 2023.
 - Bidders are advised to quote Rate without GST. GST @ 18% shall be added at the time of allotment by allotting authority.
 - The rates and prices shall be quoted by the bidder entirely in Indian Rupees and the rates quoted shall be deemed to include price escalation and all taxes excluding GST. GST @ 18% shall be added at the time of allotment by allotting authority upto completion of the work unless otherwise, specified.
 - In case the contractor/agency doesn't own/possesses Hot mix plant, it shall submit a MOU on notarised affidavit with any registered HPMD on conditions of providing of machine mixed material as mentioned in the NIT/SD/ BOQ and in compliance to all the desired tests and checks required as per the guidelines or on the directions of engineer in charge.
 - The HPMD with whom there is an MOU shall not be participant in the same tender and under the circumstances both participants shall be disqualified.
 - In case work isn't started on the scheduled date as communicated by engineer in charge, the department shall put the work for fresh tenders without any notice keeping in view the limited season for macadamisation.
 - Scanned copy of GSTIN registration and most recent clearance certificate FORM GST-3B of the Latest Quarter i.e. January-March 2023/Qualifying Month i.e. March 2023.
 - Bidder shall upload a Self-Declared Performance Declaration (Annexed format) in support of performance in respect of Bitumen Macadam Works executed by the agency during the year 2021-22.
 - Bidders are expected to submit technical bids along with scanned copies of all required documents. No document (s) that have not been uploaded will be accepted in hard copy for evaluation consideration. However, if need arises, Hard copies of any specific supporting documents, on the other hand, may be required on demand in support of documents posted online for clarification during technical evaluation.
 - The bidder should visit and examine the site of work and its surroundings before submitting a bid, and no claim based on constrained site conditions will be entertained after the bid is accepted.

No:1434-38
Dated:11-05-2023

DIPK-1447-23
DT: 12/05/2023

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
R&B Division Ganderbal

AILF conducts first art workshop in north Kashmir

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BARAMULLA: The Art in Life Foundation (AILF), which is a community development initiative of JK Policy Institute (JKPI), conducted its first art workshop of the session on Friday, introducing students to the basics of drawing, including basic drawing techniques.

The art workshop titled 'Reimagining classrooms for the social & emotional well-being of children' was organized in Nihalpora education zone of J&K's Baramulla district, in which more than 50 students participated.

The workshop was an attempt to emphasize that educators must consider what kind of learning is most effective for students. The initiative is part of the student outreach program of JKPI, connecting students with opportunities to serve their local community.

AILF provided the students with free art supplies so that they had all the materials they needed to try their hand at art and improve their skills. The students were assisted by a trained artist throughout



the workshop. At the end of the workshop, the students were given certificates of participation for their hard work and dedication.

AILF strongly believes that there is room to reimagine classes with a strong emphasis on drawing, painting, and other creative pursuits. Encouraging students to use their imagination can foster their academic growth, as well as their social and emotional well-being. Engaging in creative pursuits help children emotionally and mentally, and is a great way for them to combat boredom.

Our creative, fun, and interactive art workshops are designed for school children and engage them using various activities and

art mediums. AILF artists work closely with teachers to conduct art classes, workshops, and art camps in schools where students experience new dimensions of their imagination.

At AILF, we don't make children compete, we emphasize the importance of having fun and creating a supportive environment for teaching and learning. It is important to foster cooperation rather than competition among young children with the goal of developing a community of children that respects and helps each other.

We don't say competition is always bad; rather, it can be a positive force that encourages teams to work together and continually strive for improvement.

AILF is committed to making meaningful contributions to a number of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which align with our own goals and values.

Art in Life Foundation (AILF), is a registered organization having a major thrust on Environment, Education, Economy, Health, Women's Empowerment and Rights, Art, and Community Development Work. The organization also aims to recognize the importance of contemplative engagement with young people and critical thinking for young people.

Jammu & Kashmir Policy Institute is an independent and nonpartisan institution based in Srinagar J&K committed to conversations on peace and sustainable development with a focus on economic growth in Jammu and Kashmir. We believe in facilitating multi-stakeholder dialogues to bring in diverse perspectives and encourage constructive disagreements, introducing new cutting-edge creative problem-solving approaches to socio-economic and political issues confronting J&K and the larger South-East Asian region.

Democracy at odds: India's resilience versus Pakistan's instability

NEW DELHI: India and Pakistan both emerged as nations around the same time and since have had divergent trajectories.

While India has emerged as one of the most significant economies and an emerging superpower in the region and became a strong global force, unfortunately, Pakistan has faced decades of political instability and military interventions, undermining its democratic framework, wrote Dr Shenaz Ganai.

Pakistan's political history has been plagued with civil-military rivalry, causing distrust and disruption of the civilian leads. The country continues to grapple with the history of power clashes between elected leaders and the defence establishment, critically weakening its democratic institutions.

From Liaquat Ali Khan to the former Prime Minister, Imran Khan, Pakistan's tussle for control between civilian and military forces has been relentless. This impeded the development of the democratic system and constitutional rule, according to the author.

The author is a former

Member Legislative Council, Jammu and Kashmir.

Pakistan's tumultuous path to democracy has been a chronicle of missed opportunities, political turmoil, and institutional conflicts. Since its creation in 1947, the country has seen frequent military coups, endemic corruption and a never-ending struggle between the democratically elected civilian government and the powerful defence establishment. As a result, the country's democratic institutions and progress have been severely impacted, with the incumbent government, unable to shake off the stranglehold of the defence establishments' influence and assert their authority. Unfortunately, the country's current situation remains dire, with the common people bearing the brunt of this political discord.

In stark contrast, Pakistan's neighbour and fellow country created in the same year, India, has established itself as a vibrant democracy, marked by a peaceful transition of power and robust institutions. India has also transformed itself from a developing nation to an



emerging market, an economic powerhouse, while Pakistan is still grappling with the return of domestic issues, such as unrest, poverty and political instability.

Despite seven decades of democratic governance, Pakistan has been unable to establish a stable democratic set-up to the institutional conflicts and put its influence on the defence establishment. The ministry has played an influential role in domestic policy and governing decisions, positioning itself as a Parallel power. As a result, the elected governments have frequently remained reliant on the

establishment of their tenure, resulting in a political stalemate where a neighbour state has been able to take decisive action on long-term issues. In addition, the defence establishments' influence has impacted Pakistan's foreign policy decisions, leading to a lack of consistency and negatively impacting its foreign relations.

The current situation in Pakistan is highly concerning for the region, given its frequent internal tumult. Political instability has always resulted in a lack of investment, reduced international aid, and a halt in

infrastructure projects leading to significant economic losses.

Pakistan's political instability has seriously hindered its economic development, deterring investors and businesses concerned about unstable conditions. In contrast, India's stable environment has helped it progress rapidly economically, with a ranking of 131 out of 189 countries in the human development index, where Pakistan lags at the 154th position. Similarly, India ranks 63 in the world bank's ease of doing business index, while Pakistan's ranking is 108.

The Instability in Pakistan, not only challenges the country, but Southeast Asia as a whole, risking regional stability, upon which neighbouring countries, like India, rely heavily on for their growth and development. Instrumental in creating conditions for peace and stability, building trust between government institutions will allow Pakistan to contain internal divisions, ensuring prosperity for citizens and the region as a whole.

For Pakistan, to become a stable, progressive and democratic nation, it needs to revisit its constitutional structure and empower civilian leaders. The commitment to rectifying its democratic shortcomings is essential for the betterment of the region and its people.

India's successes is a result of its robust democratic system and its people's resilience, while Pakistan's struggle with stability, underscores the importance of nurturing democratic institutions. The tale of these two nations offers valuable lessons and serves as a reminder that a commitment to democracy is critical to sustainable develop-

ment, stability and prosperity.

The journey towards democracy in Pakistan has been fraught with obstacles and setbacks. The insidious influence of the defence establishment on governing decisions, combined with political impasse has significantly impacted the country's economic growth, stability, and regional standing. Unless Pakistan can relieve itself of these institutional conflicts, the country will continue to struggle on the world stage. The sharp contrast between Pakistan, and India's growth trajectory underscores the importance of stable and democratic governance in emerging markets. Pakistan must, therefore, usher in stability and progress to replicate India's success.

As a great Indian philosopher, Chanakya once said, "State is as strong as its administration." For the greater good of Southeast Asia and its inhabitants, we can hope that Pakistan acknowledges its democratic shortcomings and embarks on a journey to rectify them, ensuring prosperity and stability for its people and the entire region. (MILAP NEWS NETWORK)

Union Minister Piyush Goyal invites Canadian businesspersons to participate in growth of Indian economy

CANADA: While inviting Canadian businesspersons to participate in the journey of growth of the Indian economy, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal said India offers a stable business environment with decisive and popular leadership.

He appreciated Canadian Minister of International Trade, Export Promotion, Small Business and Economic Development Mary Ng for her leadership and involvement in taking the Canada-India partnership to the next level.

Piyush Goyal has invited Canadian businesspersons to participate in the journey of growth of the Indian economy during the Round Table of Indian and Canadian CEOs in Toronto, Canada on May 9. He addressed the roundtable during his two-day visit to Canada.

Piyush Goyal said that India is focusing not only on high-quality standards in goods and services but also on high-quality delivery of goods and services. He stressed that this focus on high quality is attractive for Canadian business persons and their investments.

In his remarks, he said, "India offers a stable business environment with decisive and popular leadership. He said that the Prime Minister has been recognised internationally as a leader who is contributing significantly to face the challenges of the



world and the G20 Presidency reflects his vision."

Goyal noted that the theme of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" showcases the initiatives and efforts of India at the global level to encourage sustainable development and preserve Earth as a better planet for future generations, according to the official statement by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Goyal said that the growth in Canada will be driven by the use of significant pools of capital, innovation, new technologies, and Research and Development (R&D) in big markets achieving economies of scale and making products affordable. He stated that Canadian businesses can prosper in the safe and conducive business environment of the Indian economy.

He lauded the pace of negotiations for the Early Progress Trade Agreement (EPTA) as a tran-

sitional step towards the re-launched India-Canada Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) negotiations.

