



Empowering Tribals, Transforming J&K

Historic Step for Inclusive Development

Communities getting benefits of ST reservation

- Balti
- Bot, Boto
- Brokpa, Drokpa, Dard, Shin
- Changpa
- Mon
- Gujjar
- Gaddi
- Beda
- Garra
- Purigpa
- Bakarwal
- Sippi

Additional Communities who will get benefits of ST reservation

- Pahari Ethnic Group
- Paddari Tribe
- Koli
- Gadda Brahmin

- Based on **SEBC Commission** Recommendations
- **Additional & proportionate** reservation will be provided separately for above communities



Existing Communities including Gujjar Bakarwal will continue to get the 10% reservation and there will be no reduction in it

Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas, Sabka Prayas

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

Good Morning Kashmir

15th Year Of Publication

Office of LG J&K @OfficeOfLGJandK



I am proud of Police & Security Forces. I bow to their magnificent heroism and selfless sacrifice to safeguard country's integrity and sovereignty.

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Snow Clearance Underway On Sgr-Leh Highway



GANDERBAL: Snow clearance operation is in full swing at the Zojjila Pass after snowfall blocked the Srinagar-Leh Highway road. Heavy machinery has been pressed into service in collaboration with the Border Roads Organization. Another significant **•P-06**

J&K, Army Share Special Relation: Dwivedi



JAMMU: The Jammu Kashmir Police and Army share a special relation because not only they work together but they sweat together and bleed together, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Northern Command, Lieutenant General Upenra Dwivedi, PVSM, AVSM, at his farewell function organised at Police Headquarters here on Thursday. The function hosted **•P-06**

Parliament Approves Appropriation Bills For J&K



GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: The Parliament considered the Revised Estimates for 2023-24 and Interim Budget 2024-25 of Government of Jammu and Kashmir starting from Tuesday. The two Appropriation Bills on the Supplementary Budget for 2023-24 and Vote on Account for 2024-25 were placed by Union Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman on 5th February, 2024.

The ongoing efforts of the UT Government were also appreciated by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Tuesday. Chief Secretary, Atal Dulloo, Principal Secretary Finance Santosh Vaidya and Secretary Planning Mohammad Aijaz represented Jammu and Kashmir before the Committee. This effort highlighted the developmental initiatives of the UT government before the Parliamentary Standing Committee.

The Lok Sabha considered the Bills on 6th and 7th February and passed both the Bills on Wednesday. After seeking approval of the President of India, these Bills were then considered by the Rajya Sabha which approved them on Thursday.

The Finance Department of the UT Government had drafted both the Bills for the Supplementary Budget for the current year and the Interim Budget for the next financial year. For this, the Department had assessed the revenue receipts of the UT Government from GST, motor spirit tax, excise, and stamp duty. Further, the non-tax revenue from electricity and water supply, mining royalty, timber **•P-06**

Srinagar Terror Attack Marches, Protests In Kashmir To Condemn Civilian Killings By Terrorists

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Protest demonstrations and candlelight marches were held on Thursday in Kupwara, Baramulla and Bandipora districts in north Kashmir and Shopian district in the south against the killing of two non-local civilians in the capital city on Wednesday by terrorists.

As per an official, a demonstration was held in Main town Baramulla which saw participation of hundreds of general public of the district.

Scores of people gathered near Kiryapa Park in Baramulla to hold a candlelight vigil denouncing the killings of two non-local civilians.

The peaceful protest, attended by traders, transporters, and civil society members of Baramulla, was held in response to the innocent killing of two non-locals in Srinagar.



The protesters termed the killings of the duo as a collective loss to society and an attack on the communal harmony of Jammu and Kashmir.

Omar Kakroo, former President of the Municipal Council (MC) Baramulla, denounced the killings of civilians, stating killing any innocent civilian is a highly condemnable act and no religion on earth teaches such actions.

"We stand in solidarity with the families of the non-local civilians killed in Srinagar yesterday. It's our collective loss. Innocent killings have no place in our society," he said.

He appealed to the DGP RR Swain to enhance the process of apprehending the perpetrators behind these barbaric killings. "As a civil society, we oppose the killing of innocent civilians that occurred in Srinagar and this gathering is a message to the perpetrators that their wicked tactics won't damage the communal harmony of Jammu and Kashmir," he added.

Ishfaq Ahmad, a trader who was part of **•P-06**

Injured Punjab Resident Succumbs, Toll Two

SRINAGAR: The death toll in Shaheed

Gunj, Srinagar terrorist attack on Thursday reached two as the injured civilian, hailing from Amritsar, succumbed to his injuries at the hospital here, officials said.

Pertinently, two non-locals identified as Amritpal Singh (31) and Rohit (27), both hailing from Amritsar, Punjab were fired upon by the terrorists in Shaheed Gunj, resulting in on

spot death of Amritpal and injuries to Rohit, who was evacuated to hospital, where he succumbed to his injuries this morning. As per the details available, both the **•P-06**

Shab-e-Me'raj Observed Dargah Reverberates With Durood On Shab-e-Me'raj



SRINAGAR: Thousands of devotees from all over Kashmir converged at the revered shrine Hazratbal in Srinagar to have the glimpse of the holy relic of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) on the occasion of Mehraj-e-Alam (SAW) on Thursday. Mehraj-e-Alam (SAW) was celebrated with great religious fervour across J&K. From Wednesday evening, thousands of devotees from far off places of Kashmir reached the Hazratbal shrine to be part of the night-long gathering. **•P-06**

Farm-Level Diversifications J&K Has Diverse Agro-Climatic Zones: LG

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Thursday said that Jammu and Kashmir UT has diverse agro-climatic zones which provide ample scope of adopting farm-level diversifications.

"J&K has diverse agro-climatic zones which provide ample scope of adopting farm level diversifications. With this scientific solution, we can mitigate the impact of climate change and will be able to generate higher farm revenue from the same piece of land," the Lt Governor said while addressing the inaugural session of the 6th J&K Agricultural Science Congress on "Diversification of Agriculture for Self-Reliant Mountain Agro-Ecology" at SKUAST Jammu.

