


Good Morning Kashmir

15th Year Of Publication


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In the 21st Century, ideas will be the new wealth of the nations. The role of a University and College Campus will expand further. They will no longer be seen as an academic institution. They will be known as the base to create young minds, who will change the world.

Night Temp Drops In Kashmir



SRINAGAR: Amid forecast for generally cloudy weather with possibility of light rain/snow from March 21, night temperature recorded a drop at most places in Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday.

A meteorological department official here said that Srinagar recorded a minimum of 2.5°C against 3.5°C on the previous night which was below normal. **●P-06**

SED Demotes Teachers With Fake Degrees



SRINAGAR: The School Education Department of Jammu and Kashmir has demoted two teachers, Anita Sharma and Raman Chanyal, who secured promotions using fraudulent postgraduate degrees, reverting them back to teaching roles. **●P-06**

Committed To Combating Piracy, Terrorism In Indian Ocean Region: PM Modi



AGENCIES

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday reaffirmed India's commitment to safeguarding freedom of navigation and combating piracy and terrorism in the Indian Ocean region.

His remarks came in response to a message from Bulgarian President Rumen Radev, expressing gratitude for the safe return of seven Bulgarian nationals.

On Monday, the Bulgarian President expressed his gratitude to the Indian Navy for successfully carrying out a rescue operation on the hijacked Bulgarian ship, MV Ruen.

PM Modi expressed appreciation for the President of Bulgaria Radev, and conveyed India's satisfaction that the seven Bulgarian nationals were safe and would soon be returning home.

"Appreciate your message President @PresidentofBg. We are happy that 7 Bulgarian nationals are safe and will be returning home soon. India is committed to protecting freedom of navigation and combating piracy and terrorism in the Indian Ocean region," said PM Modi in a post on X.

The "Rouen" ship with eight Bulgarians, nine Myanmar and one Angolan citizen on board was captured by pirates in the Arabian Sea in December last year.

In an official post on X, the Bulgarian President said, "My sincere gratitude to PM @narendramodi for the brave action. **●P-06**

Ideas New Wealth

Varsities Should Focus On Inspiring Creativity For Change-Makers: LG

Addresses The Inaugural Ceremony Of 'Goonj-2024' At Jammu University

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said that the university campuses should be known for collaboration and inspiring creativity for change makers to make it work efficiently for the benefit of society.

"In the 21st Century, ideas will be the new wealth of the nations. The role of a University and College Campus will expand further. They will no longer be seen as an academic institution. They will be known as the base to create young minds, who will change the world," the Lt Governor said while addressing the inaugural ceremony of 'Goonj-2024' a multi-genre mega festival hosted by University of Jammu.

The Lt Governor congratulated the entire team of University of Jammu for providing a unique platform to the students to express their creativity, showcase their talents and engage in a dynamic learning environment.

He called upon the Universities and the educational institutions to replicate the important initiatives of University of Jammu, such as Design Your Degree, College on Wheels and Goonj program which have become the medium of lifelong learning, new discovery, and a powerful instrument to ignite creativity within.

He said, the University campus should be known for collaboration and inspiring creativity for change. **●P-06**



IN THE 21ST CENTURY, IDEAS WILL BE THE NEW WEALTH OF THE NATIONS. THE ROLE OF A UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE CAMPUS WILL EXPAND FURTHER. THEY WILL NO LONGER BE SEEN AS AN ACADEMIC INSTITUTION.

LG Chairs A Review Meeting Of H&ME Deptt

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Tuesday chaired a review meeting of Health and Medical Education Department with the senior officials and Principals of Government Medical Colleges. Heads of Departments also participated in the meeting.

The Lt Governor called upon officials and all the stakeholders to focus on the goal of 'Health for All' and ensure healthcare services are efficient, effective and equitable.

He reviewed the utilization of funds under various schemes, progress of new Government Medical Colleges and other key health infrastructure projects in the Union Territory. **●P-06**

Ramadan Boosts Sales For Kashmir's Bakeries, Pickle Vendors



SRINAGAR: Amid the holy month of Ramadan, streets of Kashmir are abuzz with shoppers flocking to purchase their favourite delicacies from bakeries and pickle vendors.

During the busy atmosphere of fasting and prayer, the aroma of freshly baked products and the tangy taste of pickles entices residents and visitors alike.

Bakery and pickle sellers expressed their delight at the increased demand during this sacred month.

"It's heartening to see the enthusiasm of customers during Ramadan," remarked Mohammad Ali, owner of a bakery in **●P-06**

'400 Paar' Is Common People's Demand: Dr Jitendra

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: "400 Paar" for Modi is common people's demand, Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh said on Tuesday.

At the same time, "Udhampur 4 lakh Paar" is common people's demand in Udhampur-Kathua-Doda Lok Sabha constituency which is all set to beat its own victory margin record, he said.

It is not only the BJP worker appealing for 400 plus mandate, but the common citizen of India who wants a third term for Narendra Modi to lead India on the path to "Viksit Bharat", he said.

The Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh was interacting with media on the sidelines of a series of meetings with groups of citizens from all walks of life at his parliamentary office here.

In the last two terms Prime Minister Narendra Modi has emerged as the tallest. **●P-06**



Sgr-Leh Highway To Reopen Next Week



GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: The 434-km long Srinagar-Leh highway is scheduled to reopen next week, as the Border Roads Organisation (BRO) and Project Vijayak have accomplished snow clearance on both sides of the highway, reaching Zero Point Zojila.

Despite heavy snowfall this year, the BRO and Project Vijayak managed to complete the challenging task of snow clearance, which had kept the highway closed since February.

Key areas such as Sonamarg, Zojila Pass, Zero Point, Gumri, Matayan, Drass, and Meenmarg experienced significant snow accumulation, posing obstacles to reopening the route.

A BRO official highlighted the daily challenges faced by the snow clearance. **●P-06**

Srinagar's Famed Tulip Garden To Open For Visitors On Mar 23



GMK CORRESPONDENT

SRINAGAR: Asia's largest Tulip Garden, also known as Indira Gandhi Memorial Tulip Garden, located in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir is all set to open for public from 23 March 2024.

Situated at the foothills of the magnificent Zabarwan mountain range, with a breathtaking view of iconic Dal Lake, the tulip garden is undoubtedly a feast for the eyes.

Every year, lakhs of local and foreign tourists visit the tulip garden to witness amazing tulips of different colors and hues. This year, 1.7 million tulips are expected to be displayed in the upcoming tulip festival 2024 in Srinagar, J&K.

Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri Tuesday also convened a meeting to review the arrangements at Asia's largest Tulip Garden for visitors.

The meeting was attended by Director Floriculture, SSP Traffic Srinagar, Joint Commissioner SMC, officers of Tourism department and Srinagar Smart City Limited.

The meeting held threadbare discussion regarding opening of garden for visitors, traffic management, parking space, sanitation, cleanliness drive, fixing of potholes, online ticketing and other arrangements.

The Asia's Largest Tulip Garden at the foothills of Zabarwan Hills will bloom with 17 lakh flowers of different varieties this year and will be thrown open for visitors on March 23.

Addressing the officers, Div Com **●P-06**

DGP Reviews Security Of Newly Commissioned Railway Line



GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANIHAL: Director General of Police R R Swain on Tuesday reviewed the security of newly commissioned railway line between Banihal and Sangaldan in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district, officials said.

The 48.1 km long Banihal-Sangaldan stretch along the country's most ambitious Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project was dedicated to the people by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Jammu on February 20.

Out of the total 272 km USBRL project, the 161 km was earlier commissioned in phases with the first phase 118-km Qazigund-Baramulla section commissioned in October 2009 followed. **●P-06**

MOVIES Schedule

Wednesday 20 March



YODHA (HINDI)
11:15AM, 06:20PM (U/A)



SHAITAAN (HINDI)
11:45AM, 02:45PM, 06:00PM (U/A)



DUNE PART TWO (ENGLISH)
WITH ENG SUBTITLES
02:15PM (U/A)



KUNG FU PANDA 4 (ENG WITH ENG SUBTITLE) (U)
03:00PM, 05:30PM 12:45PM

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DC Ganderbal chairs NCORD meeting

GMK NEWS NETWORK

GANDERBAL: The district-level NARCO Coordination Committee (NCORD) meeting was held Tuesday at the meeting hall of Dak Bungalow Ganderbal under the chairmanship of Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Shyambir.

The meeting held a detailed discussion on the efforts of enforcement agencies in combating drug abuse and narcotic trafficking in the district. A detailed discussion on previous directives to address the drug problem was also held.

Concerned departments and agencies shared the steps they have taken to make Ganderbal drug-free, including addressing drug addiction and identifying hotspots of drug use.

The DC directed the Education Department to frame a calendar of activities for Nasha Mukh once ongoing examinations conclude and ensure compliance with COTPA guide-



lines, particularly regarding the prohibition of tobacco items near schools.

He emphasized the sustainability of Nasha Mukh status in announcing Panchayats and underscored the involvement of Civil Society members in ongoing activities. Additionally, all stakeholder departments were tasked with monitoring new drug addiction cases in Nasha Mukh Panchayats and submitting action reports.

The meeting also reviewed the status of CCTV camera installation

and it was informed that over 98 percent medical shops have installed cameras and computerized billing in retail medical shops is also ensured.

While reviewing the status of illicit crop destruction, Excise department was directed to identify the illicit crop as the season of poppy cultivation season is approaching and Tehsil-dar were directed to assist them by involving Lumberdars and Chowkidars and violation should be brought into the notice of

Police so that appropriate action could be taken.

The meeting also reviewed the work progress on Half Way Home and DC asked the ADC to inspect the progress of works along with DSWO and officials of Municipal Council, PDD and Jal Shakhti so that the facility could be utilized at an earliest.

Among others the meeting was attended by ADC Ganderbal, ASP Ganderbal, SDM Kangan, CMO, Tehsildars, and other officials.

HDFC Bank inaugurates 60 Banking Outlets pan-India

GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: HDFC Bank announced the inauguration of 60 Business Correspondent (BC) Banking Outlets across RBI notified unbanked rural centers (URCs) pan-India. These new outlets now increase HDFC Bank's URC network presence to 5,020 outlets. Notably, 34% of the Bank's BC Agent network now caters to providing formal financial products and services across 10,602 villages.

Customers will benefit from a comprehensive suite of Bank's financial solutions including, convenient cash deposit & withdrawal through AEPS-enabled transactions, neighborhood locations for EMI collection of loans, government-backed social security schemes to create an insurance safety net, opening bank accounts for directly receiving government scheme transfer benefits, fixed and recurring deposit options for financial planning and



access to credit through loans like SLI and Kisan Gold Card to fulfill household aspirations.

Ms. Smita Bhagat, Group Head, Retail Branch Banking-North, East & Central, ABCP & Retail FX, HDFC Bank said, "HDFC Bank is deeply committed to financial inclusion even in the remotest corner of the country. We are happy that a significant portion, nearly 34% of our BC network, operates within RBI notified unbanked rural

centers (URCs). We aim to empower these communities and contribute to the government's financial inclusion agenda by providing crucial financial solutions like AePS transactions, deposit services, government-backed insurance, and access to credit facilities."

Sanjay Rakesh, MD of CSC, emphasized the importance of digital innovation by suggesting that the bank should consider introducing a diverse

range of digital products and services at BC centers. This strategic move aims to provide comprehensive banking services directly to customers within the catchment area. Additionally, Mr. Rakesh advised VLEs operating as BCs at URC locations to maximize their revenue potential through the HDFC Bank and CSC partnership by offering relevant financial products and services to the local customer base." (KNT)

Lok Sabha Elections

Training for MCC teams held at Bandipora



GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: In view of the forthcoming General Elections to Lok Sabha 2024, a daylong training programme for the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) Teams including Accounting Teams, Flying Squad Teams, Static Surveillance Teams, Video Surveillance Teams and Video Viewing Teams was Tuesday held at town Hall Bandipora.

The training was imparted by District Level Master Trainer Mohammad Iqbal Samoon and was attended by MCC team members.

ADDC Bandipora Mohammad Ashraf, Nodal Officer MCC/ADC, Umar Shafi Pandit, Nodal Officer Expenditure Monitoring/ D/O, Sheikh Abid Manzor; Coordinator Manpower and Trainings Irfan Maqbool and other concerned were also present on the

occasion.

The training programme was held with focus to equip MCC team members with the knowledge and skills necessary to ensure fair and ethical conduct during elections.

The training covered various aspects of the Model Code of Conduct, including its significance, key provisions, and practical implementation strategies.

During the training programme, the participants were made aware about the principles of neutrality, impartiality, and professionalism and their role in upholding these principles throughout the electoral process.

The Participants also received a detailed overview of the Model Code of Conduct, its legal framework, and the significance of its provisions in maintaining the integrity of elections.