Piyush Goyal praised the work carried out by negotiating teams of both nations. He said that there is a huge potential in the Canada-India partnership as they are amongst the fastest-growing large economies and will continue to remain so in the coming years, according to the press release by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

He said that the macro-economic fundamentals of India is at its peak under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

He called India an "oil-based economy" which he stressed can prosper despite emerging challenges across the world. Goyal said that inflation has been under control in India in the past nine years of the government under the leadership of PM Modi, according to the

press rr. The minister spoke about the huge foreign exchange reserves of India and the significant increase in overall exports of India from around USD 500 Billion two years ago to USD 770 Billion in FY 2022-23. He spoke about the target of achieving an overall export target of USD 2 Trillion by 2030, according to the press release.

Goyal said that the economies of Canada and India complement each other and there is not much of conflict between them. He noted that there is certainly some competition but no conflict of interest between the two economies. He said that Canada is focusing on natural resources given its huge reserves and investments and is more interested in the Services sector.

Piyush Goyal stressed on the importance of the young demography of India and the production of the highest number of 'Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics' (STEM) graduates today anywhere in the world. He called this century an important one for India as it is expected to have the world's youngest population for the next 30 to 40 years which will lead to a significant portion of the population in the working age.

Goyal said that he and Mary Ng discussed about dual degrees and mutual recognition of our educational qualifications throughout

professional bodies. He said that they also talked about creating campuses in each other's countries so that the youth of both countries can contribute to economic development.

Speaking about the Indian rupee, the minister said that the Indian currency has remained relatively stable in the past nine years of the government. He noted that India has never defaulted on its international obligations and India's debt-to-GDP ratio is relatively amongst the lowest in the developing world.

Mary Ng tweeted, "Today, @PiyushGoyal and I hosted a roundtable with Canadian and Indian businesses to hear first-hand how we can make it easier for these companies to work together and to help them succeed."

In another tweet, she said, "The success of the Canada-India relationship is rooted within the close collaboration and hard work of Indian and Canadian businesses."

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal met Canadian Minister for International Trade Mary Ng.

"Delighted to meet Canadian Minister for International Trade @Mary_Ng in Ottawa. Looking forward to continuing discussions to further strengthen bilateral ties at the India-Canada Ministerial Dialogue on Trade and Investment today," Goyal tweeted. (MILAP NEWS NETWORK)

Vital boost for Pashmina sector in J-K: H&H dept commissions OFDA 4000

J&K: In a major boost towards the testing and authentication of Pashmina, a state of art equipment OFDA 4000 stands procured by the Handicrafts and Handloom Department Kashmir, an official statement said. The equipment was inaugurated by Director Handicrafts and Handlooms Kashmir, Mahmood Ahmad Shah, on Wednesday at the Pashmina Testing and Quality Certification Centre, Bagh e Ali Mardan Khan Nowsheera, Srinagar, the statement added.

On this occasion, Director was briefed that the equipment was unique and its availability would enhance the testing process for the classification of Pashmina and other fibres. He was also informed that the testing results of the equipment are more accurate and would decrease the time period required for testing and certification of Pashmina significantly.

Further, the equipment is the first one to be commissioned in the UT of J&K and such a facility for testing with OFDA 4000 is available at very limited places in the country, the statement said. The equipment is capable of testing more than 40,000 fibres in less than a minute and can determine such characteristics of the fibre like



micron, length, crimp etc. and can test Pashmina fibre, yarn and fabric thus making testing easy and hassle-free.

With the availability of the OFDA 4,000, the process of labelling Pashmina-based GI crafts, particularly Pashmina, Kani and Sozni is set to receive a big boost and shall result in the widespread use of the GI-certified products and would also help in checking of counterfeit Pashmina, the statement said. Further, the availability of the equipment would not only help in securing the future handmade Pashmina sector in the UT of J&K

but shall also significantly increase the earning of the artisans associated with Pashmina craft.

According to the statement, on this occasion, the staff of the Handicrafts and Handloom Department and Pashmina Testing Centre were provided training by Hebert Hornik from Hornik Fibretech in the operation and maintenance of the equipment. The Department intends to conduct awareness camps about GI testing and labelling so that the stakeholders of the Pashmina sector take advantage of the said facility. (MILAP NEWS NETWORK)

Muslim world condemns Taliban's ban on higher education for women: US State Secretary Blinken

KABUL: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has said the Muslim world condemns the Taliban's ban on higher education for women, Afghanistan-based Tolo News reported.

"When the Taliban enacted restrictive bans on higher education for women, governments from across the Muslim world spoke up to condemn the Taliban's decision," and they had argued that the actions were inhuman and contrary to Islamic beliefs.

Blinken made the remarks at a reception to celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr in Washington DC.

"Scholars of Islamic law weighed in to condemn the Taliban's actions, too, noting that the Quran gives the right to education to women and men alike," he said, as cited by Tolo News.

This comes as religious clerics have said that access to education for school and university students is the basic right of students and called on the Taliban to provide access to education for both male and female students.

Fazal Hadi Wazeen, a

member of the international union of Muslim Scholars, said: "In addition to what the foreigners say about the education of females in Afghanistan, this is a national and Sharia responsibility of the interim government, to reopen the doors of the schools and universities without delay for the girls, who contribute half of the population."

"Unfortunately, we are moving backwards from the knowledge and this will affect Afghanistan and its people," said Suraya Paikan, a women's rights activist.

"The interim government promised that schools and universities will be suspended until next notice; the girls are waiting for the doors of the schools and universities to be reopened eventually," said Raweena Poya, a student, as quoted by Tolo News.

This comes as more than 600 days have passed since schools have been closed for girls, and more than 140 days since universities have been closed to young women, according to Tolo News. (MILAP NEWS NETWORK)

Family renews call for release of Australian journalist imprisoned in China for over 1000 days

AUSTRALIA: Calls renewed once again for the release of Australian journalist Cheng Lei who is in detention in China for over 1000 days after she was taken into custody on espionage charges.

The court has not yet handed down a verdict. Analysts raised concerns as the journalist has been allegedly accused of illegally supplying state secrets overseas, a charge that carries a possible sentence of between five years to life in prison, CNN reported.

Friends and family of Cheng Lei renewed calls for her release from detention in China, 1,000 days after she was taken into custody on espionage charges - a move that has cast a black mark on the relations between the two countries which are already under strain.

Australian authorities have expressed concern about her detention amid suggestions from analysts that strained ties between

Canberra and Beijing may have provided an impetus for the opaque case against her.

Cheng's prolonged detention is a "critical issue" holding back further reconciliation, CNN quoted Nick Coyle, Cheng's partner as saying.

"The ongoing delay, the ongoing situation, causes enormous damage not only to Lei and her two children, but I think it's also causing a lot of damage in terms of the efforts by both China and Australia to repair the bilateral relationship," said Coyle.

He added that people in Australia and around the world view her detention with "a lot of negative sentiment," and that "it would be in everyone's best interest for it to be resolved as quickly as possible."

Cheng had been on her way to work on the morning of August 13, 2020, when she "was taken by China's Ministry of State Security," CNN quoted Coyle as saying in a separate letter pub-



lished in The Australian newspaper.

"Now 1,000 days later, we still don't know why she was taken, why she was charged with deliberately vague national security breaches or when she might be with us again," he wrote.

"The most difficult issue for her to deal with is the long time that she's been away from her children," said Coyle. "Physically she's going okay, and mentally she's very tough, very

strong, very resilient," CNN reported.

Australia's Minister of Foreign Affairs Penny Wong also released a statement on Twitter: "Despite being separated from her family for so long, she has shown great resilience and courage. All Australians want to see her reunited with her children."

Wong added that the ministry shared the concerns of Cheng's friends and family about "the ongoing delays in her case," and that it would continue advocating for Cheng "at every opportunity with the Chinese government."

Earlier, Australia's ambassador to China was denied entry to the start of Cheng's trial in Beijing, a move he called "deeply concerning." The court has not yet handed down a verdict, delaying the announcement multiple times - leaving Cheng stuck in custody, and her loved ones without clarity on her fate. (MILAP NEWS NETWORK)

Taliban has imposed 'severe restrictions' on movement of female UN employees in Afghanistan: Report

KABUL: With the Taliban continuing with curbs on girls and women in Afghanistan, the UN has accused the country's de facto authorities of imprisoning, harassing and placing "severe" limits on the movements of its female employees, Khaama Press reported.

"This is the most recent in a series of discriminatory - and unlawful - measures implemented by the de facto authorities to severely restrict women and girls' participation in most areas of public and daily life in Afghanistan," the UN report on Afghanistan's human rights situation in south Asia said.

The measures will have disastrous effects on Afghanistan's prosperity, stability, peace, and future, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) said in its report.

Fiona Frazer, the agency's human rights chief, said UNAMA is concerned "about the growing restrictions on civic space throughout Afghanistan". "Arbitrary arrests and detention of former government officials and Afghanistan National Security and Defense Force members also occurred throughout February, March

and April," the report added, according to Khaama Press.

An increasingly unstable and volatile Afghanistan is causing worry to the world.

Worsening human rights, in particular, women's and girls' rights, poverty, hunger, terrorism and the spread of drug trafficking are among the issues that the people of Afghanistan have been facing under Taliban rule.

The Taliban returned to power in August of 2021 and have restricted Afghan women and girls from participating in most areas of public and daily life.

UN chief Antonio Guterres, in a recent statement, said that the situation in Afghanistan was the largest humanitarian crisis in the world today and that he would meet the Taliban when it was the "right moment to do so but today is not the right moment."

According to the United Nations, a record 28.3 million people in Afghanistan are in need of assistance this year, making Afghanistan the world's largest aid operation. Regular Afghans, particularly women and children remain oppressed under the Taliban. (MILAP NEWS NETWORK)

Our aim is to create 100 semiconductor design startups: MoS IT

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: India is aiming to create 100 semiconductor design startups in the near future that will develop innovative designs and solutions not only for the domestic market but also for the world, Minister of State for Electronics and IT Rajeev Chandrasekhar said here on Friday.

Addressing a gathering of students, young innovators, industry stakeholders and others at IIT Delhi, the minister said that the country will soon have a talent pool of 85,000 highly-skilled professionals in the semiconductor space.