The Lt Governor welcomed the eminent scientists and researchers from across the country in the three-day conference. He said the exchange of ideas and discussions among **•P-06**

Money Laundering Case ED Arrests Kupwara Resident

SRINAGAR: The Enforcement Directorate has arrested a Kupwara resident in money laundering case linked to admissions of Jammu and Kashmir students in MBBS and other courses in Pakistan.

In a post on X, ED arrested Mohammad Abdullah Shah, a resident of Kupwara under the provisions of PMLA, 2002 in connection with money laundering case. It said that the was linked to accused persons involved in terror financing who were hand in glove with Pakistani handler Manzoor Ahmad Shah, who arranged admissions in MBBS & other courses in the colleges of Pakistan for students from J&K.

The Central agency said that Mohammad Abdullah Shah was produced before the court of the Special Judge ACB (CBI-Cases) Kashmir. "The court has granted ED custody till February 13," it said—(KNO)

Laced With NDPS Act Police Goes Tough Against Drug Dealers In J&K

MUBASHIR AALAM WANI

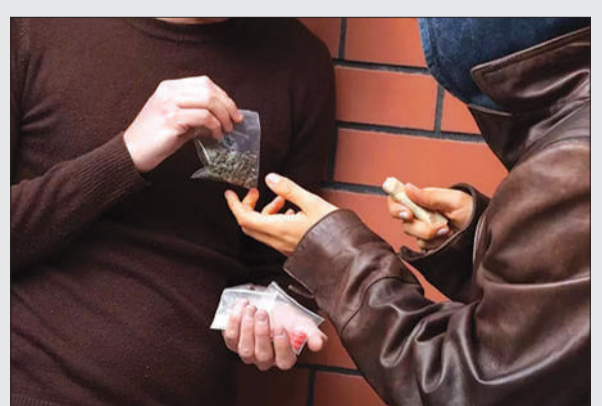
SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir police has tightened its noose on the drug peddlers by booking the big sharks under Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) act as it has seized movable and immovable properties of those involved in drug trade besides freezing a large amount of cash. The police move has evoked a great response from all sections of the society with people hailing the move widely.

Figures available suggest that 15 vehicles and gold coins worth Rs 10.66 lakh were recovered and seized in 2023. "Of this, four vehicles were seized from the Jammu region with cash worth Rs 28.10 lakh was also frozen," the figures reveal.

Similarly, while continuing its war against narcotics, seven houses and 21.5 malras of land was seized in Kashmir where Rs 238 lakh were also frozen. "Anti-Narcotics Task Force (ANTF) also seized one house and four malras of land in Kashmir last year," the figures reveal.

In total, 15 vehicles and gold coins worth Rs 10.66 lakh were seized under NDPS in 2023 besides eight houses and 21.9 malras land also attached under NDPS. "In total, cash worth Rs 296 lakh were recovered and frozen," the figures reveal.

A senior police official said that along with the NDPS, police are acting tough against big fish involved in supplying and distributing drugs among youth in J&K. "Special police teams have been constituted to crack **•P-06**



Process Begins To Procure 25 More E-Buses

MUBASHIR ALAM WANI

SRINAGAR: With the increasing demand, the authorities have started the process to procure additional 25 electric buses for Srinagar while the officials stated that some among them have already reached Jammu.

Pertinently, the administration had announced the procurement of 200 e-buses, 100 each for Srinagar and Jammu cities. However, only 75 have been introduced so far while a process to introduce more 25 e-buses has been started.

Chief Engineer, Srinagar Smart City Limited (SSCL), Er. Abdul Qayoom Kirmani said that out of the initial target of 100 e-buses, only 75 e-buses are presently operational **•P-06**



INOX CINEMA SHIVPORA SRINAGAR

MOVIES List & Timings Friday 09 Feb



FIGHTER (HINDI)
02:30 PM (U/A)



TERI BAATON MEIN AISA ULJHA JIYA (HINDI)
03:30PM, 06:30PM (ATMOS)
07:30PM (U/A)



MOHABBATEIN (HINDI)
03:00PM (U)



ANIMAL (HINDI)
06:00PM (A)

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Good Morning **Kashmir**

EDITORIAL

Skyrocketing Airfares

The snowfall came as a blessing. The highland ski resort of Gulmarg witnessed massive snowfall and at the first phase of Gondola ropeway, it is being reported that many feet of snow has accumulated. Good snowfall has also been reported from south Kashmir as well. There is a wave of joy in the general public as this snowfall was much awaited. However, this snowfall has led to a surge in the airfare to Kashmir. There is over-tourism in the air as the tourists who had cancelled their tours earlier are now rebooking in bulk. Since these airlines work on the cruel supply-demand analysis a higher demand means a steep surge in air fares. The airfares currently are so high that one really needs to have the proverbial deep pockets to reach Srinagar in an airline. Some time back there was this talk of moderating airfares and putting an upper circuit/bar on the prices but all these considerations seem to have gone for a toss. There are Kashmiri families literally stranded in Delhi, Mumbai, Bengaluru and Hyderabad who had gone to spend winter with their relatives. They now want to return as the harshest part of the winter is over because of the soaring airfares. A majority of these families have one or two elderly or sick members and do not want to risk the prospect of travelling through the Srinagar-Jammu Highway. At the same time, they cannot travel through air because they cannot afford it.

The airlines have been minting money on the Delhi-Srinagar route for a long time. These are all the more reasons that many in Kashmir are keenly waiting for the rail network to start on the Udhampur-Baramulla stretch. Let this be the last season that Kashmiris have to risk either their lives on the risky Srinagar-Jammu Highway or a substantial chunk of their income by travelling in an airline. The soaring airline fares need to be checked at the earliest. The government must strictly ask the airlines to adhere to the regulatory orders and charge nothing above the permissible cap. The passengers cannot be left at the whim and fancy of these airlines. May the train start chugging soon!