DEO Anantnag holds election related meetings with Political Parties



GMK NEWS NETWORK

ANANTNAG: The District Election Officer (DEO) Anantnag, SF. Hamid Tuesday convened meetings with representatives from various political parties and members of the media.

The meeting was attended by the Senior Superintendent of Police Anantnag, ADC Anantnag, Deputy DEO and DIO.

The primary objective of these meetings was to provide training and guidance to stakeholders on the principles outlined in the Model Code of Conduct (MCC).

The DEO emphasized the paramount importance of strict adherence to the MCC by all individuals involved in the electoral process. Political parties were urged to demonstrate

unwavering commitment to ethical campaigning practices, avoiding any actions that could potentially compromise the integrity of the electoral system.

Recognizing the pivotal role of the media in ensuring free and fair elections, SF. Hamid said that fair and unbiased reporting, free from partisan influence is essential to preventing the menace of fake news and also in ensuring accurate information reaches the electorate.

He also announced the establishment of the Media Centre and the Media Certification and Monitoring Committees in Anantnag.

Notably, the Anantnag parliamentary constituency seat shall go for polls on 07th May in the third phase of the upcoming General Elections.

'CHUNAV KA PARV DESH KA GARV'

DEO Kishtwar convenes meeting with political parties

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KISHTWAR: District Election Officer Kishtwar, Dr. Devansh Yadav Tuesday chaired a meeting with representatives from various political parties to underscore the paramount importance of upholding the highest ethical standards as delineated in the Model Code of Conduct (MCC) and other pertinent guidelines set forth by the Election Commission of India (ECI) in anticipation of the forthcoming Lok Sabha Elections, 2024.

The primary objective of the gathering was to sensitize political parties on the imperative nature of maintaining integrity, fairness, and transparency throughout the electoral process.

Deliberations during the session encompassed crucial issues such as adherence to MCC provisions, acquisition of permissions for media advertisements and campaign vehicles, initiation of candidate bank accounts in accordance with stipulated timelines, and other

pertinent aspects vital to ensuring a just and equitable electoral environment.

The discussions reaffirmed the collective commitment of all political stakeholders towards fostering an environment characterized by ethical conduct, accountability, and reverence for democratic principles.

Dr. Devansh Yadav reiterated the pivotal role of political parties in upholding the democratic ethos of the nation and stressed the indispensability of cooperation and adherence to the guidelines delineated in the Model Code of Conduct by the ECI.

He urged all parties to demonstrate utmost integrity and responsibility, thereby setting a positive precedent for a free, fair, and peaceful electoral process.

Expressing confidence in the cooperation and adherence of all political parties to the outlined guidelines, the DEO anticipated a conducive environment for the smooth conduct of the Lok Sabha Elections.

Awareness programme under SVEEP held in Sumbal

GMK NEWS NETWORK

BANDIPORA: The District Election office Bandipora on Tuesday organised an awareness programme under Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) for specially abled persons at Government Girls High School Sumbal.

The programme was aimed to raise awareness about the importance of ensuring equal participation in the electoral process for individuals with special needs.

The programme was attended by Nodal Officer Man Power and Trainings (Chief Education Officer) Dr. G. M. Pujoo; Nodal Officer SVEEP (Principal NM Higher Secondary School) Ab. Rasheed Lone; Election Icon/ General Secretary Handicapped Association J&K, Nazir Ahmad Lone; Coordinator SVEEP Arsalan Habib and specially abled persons besides other concerned.

Nodal officer Man Power Management and Nodal officer SVEEP highlighted various facilities

available at polling stations for specially abled persons to ensure their participation.

The speakers said that electoral authorities are committed to provide the necessary support to facilitate participation of specially abled persons and polling stations are equipped with ramps and wheel chairs besides trained persons shall be available to provide assistance to voters with special needs.

Coordinator SVEEP activities said that the programme was conducted to educate individuals with special abilities about their voting rights, the accessibility of polling stations, and available support services.

Speaking on the occasion, election Icon Nazir Ahmad Lone urged public particularly individuals with special abilities to exercise their fundamental right to vote in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

He said participation in the democratic process is vital for building an inclusive society that represents the diverse needs and perspectives of all its members.

DEO Kupwara convenes meeting with representatives of political parties

GMK NEWS NETWORK

KUPWARA: The District Election Officer (DEO) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan Tuesday chaired a meeting with representatives from various political parties at the Meeting Hall of DC Office Complex, here.

The meeting was attended by representatives from different political parties.

The objective of the meeting was to underscore the importance of adhering to the highest ethical standards outlined in the Model Code of Conduct, and other applicable guidelines of ECI in view of the forthcoming Lok Sabha Elections, 2024.

At the outset, the DEO



called for strict implementation of Model Code of Conduct (MCC) and urged all political parties for strict adherence to the guidelines of Election Commission of India.

She emphasized upon the representatives of

aspects of MCC.

The representatives of political parties were also apprised about the Apps like cVIGIL, which enables citizens to report violation of Model Code of Conduct (MCC), Suvridha Candidate App, and other Apps to ensure smooth and transparent election.

Election manuals and related material was also distributed among the representatives of the political parties.

The meeting was also attended by ADC Kupwara/Nodal officer MCC, Muhammad Rouf Rehman, Dy-DEO, Mir Hamidullah; ACR Kupwara, Irfan Bahadur; NLMT, Sameer Jan and other officers.

PG resident doctors face delay in stipend payments, threaten protest

JAHANGEEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: Postgraduate resident doctors at Government Medical College (GMC) Srinagar are facing hardships as they continue to experience delays in receiving their monthly stipends.

The Diplomat of National Board (DNB) is equivalent to a postgraduate Master's degree, similar to the MD/MS degree awarded to specialist doctors in India after completing a three-year residency.

The PG resident doctors expressed their frustration over the recurrent delays in receiving their stipends, which has left them struggling to meet their financial obligations. With approximately 600 residents in their first, second, and third years, many have been without stipends since January or February.

Junaid Ahmad, one of the resident doctors, said that despite repeated appeals to the authorities,

the issue of delayed stipends continues, with little action taken to address it.

He lamented that over the past year, they have faced prolonged delays in salary payments, sometimes exceeding five months. "These delays are due to funding shortages resulting from the institution's increased seat capacity," he said.

The financial strain caused by these delays has prompted residents, both local and non-local, to consider staging a protest if salary disbursement does not occur within the next three days.

Resident doctors said that while they fulfill their duties diligently, the delayed compensation has left them feeling marginalised and demoralised.

"Despite assurances from officials, including verbal promises of imminent stipend releases, no tangible progress has been made, leaving us feeling disillusioned," they said, adding that if

the government fails to address their concerns promptly, they will have no choice but to resort to strike action, which could significantly impact patient care services.

Resident doctors also highlighted disparities in stipend payments, saying that GMC Srinagar pays only 60,000 rupees, which is far lower than the national average of 80,000 rupees. They urged higher authorities to intervene urgently to resolve the issue and ensure timely stipend payments.

They said despite taking up the issue with higher officials of GMC Srinagar, no positive response has come from any side. "Every official is assuring us verbally that the stipends will be released soon but as of now nothing has been done. We are now fed up with the assurances and if the government fails to issue our stipends then there is no option other than to go for a strike that will definitely affect patient care delivery

services," they warned.

Notably, GMC Srinagar had earlier issued a circular that stipend bills of senior residents and postgraduate scholars must be prepared and submitted to the treasury by or before the 6th of every month. "Any deviation from these circular instructions shall be dealt with strictly and the salary of the dealing assistants shall be kept withheld," reads the circular.

"Authorities themselves are deviating from the circular issued by them. Are they going to take action against those who are involved in any kind of deviation," they said while seeking the attention of the Secretary Health and Medical Education Department for a "one-time solution".

An official from GMC Srinagar said that a meeting had been convened to address the matter. "Stipends will be disbursed within the next two days," he said—(KNO)

DEO Jammu meets bankers ahead of Lok Sabha Polls

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: District Election Officer, Sachin Kumar Vaishya Tuesday held a meeting with various bankers in view of the Lok Sabha Elections.

The DEO discussed the electoral process and the bankers' important role in it. Bankers were instructed to monitor unusual transactions closely and report any suspicious activity.

Sachin Kumar emphasised the importance of adhering to banking norms and maintaining customer privacy. He also enlightened all about the cVIGIL app, which allows the public to report any violations of the Model Code of Conduct or irregularities in the electoral process.

The meeting was also attended by ADDC Sher Singh, ADC Shishir Gupta and LDM Ramesh Chander.

Govt. of Jammu and Kashmir
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
IRRIGATION AND FC DIVISION
HANDWARA
ADDENDUM
 Kindly read MH4711 FMBAP,4701UT Capex,4711 UT Capex,4702UTCapex,2702-110Handling & Transport, 2711-110 Handling & transport ,4702 District Capex in addition to MH 2702 M&R & MH 2711 M&R for the e-nit No.13/IFCD/HND/2023-24 Dated:-13-03-2024 bearing endorsement No:- HND/IFCD/Camp/5046-58 Dated:- 13-03-2024 published under Tender ID 2024_IFC_247028_1
 No:-5179-91 sd/
 Dated:-19-03-2024 Executive Engineer,
 DIPP-18150-23 Irrigation & FC Division,
 DT: 19-03-2024 Handwara

PM Modi crafted Naya Bharat to make it Vishwa Guru: Rana

GMK NEWS NETWORK

JAMMU: Senior BJP leader Devender Singh Rana Tuesday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has crafted the idea of Naya Bharat rooted in assertive nationalism, decisive growth and development, global prominence with resolve to make Viksit Bharat as Vishwa Guru.

“Yashasvi Prime Minister has led the country to a renaissance based on national pride, cultural and civilizational revivalism based on integral humanism and the traditional ethos of Vasudeva Kutamkam,” Rana said in his keynote address at the discussion on book ‘Modi Consensus: The Rediscovery of Bharat’, organized by the Public Relations Society of India, Jammu Chapter at the Press Club here.

Author of the book, Dr. Swadesh Singh dwelt in length on the subject. Reflecting on the book discussion, Devender Singh Rana said that Prime Minister Modi has indeed shown the path of development to the country.

“Patriotism has always existed among the people of India, but today, people not only talk about patri-



tism but also take pride in it”, he said, adding that after becoming Prime Minister in 2014, Narendra Modi worked on the concept of ‘My India is great’, and now, every citizen of the country feels proud of ‘My Bharat, Our Bharat, Proud Bharat’.

Rana emphasized that he is a Hindu, and he takes pride in being a Hindu while respecting the great diversity of the nation. Everyone should take pride in their respective religions in true consonance of the glorious ethos of this great nation, he added.

More than 50 educators, researchers, journalists, and social workers from Jammu participated in this discussion.

The programme com-

menced with the lighting of the traditional lamp and inauguration with a welcome speech by the Vice Chairman of PRSI, Jammu Chapter Mr Opinder Sharma.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr. Swadesh Kumar said that this book is important for understanding current politics.

He highlighted the work done by Prime Minister Modi on issues like politics and policy-making in the past 5-10 years and the changes seen in international politics as a result.

Referring to the current political situation, he emphasized that any political party aiming to stay mainstream must focus on social issues, which is evi-

dent under Prime Minister Modi’s leadership. He illustrated that when he speaks, it reflects the history of five thousand years. In today’s political scenario, politicians have started bringing their personal spaces in the public domain, which is also the demand of the day. Merely slogans like ‘eradicate poverty’ won’t work anymore; rather, actions for the poor and needy are necessary, he added.

On the occasion, Secretary of the Public Relations Society of India, Jammu Chapter, initiated a campaign to raise awareness among voters for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections in 2024. The slogan of this campaign is, ‘Value your vote, Vote for Values.’

IMPORTANCE OF DEWORMING

Doctors warn of health risks from worm infections in children

JAHANGEER GANAIE

SRINAGAR: Children who have worms often feel tired due to malnutrition and anaemia, which can lead to impaired physical and cognitive development, doctors have warned.

Doctors said that while worm infections are relatively easy to control, parents must remain vigilant about their children’s health and behaviour. “Untreated worm infections not only hinder healthy growth but also contribute to poor nutrition, reducing a child’s ability to concentrate and learn,” they said.

“The treatment is simple, safe, effective, and free of charge. A single dose of deworming treatment drastically reduces the number of worms in each child,” they explained.

Dr. Junaid, a paediatric specialist, informed that worm infections can result in various health problems such as anaemia, abdomi-



nal distention, severe abdominal pain, and diarrhoea. They can lead to loss of appetite, malnourishment, impaired mental and physical development, as well as tissue damage requiring corrective surgery, he said.