"Our target is to create 100 semiconductor design startups as there are immense innovation possibilities in this space," said Chandrasekhar during the keynote at the third edition of the flagship 'Semicon India' event.

According to Chandrasekhar, in just 14 months, the country has not only created opportunities in manufacturing and



design but "with brand new curriculum in place, we will soon deliver a brand new 85,000 talent pool not only for India but also for the world".

"There is nothing in the digital space or in the tech space that India will not be a part of in the coming years," said the minister.

Hidetoshi Shibata, President and CEO of Japanese semiconductor manufacturing company Renesas Electronics, said at the event that India is a critical part of the company's global business and there are countless opportunities for collaboration in the semiconductor space.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has allocated a budget of Rs 1,200 crore to invest in the Indian semiconductor design startups. The country recently launched a Rs 76,000 crore production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme for semiconductors and display manufacturing units.

Nirmala Sitharaman meets IMF chief in Japan

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on Friday met International Monetary Fund (IMF) managing director Kristalina Georgieva on the sidelines of G7 finance ministers and central bank governors (FMCBG) meet.

She is on a two-day visit to Japan. The G7 meeting is taking place in Niigata. Meanwhile, she also met Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Lawrence Wong during the sidelines of the meeting.

Both the ministers exchanged their views on



strengthening India-Singapore cooperation on issues like digital payment gateway, food security, green transition, crypto assets and Pandemic prepared-

ness among other issues. Sitharaman highlighted the emerging role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and skilling programmes in the context of setting up

of new AI centres. Both the ministers discussed ways for collaboration between India-Singapore in AI research and Quantum Computing.

Digital intelligence firm Similarweb cuts another 6% of staff



SAN FRANCISCO: Digital intelligence company Similarweb has laid off around 6 per cent of its workforce, or over 60 employees, in another round of job cuts.

According to CTech, the cutbacks were announced together with the company's results for the first quarter (Q1) of 2023.

The majority of those laid off are based outside of Israel.

In November last year, Similarweb laid off about 10 per cent of its team, around 130 employees, when it announced its results for the third quarter of 2022.

Moreover, the report said Similarweb, which creates measurement tools for analysing web behaviour and traffic analytics, saw its cash and cash equivalents fall to \$75.3 million at the end of March.

In future, the company

anticipates total revenue for 2023 to fall within the range of \$221 million to \$222 million, with a mid-point growth rate of approximately 15 per cent (year-over-year), the report added.

Meanwhile, e-commerce platform Shopify has announced to lay off 20 percent of its workforce which will impact more than 2,000 people.

The company also announced that the American multinational corporation Flexport will buy Shopify Logistics.

"Shopify will be smaller by about 20 per cent and Flexport will buy Shopify Logistics; this means some of you will leave Shopify today. I recognise the crushing impact this decision has on some of you, and did not make this decision lightly," said the company's CEO Tobi Lutke. (AGENCIES)

Canon India announces new video-centric camera 'PowerShot V10'



NEW DELHI: Canon has announced a new video-centric compact camera designed for smartphone natives PowerShot V10 in India.

Priced at Rs 39,995, the new camera will be available to purchase starting June 2023.

With its slim, ergonomic form factor and seamless, high-quality footage, the PowerShot V10 brings Canon's imaging technologies in a pocketable design.

According to the company, the PowerShot V10 is a 3-in-1 content creation kit essential for anything from travel vlogging to on-location livestreams. It fits in a small bag with room to spare, along with a smartphone, earbuds, and a power bank.

Canon's EOS imaging technology allows the PowerShot V10 to produce low-noise footage with vivid colours, even in low-light set up.

The new camera comes equipped with various shooting modes that include auto and manual exposure, and as many as 14 colour filters.

Moreover, the company said that the autofocus will prove to be a breeze even for beginners.

"While Face Tracking AF automatically detects and keeps your face in the frame, you can also switch to Specified Frame AF to focus on wherever you tap," Canon said.

The PowerShot V10 supports real-time delivery methods such as live streaming, which can be done directly to Facebook or YouTube via the Camera Connect app without the hassle of complicated settings.

Designed for ease of shooting, the lens' wide angle-of-view lets users record themselves with their friends and the background behind them. (AGENCIES)

Exim Bank logs Rs 1,556 cr net in FY23

Chennai: The Export Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) on Friday said it closed FY23 with an after tax profit of Rs 1,556 crore.

According to Exim Bank, the company closed FY23 with a net profit of Rs 1,556 crore up from Rs 738 crore logged during FY22. During the year under review, the bank had sanctioned loans aggregating Rs 79,764 crore to enhance export capabilities of Indian companies and support development priorities of partner countries.

The Bank has a portfolio of 303 Government of India-supported Lines of Credit (LOCs) with credit commitments aggregating \$ 31.85 billion, which are at various stages of implementation.

With ever expanding reach, the LOCs have gained momentum in stimulating economic

growth across 68 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Oceania and the CIS region.

During FY23, the Bank supported 37 new contracts



valued over \$ 1 billion. On behalf of the Government of India, the Bank sanctioned seven LOCs, aggregating \$670.32 million, to support export of projects, goods, and services from India.

Last fiscal, the Exim

Bank provided support of Rs 72,521 crore to Indian companies to build export capacity and boost export competitiveness under the Commercial Business.

Further, the Bank supported 75 project export contracts valued at Rs 43,421 crore under its commercial portfolio, in 37 countries.

The bank said it had also provided aggregate overseas investment finance of

Rs 67,082 crore to support 671 Joint Ventures/Wholly Owned Subsidiaries, set up by 495 Indian companies in 78 countries.

During FY23, Exim Bank had raised aggregate resources of Rs 52,156 crore, including foreign currency resources of \$ 3.47 billion.

The bank opened the international markets for Indian issuers with a benchmark sized Sustainability Bond of \$1 billion in January 2023, under its Environmental Social and Governance (ESG) Framework.

Proceeds of the bond are being used towards projects such as renewable energy, clean transportation, access to essential services and basic infrastructure, affordable housing, water and waste management, the bank said. (AGENCIES)

New AI model may soon help doctors diagnose heart attacks accurately

LONDON: The UK researchers have developed a novel algorithm based on artificial intelligence (AI) that may one day help doctors diagnose heart attacks quickly and with precision.

According to researchers from the University of Edinburgh, the new algorithm, called CoDE-ACS, was able to rule out a heart attack in more than double the number of patients, with an accuracy of 99.6 per cent in comparison to current testing methods.

CoDE-ACS may also greatly help in reducing hospital admissions and rapidly identify patients that are safe to go home. The findings are published in the journal Nature Medicine.

"For patients with acute chest pain due to a heart attack, early diagnosis and treatment saves lives," said Prof. Nicholas Mills, who led the research.

"Unfortunately, many conditions cause these common symptoms, and the diagnosis is not always straightforward.

"Harnessing data and artificial intelligence to support clinical decisions has enormous potential to improve care for patients and efficiency in our busy Emergency Departments,"



Mills noted.

In addition to ruling out heart attacks, CoDE-ACS could also help doctors identify those whose abnormal troponin (protein released into the bloodstream during a heart attack) levels were due to a heart attack rather than another condition.

"Chest pain is one of the most common reasons that people present to emergency departments," said Prof. Sir Nilesh Samani, medical director of the British Heart Foundation.

"Every day, doctors around the world face the challenge of separating patients whose pain is due to a heart attack from those whose pain is due to something less serious," he

added. CoDE-ACS was developed using data from 10,038 patients in Scotland who had arrived at hospital with a suspected heart attack.

It uses routinely-collected patient information, such as age, sex, ECG findings and medical history, as well as troponin levels, to predict the probability that an individual has had a heart attack.

The result is a probability score from 0 to 100 for each patient.

Clinical trials are now under way in Scotland to assess whether the tool can help doctors reduce pressure on overcrowded emergency departments. (AGENCIES)

Smartphone maker OPPO shuts down chip design unit



AGENCIES

BEIJING: Smartphone maker OPPO has shut down its chip design subsidiary called Zeku, as the semiconductor market goes through a heavy slump, the media reported on Friday.

According to the South China Morning Post, OPPO announced the move in a brief statement, calling it a "difficult decision" and blaming "uncertainties in the global economy and smartphone market".

Zeku employees received less than a day's notice about the unit being shut down, the report claimed.

The global technology brand set up Zeku in 2019 to design chips that could be used in its devices.

Other smartphone makers, including Xiaomi, have also set up their own chip-design verticals. The move came as chip manufacturing has been severely affected in China

by escalating US export restrictions targeting advanced semiconductors.

"Out of 3,243 fabless chip firms in China last year, only 566 had sales above 100 million yuan (\$14.4 million), according to Wei Shaojun, president of integrated circuit design at the China Semiconductor Industry Association (CSIA)," the report mentioned.

Global semiconductor revenue is projected to decline 11.2 per cent to reach \$532 billion in 2023, and the short-term outlook for the semiconductor market has deteriorated further.

In 2022, the market totalled \$599.6 billion, which was marginal growth of 0.2 per cent from 2021, according to the latest forecast from Gartner.

The PC, tablet and smartphone semiconductor markets are stagnating. The combined markets will represent 31 per cent of semiconductor revenue in 2023 and total \$167.6 billion.

Noise clocks over Rs 2,000 cr in revenue in FY23 with 100% growth

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: Homegrown consumer wearable company Noise on Friday said it clocked more than Rs 2,000 crore in revenue in FY23 with a record growth of over 100 per cent (year-over-year).

Noise maintained its leadership in the smart wearables industry and is aiming to double down further in the next fiscal year.

The company, with 400 employees, is projected to sustain a robust growth momentum of over 70 per cent next year, through a

combination of volume and pricing growth.

Over 95 per cent of its production is happening in India.

"Furthermore, Noise was also the first homegrown brand to ship over 3 million made-in-India smartwatches, reaffirming its commitment to leading the country's vision of making India a global manufacturing hub," said the company.

According to latest IDC numbers, Nexxbase (Noise) stood third in overall wearables, growing by 97.3 per cent YoY and 11.9 per cent

market share in India.