Emerging **Trend**

Surge In Progressive Heart Failure Among Youth



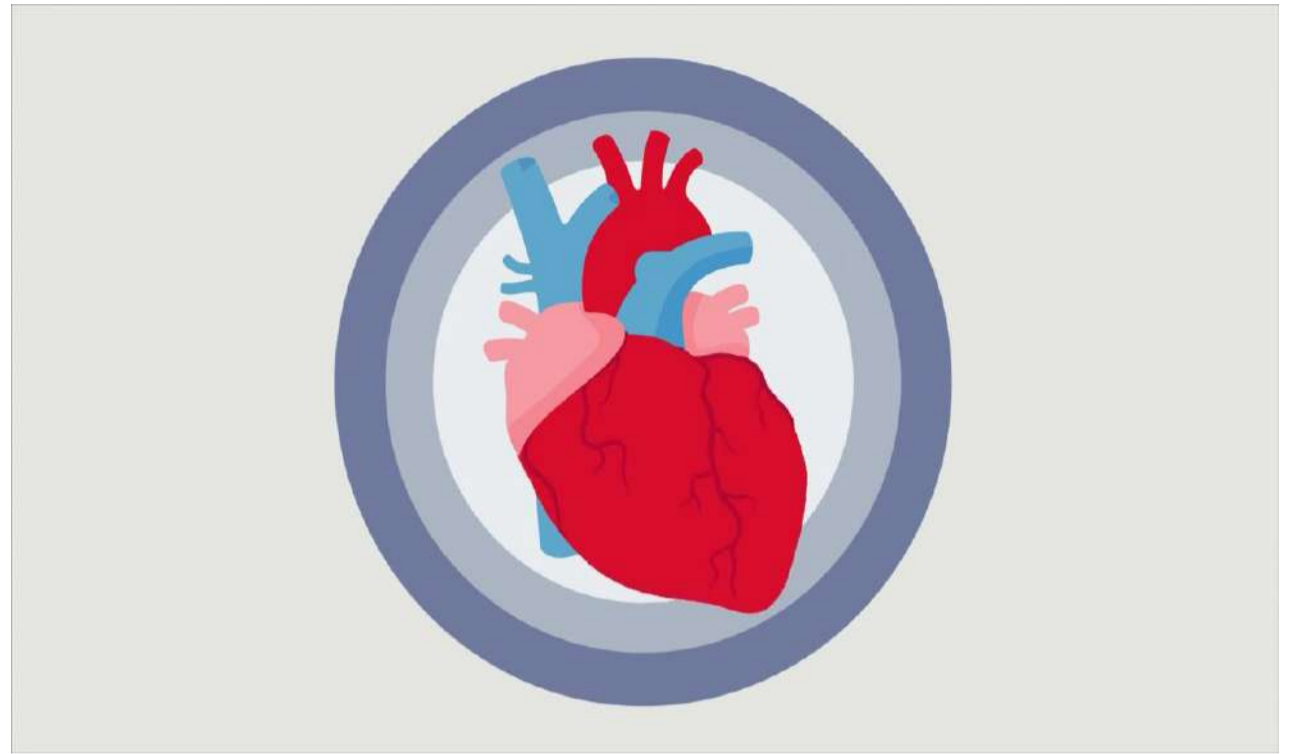
DR PANKAJ RANJAN

Cardiac ailments have swiftly risen to prominence as the leading cause of mortality in India and globally, claiming the lives of approximately 1 in 5 men and 1 in 8 women, according to reports from the World Health Organization (WHO). This surge is primarily attributed to the accumulation of fatty substances in the arteries, causing a blockade in the heart's blood supply—a condition exacerbated by lifestyle factors such as smoking, obesity, high cholesterol, elevated blood pressure, and diabetes.

In a noteworthy departure from the conventional association of heart attacks with old age, an alarming trend has surfaced, with an increasing number of individuals in their 20s, 30s, and 40s grappling with heart-related ailments. The escalating stress levels inherent in modern life have exposed even the younger demographic to the perils of heart diseases. While genetic predisposition and family history remain uncontrollable risk factors, the majority of heart diseases among the youth are linked to excessive stress, prolonged working hours, erratic sleep patterns, smoking, and a sedentary lifestyle, all of which contribute to inflammation and escalate the risk of heart-related issues.

Startling statistics reveal that every day witnesses approximately 9,000 fatalities due to heart ailments, translating to one life lost every 10 seconds. Alarmingly, 900 of these casualties belong to the youth demographic, those below 40 years of age. Urgent and widespread education is crucial to stave off the impending epidemic of heart diseases in India, lest it becomes the leading cause of mortality by 2020.

While cardiac hospitals in India perform over 200,000 open-heart surgeries annually, witnessing a 25%



annual increase, these interventions are merely palliative measures. The key to mitigating the prevalence of heart attacks lies in comprehensive public education about heart diseases and their risk factors.

Recognizing the Symptoms: Symptoms of coronary heart disease (CHD) can vary widely, with angina chest pain being a common feature. Ranging from mild discomfort to severe pain, individuals may experience sensations akin to indigestion or intense pain, heaviness, or tightness. Pain typically centers in the chest and may radiate to the arms, neck, jaw, or stomach, accompanied by palpitations and abnormal breathlessness.

Prognosis and Diagnostic Measures: Early assessment of a suspected CHD patient involves a comprehensive examination of medical and family history, lifestyle evaluation, and blood tests. Confirmatory diagnostic tests include non-invasive procedures such as electrocardiogram (ECG), X-ray, treadmill test (TMT), cardiovascular cartography, CT angiography, and invasive coronary

angiography.

Management of Heart Ailments: Although coronary heart disease cannot be cured, effective management involves a multifaceted approach encompassing lifestyle changes, medications, and non-invasive treatments. Severe cases may necessitate invasive and surgical interventions. Lifestyle modifications, including a balanced diet, regular exercise, abstinence from smoking, and control of blood cholesterol and sugar levels, significantly reduce the risk of CHD, stroke, and dementia.