Similarly, Dr Shugufta said that deworming improves a child’s immunity, protecting them from

chronic illnesses caused by worms. “It enhances concentration and attendance in school, increases nutrient uptake, and controls infections like anaemia and loose bowels. It also improves work potential and livelihood opportunities while reducing worm infection in the community,” he said.

Addressing misconcep-

tions, Dr Shugufta clarified that deworming can be administered in any season at regular intervals. However, she expressed concern that many children are not receiving deworming treatment, which contributes to the prevalence of anaemia.

According to NFHS-5 data, approximately three-fourths (73%) of children aged 6-59 months are anaemic in India. This includes 25% with mild anaemia, 44% with moderate anaemia, and 4% with severe anaemia. The overall prevalence of anaemia in children has increased from 43% in NFHS-4 to 73% in NFHS-5, affecting both girls and boys equally.

Children born to mothers with anaemia are more likely to be anaemic themselves, regardless of their mothers’ educational background. In Jammu & Kashmir, three-fourths (74%) of children are anaemic, even if their mothers have 12 or more years of schooling—(KNO)

JK’s Political Landscape set to witness Tectonic Shift ahead of LS Polls

ALI ASAD

SRINAGAR: The political landscape in Jammu and Kashmir is witnessing strategic maneuvers as Democratic Progressive Azad Party (DPAP) led by Ghulam Nahi Azad and Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party led by Syed Altaf Bukhari along with other outfits, in a bid to bolster its electoral prospectus, are actively exploring the possibility of forming alliance for the coming LS polls.

Reports said that following an executive meeting held at the party headquarters in Srinagar, Apni Party’s general secretary, Rafi Ahmed Mir, announced that the party has resolved to reach out to potential allies.

Authorized by party president Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari, discussions are underway to forge alliances in preparation for the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

On the other hand, DPAP spokesman Salman Nizami confirmed to KNO that talks are in the initial stage with a few “like minded” parties in Jammu and Kashmir and final decision in this regard will be taken within a week’s time. “We are holding confabulations and they are in the initial phase. We will

come out with a strategy once we reach the decision,” Nizami said.

Meanwhile, sources divulged that during the meeting, the leaders engaged in extensive deliberations, analyzing



feedback from both political and parliamentary spheres. The focus was on assessing the prevailing political scenario in Jammu and Kashmir and devising an effective election strategy.

“In its executive meeting on Monday, it has been decided that the Apni Party will initiate talks with like-minded parties,” said Rafi Ahmed Mir.

He emphasized the importance of fostering a conducive environment for dialogue, expressing confidence that alliance formations will materialize swiftly. “We are currently reaching out to various stakeholders, and we aim to finalize the alliances within a week,” Mir added—(KNO)

12-year-old braves leopard attack to save younger brother

NAVEED UL HAQ

BUDGAM: In a daring act of bravery, a twelve-year-old boy risked his life to rescue his younger brother from a leopard attack in central Kashmir’s Budgam district.

The incident happened as the two brothers were playing cricket in their yard during iftar time on Monday evening.

“We were playing when suddenly I saw something moving suspiciously near our house. Before I knew it, the leopard pounced on my little brother,” recounted Aqib Javed, a fourth-grade student.

With no time to spare and his hands empty, Aqib acted instinctively. “I had to save him, he’s my brother,” he said. “I grabbed a ball from my pocket and threw it at the leopard, hitting its eye and diverting its attention away from my brother.”

The situation remained dire as the leopard prepared to attack again, but Aqib’s friend intervened. “My friend threw a brick at

the leopard, and we made a lot of noise which attracted people, and together we scared the leopard away,” Aqib recounted.

Reflecting on the incident, Aqib expressed relief that his brother’s life was spared. “I feared the worst, especially after imagining the leopard attacking a girl last week in this same village in which she lost her life.”

However, the family struggled to get help due to the lack of network facilities in their village. “We couldn’t reach the driver to take my brother to the hospital,” the family said, adding that they face difficulties due to the non-availability of a network facility.

“We’re scared to even step outside. We need the government to ensure we have network facilities and traps to catch these leopards,” they appealed.

Villagers appreciated Aqib for his courageous act. They called for taking care of the kids and not letting them venture out, especially during the evening—(KNO)



Watermelon Safety Concerns Spark Online Frenzy in Kashmir

MUBASHIR AALAM WANI

SRINAGAR: Last week when a wave of uncertainty surrounded the safety of watermelon, Kashmiris have turned to the internet in search of answers.

Ahead of Ramadan, controversy brewed in Kashmir when few doctors called for avoiding watermelons this Ramadan.

Following the resentment by the fruit growers and dealers, the Food and Safety department came up with a clarification and declared the watermelons safe for human consumption.

Amidst the controversy, netizens in the valley have been looking for answers from Google about the safety of watermelons during the current season.

As per the Google Trends, maximum Google searches from Jammu and Kashmir have been regard-

ing the watermelons last week.

Google Trends showed that the Google searches



regarding the fruit began with the commencement of Ramadan.

On March 16 and 17, the searches regarding the fruit reached the 100 mark, the highest on the scale.

The calculation of Google Trends is based on a graph that shows the relative frequency of any

search term on a scale of zero to 100. Hundred represents the highest level.

Google searches mostly

declined especially after Food and Safety department came up with a clarification.

Pertinently, the sales of watermelons had declined by more than 50 percent in the first week of Ramadan following the controversy regarding the fruit.

The fruit dealers said the sales have now gone normal after government cleared the air regarding the controversy. “We are highly thankful to the government which came up with valid test reports and urged people to consume the fruit,” said Ali Muhammad Khan, a fruit seller.

Watermelon is the most consumed fruit in Kashmir during the holy month of Ramadan. Every year watermelons worth crores of rupees are being consumed in Kashmir during the holy month of Ramadan—(KNO)

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Watermelon is the most consumed fruit in Kashmir during the holy month of Ramadan. Every year watermelons worth crores of rupees are being consumed in Kashmir during the holy month of Ramadan—(KNO)

Man clears traffic on busy Sgr road to make way for ambulance, get applause

JAHANGIR SOFI

SRINAGAR: In a heartwarming display of compassion and humanity, a video of a selfless act has gone viral on various social media platform, Facebook.

The video shows an unknown man, dashing ahead of an ambulance stuck in traffic near Qamarwari Chowk, desperately beckoning to drivers to make room for the emergency vehicle.

A video possibly shot by the ambulance driver, the video records the man’s efforts as he runs ahead of the ambulance from Qamarwari to Noor Bagh Chowk, trying to ensure a clear path through the congested road stretch.

He can be seen tirelessly running and clearing the way on the road stretch, allowing the ambulance to move through the jam-packed vehicle road.

The person’s generous efforts has sparked appre-



ciation from netizens and the general public alike, with many praising his fast thinking and altruism in a difficult situation.

A Facebook user, while commenting on his action wrote, “This man is a gem. May Allah bless him with his choicest blessings.”

Another FB user wrote, “love and respect. This is the real hero at ground zero”.

The viral video is available on social media and has already garnered over 8 Lac views, with over 9.5K shares and over 570 com-

ments on Facebook.

Shabir Ahmad, a Srinagar resident praised the unknown man’s act and said in a time when acts of kindness are often overlooked, this demonstration serves as a reminder of the power of compassion and communal spirit.

He stated that as the video continues to circulate on social media platforms, the act serves as evidence of the influence that individual efforts may have in reducing emergency situations and potentially saving lives—(KNO)

Residential house of drug peddler attached in Kulgam: Police



GMK NEWS NETWORK

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Police in Kulgam have attached the residential house of a drug peddler on Tuesday, a spokesman said.

“Continuing its action against drug peddlers, Police in Kulgam attached property (Single story residential house) worth approx. Rs 1,014,894, measuring 976.76 Sq. ft belonging to notorious drug peddler namely Ghulam Mohammad Mir @Gull Kasai Son of Mohd Abdullah Mir resident of Bugam,” a police statement issued reads.

The action was taken under sections 68-E read

with 68-F (1) of NDPS Act of 1985 & is linked with case FIR No. 166/2015 U/S 8/15 of NDPS act & 77/2022 U/S 8/15 of NDPS Act of PS Kulgam, it said.

The property was identified as illegally acquired property during the course of investigation/enquiry conducted by Kulgam Police. The property was prima facie acquired from illicit trafficking of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances by the said drug peddler, the statement said.

This operation reaffirms the commitment of J&K Police to combat the drug menace. Local people of the area hailed the initiative of J&K Police, the spokesman said.

BATTLE FOR LADAKH

Can Congress-NC Challenge BJP's Dominance in LS Elections?

ALI ASAD

SRINAGAR: As the Lok Sabha elections approach, all eyes are on the Ladakh parliamentary seat, which has been under the BJP’s control since 2014. The question arises: will the Congress-National Conference (NC) alliance be able to break the BJP’s stronghold in this region?

The 2014 elections marked a significant turning point when the BJP secured victory in Ladakh for the first time. Historically, the Congress has dominated this constituency, winning six times, while the NC has clinched victory twice, and independent candidates have triumphed thrice.

The political landscape in Ladakh has witnessed seismic shifts, particularly following the abrogation of Article 370, which granted special status to Jammu and Kashmir. With Ladakh emerging as a separate union territory without its own legislative assembly,

the stakes are higher than ever before. The BJP faces the challenge of securing a hat-trick victory in this crucial constituency amidst growing demands for a separate statehood movement in the region.



Protests have erupted in both Leh and Kargil, underscoring the discontent among the local populace. The momentum of the Ladakhi movement could pose a significant challenge to the BJP’s electoral prospects. Traditionally, Ladakh has been a bastion of the Congress, with the NC also enjoying con-

siderable support. Talks are underway between the two parties regarding seat sharing, with the NC reportedly willing to concede the Ladakh seat to the Congress. However, neither party has officially announced their candidates yet.

Reflecting on the electoral history of Ladakh, it’s evident that independent candidates have played a pivotal role, interrupting the dominance of major political parties. In 1989, independent candidate Mohd. Hassan Commander halted the Congress’s winning streak, while independents emerged victorious in 2004 and 2009. Thuptasan Chhiwang’s victory as an independent candidate in 2004 paved the way for the BJP’s triumph in 2014.

The upcoming Lok Sabha elections in Ladakh, scheduled for the fifth phase on May 20, will witness a keenly contested battle spread across Kargil and Leh districts—(KNO)

Good Morning Kashmir

EDITORIAL

Railway Expansion

This is music to ears. The railways recently sanctioned the final location survey of five lines including the doubling of the Baramulla-Banihal section (135.5 km), Baramulla-Uri (50 km), Sopore-Kupwara (33.7 km), Awantipora-Shopian (27.6 km) and Anantnag-Pahalgam (77.5 km). These are important railway lines connecting the economically important zone of Kashmir to Jammu and beyond. While the Kashmir valley is still waiting to get connected to the Jammu region through the railway, these arteries are equally important to ferry produce to the main railway line. The line connecting Baramulla to Uri (50km) and Sopore-Kupwara (33.7km) are two important railway extensions as it make railway travel open to about two million people in the frontier districts. For the people of Kupwara and Uri, this is nothing less than a boon. Almost every area will now have a railway station not more than twenty kilometers away from their homes. Once completed, this would provide true all-weather connectivity to almost every area in the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir. It would be especially great for people dealing with the horticulture industry as the produce can now be ferried all-round the year at minimal charges.

These two lines are also important because the frontier districts Like Baramulla and Kupwara would now be easily accessible to a tourist who travels by train from Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Delhi through train. Already a few villages in Kupwara like Keran have become tremendously famous with the public in these states and with railway connectivity they would love to come in droves. This would create a ripple effect in tourism and sooner we will see lots of other villages in north Kashmir on the tourism map of Kashmir. There are some issues with the Awantipora-Shopian (27.6 km) line as some orchardists have objected to the railway line passing through the village. This railway artery is the most critical one in as far as the economy of Kashmir is concerned. It can help ferry the horticulture produce from Shopian in stipulated time at no cost to the plains of India. We hope the current establishment enters into a series of negotiations with this village and find a way around it.

The current establishment at the center must be thanked for fast-forwarding a lot of proposals when it comes to Kashmir.

Unveiling Kashmir's Cultural Legacy

A Journey Through S.P. College Srinagar



DR. SHIBEN KRISHEN RAINA

A nostalgic photograph has recently resurfaced from the depths of my old albums, offering a poignant glimpse into the past glory of Kashmir during the 1960s. This black-and-white gem captures a moment from the annual cultural festival held at SP College in Srinagar, where I had the honor of portraying 'Bharat Mata' or Mother India, selected by the esteemed college Cultural Committee. I distinctly recall Professor Shamsuddin Sahib from the Department of English, who served as the convener of the Committee and saw in me a resemblance fitting for the role of Bharat Mata.