Noise was at second place in the smartwatch category with 21.6 per cent share, growing by 157.6 per cent YoY.

"Noise Colorfit Icon Buzz, Colorfit Icon 2 and Colorfit Pulse Go Buzz contributed to more than 25 per cent of its shipments," said the IDC report.

The company said it maintained an 80:20 ratio for its online and offline channels nationwide and further aspires to "cultivate strategic alliances that will facilitate broader audience outreach".

London Stock Exchange Group to set up tech centre in Hyderabad

HYDERABAD: London Stock Exchange Group (LSEG) has announced that it will establish a Technology Centre of Excellence in Hyderabad, which will generate employment for about 1,000 people.

The announcement was made after Telangana's Minister for Information Technology and Industries K.T. Rama Rao met Anthony McCarthy, Group CIO, LSEG in London.



A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in this regard was signed by Jayesh Ranjan, Principal Secretary of IT and Industries Department, and Anthony McCarthy, Group CIO, LSEG.

The move is expected to create ample employment opportunities and drive growth in the industry, according to a statement released from the minis-

ter's office in Hyderabad. LSEG is a leading global financial market infrastructure and data provider, operating in 70 countries worldwide and serving customers in 190 countries.

With over 2,000 issuers across more than 100 countries and a benchmark of \$161 linked to FTSE Russell indexes, LSEG continues to be a major player in the global financial industry. (AGENCIES)

Over 18K people enter Ethiopia from Sudan: UN

AGENCIES

ADDIS ABABA: The number of people arriving in Ethiopia due to the ongoing situation in Sudan has surpassed 18,000, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) has said.

"People arriving from Sudan to Ethiopia via the Metema border town have now reached more than 18,000," the UNOCHA said in its latest situation update issued on Thursday, adding that more than 440 people till now have entered Ethiopia via the Kurmuk border crossing point in Ethiopia's Benishangul Gumuz region.

According to the agency, new arrivals have been reported at the Pagak, Bubiyeir border crossing in Ethiopia's Gambella region for the first time since the conflict began in Sudan. UNOCHA figures showed that the arrivals are from 60



nationalities, and the largest group are Ethiopians, Sudanese and Turkish, Xinhua news agency reported.

The UNOCHA earlier announced that shelter and reception areas are under

construction for those who need relocation, and further medical support would be provided.

Sudan has witnessed deadly armed clashes between the Sudanese

Army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces in the capital city of Khartoum and other areas since April 15, with the two sides accusing each other of initiating the conflict.

US ambassador calls for S.Korea to keep speaking out against Russia's aggression of Ukraine

AGENCIES

SEOUL: US Ambassador Philip Goldberg called on Friday for South Korea to "keep speaking out" against Russia's invasion of Ukraine, stressing the importance of the two allies working together on global issues.

Goldberg made the remark during a lecture at Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, after tensions flared between South Korea and Russia last month following President Yoon Suk Yeol's suggestion of a shift in South Korea's policy of providing only non-lethal aid to Ukraine in its war with Russia, Yonhap news agency reported.

"We need you to work with us to find solutions to the climate crisis. We need you to continue standing up for our shared democratic values, such as respect for human rights," he said.

"And we need you to keep speaking out against atrocities, like Russia's war in Ukraine."

In an interview with Reuters, Yoon said it might



be difficult for South Korea to insist only on providing humanitarian or financial assistance if Ukraine comes under a large-scale attack on civilians.

Russia has since warned that supplying military aid to Ukraine would mean Seoul "becoming involved in the conflict to a certain extent" and would represent "an openly hostile anti-Russian move".

"The world has watched in horror as Russia embarked on a senseless war of aggression in violation of international law,

destroying civilian infrastructure and wreaking havoc on the global economy," Goldberg said.

"I want to praise the South Korea government for helping Ukraine's vast humanitarian needs and for implementing sanctions on Russia to make sure they pay a price for this pointless destruction," he added.

The Ambassador also reaffirmed the US security commitment to South Korea is firm.

"There should be no

doubt that our commitment to South Korea's defence is ironclad, as it has been for the past 70 years," he said.

Goldberg denounced North Korea's destabilising actions, such as missile launches, saying Pyongyang is using its scarce resources to develop weapons of mass destruction, rather than caring for its people.

Still, he said diplomacy is the "only viable way to achieve a safe and stable Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons".

The envoy also spoke at length about the recent summit between Yoon and US President Joe Biden, saying the two leaders "looked a lot like old college friends".

"To ensure we are ready to stand against any threat, our presidents announced a new forum to discuss the full range of our combined defensive capabilities, including nuclear, conventional and missile defence," he said, referring to the Washington Declaration adopted at the White House summit.

914 children mistreated at Japanese nurseries between April-Dec

TOKYO: More than 900 incidents of children being mistreated at nurseries across Japan between April and December of 2022 were reported, according to a government survey released Friday.

According to the survey by the Children and Families Agency, 90 of those cases were assessed as abuse.

The survey involving local governments was conducted following the high-profile case in December last year resulting in the arrest of three nursery school teachers in Shizuoka Prefecture for allegedly physically and verbally abusing infants in their care repeatedly.

Among the allegations, the teachers were found to have held one-year-old in their care upside down in the air by their feet and threatened them with a knife, among other abusive acts, Xinhua news agency reported.

The multiple cases of

abuse at the nursery school may have come to light earlier, but the school made all of its staff sign a pledge to keep silent on the matter, local reports said.

The case in Shizuoka led to the uncovering of similar cases of mistreatment and abuse of nursery school-aged children in Japan.

As a measure to standardise cases considered abuse, the government produced a new criterion, as previously, each childcare facility had its own judgment of what constituted abuse.

According to the poll

by the Children and Families Agency, nationwide municipalities and prefectures were asked if they had received reports from nurseries about incidents of infants being mistreated or abused by their teachers.

Of the 1,492 cases in which those asked investigated such cases, 914 confirmed incidents of children being mistreated, with 90 of these considered to be cases of child abuse with children being physically hurt.

The survey revealed a mere 9.5 per cent of the municipal governments reported cases of child mistreatment to the prefectural governments, with 27.8 per cent of cases regarding abuse reported.

In a separate nationwide poll conducted by the agency, showing a huge disparity in what constitutes child mistreatment, 73 per cent of childcare facilities said there had been zero cases of children being mistreated.(AGENCIES)



S.Korea Air Force begins regular large-scale exercise



SEOUL: The South Korea Air Force on Friday kicked off a regular large-scale exercise to bolster its combat capabilities and ensure the country's defence posture.

The eight-day Soaring Eagle exercise began at an air base in Cheongju, 112 kilometre south of Seoul, amid tensions on the Korean Peninsula in the wake of North Korea's firing of a purported solid-fuel intercontinental ballistic missile last month.

The exercise mobilises more than 160 personnel and nearly 60 warplanes, including F-35A stealth

fighters, F-15Ks, KF-16s and KC-330 tanker transport aircraft, according to the Air Force, Yonhap news agency reported.

It will take place under various scenarios, such as infiltrations by enemy special forces and aircraft as well as cruise missile launches, with participants set to stage attack formation drills focusing on striking core enemy assets and the origin of provocations, the armed service said.

It will also stage air interdiction drills to train pilots to neutralise enemy targets, such as station-

ary artillery batteries and mobile missile launchers, in the shortest possible amount of time.

"The purpose of this exercise is to become equipped with swift response capabilities against recently continuing enemy provocations and threats, and acquire the best operational capability by verifying strike capabilities against threat targets," Col. Won Kwonsoo, who leads the exercise, was quoted as saying.

Launched in 2008, the Air Force has conducted the Soaring Eagle once or twice a year.(AGENCIES)

US ends Covid vax mandate for foreign arrivals

AGENCIES

WASHINGTON: The US has dropped the Covid vaccine mandate for all its international passengers, even as the country ends its Covid emergency status, the White House has announced.

"While vaccination remains one of the most important tools in advancing the health and safety of employees and promoting the efficiency of workplaces," the White House said, "we are now in a different phase of our response when these measures are no longer necessary".

While the requirement for coronavirus testing was dropped in June last year, the vaccination policy was not removed for foreign travellers. In February, the House of Representatives voted to end the last remaining pandemic restrictions on May 11.

"As we continue to monitor the evolving state of Covid-19 and the emergence of virus variants,

we have the tools to detect and respond to the potential emergence of a variant of high consequence," President Biden said in a proclamation published on May 1.

"Considering the progress that we have made, and based on the latest guidance from our public health experts, I have determined that we no longer need the international air travel restrictions that I imposed in October 2021," he added.

During the pandemic, the US was shut for all international travellers for 18 months.

While the restrictions were eased in November 2021, foreign travellers were still required to be vaccinated and take a coronavirus test within three days of travel.

The new rules are part of the Biden administration's decision to end the emergency from May 11 even as deaths and hospitalisations from Covid are at their lowest point since March 2020 in the country.

Vietnam sees disputes arising from energy transition

AGENCIES

HANOI: Vietnam's transition towards cleaner forms of energy has brought a greater risk of disputes distinctive to renewable energy projects, state media reported on Friday.

The Vietnam International Arbitration Centre (VIAC) has recorded the increased risk of disputes arising from the sophistication of renewable projects, possibly resulting in dispute across several business activities, Vietnam News reported.

In the cases of large projects, dispute not only had a large impact on the local community but also the entire energy sector as a whole and the country's energy stability and sustainability, said the VIAC.

The dispute in the renewable industry during the 2013-2022 period amounted to a total of more than \$300 million, with the average time required to settle a dispute of up to seven months, said Chau Viet Bac, deputy secretary-general of the VIAC.

Changes to state policy and financial incentives have continued and will continue to lead to significant dispute between



foreign investors and state organisations, Xinhua news agency reported.

Such dispute must be resolved through Vietnamese courts or arbitration bodies with the exceptions of contractual agreements and international treaties of which the country is a signatory but received different provisions, said Vu Thi Chau Quynh, deputy head of the legal affairs department under the Ministry of Planning and Investment.

Given the nature of energy projects which often require large capital investment, prolonged implementation processes and involve multiple stakeholders, investors are faced with substantially higher risks, she added.