Treatment Options: Various medications are employed to treat CHD, targeting cholesterol, high blood pressure, and diabetes. While these medications are generally effective, periodic blood tests are recommended due to potential side effects. Advancements in medical science have led to less invasive surgical methods, such as Coronary Artery Bypass Grafting (CABG), valve replacement surgeries, Minimally Invasive Direct Coronary Artery Bypass Grafting (MIDCAB), Thoracic surgeries with VATS, and management of heart and

lung failure using Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation (ECMO).

Cardiac Resynchronization Therapy (CRT) plays a crucial role in managing progressive heart failure by synchronizing the contractions of the heart's chambers. This innovative treatment involves implanting a device that coordinates the heart's rhythm, enhancing its efficiency and alleviating symptoms. CRT significantly improves the quality of life for individuals facing advanced heart failure.

Demystifying Heart Failure: Contrary to its ominous name, heart failure can be managed effectively with improved care and diagnosis. Prevention revolves around avoiding lifestyle and dietary habits that contribute to obesity, diabetes, and high blood pressure. A healthy lifestyle remains the simplest and most effective means of warding off heart failure and ensuring optimal heart function.

Author is HOD & Senior Consultant, Cardiac Sciences, Yatharth Super Speciality Hospital, Greater Noida

Unforgettable Persona Of Peetkak From Habbakadal



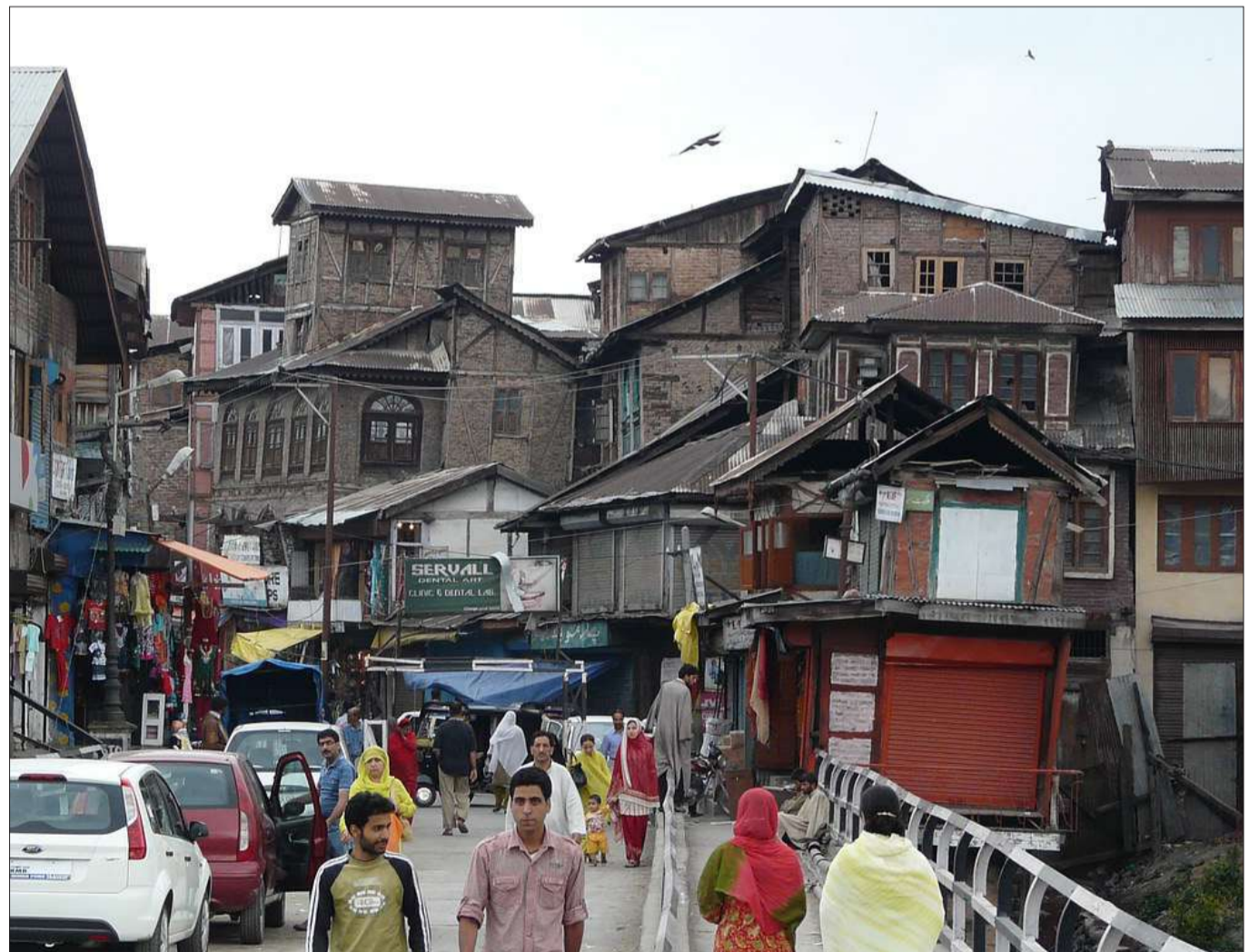
DR. S. K. RAINA

In the heart of Srinagar, Kashmir, amidst the bustling streets and the timeless flow of Habbakadal Bridge, there existed an unforgettable persona known to all – Peetkak, the betel nut/leaf seller. The early Sixties marked an era where Peetkak's ageless charm and distinctive presence left an indelible mark on the memories of those fortunate enough to witness his captivating personality.

Peetkak's small shop, nestled beside Zind Panwala's, was a cultural hub for the locals. The desire to listen to Radio Ceylon's Binaca Geetmala and cricket match commentaries on the radio, placed strategically in Peetkak's shop, drew people from both sides of the bridge. In a time when owning a radio was a luxury, Peetkak's shop became the gateway to entertainment for the entertainment lovers.

Standing tall and robust, Peetkak's face was adorned with a prominent tilak in the center of his forehead, adding to his distinctive allure. Patrons and admirers often noted the discreet cup of red wine by his side, cleverly concealed from the view of customers. Sipping at intervals, Peetkak maintained a cheerful temperament, smoothly engaging with his clientele.