In this treasured image, Bharat Mata stands adorned as the embodiment of our beloved nation, set against the majestic backdrop of the snow-capped Himalayas. As I reflect upon this snapshot, memories of my teenage years flood back. I must have been a student in my first year, or perhaps in the FA program, at that time. The Muslim students can be seen respectfully stand-



ing with joined palms, seeking blessings from the symbol of Mother India.

This rediscovered photograph evokes a torrent of emotions within me. It serves as a poignant reminder of a time in Kashmir when communal harmony and goodwill prevailed, untouched by the religious discord and division that has since marred the region. Those were truly different days, filled with unity and tolerance.

Needless to say that the sudden appearance of this photograph from my old collection has transported me back to the alleys of memory, filling me with joy. As I reminisce, I am reminded that I later pursued my Bachelor's degree in 1960 from the same college, followed by a Master's in Hindi from the University of Kashmir in 1962, where I proudly secured first-class first position. Now, some six decades later,

this photograph stands as a witness to a bygone era of unity and tolerance, increasingly rare in today's conflict-torn Kashmir. As sectarian tensions escalate, precious images such as this offer a glimmer of hope that the spirit of mutual understanding and harmony can be reignited once more.

Author is former Fellow, IIAS, Shimla (HP)

Policy Perspective

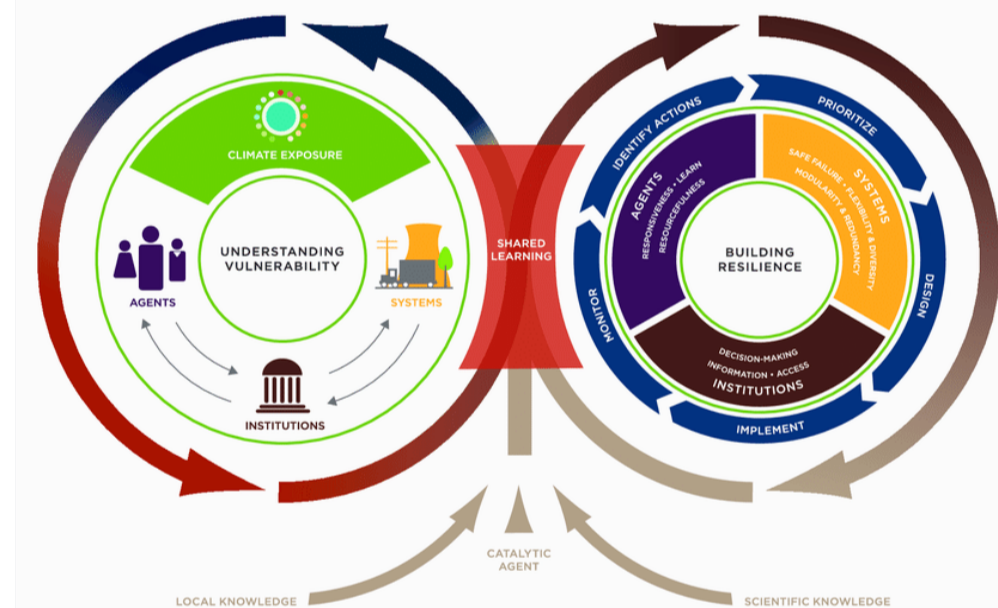
Revisiting Climatic Resilience And Fiscal Space



ISHIKA JAISWAL

The latest UNEP's Emissions Gap Report has projected a growth of 3% in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 considering existing measures. Before celebrating this positive outlook, it is important to note that to attain global average temperature increases of 2°C and 1.5°C, the greenhouse gas emissions for the year 2030 must be reduced by 28% and 42% respectively. The present strategies, as indicated by the nationally specified contributions, are positioning us on a trajectory toward a temperature range of 2.4°C-2.6°C by the end of the 21st century. Hence, despite the extensive mitigation measures, it is projected that the world climate will persistently experience transformations. Empirical data indicates that there exists a positive correlation between economic development and climatic vulnerability, with the latter serving as a catalyst for economic development. Undoubtedly, emerging and low-income nations exhibit a higher susceptibility to climate-related hazards compared to advanced nations. This observation implies that although climate change adaptation is crucial for all countries, it is particularly imperative for emerging and developing countries. Although there is a positive association between decreased climate vulnerability and economic development, the Adaptation Gap Report 2023 by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) emphasizes that advancements in adaptation are decelerating in terms of finance, planning, and implementation.

Between 2015 and 2022, the Asia and Pacific region experienced a significant increase in losses resulting from climate-related natural disasters, amount-



ing to \$400 billion, impacting a staggering 800 million individuals. In the given environment, it is of utmost importance to prioritize the mobilization of domestic resources and the implementation of fiscal policies in order to address the adaptation funding gap and foster the development of climate resilient businesses and societies. In this connection, fiscal policies encompass a wide array of instruments and measures, ranging from government expenditures to directly prioritized adaptation initiatives, to taxation, which motivates important stakeholders to endorse adaptation plans. Nevertheless, the fiscal capacity in the Asia-Pacific region is limited due to the presence of more arduous borrowing circumstances in different countries.

The integration of climate change into the fundamental framework of fiscal policymaking is important. The magnitude of the required investments is such that incorporating climate change adaptation into fiscal policy cannot be a straightforward addition. For establishing fiscal flexibility, it is imperative to integrate climate change into the mainstream through certain measures:

The enhancement of fiscal risk assessment entails the identification, evaluation, and communication of the influence of climate and disaster risks on fiscal sustainability

through macroeconomic shocks, implicit and explicit liabilities, adaptation needs and public services. For instance, the Philippines releases a yearly fiscal risk statement that encompasses a segment pertaining to the ramifications of climate-related calamities and alludes to continuous funding and management endeavours aimed at mitigating these effects. Policy makers ought to perform comprehensive evaluations of climate and catastrophe risks across several hazards to analyze the mean yearly damages caused by disasters, particularly those exacerbated by climate change.

Enhancing fiscal risk management can enhance risk assignment, which in turn, facilitates the implementation of targeted investments to effectively manage climate and disaster-related fiscal risks. This can be achieved through improved preparedness, risk reduction, and risk transfer. Bangladesh, Indonesia, and Nepal have implemented climate budgeting systems to effectively categorize investments connected to climate change. The integration of climate risk management into public investment management systems is crucial for policymakers to effectively identify, align, and prioritize investments in climate action.

To increase the mobiliza-

tion of domestic resources and harness private money for climate action, it is imperative to optimize resource allocation, finance, and investment through fiscal policies. This encompasses widely recognized mechanisms, such as the implementation of carbon taxation to produce income to finance investments in low-carbon and climate-resilient endeavors, the gradual elimination of subsidies that bolster fossil fuel industries, and the restructuring of sovereign funds. For instance, Green bonds can be launched.

These measures can be enhanced by employing novel approaches to generate fiscal capacity, such as the utilization of resilient bonds to secure financial resources for climate-related investments; the establishment of special purpose vehicles to consolidate funds from various sources to facilitate private investment in adaptation efforts, encompassing the mitigation of risks associated with private investments in climate action and the provision of concessional capital; and the implementation of debt-for-climate or debt-for-nature instruments to facilitate investments in climate-related initiatives. For instance, Philippines has made efforts to mobilize resources and encourage strategic initiatives, resulting in the establishment of a focused financial mechanism known as the

People's Survival Fund. Policymakers should consider a diverse array of instruments to foster the development of climate-adapted economies using a systematic strategy considering the following areas of intervention, as outlined by the International Monetary Fund:

Allocating resources for providing financial support for modifications that yield positive externalities. The importance of selectivity cannot be overstated, as it is justified by the underinvestment of private actors in adaptation solutions. Relevant examples include infrastructure investment, early warning systems, and research and development that assist the development of novel adaptation technologies.

The elimination of obstacles to private investment. This category of action encompasses the elimination of both financial and nonfinancial obstacles to private investment, such as subsidies that are unproductive. It also involves the establishment of frameworks for carbon pricing, the promotion of knowledge generation and distribution, and the enhancement of capacity for climate risk and adaptation solutions.

Designing policies for the redistribution of resources. Addressing equity challenges that arise from climate change or adaptation policy itself is of utmost importance. To address the issue of a population leaving an area susceptible to sea level rise due to the creation of a new local urban plan, it is crucial to establish a comprehensive and equitable compensation plan.

After identifying the specific domains where actions are needed at the national level, cost-benefit assessment methods can be used to evaluate climate resilience measures. This analysis focuses on the distributional effects to optimize consumption effectiveness while considering societal preferences and risk aversion, while also ensuring productivity and fairness. (C-Counter Currents)

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The Concept Of Fasting In Religions



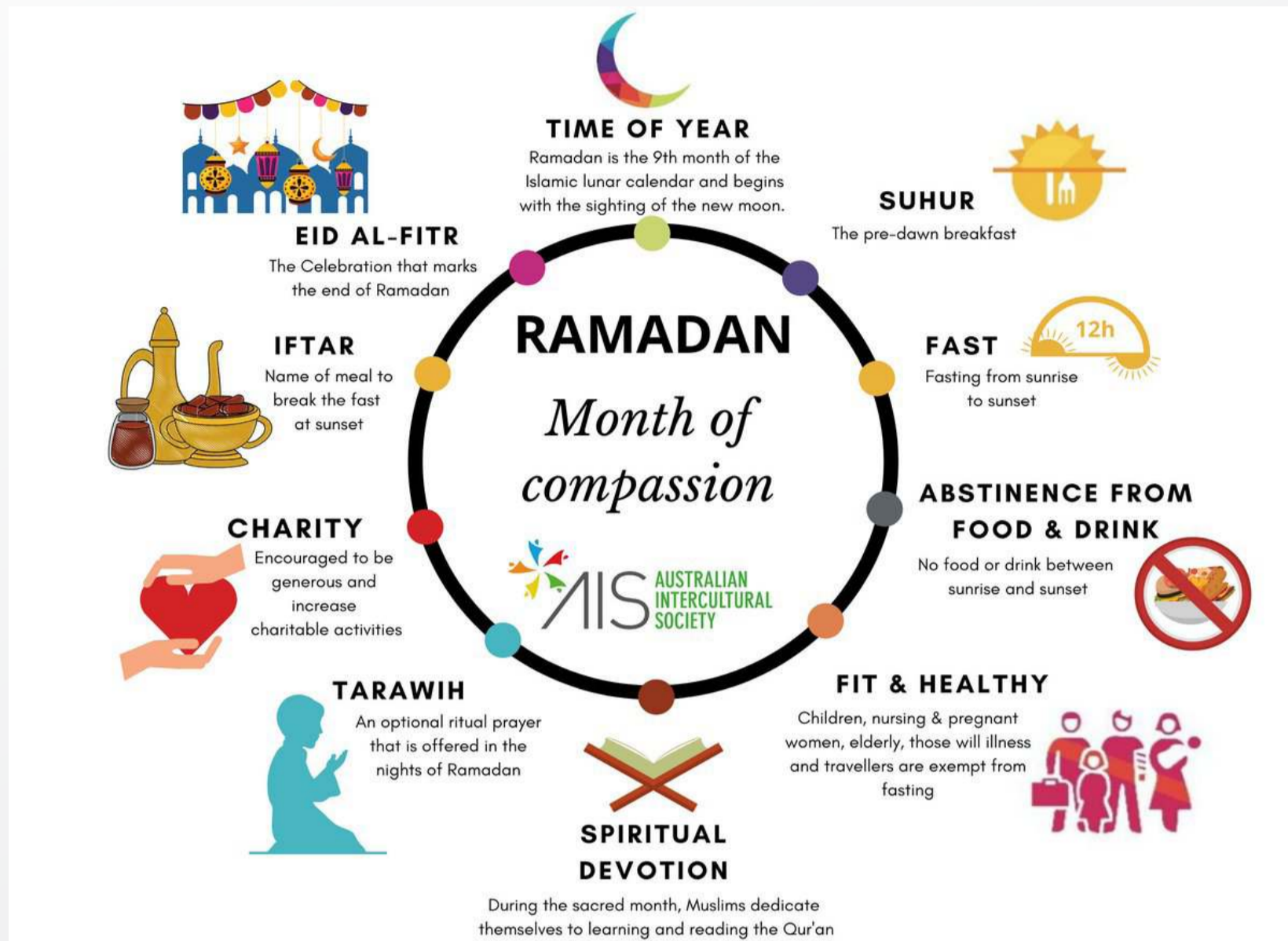
AGA SYED MUNTAZIR MEHDII

The religious context defines the practice of fasting as voluntary abstinence from certain bodily functions for a specific period to obtain not only physical but also spiritual well-being. Without abstinence from bodily functions, we shouldn't be talking about fasting but more about dieting. In the case of Taoism, however, this distinction is not so evident, as is usually the case with the polysemy inherent to the Chinese language. This tradition recommends a regime known as 'Bigu', which is generally understood as the "prohibition of eating cereals" but there are those who also understand it as a particular type of continence. It is mentioned in the context of inner alchemy (Neidan Shu) and is compared to a kind of cooking that helps to detoxify and regenerate the body, as well as providing it with immunological virtues. Christianity and Islam also emphasize this protective value of fasting. In some archaic and folk forms of Taoism, there was also a series of annual expiatory and cathartic festivals with elaborate ceremonies in which talismans played a crucial role. These festivals were preceded by particular fasting (chai) closely linked to the talisman used. The Taoist calendar also recommended fasting several days every year, depending on the lunar phases and the solar cycle (solstices and equinoxes), always in honor of a specific deity.