Vietnam's pivot towards a clean economy is forecast to fuel environmentally-focused products and services, which could be worth \$300 billion to its gross domestic product by 2050, up from only \$6.7 billion in 2020, according to industry experts.

Cambodia launches 5-yr partnership for action project on green economy

PHNOM PENH: Cambodia on Friday launched the Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE) to reaffirm its commitment towards sustaining the country's economic growth on a sustainable and inclusive trajectory.

The launching event brought together 100 participants from various relevant ministries, private sectors, civil society, academia, national research institution and development partners.

Being an alliance of five UN agencies, PAGE is increasingly recognised as a model for delivering coordinated support of the UN to countries for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the Paris Agreement.

PAGE's unique value proposition is its focus on "upstream" economic policies that have the potential to eventually move the whole of the economy on a more sustainable trajectory, Xinhua news agency reported.

Cambodian Ministry of Environment's Undersecretary of State, Chuop Paris, said the project will span over five years, including a one-year incep-



tion phase that will be concluded by mid-2023.

"Cambodia has already demonstrated its commitment to green economy principles through the National Strategic Plan on Green Growth 2013-2030 and the submission of its Long-term Strategy for Carbon Neutrality to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2021," he added.

Thereby, joining this global partnership will leverage the country's efforts in mobilising additional support in terms of new and advanced knowledge and finance to expedite the transition towards an inclusive green economy, Paris said.

Narin Sok, representative of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) to Cambodia, reiterated the joint UN

commitment to work closely with relevant line ministries to ensure that PAGE contributes to promoting green and inclusive economic growth in Cambodia.

He said the implementation of PAGE programme is fully aligned with and will contribute to the realisation of the overall objectives of the new UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2024-2028.

Iran, Oman agree to start space cooperation



TEHRAN: Iran and Oman have agreed to start cooperation in the space sector, media reported.

The issue was discussed in a meeting between Iranian Minister of Information and Communications Technology Isa Zarepour and Omani Minister of Transport, Communications and Information Technology Saeed bin Hamoud al-Maawali in Tehran, the report said on Thursday.

Speaking at the meeting, the Iranian Minister said his country is capable of building remote sensing and communications satellites for launch into low Earth orbits and can cooperate with Oman in this area, the official news agency IRNA reported.

He added that over the past two years, cooperation between the two countries has been enhanced, noting that following the recent visit by Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi to Muscat, the cooperation has taken

a better form, Xinhua news agency reported.

The two Ministers also agreed to begin cooperation in the fields of data transit and postal services, the report added.

The Omani Minister, for his part, said there are numerous areas for cooperation between the two countries in the fields of communications and information technology, noting that the field of modern technologies is another important area for bilateral cooperation.

The national post companies of the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding at the end of the meeting, IRNA said.

Iran has in recent years built a number of satellites. In August 2022, the country successfully launched the Khayyam satellite into space from the Baikonur space station in Kazakhstan by Russia's Soyuz satellite carrier rocket.(AGENCIES)

SC directs Centre, state govts to ensure formation of sexual harassment committee

AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Friday directed the Centre, all state governments and Union Territories (UTs) to verify as to whether all the concerned ministries, departments, government bodies, authorities, public sector undertakings, institutions etc. have constituted sexual harassment committees.

The top court stressed that it is disquieting to note that there are serious lapses in the enforcement of the 2013 Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PoSH) Act even after such a long passage of time.

A bench comprising justices A.S. Bopanna and Hima Kohli said if the working environment continues to remain hostile, insensitive and unresponsive to the needs of women employees, the 2013 Prevention of Sexual Harassment (PoSH) Act will remain an empty formality.

"If the authorities, managements/employers cannot assure them a safe and secure workplace, they will fear stepping out of their homes to make a dignified living and exploit their talent and skills to the hilt. It is, therefore, time

for the Union government and the state governments to take affirmative action and make sure that the altruistic object behind enacting the PoSH Act is achieved in real terms," said Justice Kohli, who authored the 61-page judgment on behalf of the bench.

The top court stressed that however salutary this enactment may be, it will never succeed in providing dignity and respect that women deserve at the workplace unless and until there is strict adherence to the enforcement regime and a proactive approach by all the state and non-state actors.

The bench said all the state functionaries, public authorities, private undertakings, organisations and institutions are duty-bound to implement the PoSH Act in letter and spirit.

"Being a victim of such a deplorable act not only dents the self-esteem of a woman, it also takes a toll on her emotional, mental and physical health. It is often seen that when women face sexual harassment at the workplace, they are reluctant to report such misconduct. Many of them even drop out from their job. One of the reasons



for this reluctance to report is that there is an uncertainty about who to approach under the Act for redressal of their grievance," said the bench.

Justice Kohli said it is disquieting to note that there are serious lapses in the enforcement of the Act even after such a long passage of time. This glaring lacuna has been recently brought to the fore by a national daily that has conducted and published a survey of 30 national sports federations in the country and reported that 16 out of them have not constituted an Internal Complaints

Committees (ICC) till date, Justice Kohli said.

She added: "An improperly constituted ICC/LC/IC, would be an impediment in conducting an inquiry into a complaint of sexual harassment at the workplace, as envisaged under the statute and the rules. It will be equally counterproductive to have an ill-prepared committee conduct a half-baked inquiry that can lead to serious consequences, namely, imposition of major penalties on the delinquent employee, to the point of termination of service."

The bench said: "The Union of India, all state governments and UTs are directed to undertake a time-bound exercise to verify as to whether all the concerned ministries, departments, government organisations, authorities, public sector undertakings, institutions, bodies etc. have constituted ICCs/LCs/ICs, as the case may be and that the composition of the said Committees are strictly in terms of the provisions of the PoSH Act."

The bench directed that necessary information regarding the constitution and composition of the ICCs/LCs/ICs, details of the e-mail IDs and contact numbers of the designated person(s), the procedure prescribed for submitting an online complaint, as also the relevant rules, regulations and internal policies are made readily available on the website of the concerned authority/functionary/organisation/institution/body.

The apex court said: "A similar exercise shall be undertaken by all the Statutory bodies of professionals at the apex level and the State level (including those regulating doctors, lawyers, architects, chartered accountants, cost

accountants, engineers, bankers and other professionals), by universities, colleges, training centres and educational institutions and by government and private hospitals/nursing homes."

The top court issued a slew of directions while hearing a plea by Aureliano Fernandes, a former head of department at Goa University, against a Bombay High Court order in connection with sexual harassment allegations levelled against him.

The high court had dismissed his plea challenging the order by the Executive Council of Goa University (disciplinary authority), dismissing him from service and disqualifying him from future employment. The apex court set aside the high court order noting procedural lapses in inquiry proceedings and violation of principles of natural justice.

Passing a slew of directions in the matter, the bench said: "The authorities/management/employers shall regularly conduct orientation programmes, workshops, seminars and awareness programmes to upskill members of the ICCs/LCs/

ICs and to educate women employees and women's groups about the provisions of the Act, the rules and relevant regulations."

The apex court directed the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) and the State Legal Services Authorities (SLSAs) to develop modules to conduct workshops and organise awareness programmes to sensitise authorities/managements/employers, employees and adolescent groups with the provisions of the Act.

The bench said: "A copy of this judgment shall be transmitted to the secretaries of all the ministries who shall ensure implementation of the directions by all the concerned departments, statutory authorities, institutions, organisations etc. under the control of the respective ministries. A copy of the judgment shall also be transmitted to the chief secretaries of all the states and Union Territories who shall ensure strict compliance of these directions by all the concerned departments."

The apex court also directed Centre and states to file their affidavits within eight weeks for reporting compliance.

Goa CM stresses on value-based education for changing slum dwellers' condition



AGENCIES

PANAJI: Lamenting about the woes of street dwellers, Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant on Friday said there was a dire need to inculcate values-based education in the younger generation in order to stop people from being abandoned who are then forced to live in the streets.

Sawant while inaugurating the two-day National Conference on issues of street dwellers, also stressed upon the need to take measures to curb this menace. He appealed to the experts to come out with strategies to deal with the situation.

"Basically what hap-

pens is that some families abandon mentally ill and old people, who are then forced to live on the roads. We need to change this picture and for that our government has already started the value-based education for the young minds, so that we don't see street dwellers after 25 years," Sawant said.

According to Sawant, if the value-based education is given to children, then in future they will not shun their parents.

He said that the Goa government was working for aged people through old age homes and also for orphans by supporting NGOs and their guardians.

PM Modi inaugurates projects worth Rs 4400 cr in Gujarat

AGENCIES

GANDHINAGAR: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday laid the foundation stone for projects worth Rs 4400 crore here.

These projects encompass various sectors such as Urban Development, Water Supply, Road and Transport, and Mines and Minerals.

He also inaugurated PMAY (rural and urban) projects worth around Rs 1950 crore, marking a significant milestone in housing development.

During the programme, Prime Minister Modi interacted with beneficiaries via video link and handed over keys to around 19,000 houses constructed under the PMAY scheme.

Highlighting the unique features of the PMAY initiative, he said, "The houses being constructed under PMAY are a package of many schemes. Every house has a toilet under Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, electricity connection under Saubhagya scheme, free LPG connection under Ujjwala scheme, and piped water under JJM."

He also underscored that the beneficiaries enjoy additional benefits such as free medical treatment and free



ration, providing a comprehensive safety net for the poor.

The PM commended the empowerment of women under PMAY, emphasizing that 70 per cent of the houses have been registered in the name of women. He highlighted that the cost of constructing these houses, which amounts to several lakhs, has transformed crores of women beneficiaries into millionaires, enabling them to own property for the first time.

Furthermore, PM Modi discussed the government's focus on future challenges and urbanization. He high-

lighted the utilization of modern technology to construct affordable and safe houses, citing the success of the Light House Project in six cities. He also assured that such housing opportunities will be made available to the poor in the near future.

In addition, he addressed the issues of malpractices and fraud in the real estate sector, which had adversely affected the poor and middle-class families. The implementation of the RERA Act has provided legal security to homebuyers, ensuring the fulfillment of promised facilities.

The Prime Minister also mentioned the significant budget subsidy for housing loans provided to the middle-class, benefiting thousands of families.