Habbakadal Chawk bore witness to Peetkak's charisma, a result of his wit and audacity. His shop, strategically placed near the bookstores of Mr. Kapoor and Ali Muhammad, became a central point in the



fortress of Srinagar city. The Habbakadal area, where my ancestral home was situated near Purushyar Mohalla, was enriched by the presence of Peetkak and his unique shop.

Peetkak's close familiarity with his customers set him apart. He remembered their preferences and adeptly presented them with their preferred Pan or betel leaf. His shop, almost an extension of his personality, became a haven for those seeking not only betel leaves but also a sense of connection and amity.

Those were the days when amidst the peace in the valley, attempts to disrupt social harmony by anti-social and destructive elements were ongoing. Peetkak, with a touch of wisdom, would often express his concern about the daily closures, curfews, protests, and demonstrations in the city. He would often say to me, "Get out of here, or you'll end up selling betel leaves all your life like me."

As time marches on, the memories of Peetkak resurface up, bringing with them a sense

of nostalgia and reflection. Today, I find myself pondering over whether he still exists in this world and also, I begin to understand the profound wisdom in Peetkak's words. As a matter of fact, fate or destiny significantly shapes our future, influencing our career and life's path. My journey led me from Kashmir to Kurukshetra University, then to the historic land of Rajasthan and ultimately to Dubai, a dreamland of fascination and magnificence. The unknown possibilities that lie ahead always

continue to intrigue.

Peetkak remains a vivid thread, intricately woven into the fabric of a bygone era in the old-fashioned lanes of Habbakadal. His unforgettable presence leaves an indelible mark on the memories of those who were fortunate enough to witness the timeless charisma of this Panwala/betel-leaf seller.

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

Tobacco **Epidemic**

Reducing Tobacco Use And Access



SHOBHA SHUKLA

Currently the intergovernmental talks on the legally binding global tobacco treaty are taking place in Panama. This meeting, formally called the tenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP10) to the World Health Organization Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (WHO FCTC), has delegates from 183 countries representing more than 90% of the world's population, to review progress in the implementation of the global tobacco treaty, and take the next steps to help achieve the right of all people to lead healthy lives.

Daniel Dorado, Tobacco Campaign Director at Corporate Accountability rightly says that these talks are a critical venue to advance the global campaign to hold Big Tobacco accountable and liable for its deadly products. He informs that over 30,000 signatures have been delivered onsite to government delegates attending the tobacco treaty talks showing the broad support from people around the globe to make Big Tobacco pay for its deadly products.

The global tobacco treaty (WHO FCTC) is the first-ever public health and corporate accountability treaty of the WHO. If implemented fully it will protect human and environmental health. It plays a pivotal role in saving lives even as the tobacco industry comes up with newer tactics to entice new consumers and mint more profits.

Article 5.3 of the FCTC acknowledges the inherent conflict between the industry and public health policy. It calls to "Protect public health policies from commercial and other vested interests of the tobacco industry." It prohibits the tobacco industry from having any role in policy-making. However, Big Tobacco still interferes with the treaty, year after year, to protect its profits. The tobacco industry is always present in the spaces in which the governments are trying to regulate it.

Asian Tobacco Industry Interference Index

The Asian Tobacco Industry Interference Index 2023 published by the Southeast Asia Tobacco Control Alliance (SEATCA) measure the compliance of Article 5.3 in 19 Asian countries on a score of 0 to 100. The higher the score, the worst is the country's performance.

Japan has the strongest tobacco industry interference (score is 88), followed closely by Indonesia (80), Malaysia (76), China (73), Bangladesh (72) and Lao PDR (70). In contrast, the governments of Brunei with a score of 14 and Mongolia (score of 38) emerge as leaders in their ongoing efforts to combat tobacco industry interference.

Brunei, Lao PDR, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, India and Thailand have enforced prohibitions on the tobacco industry's corporate



social responsibility (CSR) activities.

In Brunei and Lao PDR, stringent regulations are in place to prevent engagement with the tobacco industry.

However, despite these prohibitions, government endorsements of them have been recorded in India, Myanmar, and Thailand during the monitoring period of the Index. In India, significant amounts of CSR contributions by tobacco companies continue to occur, particularly in the areas of agriculture and livelihood. During the COVID-19 pandemic, tobacco companies increased their CSR contributions.

In Myanmar, JTI continues its initiative to provide drinking water for refugees.

In Thailand, the Tobacco Authority of Thailand organized the "See, Taste, Shop Chiang Rai Tobacco" project for Chiang Rai residents, facilitating agricultural product trading.

In Indonesia, CSR activities are encouraged under national laws. While there is a restriction of tobacco industry sponsorships, it is weakly enforced.

Tobacco industry CSR is not banned and remains a big problem in Cambodia, Malaysia, Philippines, and Vietnam. In Cambodia, the industry engaged in various COVID-19 relief efforts, including providing alcohol dispensers and banners to the Ministry of Justice, distributing food packages in lockdown areas, and donating disinfection supplies to provincial administration.

With the exception of Brunei, which has prohibited duty-free tobacco products, all countries surveyed still permit duty-free allowances for international travelers. This practice undermines the effectiveness of tobacco taxation, and promotes and normalizes tobacco use.

The good news

Some countries are taking preventive measures. Ten countries,

namely Brunei, India, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Maldives, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, the Philippines, and Thailand, have proactively introduced policy measures aimed at safeguarding the bureaucracy or a specific ministry or department from undue interference by the tobacco industry.

Policies for disclosing records of interactions with the tobacco industry and its representatives are in place in countries such as Brunei, India, Maldives, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. Nepal is also in the process of drafting such a policy. However, the effectiveness of these policies is hindered by the fact that governments do not disclose or make information from these interactions available to the general public.

SEATCA calls upon all governments to fortify their commitment to the implementation of Article 5.3 for the effective realisation of tobacco control measures. 'It is crucial to ensure the protection of public health policy against the efforts and influence of the tobacco industry, as the success of the industry is diametrically opposed to the safeguarding of public health and sustainability by nature.'