Hinduism mentions fasting (ekadashi) in practically all its sacred books and recommends it as one of the best ascetic methods (tapas) for purifying the body and concentrating the mind. We also know that Mahatma Gandhi used it as a political weapon. Ayurveda is a medical science that studies the practice of fasting. It is especially recommended for phlegmatic ailments or conditions (Kafa) and for its ability to generate "the inner fire" (Agni). Ayurveda also teaches us that the body's metabolism is not the same throughout every hour of the day, which, among other things, explains how certain intermittent fasts that advise not eating from the afternoon onwards work. Practically every current of Hinduism has its fasting calendar but, generally speaking, the most favorable times for fasting relate to the lunar cycle, especially after a new moon and a full moon, but without setting specific obligatory dates. It is only in the so-called Abrahamic religions that fasting has a regular or liturgical status.

After having suffered the grave consequences of excessive fasting, the Buddha harshly criticized this disproportionately prolonged practice among Hindus and Jains. No religion prescribes rigorous fasting and so-called inedia (sustained abstinence from consuming food or drink) is only found in highly exceptional cases. Advocating the path of moderation, Buddhism prescribes a period of abstinence that varies according to the school. Normally the recommendation is not to eat after midday or to only eat one meal a day. A light, vegetarian diet is usually recommended so as not to slow the mind and meditation. In certain schools of Vajrayana Buddhism, fasting is often performed for the full moon of Vesak (celebration of the birth of the Buddha) or as a therapeutic practice, such as that inspired by Chenrezig (Tibetan form of Avalokiteshvara). The relationship between Tibetan medicine and Ayurvedic science is well known.

As regards Judaism, the Torah only mentions fasting on one day: Yom Kippur. That translates as the Day of Atonement or of Repentance and it falls on the tenth day of the lunar month of Tishrei, following the Jewish New Year (Rosh Hashanah). On the other hand, Jewish tradition proposes six days of commemorative fasting throughout the year (Gedaliah, Asara b'Tevet, Shivah Asar B'Tammuz, Tisha B'Av, Purim, and Bekhorim; the first four are related to the Temple) and numerous optional fasts for more devout people (Shovavim, Tu B'Av, Zayin Adar, etc.). As most fasting is related to fateful events, it is usual to fast when faced with any misfortune: drought, death, accidents, and so on. Given its importance, a whole section of the Talmud



is devoted to talking about and discussing fasting (ta'anit o tzom).

All fasting under Judaism takes place during the day, except Yom Kippur and Tisha B'Av, which can last up to 25 hours. Also very significant is the restriction on eating leavened bread during the Passover. Christian exegesis sees an image of impurity or sin in leaven, which explains why there is fermentation. Consequently, the bones consecrated to the Eucharist are made of unleavened bread. From what little we know of Orphism and Pythagoreanism, both recognized the value of fasting. The same is true of all Western medical traditions since

and Jesus spent 40 days fasting in the desert. In this highly significant place of extreme austerity, the Devil appears before Jesus to frighten him and the latter responds with what might be the best definition of the goal of fasting in the Christian context: "Man shall not live on bread alone but every word that comes out of the mouth of God". The Word of God is the bread that nourishes the spirit and is identified with Christ himself: "living bread that came down from heaven". The same applies to the water metaphor, as Jesus teaches the Samaritan: "Whoever drinks from my water will never thirst again".

Week is celebrated on the first Sunday after the full moon that follows the spring equinox. Abstinence is also recommended on Christmas Eve and the eve of other feast days linked to the Virgin Mary (Purification, Annunciation, Assumption) or the Apostles (Pentecost, Peter, Paul). Certain Orthodox Churches also do weekly fasting (for example, every Friday to commemorate the crucifixion) and even extend abstinence to sexual relations, as well as the consumption of fish, eggs, oil, milk, or wine.

Christian mysticism has always attached great importance to the pair-

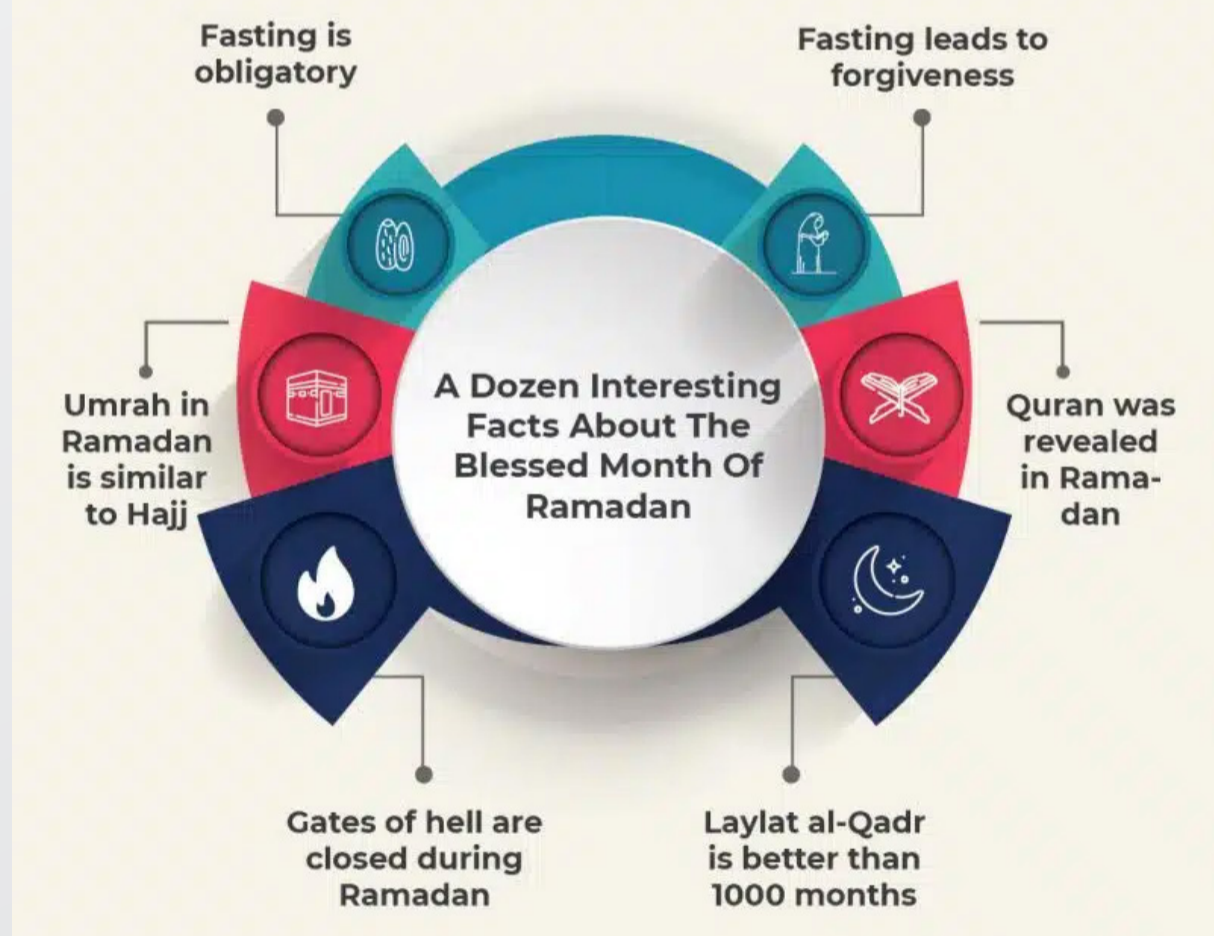
in eating and, above all, the generous act (vand shako) of offering food to those who are most in need of it. Rejecting the Islamic fasting of the month of Ramadan, the Bab, the forerunner of Bahaism, prescribed eating during the last month of the Bahai calendar. The subsequent coming of Bahá'u'lláh corroborated this prescription and, in addition, added a series of prayers (alwáh-e siyám) to be read during the period of fasting. The Bahai year therefore ends with a fast and begins with the feast of Naw-Rúz: New Year.

Fasting throughout the month of Ramadan is one of the five obligatory pillars of Islam. From sunrise to sunset, Muslims are forbidden to eat, or drink. Ramadan is the chapter in which the body and the soul fall into a dialogue of passion and restraint. In this season, humility, patience, and discipline of the spirit and the corpse are entwined to liberate them both into a world of harmony. Ramadan is said to be an auspicious month for revelation at all levels as it coincides with the revelation of the first verses of the Quran to the prophet of Islam, Mohammad (Peace Be upon Him). People put more effort into the practice of their faith and refrain from seeing, hearing, touching, or tasting any obscenity. The goal is to resist temptation in all forms. Purity of thoughts, intentions, and actions is emphasized and the road to self-discipline, self-control, sacrifice, compassion, and affection is paved by willpower and endurance.

People are not, however, expected to relinquish their daily routine and occupation despite the challenge of fasting. These hardships are meant to carve an ascetic sense of spiritual satisfaction out of the persistence of individuals. Ramadan is not only a wonderful time for dialogue of the soul and the body but a dialectic of the spirit and the corpse in which the truth of our mortality comes face to face with our immortal possibilities of goodness through the doors of remorse, redemption, and reformation and hopefully attains the fine attainment of the body and the soul, the worldly and the celestial, and the godly and the human in persistence and endurance as they attempt to create a meaningful space where they all can function in harmony.

Ramadan is also the month of the Quran, as it was in this month that the revelation began. Muslims therefore fast during the day and complete the reading of the entire sacred book. As in other traditions, the end of Ramadan also culminates in a great feast: Idd ul Fitr Happy Ramadan & Happy Feast of Fitr!

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Hippocrates, who has always regarded fasting as a means of detoxification and a purifying or cathartic therapy. Western alchemical tradition, largely inherited from ancient Greek thought, uses abstinence as a metaphor for its purifying operations or rites of fire. Imitating nature, alchemists regard as impure any "natural function that is not in action" and which, therefore, entails disorder and corruption. Bodily excretions are an example of this, due to their excess and residual dysfunction.

As Zosimos of Panopolis used to say: "Let your body fast, restrain your passions; if you control yourself, you will attract the divine being". The process of transmutation is not the goal but rather the preparatory path or prior condition that leads to the final transformation that is the "Great Work". Both Moses

Although fasting has a fundamental role in the entire Christian monastic and saintly tradition, the various Churches do not encourage their faithful to fast but rather recommend certain restrictions on food and drink. These are called fasts because the intention is the same as fasting: to encourage repentance or penitence that will lead to the faithful's sins being pardoned. Lent is the 40 days of preparation before Easter and the most important fast in Christianity, but not the only one.

During this period, and especially on specific days such as Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, or every Friday, it is recommended that Christians practice austerity in their meals by mainly abstaining from eating meat. The count is always lunar: Easter, as part of Holy

of fasting and prayer, and many currents arising from the Reformation have continued to do so, especially the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), the Seventh Day Adventist Christian Church (Adventists) and the Church of the Morning After (Mormons), where it is highly recommended for its physical and spiritual benefits. Joseph Smith, the precursor of the Mormon movement, recommended "to fast and pray fervently" at least one Sunday of every month.

In the same way that Jesus criticized the ostentatiousness of the fasting of the Jews of his time, Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, criticized the hollowiness of Hindu and Muslim fasts. Sikhism does not prescribe any kind of obligatory fasting, but it does recommend moderation

10 Ways Consuming Walnuts In The Morning Can Boost Your Health

Walnuts are nuts that come from the Juglans genus of trees. They have a hard shell, which when cracked open, reveals a wrinkled, edible seed. Walnuts are considered to be very healthy. They are packed with nutrients such as omega-3 fatty acids, protein, fibre, vitamins, and minerals.

They also contain antioxidants, which help combat inflammation and oxidative stress in the body. Eating walnuts regularly has been associated with various health

benefits, including improved heart health, brain function, and reduced risk of certain cancers.