Speaking about urban planning, Modi underlined the equal emphasis on Ease of Living and Quality of Life. He mentioned the expansion of metro networks across the country, reducing travel time and improving connectivity.

Noting the remarkable progress, he stated, "The metro network in the country grew 600 kilometers in the last 9 years from 250 kilometers before 2014."

Delhi court extends Sisodia's judicial custody till June 2



NEW DELHI: A Delhi court on Friday extended former Deputy Chief Minister Manish Sisodia's judicial custody till June 2 in the alleged now-scrapped excise policy case being probed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

On Thursday, the High Court had reserved its judgement on the AAP leader's bail plea.

Sisodia had moved to the high court on April 3, seeking interim bail in the case on the grounds of his wife's illness.

Justice Dinesh Kumar Sharma directed the jail superintendent to provide Sisodia with video conferencing facility to speak to his wife every alternate day between 3-4 p.m. as per

prison rules, till disposal of bail plea.

The CBI on Wednesday opposed the bail plea, arguing that the former Deputy Chief Minister was in a position of power and had political clout.

A Delhi court, on Monday, extended Sisodia's judicial custody till May 23 in a case being probed by the Enforcement Directorate (ED).

The ED had arrested Sisodia on March 9 after the CBI's arrest on February 26.

Last month, Special CBI Judge M.K. Nagpal of the Rouse Avenue Court denied bail to Sisodia, holding that the evidence, prima facie, "speaks volumes" of his involvement in the offence. (AGENCIES)

ED attaches assets worth Rs 250 cr in Indore PMLA case

NEW DELHI: The ED on Friday said that it recently conducted searches at six premises including five residential premises in Indore and the premise of a shell entity based in Mumbai in a money laundering case lodged against businessman Deepak Jain Madda and others.

During the searches, cash amount of Rs 91.21 lakh, details of illegally acquired immovable properties worth more than Rs 250 crore and various incriminating documents were recovered and seized.

The ED initiated PMLA investigation on the basis of the FIRs lodged in Indore in case of illegal sale and alienation of the lands of housing co-operative societies by Madda in connivance with other builders and developers.

"The accused persons in connivance with each other illegally sold and

alienated hundreds of acres of land belonging to co-operative societies located at Indore, Madhya Pradesh. These lands were originally acquired by housing cooperative societies to allot housing plots to its own members. As on date, the market value of these lands pertaining to numerous societies is estimated to be more than 1,000 crore," the official said.

The ED said that these lands were usurped and were subsequently sold to various accused persons causing massive loss to the housing society and thus depriving its members from their rightful ownership of plots. Several attempts of defrauding the society by siphoning away the movable assets such as bank accounts, etc of the housing societies have also come to notice. (AGENCIES)

Calcutta HC orders service termination of 36K primary teachers in Bengal

AGENCIES

KOLKATA: A single-judge bench of the Calcutta High Court on Friday ordered termination of service of 36,000 primary teachers in different state-run schools in West Bengal.

While passing the order, Justice Abhijit Gangopadhyay observed that none of these 36,000 teachers had proper training for getting recruited as primary teachers and they got recruited without appearing for the compulsory aptitude tests.

However, Justice Gangopadhyay ordered that these 36,000 primary teachers will be able to attend their respective schools for the next four months and during that period they will be entitled for the salary of para-teachers instead of that for regular teachers.

If any candidate among these 36,000 completes the requisite training in the

interim period, he/she will be eligible for appearing for examinations in the next recruitment phase.

Justice Gangopadhyay also directed the West Bengal Board of Primary Education (WBBPE) to fill up the vacant posts arising out of the termination of services.

He also observed that if WBBPE wishes, it can recover the cost for conducting fresh recruitment exams from Trinamool Congress legislator and former President of WBBPE, Manik Bhat-tacharya, who is currently in judicial custody for his alleged involvement in the scam.

In 2016, a total of 42,500 primary teachers were recruited by the WBBPE.

According to the BJP, if 36,000 of these 42,500 teachers are being terminated, one can easily understand the extent of corruption in the recruitment process.

Four Nigerians among six held for duping hundreds of women

GURUGRAM: With the arrest of six people four Nigerians and two women the Gurugram police on Friday claimed to have busted a gang which allegedly duped hundreds of women by befriending them via social media, police said.

According to police, a complaint was received on March 13, from a woman who claimed that in the same month, she had befriended a man through social media who introduced himself as a doctor based in the United Kingdom and they started talking over the phone.

"On April 4, she received a call from a woman who called herself a customs official and informed the victim that gold and foreign currency had arrived in her name, for which she will have to pay Rs 45,000 as tax, which she did," the woman told the police.

Thereafter, she transferred another Rs 8.85 lakh as tax to the suspects. Following this, the woman

reported the matter to the police and a case was registered in the cyber crime police station A (east), Gurugram.

During the probe, the police nabbed six accused identified as Samuel Ubaka Igwatu, Emmanuel Chukwudi, Anidebe Emeke Alex, Aduimnobifitu Aloysia a Nigerian national and Wasomichon and Chanchamaliyu Panme a Manipur resident involved in the alleged crime from Delhi's Mohan Garden.

Investigations revealed that the Nigerian national was illegally staying in India; their passport/visa had already expired.

"The accused used to befriend young women via social media and along with the arrested women extract money from the victims. We recovered 16 mobile phones, 18 SIM cards, four laptops, six debit cards, as many pen drives, three passports and Rs 31,000 from their possession," Priyanshu Diwan, ACP (cyber-crime) said. (AGENCIES)

DGCA suspends AI pilot for allowing friend into cockpit

NEW DELHI: The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has suspended the licence of an Air India pilot for three months. The suspension comes after the pilot allowed a woman



friend to enter the cockpit mid-air during a Dubai to Delhi flight.

The aviation regulator has also imposed a fine of Rs 30 lakh on Air India for failing to address the safety-sensitive issue in a prompt and effective manner.

Additionally, the co-pilot has been cautioned for not being assertive enough to prevent the unauthorized entry.

The Air India pilot was under investigation for violating safety norms by

allowing a friend into the cockpit during a flight from Dubai to Delhi on February 27, violating DGCA safety norms.

In April, a senior DGCA official had said that this act is unacceptable and could have put the passengers' safety at risk.

Air India had also released a statement saying that they have taken note of the reported incident and investigations are underway.

"The airline has a zero-tolerance policy regarding passenger safety and well-being and will take requisite action. The matter has also been reported to the DGCA, and Air India is cooperating with their investigation," said the statement.

"We have taken serious note of the reported incident and investigations are underway in Air India," the statement further said. (AGENCIES)

New Football clubs to be registered, developed on professional lines



GMK SPORTS DESK

SRINAGAR: With improvement in weather conditions, outdoor sports activities started across Kashmir division here, Friday.

In this connection, a one day Badminton event on similar lines was today conducted at Jehlum Indoor Stadium, Janbazpora Baramulla. In addition to the G-20 awareness campaign, the events also highlighted the benefits of healthier, fitter and vibrant J&K for a better future.

The other activities held under My Youth My

Pride include Badminton, Chess and Tug of War at Indoor hall in Qaimoh, Kulgam district in South Kashmir.

In the meantime J&K Football Association has started the process of registering new clubs to improve the game and creating an environment for professional Football in the union territory.

Divulging the details, JKFA said that such clubs will provide a platform to young footballers to showcase their talent and an opportunity to be picked up for bigger roles in I-League and other top division

events.

They said JKUFC, a new football club, has been established with a distinctive approach with both provinces of J&K as its home base. They also said it is for the first time that a private professional football team would have its base both in Jammu and Srinagar and the club has formally started its practice in the Bakshi Stadium Srinagar.

Meanwhile, many players from different districts of Kashmir division called on Secretary J&K Sports Council Nuzhat Gull in her Srinagar office cham-

ber with the request to extend the reach of sports activities to their respective areas.

Assuring the players of all the support from J&K Sports Council, Nuzhat Gull said that additional verticals of sports activities have been included in the calendar of activities this year which shall engage more youth.

Speaking to the visitors, Secretary Sports Council said that apart from sports activities anti drug campaigns, healthy lifestyle campaigns and G-20 awareness campaigns shall run parallel.

Director YSS along with JDK tours Srinagar

Inspects various sports infra projects

AZHAR HAJINI

SRINAGAR: Director, Department of Youth Services and Sports J&K Subash C Chhibber on Friday visited various areas of Srinagar city to take a first-hand view of different projects being carried out to develop modern sports infrastructure by the Department of Youth Services and Sports J&K (YSS).

He was accompanied by Joint Director Kashmir (JDK) YSS Waseem Raja. He passed on some on spot directions for speeding up the pace of executions. He stressed that during the execution of various working projects Guidelines issued by the Administrative Department should be adhered in letter and spirit.

He also directed the concerned to take up work of construction purely as per the approved DPRs.

Officers also visited the site of New Youth Hostel Srinagar and showed satisfaction over the quality of the initial work being carried out by the construction agency.

Dir YSS hoped that the



sports infrastructure being developed would provide a lot of opportunities to the young blood to hone their skills and sports talent in the most professional manner.

DYS&S Budgam holds sports activities in different zones

GMK SPORTS DESK

B.K.Pora.

BUDGAM: The District Youth Services and Sports Budgam (DYS&S) Friday organized sports activities in different Zones of the district viz. Hardpanzoo, Beerwah, Drygam, Magam and

In this connection various sports events viz Badminton, Yoga, Table Tennis and Tug of War were organized by the respective zones, in which 445 boys and 431 girls participated with great enthusiasm.



Badminton World Federation issues an interim ban on new 'spin serve'

AGENCIES

KUALA LUMPUR: The Badminton World Federation (BWF) on Friday issued a temporary ban on a new 'spin-serve' that has had the attention of the world's top badminton players recently.

The new spin serve was first implemented in tournaments at the Polish Open 2023 in March by Danish doubles player Marcus Rindshoj in the second round of the tournament. Since then, the innovative trick created a rage in international badminton with players across the globe trying their hand to learn this new technique.

"BWF Council has approved a proposal for an 'experimental variation' to the Laws of Badminton to forbid the use of the new 'spin serve' effective immediately until 29 May 2023," the statement from badminton's global governing body read.