African Tobacco Industry Interference Index

During a recent media briefing hosted by the Network for Accountability of Tobacco Transnationals (NATT), just ahead of COP10 to WHO FCTC, Labram Musah, Executive Director, Vision for Alternative Development (Ghana) shared the findings of the African Tobacco Industry Interference Index 2023 for the 18 countries of the AFRO WHO region.

This index is 'a critical assessment tool to scrutinize and quantify the various forms of interference perpetrated by the tobacco industry in public health policymaking'. It focuses on how the tobacco industry participates in policy development, the industry's CSR activities, benefits

accorded to the tobacco industry by governments, as well as unnecessary interactions that occur between government officials and the tobacco industry that could facilitate policy interference. The index also sheds light on the level of implementation of preventive measures as recommended by the WHO FCTC.

Musah shared specific examples of tobacco industry participation in policy development in Cameroon and Mozambique; unnecessary interactions between the government and the tobacco industry in Nigeria; and CSR activities by the industry in Lagos, Ghana and Madagascar.

The index shows that African governments do not adequately address conflict of interest situations and current and former public officials continue to work for and in the interest of the tobacco industry.

As per the index findings, Zambia, Tanzania and Mozambique continue to have the highest level of tobacco industry interference from 2020-2023 in almost all indicators.

However, there have been some positive improvements in increasing tobacco taxes in Ghana, Mauritius, South Africa and Nigeria.

In 2023, Mauritius became the first African country to introduce plain tobacco packaging and received the acknowledgement of being the first in Africa to adopt the WHO full-scale tobacco control measures along with the Netherlands, Brazil, and Turkey.

It is very important to denormalize and ban the industry's CSR activities, fast-track the passing of pending tobacco control laws, maintaining a strong stance against tobacco industry interference, and encourage and empower civil society to act as watch dogs, says Musah.

Hold governments accountable

Dr Tara Singh Bam, Board Director, Asia Pacific Cities Alliance for Health and Development and Regional Director for Asia Pacific of the Inter-

national Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (The Union) says it is high time to build government's accountability to ensure implementation of WHO FCTC.

"It is the government's role to ensure there is accountability, and at COP10 to WHO FCTC, the governments are there to discuss the implementation of the global tobacco treaty. We see governments are part of the solution, but they can also be part of the problem. On one hand, they are part of the FCTC, and on the other hand, they are partners with the tobacco industry because they see the tobacco industry as having benefits - contributions to political campaigns for example. The tobacco industry is not part of the solution, they are the problem," he said.

Let us hope that the decisions made by the delegates at COP10 from the countries that have ratified the WHO FCTC, will further protect people around the world from the devastating health, social, economic and environmental consequences of tobacco consumption and exposure to tobacco smoke, as well as help to eliminate all forms of illicit trade in tobacco products.

And to make the most out of this moment all of us have to put as much public pressure on the decision-makers to move forward in the right direction.

Shobha Shukla is the award-winning founding Managing Editor and Executive Director of Citizen News Service and is a feminist, health, and development justice advocate. She is a former senior Physics faculty of the prestigious Loreto Convent College and current Coordinator of the Asia Pacific Regional Media Alliance for Health and Development (APCAT Media) and Global AMR Media Alliance (GAMA). Follow her on Twitter @shobhaishukla or read her writings here www.bit.ly/ShobhaShukla



30 space missions planned from India in next 14 months



CHENNAI: A total of 30 space launches -- commercial and non-commercial by government and private players -- are being planned from India over the next 14 months from the Indian spaceport in Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh, the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) said on Thursday.

Included in the proposed missions are the test flights relating to India's human space mission, Gaganyaan. This was stated by IN-SPACe, the regulator for the private sector in the space industry, in its integrated launch manifesto using Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) infrastructure.

"About 30 launches are planned for 2023-24 (Q4) and 2024-25 from SDSC (Satish Dhawan Space Centre) half of which are catering to the commercial space sector of India with the rest being user-funded, scientific missions or technology test launches," IN-SPACe said.

According to IN-SPACe, out of the 14 commercial missions identified, seven launches are being undertaken by NewSpace India Ltd -- the commercial arm of Department of Space -- including the realisation of two Polar Satellite Launch Vehicles (PSLV) from the L&T-HAL consortium.

This marks a substantial increase in launch activity compared to previous years and is a positive indicator of the expanding

space ecosystem in the country. This initiative aligns with the directives of the recently-ratified Indian Space Policy, entrusting IN-SPACe with authorisation of launch manifesto for launch-infrastructure created through public expenditure.

The launch manifesto comprehensively covers user-funded, scientific missions and other technology demonstration launches by ISRO along with the commercial launches and associated primary and co-sharing passengers.

"The Integrated Launch Manifesto is in line with Department of Space's vision on optimising resources and encouraging innovation to establish India as a global manu-

facturing hub for space activities, aligning with the vision of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' (Self-Reliant India)," IN-SPACe said.

The key private sector rocket missions include planned Sub-Orbital and Orbital launches by Agnikul Cosmos and Skyroot Aerospace.

Few of the private sector satellites that would be flown are from Digantara Research & Technology, Dhruvaspace, Space Kidz India and academic institutes like IIT-Madras, Manipal Institute of Technology and C.V. Raman Global University Odisha, IN-SPACe said. However, IN-SPACe will make every effort to accommodate any additional requirement of private players during this period.

BJP govt in R'sthn announces 70,000 jobs for youth

JAIPUR: Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister and finance minister Diya Kumari on Thursday presented the interim budget in the Assembly in which 70,000 new recruitments for the youth, Gopal Credit Card Scheme for farmers and loans to 5 lakh cowherds, expansion of Metro in Jaipur and solar plants installation in 5 lakh houses of Rajasthan were announced.

The Finance Minister said that a provision of Rs 1500 crore is being made for the development of roads in the state. She said that as a result of the wrong policies of the previous government, we have inherited a huge debt.