Consuming walnuts in the morning daily can indeed be beneficial. As a good source of protein, healthy fats, and fibre, they provide a satisfying and nutritious breakfast option. The combination of these nutrients helps keep you full, provides sustained energy, and may even aid in weight management. Read on as we share the many benefits of consuming walnuts each morning.

Here are some ways in which

walnuts can benefit our health:

- 1. Heart health**
Walnuts are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which have been shown to reduce inflammation and promote heart health by reducing the risk of heart disease and improving cholesterol levels.
- 2. Brain function**
The high levels of omega-3 fatty acids in walnuts support brain health, improve memory, and enhance cognitive function.
- 3. Weight management**
Despite being calorie-dense, walnuts can help with weight management. Their combination of healthy fats, protein,

and fibre helps keep you feeling full and satisfied, reducing overeating.

- 4. Antioxidant effects**
Walnuts are a rich source of antioxidants, particularly polyphenols, which help protect our cells from damage caused by free radicals. This can aid in reducing the risk of chronic diseases like cancer and heart disease.
- 5. Anti-inflammatory properties**
The omega-3 fatty acids and polyphenols present in walnuts exert anti-inflammatory effects, helping to reduce chronic inflammation in the body and

potentially mitigating the risk of various diseases.

- 6. Blood sugar regulation**
Walnuts have a low glycemic index and are a good source of fibre and healthy fats. These factors contribute to better blood sugar control, making them a suitable choice for individuals with diabetes or those at risk.
- 7. Digestive health**
The fibre content in walnuts supports healthy digestion by promoting regular bowel movements and preventing constipation.
- 8. Bone health**
Walnuts are a good source

of minerals such as calcium, magnesium, and phosphorus, which are essential for maintaining healthy bones and preventing conditions like osteoporosis.

- 9. Eye health**
Walnuts contain antioxidants like vitamin E and omega-3 fatty acids, which are beneficial for eye health and may help prevent age-related macular degeneration.
- 10. Skin health**
The combination of healthy fats, vitamin E, and antioxidants in walnuts supports skin health by reducing oxidative stress and promoting collagen

production, aiding in maintaining healthy and youthful-looking skin.

Besides consuming walnuts in the morning, you can incorporate them into your diet in various ways, such as adding them to salads, oatmeal, smoothies, or using them as a topping for yogurt. However, it's important to note that walnuts are high in calories, so moderation is key. Consulting with a healthcare professional or a registered dietitian can provide personalised recommendations for incorporating walnuts into your diet based on your specific health needs.

FROM THE FRONT PAGE

Committed To

of Navy rescuing the hijacked Bulgarian ship "Ruen" and its crew, including 7 Bulgarian citizens."

Meanwhile, Bulgaria's foreign minister Mariya Gabriel in a Facebook post said on Saturday that she held a conversation with the Indian Ambassador to Bulgaria Sanjay Rana for the Indian Navy's Operation on MV Ruen and thanked him for rescuing Bulgarian nationals.

In a recent post on Facebook Bulgaria's foreign minister Mariya Gabriel said, "Today, March 16, with the help of the Indian Navy, the crew of the ship "Rouen" hijacked on December 14, 2023, including seven Bulgarian citizens, was released."

"Thanks to the efforts of the Indian military, the entire crew of the ship was freed. All sailors are in good health and efforts are currently being made for their timely return to Bulgaria," she added.

Speaking regarding the incident, she stated that the ship "Rouen" with eight Bulgarians, nine Myanmar and one Angolan citizen on board was captured by pirates in the Arabian Sea in December last year. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in close cooperation with all competent institutions, the overseas representations of the Republic of Bulgaria in the region and international partners is actively involved in the efforts to release the Bulgarian crew."

On March 16, at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a conversation was also held with the Indian ambassador in Sofia, Ambassador Sanjay Rana and an additional request was made to the Indian side for assistance and to take all possible actions to protect the life and health of the crew.

She added in her statement, "I am extremely grateful for the assistance of the Indian side in the process of releasing the Bulgarian sailors." (ANI)

LG Chairs A

The Lt Governor directed the officials to conduct an analysis of the facilities extended to the patients in Hospitals and Health centres and work out a strategy to further improve the functioning of the healthcare facilities.

He said the principals must ensure the optimal utilization of medical equipments in their respective hospitals and 3-Tier faculty structure should be implemented without any delay.

The Lt Governor directed for increasing the utilization of AB-PMJAY – SEHAT cards in government-run hospitals, besides streamlining of procurement of medicines and online appointments in the hospitals.

On the progress of Cancer Institute Jammu, the Chair was informed that the essential equipments have been procured and the facility will be made fully operational in the next few months.

Directions were issued for monitoring of the functioning of J&K Medical Supplies Corporation Limited and Drug de-addiction centres, and taking dedicated measures to control diseases like Tuberculosis (TB) and AIDS.

The Lt Governor also reviewed the human resources in Hospitals, Para Medical & Nursing Colleges. He directed that the vacant posts in SKIMS should be referred to JKSSB and PSC.

The meeting discussed important matters related to healthcare projects including Cancer Institute SKIMS, Srinagar; Bone & Joint Hospital Jammu; extension of Labour Room at SMGS Hospital, Jammu; Construction of 200 Bedded additional block at LD Hospital, Srinagar; Operationalization of Integrated Ayush Hospital at Harwan, and the achievements registered under National Health Mission and Ayushman Bhav campaign.

Sh Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to Lt Governor; Sh Atal Dulloo, Chief Secretary; Sh Santosh D Vaidya, Principal Secretary, Finance Department; Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor; Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, Secretary, Health; Administrative Secretaries; Principals of GMCs, HoDs and senior officials attended the meeting, in person and through virtual mode.

falsified academic credentials. Sharma was promoted to the position of in-charge lecturer in 2004, following which she was posted at Government Higher Secondary School in Mansar. However, her failure to provide original qualification documents led to the suspension of her allowances between 2004 and 2006.

Official reports divulged that the School Education Department issued an order on March 5, instructing the Chief Education Officers of Samba and Kathua districts to reassign Sharma and Chanyal to teaching roles. Both teachers have been directed to report to the office of the Chief Education Officer in their respective districts—(KNO)

Ramadan Boosts

downtown Srinagar.

He added that from traditional breads to other bakery stuff, shelves of his shop are constantly replenished to meet the high demand.

Similarly, pickle vendors are witnessing a spike in sales as customers seek to enhance their iftar and suhoor meals with the flavourful addition of pickled delights.

"Ramadan is a special time for us as our pickles fly off the shelves," said a pickle seller in Srinagar's downtown.

He added the tangy flavors of mango, lemon, and mixed vegetables complement the fasting experience for many.

Moreover, for the proprietors, Ramadan brings a surge in sales and a sense of joy as customers clamor for their delectable offerings.

Similarly, Zahoor, a local said that bakery items and pickles are not just food items for them but an essential part of Ramadan.

He added that sharing these delicacies with family and friends adds to the sense of community and togetherness during this blessed month—(KNO)

mands across the world and the common people also feel confident under the Government headed by Shri Narendra Modi," he said.

Sgr-Leh Highway

team, particularly in the stretch from Zojila to Matayan Drass, known for its heavy avalanche risk. However, through perseverance and dedication, both entities successfully reached Zero Point, a critical milestone in the reopening process.

Dr. Jaffer, Chief Executive Councillor of the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council Kargil, personally inspected the progress of snow clearance at Zojila Pass and commended the efforts of the BRO team and Project Vijayak.

He expressed confidence that the pass would be fully connected within the next two days, signaling relief for travelers and residents alike—(KNO)

DGP Reviews

by 18-km Banihal-Qazigund in June 2013 and 25-km Udhampur-Katra in July 2014.

The work on the remaining railway line between Katra and Sangaldan is likely to be completed by May or June this year, the officials said.

The Director General of Police (DGP) reached Banihal railway station this afternoon and later conducted an inspection of the newly completed railway track before chairing a review meeting with senior railway and police officers at railway station Sangaldan, they said.

"I have come to review the security of this national prestigious project," said the police chief, who was accompanied by Deputy Commissioner Ramban, Additional Director General of Police, Jammu, Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP), Ramban, SSP national highway traffic and railway, and government railway police officer. (Agencies)

Varsities Should

makers. In order to make it work efficiently for the benefit of society, we must focus on relevant subjects, research and innovation to contribute in transformation of villages and towns, he added.

At the inaugural ceremony, the Lt Governor impressed upon the teaching community to reinvent classroom learning and mentor the students to unleash their true potential.

To make educational institutions relevant in the future, teachers should ignite the creativity within the students and make their consciousness pure, simple, easy and independent, the Lt Governor said.

"Education should help the students to develop the consciousness full of courage and it should be future-oriented. The education should inspire the students on adventurous exploration and passion for generating new ideas, new research and innovations," he added.

The Lt Governor further emphasized on implementing National Education Policy 2020 in letter and spirit and to connect the young generation with India's rich culture and ancient knowledge systems.

The Lt Governor visited the photo exhibition of College on Wheels and stalls put up by various educational institutions and departments.

He said the 'College on Wheels' initiative helps students to uncover their unique and unmatched personality and achieve the potential that they can be. He further observed that the initiative provides lifetime opportunity to students to learn through experience, focus on interdisciplinary collaboration and creativity.

Goonj-2024 has been curated to celebrate vibrant and diverse culture, offers educational institutions to highlight their strengths, promote collaboration and contribute to strengthen the educational landscape in J&K UT.

Prof. Dinesh Singh, Vice Chairman Higher Education Council J&K, while speaking on the occasion, emphasized that higher education institutions should make sure their activities and initiatives have a positive impact on society.

The Lt Governor also released a souvenir of the Fest and publications related to College on Wheels initiative and project report of the University of Jammu. A documentary about 'College on Wheels' was showcased on the occasion.

Earlier, the Lt Governor took salute at an impressive march past by the contingent of students and also paid tributes to General Zorawar Singh.

Prof. Umesh Rai, Vice Chancellor Jammu University; Prof. Bechan Lal, Vice Chancellor Cluster University of Jammu; Heads of various Universities and Educational Institutions, faculty members, senior officials and students in large number were present.

Night Temp

by 2.2°C for the summer capital of JK for this time of the year.

Qazigund recorded a minimum of 2.2°C against 2.8°C on the previous night and it was 1.4°C below normal for the gateway town of Kashmir, he said.

Pahalgam recorded a low of minus 0.9°C against minus 1.3°C on the previous night and it was 1.0°C below normal for the famous resort in south Kashmir.

Kokernag, also in south Kashmir, recorded a minimum of 3.8°C against 3.2°C on the previous night and it was 0.3°C above normal, the official said.

Kupwara town recorded a low of 1.5°C against 1.3°C on the previous night and it was 1.6°C below normal there, the official said.

Gulmarg recorded a low of minus 1.0°C against minus 0.5°C on the previous night and it was above normal by 1.3°C for the world famous skiing resort in north Kashmir's Baramulla district.

Jammu, he said, recorded a minimum of 14.4°C and it was below normal by 0.5°C for the winter capital of J&K.

Banihal recorded a low of 5.0°C, Batote 8.3°C and Bhandarwah 4.6°C, he said.

"From March 21-22, generally cloudy weather with possibility of light rain/snow is expected at many places with thunder/lightning & gusty winds over plains of Kashmir & Jammu Division," he said, adding, "On March 23, generally dry weather is expected while partly to generally cloudy weather with light rain/snow at few places is expected on March 24-25." (GNS)

SED Demotes

Reports inform that an investigation revealed that both teachers had obtained postgraduate degrees in Chemistry from Magadh University in 2003, despite the university not offering such a course at the time. As a result, Anita Sharma, currently serving as the Principal of Higher Secondary School in Sarna, Samba, and Raman Chanyal, Principal of Higher Secondary School in Machhedhi, Kathua, have been directed to resume their duties as teachers.

The disciplinary action comes after it was discovered that Sharma and Chanyal had advanced in their careers based on

Srinagar's Famed

directed concerned officer of Floriculture to facilitate online ticketing and put QR Code scanning facilities at different locations for the convenience of tourists.

He also enjoined the operation of colorful lights to enhance the visual vibrancy of the place.

Moreover, he directed SMC to conduct a sanitation and cleanliness drive at the garden besides ensuring availability of a separate mobile toilet facility for Ladies and Gents at the venue.

Further, he directed the concerned for repairing potholes on the roads leading to the garden.

The meeting was informed that the department has added 4 Kanals of additional parking space at the garden for the convenience of visitors.

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Thousands line streets as PM Modi holds roadshow in Kerala's Palakkad

IAN S

PALAKKAD: Prime Minister Narendra Modi's first roadshow in Kerala after the Lok Sabha election announcement drew thousands of people on Tuesday.

PM Modi arrived in Palakkad after a gap of four years, and this time his only engagement was a one km roadshow, after which he left for Salem in Tamil Nadu.