"The amendment to 9.1.5 of Section 4.1 of the BWF Laws of Badminton now states that the server shall release the shuttle without adding spin, and the server's racket shall initially hit the base of the shuttle. Any failure to adhere to the experimental variation to the law will result in a fault being called," it added.

The interim ban takes effect immediately at all BWF sanctioned international tournaments until May 29, 2023.

In the spin serve technique, the server traps the cork between the middle finger and the thumb and tries to put a spin to it with a carrom strike motion before sending it across the net with the racket. By spinning the cork before hitting, it produces an unthinkable spin which makes it difficult for the player on the receiving end to pick up.

Speaking on the decision



of banning the sin serve, BWF chief Poul-Erik Hoyer said that the new spin serve is similar to the Sidekick serve or S-serve, which is banned.

The S-serve involved slicing sideways across the feathers of an inverted shuttle, making it spin chaotically so that the receiver had difficulty controlling his return. The S-serve was so effective that many people felt it was ruining the game; eventually, the serve was banned by the international governing body for the sport on July 1, 1982.

"BWF welcomes players creating innovation in our game and experimenting with techniques to create competitive advantage on court. However, we have received several points of feedback from within the badminton community, including the BWF Athletes' Commission, expressing that this 'spin serve' could have a negative

impact on the game.

It's also been observed internally that this 'spin serve' has many similar characteristics to the 'Sidekick serve', which is not allowed. An expert panel, therefore, recommended to disallow the 'spin serve' until further consultation could take place with the membership at the upcoming BWF AGM on May 27, 2023," Hoyer was quoted by BWF website.

"BWF also wanted to avoid a scenario where the upcoming BWF Sudirman Cup Finals 2023, and other international tournaments, could be platforms to test the new 'spin serve' and ultimately disrupt the competitions.

As such, BWF Council felt it best to impose this experimental variation to disallow the 'spin serve' until BWF Council convenes again on 29 May for further discussion and deliberation," he added.(AGENCIES)

IPL 2023: Feel fortunate to play for Royal Challengers Bangalore from Day One, says Virat Kohli



AGENCIES

JAIPUR: Talismanic Royal Challengers Bangalore batter Virat Kohli stated that he considers himself fortunate to be playing for the franchise from Day One of his career in the Indian Premier League (IPL).

"I feel really fortunate to have played for one franchise from day one. It's been a constant relationship based on trust from both ends that we are working for the same thing and the value that I have seen fans connecting with me very organically is because of the fact that we play the game for the right reasons," stated Kohli in a video

posted by the franchise on their Twitter account.

Kohli made his debut for the franchise in the IPL in 2008. In 234 matches for the franchise, the right-handed batter has scored 7044 runs at an average of 36.50 and strike-rate of 129.41.

"I am really honoured and fortunate to be here for so long, in a place where I absolutely love coming to every year and start the IPL journey all over again. So, it's always very exciting," he added.

Kohli has also scored five tons and 50 half-centuries in the IPL while topping run-making charts in the 2016 edition of the

tournament. He also led the franchise in 141 games, winning 68 times while ending up on the losing side on 71 occasions.

In IPL 2023, has been the pillar of RCB's batting while opening the innings with skipper Faf Du Plessis, making 420 runs in 11 innings at an average of 42 and strike-rate of 133.76, including six half-centuries.

Bangalore are currently at the seventh spot in the points table with 10 points from 11 matches. Their next match in IPL 2023 will be against third-ranked Rajasthan Royals at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium on Sunday afternoon.

CHESS

Humpy, Harika to lead Indian challenge in 10-player Cairns Cup in June

ST LOUIS: Top Indian female Grandmasters (GM) Koneru Humpy and Dronavalli Harika will be among the top contenders in the 10-player Cairns Cup, an elite-level female chess tournament hosted by the Saint Louis Chess Club, returns this June.

The ten-player round-robin tournament will be hosted by the Saint Louis Chess Club at the World Chess Hall of Fame from June 3-13, 2023.

Former FIDE Women's rapid chess champion Humpy, who has a current rating of 2576, will be the top seed in the lineup while Harika, with a rating of 2511, will be the fourth seed in the tournament which will feature one of the strongest female fields, as they compete for a total prize fund of \$180,000.

The other players in the fray are Alexandra Kosteniuk of the United States, Nana Dzagnidze of

Georgia, Zhansaya Abdumalik (Kazakhstan), Elisabeth Paehtz (Germany), Bella Khotenashvili (Georgia), Gunay Mammadzada (Azerbaijan), Irina Krush (USA) and Anna Zatonskih (USA).

"The Saint Louis Chess Club continues to bring new and innovative ways to promote the game of chess," Tony Rich, Executive Director of the Saint Louis Chess Club was quoted in a release on Thursday.

"The Cairns Cup is exciting to watch because it brings together one of the strongest international fields ever assembled in women's chess with one of the largest prize funds for an all-female tournament," he added.(AGENCIES)



India to play Mongolia in Intercontinental Cup 2023 opener

NEW DELHI: India will take on Mongolia on the opening day of the Intercontinental Cup, which kicks off at the Kalinga Stadium on June 9.

The other two teams in the competition, Lebanon and Vanuatu, will also face each other on the opening day of the tournament.

The tournament is part of India's preparations for the 2023 AFC Asian Cup in Qatar. Immediately after the Intercontinental Cup, India will play the SAFF Championship 2023, to be held in Bengaluru from June 21 to July 3, 2023.

The national team, under head coach Igor Stimac, will be camping in Bhubaneswar to prepare for the tournament from next week onward, May 15, 2023.

This will be the third edition of the Intercontinental Cup, with the previous two being held in Mumbai (2018) and Ahmedabad (2019). All four teams will play against each other once before the top two teams compete in the final slated to be held on June 18, 2023.

The Indian men's national team had previously never played against

Mongolia and Vanuatu. Against Lebanon, the hosts hold a record of playing six matches.

Lebanon is the highest-ranked country in the tournament and are placed just two places above India in the FIFA rankings with Vanuatu and Mongolia being the two lower-ranked teams.

Fixtures:
June 9: Lebanon vs Vanuatu-June 9: India vs Mongolia-June 12: Mongolia vs Lebanon-June 12: Vanuatu vs India-June 15: Vanuatu vs Mongolia-June 15: India vs Lebanon-June 18: Final. (AGENCIES)

French Open announces 12.3 percent increase in total prize money for 2023 edition

PARIS: Prize money for this year's Roland-Garros will total 49.6 million euros, with an increase of 12.3 percent from 2022, the organisers of the clay court major said on Friday.

The organisers have significantly increased the prize money for first-round losers in the women's and men's singles draws and the amounts awarded in the qualifying, wheelchair tennis and quad competitions to ensure a

more even distribution between players.

Prize money for the singles draws will see an increase of 9.1 percent in comparison to 2022, with losers in the first three rounds receiving between 11 percent and 13 percent more.

Following on from changes made in 2022, the organisers have also chosen to increase prize money for the three rounds of the qualifying competi-

tion, which will rise by an average of 11.8 percent.

The prize pot for the women's and men's doubles competitions has gone up by 4 percent.

The allocation for this year's wheelchair and quad tennis competition is 810,000 euros, equating to a 40 percent increase in 2022.

The French Open is slated to take place from May 28 to June 11 in Paris. (AGENCIES)

Chairperson DDC Baramulla, KCCI delegation calls on LG

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Safina Baig, DDC Chairperson, Baramulla called on Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha at Raj Bhawan, Friday.

The DDC Chairperson discussed with the Lt Governor various issues of public importance and development of the district. She also raised the issue concerning the cost of Haj pilgrimage this year.

A delegation of Kashmir Chamber of Commerce & Industry led by its President Sh Javid Ahmad Tenga also called on the Lt Governor and apprised him about various issues of the business community.

The Lt Governor assured the members of the delegation that the issues projected by them would be looked into meticulously for their early redressal.



Later, Sh Pritam Singh, Founder President, Peepal

Saves People Foundation Trust called on the Lt Governor at Raj Bhawan Jammu and apprised him about the peepal sapling plantation drive and other environmental initiatives of his organisation.

Renowned Broadcaster and Director (Retd.) All India Radio Jammu Sh Vijay Kumar Sambyal, popularly known as Rangeley Thakur in the field of music, submitted a memorandum of demands regarding promotion of art & music in the UT. He also expressed his gratitude towards the UT administration for giving due attention to the field of Arts.

The Lt Governor also released a book titled "Words Whispered in the Dark" authored by Ms Bindya Raina Tikoo. The Lt Governor congratulated the author on the occasion and wished her success in the future endeavours.

Bhatnagar addresses G-20 DIAN roadshow at SKUAST-K

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar Friday addressed the G20 Digital Innovation Alliance National Roadshow at Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) here.

The National Roadshow was organised by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), Startup Hub Ministry of Information Technology, Government of India in collaboration with SKUAST-K.

In his keynote address, Advisor Bhatnagar said that it is the endeavour of our Prime Minister, Narendra Modi to make G-20 Presidency a people's event across India. He added that the G-20 is an important institution which reflects the topmost economies of the world, adding that all several areas which are important for humanity are being addressed through it.

The Advisor further remarked that our Prime Minister has the vision of putting India on a global level and this G-20 Presidency has brought sense of pride, excitement and motivation among the countrymen that our country is



attaining its position in global order.

Speaking on different aspects of this National Roadshow, Advisor Bhatnagar said that this G20 Digital Innovation Alliance will foster collaboration and advancing digital innovation in various sectors like agriculture, health-care, education, finance, and governance. He added that the technology is progressing rapidly and we all need to adapt ourselves to new and emerging means of technologies like Artificial Intelligence, Robotics, among others.

The Advisor further highlighted that effective education system, vocational training, innovation and incubation techniques, research and other are very essential for today's world. He added that National Edu-

vation to drive inclusive growth, enhance economic competitiveness, and address critical societal challenges. He emphasized the need for strong partnerships among G20 countries to leverage emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, blockchain, and Internet of Things (IoT) to create sustainable and resilient economies.