The debt has doubled to more than Rs 5 lakh crore. The opposition created a ruckus during the budget speech, alleging that the Finance Minister was

making allegations and counter-allegations instead of the budget speech. However, the Chief Minister said that a woman was reading the budget, and she should be encouraged.

A few of the ambitious announcements in the budget include a Project Monitoring Unit for the Pradhan Mantri Suryodaya Yojana, A target of more than 5 lakh solar plants has been proposed and 500 electric buses for cities like Jaipur, Jodhpur, Udaipur, Kota along with inter-state routes.

The DPR for the extension of the Jaipur Metro alongwith Tonk Road, Sitapura, Ambabari upto Vidhyadhar Nagar has been announced to free the city from traffic congestion.

Diya Kumari said that the Gopal Credit Card Scheme will be started for farmers and loans will be given to 5 lakh cowherds.

Under the Gopal Credit

Card Scheme, an interest free short term loan of upto Rs. 1 lakh and a loan for 5 lakh Gopalak families in the first phase has been announced. An expenditure of Rs. 150 crore will be incurred on this.

Kinder Garten to Post Graduate free education has been announced for the students belonging to low income group families, small/marginal/bataidar farmers/ farm labourers.

Also, a high tech city near Jaipur has been announced with world class facilities.

The finance minister announced a Lado Pratsahan Yojana in which a saving bond of Rs. 1,00,000 will be issued on the birth of a girl in poor families.

The deputy CM announced a Lakhpati Didi Yojana for the economic empowerment of women. This will benefit 5 lakh families with an annual

income of Rs. 1 lakh.

She also announced the Mission Olympics 2028 under which world class sports facilities will be provided to 50 talented youths, A Centre of Excellence for Sports has been announced in Jaipur with a provision of Rs. 100 crore.

For the timely conduct of recruitment exams an annual calendar of recruitment examinations by RPSC and the Rajasthan Staff Selection Board etc has been announced.

Diya Kumari further announced that sugar and jaggery will be exempted from mandiffee. There will be no land tax imposed now on. All previous demands will be waived off on payment of 10% of the tax demand. She also announced the formation of a Maharana Pratap Tourist Circuit in which places related to Maharana Pratap including Chawand-Haldighati and others will be developed.

Women officers represent India at Riyadh Defence show

NEW DELHI: Indian women from the Tri-Service were representing the country at the World Defence Show (WDS), currently being held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

WDS 2024 witnessed Tri-Service women representation, a testament to Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led government's vision of leveraging Nari Shakti across domains.

The Ministry of Defence (MoD) said that Squadron Leader Bhawana Kanth, Colonel Ponung Doming and Lieutenant Commander Annu Prakash represented the Armed Forces in the various seminars of the WDS 2024, especially in the International Women in Defence themed events.

On February 7, Squadron Leader Bhawana Kanth, a fighter pilot from the Indian Air Force, took centre stage as a panelist at the seminar titled 'International Women in Defence - Investing in an Inclusive Future', hosted by Saudi Ambassador to the US Princess Reema bint Bandar Al-Saud.



The Squadron Leader shared her inspiring journey of breaking barriers and soaring through the skies, thus becoming a part of the revered fighter pilot club in India. Her insights on leadership, resilience and the evolving role of women in modern warfare resonated with the diverse audience, who were impressed to know about her journey. She is the first woman fighter pilot to take part in the Republic Day Parade (2021). She also participated in the Republic Day 2024 Flypast,

officials added. Colonel Ponung Doming from the Indian Army is the first woman officer to command the world's highest Border Task Force located above 15,000 feet in the Northern sector with multiple firsts to her credit in over 20 years of service. She has been at the forefront of many challenging assignments being an Engineering officer, the MoD added.

Lieutenant Commander Annu Prakash of the Indian Navy brought her expertise in maritime

security and operations to the forefront. Her participation underscored the crucial role women play in safeguarding India's vast coastline and ensuring regional stability. Her presence at the event helped in fostering stronger ties and collaboration between India and other nations in the maritime domain, said the MoD.

The Ministry of Defence said that participation of these three exceptional women officers at the WDS 2024 served as a testament to the growing role of Indian women in the defence landscape. The trio will deliver an inspirational talk about their remarkable journey at International Indian School, Riyadh on Thursday to about 600 school children from various schools.

The event will serve as a platform in showcasing the diverse talents and leadership skills of Indian women in uniform, inspiring future generations to follow their dreams and cover new grounds.

The WDS 2024, commenced on February 4 and will culminate on Thursday.

Yogi govt to foster skill development in ITI, Polytechnics



LUCKNOW: The Uttar Pradesh government is now focussing on the operations of 47 ITI and Polytechnic institutes across the state, while also enhancing the training processes for the students.

The Directorate of Training and Employment (Training Block) has taken a decisive step to engage private companies in the operation of ITI and Polytechnic institutes spread across various districts of Uttar Pradesh.

Their role will be crucial in ensuring the seamless implementation of training and skill development programs for the trainees.

The selection process for these agencies is being conducted based on the Private Sector Partnership (PSP) module.

Upon completion of this process, it will pave the way for smoothly carrying forward all the educational processes and activities including short-term vocational courses in all these ITI and Polytechnic institutes.

The government spokesman said that the process of identifying suitable agencies to advance education and training pro-

grammes through the implementation of the PSP module has begun.

Under this procedure, the PSP will cover the payment of employees essential for the proper functioning of these institutions, along with expenses related to consumables, electricity, maintenance, and all taxes and levies associated with fixed assets (land and buildings).

In addition, these agencies will operate ITIs in two shifts, while polytechnics will operate in a single shift every day. Additionally, alongside infrastructure development in terms of land and buildings for ITIs and Polytechnics, it will be necessary to develop the management system as well.

The selected 47 ITIs and polytechnic institutions operating through the PSP module will ensure compliance with the standards of NCVT and AICTE guidelines.

If required, the process of making changes and acquiring equipment for conducting short-term curriculum and other educational activities in ITIs and Polytechnics will also be completed. A website will be established for rules, policies, and information related to management, operation, and performance.