Arriving by helicopter at the Mercy College ground around 10.45 a.m, PM Modi drove in his vehicle to the start of the roadshow at Anjuvileku where he got into a decked up open jeep. Throughout the route 'Jai Jai Modi and Bharat Mata Ki Jai' slogans reverberated. The roadshow ended at the Head Post office road.

Men, women and children were seen waving to PM Modi, who was accompanied by the state BJP president K. Surendran and the BJP candidate from Palakkad, C. Krishnakumar. Also standing beside the Prime Minister was the BJP candidate from Ponnani -- Nivedita Subramanian. Soon after alighting



from the vehicle after the roadshow. Surendran said, "Just see the massive crowd and the signs are very ominous that PM Modi has walked into the hearts of all who came to see him. Now just wait and see what's going to be the outcome."

Krishnakumar could not hide his happiness and said, "Where ever PM Modiji has gone to in Kerala, people are giving the feedback that there is going to be a change this time...Palakkad gave him a loving welcome and

it was seen on people's faces. Each one of us is excited as this visit is definitely going to bring a huge change here."

"We just came to see world leader Modiji and we have been waiting since morning. The heat is unbearable, but we were determined to see Modiji who has taken our country to greater heights," said a group of people who were happy to see the PM wave at them.

This is the fifth visit by PM Modi to Kerala since

the New Year began and the previous visit was when he arrived to address an election rally at Pathanamthitta last Friday.

Palakkad for the BJP is special as it was in this district that the BJP was able to govern the prestigious Palakkad municipality on its own strength in 2015 and they repeated it five years later also.

Also the BJP finished second in two constituencies -- Palakkad and Malampuzha in the 2021 Assembly polls.

Ahmedabad-Mumbai bullet train to be launched in 2026: Ashwini Vaishnaw

IAN S

NEW DELHI: Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said on Tuesday that the Ahmedabad-Mumbai bullet train will be launched in 2026.

"India's first bullet train will be ready in 2026, and will run in one section from Surat," the minister said.

He said significant progress has been made in the construction of various stations and work has begun on the sea tunnel through which the train will reach Mumbai from Thane.

The Railway Minister had earlier shared a video of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad 'Bullet train' corridor which will cut the travel time on the 508 km route between the two cities to a mere 2 hours.

"Stay tuned for #BulletTrain in Modi 3.0!," the minister had posted on X.

The video highlights some of the features of the state-of-the-art train project being built with an investment of Rs 1.08 lakh crore. These include:



*The Bullet train is expected to touch a maximum speed of 320 kilometres per hour on the route.

*The corridor will feature a slab track system, a technology to be used for the first time in India.

*As many as 24 river bridges, 28 steel bridges, and seven mountain tunnels are being erected for the Bullet train route.

*The corridor will also have a 7 km undersea tunnel

The video described the project as "a marvel of

world-class engineering" and the "future of India."

The objective of the project is to develop a high-frequency mass transportation system by constructing the High-Speed Rail between Mumbai and Ahmedabad, using Japan's Shinkansen technology (also known as the Bullet Train), thereby enhancing mobility in India and contributing to regional economic development.

On December 21, 2023, the government signed a loan agreement with Japan

International Cooperation Agency (JICA) to provide an Official Development Assistance loan of 400 billion Japanese Yen (approx. Rs 22,627 crore) as the 5th tranche for the construction of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail project.

The agreement also provides for the deployment of Japanese Shinkansen experts to work alongside the executing agency, the National High-Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL).

US special envoy on Afghanistan to visit India this week

IAN S

NEW DELHI: The US special representative for Afghanistan, Thomas West, will be travelling to India this week to hold consultations on working together to support Afghan people who continue to reel under a severe humanitarian crisis.

West's visit comes just after an Indian delegation met Taliban's Foreign Minister Amir Khan Mottaqi in Kabul earlier this month to discuss humanitarian assistance and trade.

"This week I will travel to India and the United Arab Emirates to meet with our partners about working together to support Afghans," West said in a post on X on Tuesday.

West, who travelled to India in December 2022, had commended Afghanistan's closest neighbour for working towards protecting civilians in the strife-torn region with "critical humanitarian aid".

The takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban in August 2021 has exacerbated the country's humani-

tarian situation, leaving an estimated 28.3 million Afghans in dire need of food assistance, medical supplies, and other support.

According to a 2023 UN report, more than eight million Afghans have been driven out of their homes or their country due to conflict, violence and abject poverty, and at least 3.2 million Afghans are displaced within their own country.

Last year, the Indian government sent 47,500 metric tonnes of wheat and 200 tonnes of medical aid to Afghanistan.

To facilitate the internal distribution of wheat, India has collaborated with the United Nations World Food Programme (UNWFP).

The visit by West, who engages with the Taliban and works to mobilise international support for the people of Afghanistan, comes just after Pakistan on Monday launched airstrikes in the border regions of the country, reportedly killing at least eight civilians, including three children.

2 retired UP cops get life term for 1994 rape case

IAN S

MUZAFFARNAGAR: The court of the additional district judge (ADJ), Muzaffarnagar, on Monday, sentenced two former Pradesh Armed Constabulary (PAC) constables to life imprisonment for raping and robbing a female protester from Uttar Pradesh in the 30-year-old Rampur Tiraha incident here.

"The court convicted the two constables, Milap Singh and Virendra Pratap, and pronounced punishment," said additional district government counsel of Muzaffarnagar, Pravendra Kumar.

He added that both retired constables were sent to jail to serve life imprisonment and were also fined Rs 50,000 each. The convicted PAC constables were posted in 41st battalion of PAC which was camped in Ghaziabad during the time of incident.

At least seven Uttar Pradesh activists were killed, and many women activists were allegedly molested during police

firing at Rampur Tiraha in Muzaffarnagar on October 1, 1994.

The activists were on their way to Delhi from Rishikesh to raise their demand for a separate state of Uttar Pradesh that was later carved out of Uttar Pradesh on November 9, 2000.

As per the district counsel, the court of ADJ Shakti Singh convicted now retired PAC constables Milap Singh and Virendra Pratap under Sections 354, 376 (2) (G), 392 and 509 of the Indian Penal Code.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) presented 15 eyewitnesses in the court, including the then Uttar Pradesh Home Secretary Deepthi Vilas, who were examined during the hearing.

CBI's Deputy Superintendent of Police, S.R. Agarwal, had lodged a case in Rampur Tiraha incident on January 25, 1995, and miscellaneous writs filed by Uttar Pradesh Sangharsh Samiti in the case were also included in it for investigation.

Sita Soren, daughter-in-law of Shibu Soren, quits party ahead of LS polls

IAN S

RANCHI: Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM) MLA Sita Soren, the daughter-in-law of party chief Shibu Soren, resigned from all party posts on Tuesday and also announced giving up primary membership of the party, ahead of the Lok Sabha elections 2024.

Sita Soren, wife of late Durga Soren, in a letter to Shibu Soren, said, "I, Sita Soren, Central General Secretary of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and active member and current MLA, am resigning with a very heavy heart."

"Since the demise of my late husband, Shri

Durga Soren, who was a leading warrior of the Jharkhand movement and a great revolutionary, I and my family have been victims of continuous neglect. We have been isolated by the party and family members, which has been extremely painful for me. I had hoped that the situation would improve with time, but unfortunately it did not happen."

Sita Soren, sister-in-law of former Jharkhand chief minister Hemant Soren, said. Sita Soren, the MLA of Jama constituency, was reportedly angry at not being made a minister in the new government



formed under the leadership of Champai Soren after Hemant Soren was arrested by the ED and sent to jail.

"Jharkhand Mukti Morcha, which my late husband had made a great party on the strength of his sacrifice, dedication and leadership ability, is no more today. I feel deeply saddened to see this. The

party has now fallen into the hands of those whose vision and objectives do not match our values and ideals," she lamented.

"Despite the tireless efforts of Shri Shibu Soren (Guruji Baba) who worked hard to keep us all together, unfortunately his efforts also failed. I have recently come to know that there is a deep-rooted conspiracy against me and my family also. A conspiracy is being hatched. I am very sad. I have firmly decided that I will have to leave Jharkhand Mukti Morcha and this family," Sita Soren added.

ECI replaces Bengal DGP again within 24 hours

IAN S



KOLKATA: The Election Commission of India (ECI) has replaced the Director General Police in West Bengal on Tuesday within just 24 hours since Vivek Sahay was designated for the chair replacing his predecessor Rajeev Kumar.

On Tuesday, a fresh notification was issued ordering the replacement of Sahay with Sanjoy Mukherjee, a 1989-batch IPS officer who is currently the Director General of Fire and Emergency Services Department.

On Monday, after the ECI ordered the removal of Rajeev Kumar, it sought three alternative names from the state government as replacement. Accordingly, the state government recommended Vivek Sahay (1988 batch), Sanjoy Mukherjee (1989 batch)

and Rajesh Kumar (1990) batch.

On the basis of seniority, the commission nominated Sahay. However, before he could even complete 24 hours in the new chair, he was replaced by Mukherjee.

Sources aware of the development said that Sahay is scheduled to retire from active services in May this year when all seven phases of polls in West Bengal will be completed. The last phase of polling in the state is scheduled for June 1.

"So, the commission thought it wise to appoint somebody in that chair who can continue since the beginning of the polls to end unless he is removed midway on charges of biasness," a senior official from the office of the Chief Electoral Officer (CEI), West Bengal said.

EX-Pak cricketer Javed Miandad acknowledges family ties with Dawood Ibrahim

IAN S

NEW DELHI: Former Pakistani cricketer legend Javed Miandad has openly accepted his association with underworld don Dawood Ibrahim, citing it as an honour.

The unexpected disclosure came to light during an interview in Pakistan where Miandad confessed to having known Dawood for a significant period and

children underscores the depth of their relationship, a connection that has largely remained concealed from the public eye until now.

Furthermore, Miandad went on to praise Dawood, suggesting that the reputed gangster had contributed significantly to the Muslim community. "The things Dawood has done for the Muslim community will be written in golden words,"

also led the nation to their only ODI World Cup win in 1992 and later held various positions in the Pakistan Cricket Board.

Miandad has a connection with Dawood, as his son, Junaid, has been married to the underworld don's daughter Mahrukh since 2005.

When the wedding took place in August 2005, Dawood apparently missed both the



reception and marriage, reportedly to avoid being photographed.

The underworld don is wanted for the Mumbai blasts of 1993, where around 250 people were killed in a series of bombings that rocked the city and changed it forever.

Miandad said, indicating a sense of admiration and respect for the controversial figure.

An ICC Cricket Hall-of-Fame inductee, Miandad is perhaps the most synonymous name with the country's cricketing triumphs. A brilliant batter, Miandad

BJP, PMK tie-up for LS polls in TN

IAN S

CHENNAI: The Vanniyar political party, PMK, on Tuesday announced that it has entered into a seat-sharing arrangement with the BJP-led NDA and will contest ten Lok Sabha seats.

The decision was taken during a meeting at the farmhouse of PMK founder, Dr. S. Ramadoss at Tindivanam, Chennai on Tuesday morning.

The agreement was signed by PMK State president, Dr. Anbumani Ramadoss and BJP state president K. Annamalai in the presence of PMK founder leader and father of Anbumani, Dr. S. Rama-



doss and Union Minister of State for Fisheries L. Murugan.

The BJP and AIADMK had been trying to garner the support and alliance with the PMK, but in the end the Vanniyar party was now aligned with the BJP.

The PMK has a minimum of 7 per cent vote

bank in Tamil Nadu with a strong presence in many northern districts of Tamil Nadu. The PMK founder leader Dr. S. Ramadoss was seeking an alliance with the AIADMK. Many of the senior leaders, including the party former state president, G.K. Mani was also in favour of an AIADMK alliance.