In his address, Vice Chancellor SKUAST-K, Prof. Nazir Ahmad Ganai said that India is emerging as knowledge superpower of the world and our country is self sufficient in every means due to host of initiatives for the common people. He added that this National Roadshow will expose students of University to Startups and make them job creators instead of job seekers which is the vision of this university.

The National Roadshow witnessed engaging panel discussions, interactive sessions, and presentations by leading experts in various domains related to digital innovation. Participants gained valuable insights into the best practices, success stories, and challenges associated with harnessing the power of digital technologies in diverse sectors such as agriculture, health-care, education, finance, and governance.

MP Er. Ghulam Ali Khatana reviews developmental scenario of Budgam

Stressing on speedy completion of all ongoing projects



GMK NEWS NETWORK

BUDGAM: The Member Parliament (MP) Rajya Sabha, Er. Ghulam Ali Khatana Friday reviewed the developmental scenario of Budgam district in a meeting held at Conference Hall Budgam.

At the outset, District Development Commissioner (DDC) Budgam, Akshay Labroo presented the overall status of the sector wise developmental achievements and implementation of centrally and UT sponsored schemes in the district through a powerpoint presentation.

Stressing on speedy completion of all ongoing works and projects, the MP reviewed implementation and progress recorded under Ayushman Bharat/ JK Sehat Scheme, JSY, PMGSY, SBM, JJM, RDSS, PMKSY, ICDS MGNREGA, PMAY, NRLM, NHM and other schemes.

Detailed review of departments including

R&B, PMGSY, PHE, Horticulture, Agriculture, Education, Social Welfare, Animal and Sheep Husbandry departments was also taken by the chair.

The MP lauded the District Administration Budgam for timely execution and completion of works and successful implementation of schemes.

He however emphasized on sustenance of developmental activities and improvement in all sectors for overall benefit of the public.

Later, the MP interacted with DDCs, BDCs, PRIs, Presidents and ward members of Municipalities of Budgam, where he listened to their genuine demands patiently.

Among others, ADDC, Dr Akramullah Tak; CEOs of Doodhpathri /Tosamaidan, Yousmarg Development Authorities, CPO, CMO, CEO, ACD, ACP and all other district and sectoral officers attended the meeting.

JKRLM women trained by IHM adopts Millets recipes

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: To celebrate the International year of Millets and get benefitted out of it, a fifteen-day training programme on development of millet-based products organised by Jammu Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission (JKRLM) concluded successfully here at Institute of Hotel Management (IHM) Rajbagh Friday.

The training programme was organised by JKRLM in association with Grassroots Innovation Augmentation Network (GIAN). A total of 12 SHG members have undergone for the said training programme.

The training was imparted to the participant by renowned Chef Yaseen and his team of expert Master Chefs of Institute of Hotel Management Rajbagh.

While interacting with the SHG members Commissioner Secretary, Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, Mandeep Kaur highlighted the importance of Millet as staple diet and said JKRLM is not only promoting cultivation of Millets but also skilling the SHG members on preparation of different recipes amongst the SHG members. Slowly but steadily, people will re-adopt the Millet in their diets.

She said that in addition to promote healthy eating, the training

programme aimed to raise awareness about the environmental benefits of millets. Millets require much less water and fertilizer than other grains, making them a more sustainable option for farmers and the environment.

Speaking on the occasion Mission Director Jammu Kashmir Rural Livelihoods Mission, Indu Kanwal Chib said that as the year 2023, is being celebrated as International year of Millets as staple diet, we at JKRLM wish to involve more and more women into our farm livelihood vertical as Krishi Sakshies and Mahila Kissanas.

During the training programme the members were imparted training on innovative recipes in Millet based products apart from learning about the nutritional benefits of Millets, she added.

She thanked Principal IHM, Shabir Ahmad for facilitating such a training programme & making this training programme a success.

It is to mention here that Millets are small-grained, nutrient-rich cereals that have been a staple food for millions of people around the world for centuries. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in millets as a sustainable and healthy alternative to rice and wheat, and many innovative millet-based products have been developed.

Measles virus outbreak at Farkin village in Kupwara

CMO says situation being monitored

TASADUQ HUSSAIN

KUPWARA: The authorities in north Kashmir's Kupwara district Friday deputed its teams to Farkin village after cases of measles virus were reported from the hamlet.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), Measles is a highly contagious, serious disease caused by a virus.

The virus infects the respiratory tract, then spreads throughout the body. Measles is a human disease and is not known to occur in animals. Measles vaccination resulted in a 73% drop in measles deaths between 2000 and 2018 worldwide, as per WHO.

Official sources said earlier today a few cases of measles were reported in Farkin village, which falls under Kralpora Medical Block.

They said that the medical team along with doctors were deputed to the

village to ensure the safety of the rest of the population, adding that all the safety measures are being ensured.

Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Kupwara Dr. Mohammad Ramzan said that some cases of measles have been reported in Farkin village.

He said that the medical team has been deputed. "As of now, I am told that there are about 4 to 5 cases. The medical team is there already and more about the situation will be known once they access the situation," he said.

The CMO also said that the immediate response is to ascertain the condition of the patients. "Anyone with a severe condition receives the treatment. The patient suffers from some rashes and takes just 3 to 4 days to recover," he said.

He added that all the patients have to be isolated as a precautionary measure—(KNO)

Pathetic road condition irks Budgam villagers

AKHTER ABAS

BUDGAM: Residents of Sanzipora, B.K Pora in central Kashmir's Budgam district on Friday expressed strong anger against the administration for failing to provide them better road connectivity in the area.

The dilapidated Sanzipora-Khanda road dotted with potholes is causing inconvenience to commuters, particularly students and office-going employees.

"The road has become accident-prone due to its bad condition but no heed is being given to the suffering of people," said Adil Ahmad, a local resident.

"This was the road built decades ago, and since then it has been a victim of official neglect," he said.

Driving two-wheelers or four-wheelers on the existing road was fraught with dangers for both the motorist and pedestrians," said Sarpanch of the village.

"A slight shower turns the road into a big puddle



making it difficult for us, particularly the children, elderly and the ladies to navigate," he said.

"We have requested the authorities time and again, and also submitted our pleas to authorities but our pleas fell on deaf ears."

The locals appealed to the Lt Governor to direct the authorities concerned for macadamization of this road in the coming plan so that we are spared of the difficulties that we face for want of good road.

Secy Health reviews action plan regarding strengthening of DHs, CHCs

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Secretary, Health and Medical Education, Bhupinder Kumar, Friday chaired a meeting to discuss the action plan regarding strengthening District Hospitals and Community Health Centres as per Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS) 2022 besides reviewing the status of branding of Health Wellness Centers.

Pertinently, IPHS is a set of standards that provide a uniform benchmark to assess the quality and functionality of public health facilities and was first framed in 2007 and then revised in 2012 and 2022. These standards provide guidance on the infrastructure, human resource, drugs, diagnostics, equipment, quality and governance requirements for delivering quality health services to the citizens with dignity and respect.

In an effort to improve the quality of services, National Health Mission J&K in collaboration with Norway India Partnership Initiative (NIPI) has taken up the initiative to conduct rapid baseline assessment of all DHs and CHCs as per IPHS 2022.

Secretary discussed various interventions with the stakeholders present in the meeting for filling the identified gaps in various areas at the earliest so as to make these hospitals IPHS compliant. He directed both the Directors of Health Department to appoint Nodal Officers who shall prioritise the

health facilities for making them IPHS compliant in shortest possible time. They shall also work out the financial implications for the same, so that proposals as per the actual gaps are included in annual plan in a phased manner, he added.

Secretary asked the concerned to take up implementation of Quality Assurance and service provision domains of IPHS guidelines 2022 in the first phase. He directed them that regular follow up meetings should be conducted to prepare and implement the time bound facility wise action plans for filling the gaps so that all the DHs/ CHCs are prepared for achieving various quality certifications like NQAS, LaQshya, MusQan and Kayakalp besides improving the quality of service provision in the identified health facilities for larger public good.

Bhupinder Kumar also reviewed the status of branding of Health & Wellness Centres. He asked the Chief Medical Officers to complete facade branding of all the HWCs by 20th of this month.

Earlier, Mission Director, National Health Mission, Ayushi Sudan, briefed the Secretary regarding main agenda points of the meeting. This was followed by detailed presentation by State Program Manager NIPI J&K on the findings of baseline assessment of CHCs and action plan for their strengthening along with the action taken report of findings of assessment of District Hospitals.

Secretary interacts with Tourism stakeholders of Jammu

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Secretary, Tourism, Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah Friday held an interactive meeting with various Tourism Stakeholders of Jammu division to review the current scenario and chalk out the strategy for upcoming publicity, promotional and developmental campaign for this year.

During the interaction, the Secretary complimented the service providers for their support and cooperation in achieving a brisk tourism season last year and urged them to come forward with their ideas for promotion of tourism in the region. He sought their support in maintaining the tempo of tourist arrivals in the coming days as well.

Speaking on different initiatives of government for tourism promotion, Dr. Abid highlighted that the Government has already notified Homestay guidelines and asked the stakeholders to popularize these among the fraternity. He added that in coming months, the department has planned various promotional activities to sustain and improve the tourist footfall to J&K.

Elaborating on the upcoming programme, the Secretary highlighted that vibrant and colourful festivals at Bani Basohli, Baderwah, Patnitop, as well as other places are being planned to attract maximum tourists towards the region.

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SATURDAY, 13 MAY 2023

Movies Watchlist

<p>IB 71 FROM THE DIRECTOR OF GHAZI ATTACK</p>  <p>10:20AM, 2:15PM, 6:45PM (Hindi)</p> <p>U/A</p>	<p>A WINTER TALE AT SHIMLA</p>  <p>11:30AM (Hindi)</p> <p>A</p>	<p>GUARDIANS OF THE GALAXY VOL 3</p>  <p>12:00PM, 3:00PM, 6:15PM (3D Eng Atmos) With Eng Subtitles</p> <p>U/A</p>	<p>KISI KA BHAI KISI KI JAAN</p>  <p>12:45PM, 3:40PM (Hindi)</p> <p>U/A</p>	<p>JOHN WICK 4</p>  <p>4:45PM (English)</p> <p>A</p>
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