We freed UP from the status of BIMARU state: Yogi



LUCKNOW: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, on Thursday, said that labelling UP as BIMARU state was a "political mindset".

He highlighted the transformative shift in perspective, noting that Uttar Pradesh has now become the second-largest economy in the country.

"Our current objective is to propel UP into the position of the leading economy in the nation," he emphasized.

Addressing the curtain raiser ceremony of the second edition of the International Trade Show held at Lok Bhavan here, the chief minister said, "Traditional craftsmen, artisans, and young entrepreneurs in the state who were once disappointed now have enthusiasm on their faces. The ODOP scheme has now become the foundation of a self-reliant India."

The chief minister inaugurated 13 projects of industrial estates and ODOP CPCs. He also honoured traditional artisans and craftsmen from various districts.

During his address, the chief minister expressed gratitude to the MSME department, extended congratulations to new entrepreneurs, and bestowed honours upon skilled craftsmen and artisans in the state. He highlighted the success

of last year's International Trade Show in Greater Noida, which set a new record and served as a robust platform to showcase Uttar Pradesh's potential.

He said, "For the first time, more than 500 foreign buyers participated, and it engaged around 70,000 people with a footfall of 3 lakh."

He announced that the second edition of the International Trade Show will take place in Greater Noida from September 25 to 29. Through this event, Uttar Pradesh is once again going to demonstrate its capabilities to the global community.

He mentioned that artisans, craftsmen, and young entrepreneurs in Uttar Pradesh had the capability, but they lacked encouragement from the government and a suitable platform. The state had numerous units of MSMEs for centuries, but due to continuous government neglect and 'Inspector Raj,' entrepreneurs were distressed and forced to migrate.

"In 2018, we initiated the ODOP scheme, enabling traditional industries to enter the market and providing technological support. As a result, UP's ODOP has now become a unique scheme in the country. ODOP has become the foundation stone of a self-reliant India, bringing pride to Uttar Pradesh", the chief minister added.

Study shows anticoagulants fail to prevent unexplained strokes

NEW YORK: A common practice of prescribing anticoagulants to people who have had unexplained strokes should stop, according to a study that shows it is not beneficial to prevent the risk.

Anticoagulants were thought to prevent additional strokes in people whose initial stroke has an unknown cause but who have a heart condition, atrial cardiopathy, that resembles atrial fibrillation, a common cause of stroke.

"We know these drugs work for people with atrial fibrillation, so we thought that they would probably work for people with atrial

cardiopathy as well," said Mitchell Elkind, Professor of neurology at the Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons.

However, the trial of 1,015 people, published in JAMA, found that patients with atrial cardiopathy who were given the anticoagulant apixaban had the same stroke rate, 4.4 per cent as patients who were given aspirin, the current standard of care.

"It's disappointing as a physician-scientist to not have your hypothesis proven, but this study is still providing really useful information.

"It tells neurologists that patients with this type of heart condition, atrial

cardiopathy, should not get anticoagulants, which are riskier than aspirin and should be reserved for people with definitive evidence of atrial fibrillation," Elkind said.

One-third of strokes have unknown causes, a challenge for neurologists trying to help their patients avoid subsequent strokes.

The team found that the unexplained strokes occur due to changes in heart that resemble changes seen in AFib.

They said there are several possible reasons why the trial did not support their hypothesis, including that they tested the right treatment in the wrong patients.

ED summons Bengal govt officers in MGNREGA case

KOLKATA: Enforcement Directorate (ED), on Thursday, issued notices to a number of state government officers for interrogation in connection with the alleged irregularities in implementation of the 100-day job scheme under MGNREGA in West Bengal.

Sources said that all of them have been summoned between February 12 and February 15 at ED's Salt Lake office in the northern outskirts of Kolkata.

Among those summoned, two are West Bengal Civil Service (WB-CS) cadre ranking officials. One of them is Sanchayan Pan, a deputy collector rank-

ing official and another is Suvrangshu Mondal, also a WB-CS officer.

Sources said that the ED sleuths, after preliminary investigation, has identified two types of irregularities in the implementation of the 100-day job scheme in West Bengal.

The first irregularity, according to sources, is in relation to fake job cards created for the beneficiaries under this scheme. The second irregularity is the use of fake caste certificates that were used in the process of creation of fake job cards.

On Tuesday only ED sleuths conducted maratho raid and search operations at four different

locations in West Bengal in relation to this case.

Sources said that ED sleuths had been silently carrying out the background investigation in the 100-day job scheme based on specific complaints and inputs that they received. After the process of accumulation of the basic evidence was over the ED sleuths started these raid and search operations from Tuesday morning.

Currently, the focus of the investigation is how a section of the state government employees as well as some political functionaries played an instrumental role in carrying out the irregularities through the creation of fake job cards.

Sensex tanks more than 600 points after RBI credit policy

NEW DELHI: BSE Sensex tanked more than 600 points after RBI announcement of credit policy with banks leading the fall.

Sensex was trading at 71,523.08 points down by a massive 628.92 points or 0.87 per cent.

Axis Bank, ICICI Bank, Nestle are down more than 2 per cent. The private banks index is down more than 1.5 per cent. Au Bank is down 2 per cent, Kotak Mahindra Bank is down 2 per cent.

FMCG stocks are down with the index falling 1.2 per cent. Tata Consumer is down 2 per cent, Britannia is down 2 per cent, Jyothy Labs is down 3 per cent.

Suman Chowdhury, Chief Economist and Head - Research, Acuité Rat-

ings & Research said it was no surprise that RBI MPC decided to keep the status quo on the interest rates for the sixth consecutive time. However, RBI continued to sound hawkish as against the market expectations and has not provided any indication of the timing of the change in monetary stance from "withdrawal of accommodation".

Chowdhury said given the tone of the MPC statement and the expectation of growth buoyancy, we believe that the likelihood of any rate cut by RBI has significantly reduced over the next six months.

"In our opinion, the short term rates will continue to remain high in the near term. We also expect bank deposit rates to show an increase by 25-50 bps, given the continuing gap between credit and deposit growth," said Chowdhury.