Government of Jammu and Kashmir
OFFICE OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER POSHAN (ICDS) NARBAL
CORRIGENDUM
 In view of advertisement notification for recruitment of Sanginis (Aanganwadi Workers) and Sahika (Aanganwadi Helper) vide No. 01 of 2024 dated: 01-03-2024 published vide DIPK-117341/23 dated: 02-03-2024 by this office. It is hereby informed that due to clerical/typing error ward no.04 Bonpora for the post of Aanganwadi Helper for the Panchayat Halqa Chewa Shall be treated as incorrect, and Ward No. 07 Bonpora Chewa shall be treated as correct instead of Ward No. 04 Bonpora Chewa (As mentioned in Annexure B of 01 of 2024) for the said post.
 No.CDPO/POSHAN/Nrb/Esst./2024/1871
 Dated:19-03-2024
 DIPK-18144-23
 DT: 19-03-2024
 Sd/
 Child Development project officer
 POSHAN (ICDS) Narbal

Treasuries to remain open in J&K from 29-31 March

GMK NEWS NETWORK
SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir government has decided to keep all treasuries of the UT open from 29th to 31 March. "It is hereby ordered that all the Treasuries of Jammu District including Civil Secretariat Treasury and New Delhi Treasury shall remain open on Friday 29th of March, 2024 for conducting government business." "The Civil Secretariat Treasury, J&K and Sub Treasury, New Delhi shall remain open on Saturday 30th of March, 2024 for conducting Government business and All Treasuries of UT of J&K including Civil Secretariat Treasury and Sub Treasury, New Delhi shall remain open on Sunday 31st of March, 2024 exclusively for purpose of receiving Government receipts only." Reads the order. "Last date/time for receipt of claims for disbursement at Treasury for the fiscal year 2023-24 shall be 29th of March, 2024 at 04:00 P.M. Treasury Officers shall communicate consolidated liability on 29th of March by 05:30 P.M. The bills / claims so presented in the Month of March are liable to Special Audit wherever required." It reads. "Any bill presented after the cut off time in the Treasury shall be entertained with the prior approval of Finance Department", it reads further.

DC Srinagar reviews preparations for Lok Sabha Elections



GMK NEWS NETWORK
SRINAGAR: Deputy Commissioner (DC/DEO) Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, who is also the District Election Officer Tuesday chaired a meeting of AROs of District Srinagar here at Meeting Hall of the DC Office Complex. Additional Deputy Commissioner (ARO-Zadibal), Dr Khalid Hus-sain Malik, Additional Deputy Commissioner (ARO- Hazratbal), Syed Ahmad Kataria and all other Assistant Returning Officers (AROs) of the District, and other concerned officers/officials including Deputy District Election Officer, Mir Imtiyaz Ul Aziz were present in the meeting. At the outset, the DEO/DC Srinagar held a detailed discussion with the Assistant Returning Officers (AROs) to review the arrangements being made for establishment of Strong Rooms at designated locations for safe custody & preparation of EVMS. The DC/DEO asked the AROs to visit their respective Strong Rooms and take up necessary measures for establishment of Strong Rooms, besides other required works.

India will have 10-15 lakh startups, 500 unicorns by 2029: BJP's Hitesh Jain

IANS
NEW DELHI: Startups are the ambassadors of 'Viksit Bharat' and by 2029, the country will have at least 10-15 lakh startups and about 500 unicorns, thus creating thousands of jobs for the youth, BJP Mumbai Pradesh Vice President Hitesh Jain said here on Tuesday. Talking to IANS at the 'Viksit Bharat Startup Mahakumbh 2024' event, Jain said that Prime Minister Narendra Modi has envisioned that by 2047, the country will become a developed nation and startups are the key to the economy. "In 2014, there were only 350 startups and today, the country has a rich and vibrant ecosystem of more than 1.25 lakh startups across the spectrum. In the next five years, we will have at least 10-15 lakh startups," he emphasised. According to Jain, thousands of innovators, entrepreneurs and investors who have come to the 'Startup Mahakumbh 2024' "believe in the idea of Viksit Bharat and see a bright future." Jain further said that the government has created a comprehensive and conducive startup policy with ease of doing business, along with making easy and friendly laws so that young entrepreneurs can do business with ease. The event, being organised at Bharat Mandapam in the national capital from March 18-20, aims to catalyse innovation, facilitate networking, and foster growth opportunities for startups, investors, incubators, accelerators and industry leaders across sectors. Over 1,000 startups, more than 1,000 investors, 5,000 future entrepreneurs and 40,000 business visitors are participating in 'Startup Mahakumbh'. One of the participants told IANS that 'Startup Mahakumbh' is raising awareness among entrepreneurs about the ecosystem and helping to expand their industry networks. "The Modi government is promoting the growing startup ecosystem in India," another participant commented.

Prominent political, social activists Join Apni Party

GMK NEWS NETWORK
SRINAGAR: Several prominent political and social leaders from Srinagar and Kulgam districts joined Apni Party during special events held at the party headquarters in Srinagar on Tuesday. On these occasions, the party president, Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari, gave a warm welcome to the new entrants and assured them that the entire party leadership would stand by them when they go out to serve the people in their respective areas. The new entrants from Srinagar included prominent social activist from Srinagar's Nowgam area Ms Sheraz Malik, Irfan Ahmad from Sonwar, Shabir Ahmad from Lasjan, Burhan from Zewan, Danish from Bemina, Shabir Ahmad from Sonwar, Ashraf Wani from Lasjan, and their associates. The party leaders who were present on the occasion to greet these new entrants included party's Provincial President Mohammad Ashraf Mir, Media Advisor Farooq Andrabi, State Convenor and District In Charge Ganderbal Haji Parvez Ahmad, District President Srinagar Noor Mohammad Sheikh, Senior Vice President (first) Srinagar Mohammad Shafi Mir, Provincial President for the party's Youth Wing Khalid Rathore, Provincial Organiser Kashmir and DDC member Harwan Shabir Ahmad Reshi, General Secretary of the party's ST Wing Khalid Bhadana, Provincial President ST Wing Rafiq Ahmad Balote, State Secretary of Youth Wing Tanveer Hussain Pathan, Senior Vice President Srinagar and In Charge for Habba Kadal constituency Jeelani Humid Kumar, District Youth President and In Charge for the Khanyar constituency Mohsin Zaffar Shah, District Publicity Secretary Adil Bhat, District Organiser Srinagar Sheikh Nisar, Senior Worker Parvez Ahmad, and others. The new entrant from Kulgam was Sareer Ahmad Sheikh, former Vice Chairman Municipal Committee Kulgam. The party president Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari along with several senior party leaders greeted these new members into the party fold. The prominent party leaders who were present on the occasion included the party's Media Advisor Farooq Andrabi, Vice Chairperson DDC Kulgam Shazia Jan, General Secretary of the party's ST Wing Khalid Bhadana, Constituency IN Charge Langate Khwaja Munawar, Senior Leader Dawood Lodhi, District Youth President Kulgam Mohammad Ashraf Dar, Youth President Uri Sajad Ahmad Sheikh, and others.

Integrated Election Control Room established in Srinagar

GMK NEWS NETWORK
SRINAGAR: In order to ensure better coordination among line Departments for smooth conduct of upcoming Lok Sabha election related activities and to monitor violations of model code of conduct (MCC), if any, an Integrated Election Control Room and Media Certification and Monitoring Committee (MCMC) Centre has been established here at DC/DEO Office Srinagar. The DC Srinagar/District Election Officer Srinagar, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat today inspected the Integrated Election Control Room and MCMC Centre equipped with latest technologies for smooth, fair and transparent conduct of the Lok Sabha elections-2024 in the District. The DC/DEO took stock of the facilities and equipment's installed at both the facilities and also interacted with the designated Nodal Officers and deployed staff. On the occasion, the DC/DEO said that as per the directions of the Election Commission of India, the Integrated Election Control Room has been set up as a tool to effectively coordinate the functioning of various agencies engaged in the election process. He said that the Integrated Election Control Room will have Call receiving facility on 1950, Model Code of Conduct (MCC) scrutiny of media channels, Social Media analysis, C-vigil teams and General grievances related to the election through ECI portal. Similarly, the Media Certification and Monitoring Committee (MCMC) Centre at the District Level will work as per the guidelines of the Election Commission of India to keep close vigil on paid news during the Lok Sabha Elections-2024. The MCMC will provide certification after scrutinizing Political Advertisements to be telecast / broadcast over TV / Radio Channels / Audio - Video displays / cinema halls / Internet based media / Websites including Social Media, e-papers & Cable Network during General Elections. Nodal Officer MCMC, Ahsan ul Haq Chisti, Nodal Officer, Integrated Election Control Room, Mirza Shahid Ali and other concerned accompanied the DC/DEO during the visit. Emphasis was laid on to have proactive approach and sensitize the staff down the line to ensure free, fair, transparent and seamless conduct of the Lok Sabha Elections.

Kejriwal creating anarchic situation: Chugh

GMK NEWS NETWORK
CHANDIGARH: BJP national general secretary Tarun Chugh Tuesday came down heavily on Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal for defying the agencies which have been investigating his corruption and creating an anarchic situation. In a statement here today Chugh said the ED has issued summons for the ninth time to ask him to appear for interrogation but he has been doggedly defying to disrupt the investigation. He said it reflects how Kejriwal has been defying and insulting the constitutional offices to escape the interrogation. If he is confident that he has done no irregularity as a chief minister where is the reason for him to disobey the ED summons in the last six months?, asked Chugh. He said at a time when most of his senior ministers were behind the bars for their alleged involvement in corruption, Kejriwal as head of the entire team, is trying to escape the interrogation.

J&K Apni Party open to pre-poll alliance with like-minded parties

GMK NEWS NETWORK
SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party (JKAP) expressed openness on Tuesday to forming a pre-poll alliance with "like-minded parties" in the Union Territory ahead of the upcoming Lok Sabha elections. Apni Party general secretary Rafi Mir said, "We have proposed discussions with various like-minded parties interested in advancing the welfare of the people of J-K. If they reach out to us, we will engage in serious dialogue to serve the interests of the people." Mir emphasized that the party aims to invite other like-minded parties to collaborate and forge an alliance for the betterment of J-K's residents. "We will extend invitations to all like-minded parties to contest elections together. This is just the beginning. We anticipate receiving approaches and will also initiate discussions. The party president has been authorized to lead these discussions, and we anticipate finalizing the alliance in a day or two," he elaborated. Mir noted that while the Apni Party holds some ideological differences with the BJP, discussions with them are currently challenging. "We will reassess the situation in the future. At present, we are focused on contesting based on our own strengths," he concluded.

SDH Tanghdar lacks CT Scan facility

PEERZADA SAYEED
KARNAH: Residents of Karnah on Tuesday expressed anger over lack of CT Scan facility at the Sub-District Hospital (SDH) Tanghdar, and appealed to concerned authorities to look into the matter for the larger interest of patient healthcare. Locals said that the absence of CT Scan facility has left the local population in distress, especially during in emergency hours. "The absence of a CT Scan facility in SDH Tanghdar has hampered the hospital's ability to provide timely and accurate diagnostic services to the patients, who are compelled to travel long distances to access the services," locals told KNS and added, "The lack of the service causes delay in diagnosis and treatment to the needy patients". General Secretary Civil Society Karnah Waqar Ahmad told KNS that the delay in diagnosis and treatment make significant difference on the health of patients who have no option left to visit far away locations to address their medical emergencies. He said the absence of the facility not only affects the patients but also places additional stress on the limited healthcare resources available in the region. The community leaders have appealed to government to prioritize the healthcare needs of the region by ensuring that essential facilities are readily available. Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Tanghdar Mohammad Ramazan said that the matter has already been taken up with higher authorities. "Hope the matter will be addressed at the earliest," CMO added. (KNS)



Adani Vizhinjam Port wins 'International Safety Award'

IANS
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM: In recognition of its commitment to keeping workers and workplaces healthy and safe, Adani Vizhinjam Port Private Limited (AVPPL) has won the 'International Safety Award' for 2023 from the British Safety Council. AVPPL is one of 269 global organisations to win a 'Distinction in the International Safety Awards 2024', of the total 1,124 that won the award. "This achievement underscores our unwavering commitment to maintaining the highest safety standards across all our operations. It's a testament to the dedication and hard work of our entire team, and it reaffirms our position in building the safest port in the country," said Ashwani Gupta, CEO, Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (APSEZ). APSEZ, a part of the globally diversified Adani Group, has evolved from a port company to an integrated transport utility providing an end-to-end solution from its port gate to customer gate. "Our heartfelt congratulations to Adani Vizhinjam Port Private Limited; all of those working there should be enormously proud of their achievement," said Mike Robinson, Chief Executive of British Safety Council. APSEZ is the largest port developer and operator in India with seven strategically located ports and terminals on the west coast and seven ports and terminals on the east coast, representing 27 per cent of the country's total port volumes, thus providing capabilities to handle vast amounts of cargo from both coastal areas and the hinterland.



No issue over seat sharing within INDIA alliance in J&K: Farooq Abdullah

GMK NEWS NETWORK
SRINAGAR: National Conference (NC) President Dr. Farooq Abdullah Tuesday said that there is no issue over seat sharing with the INDIA alliance partners, and reiterated that the party will contest on all three Lok Sabha seats in Kashmir. "The three seats National Conference won earlier are the seats of the INDIA alliance and we will contest elections on these seats in the coming elections", Abdullah told reporters at Hazratbal Srinagar. "INDIA alliance is not meant for seat sharing. We are all partners to defeat those who snatched everything from us," Abdullah said. When asked if NC went ahead, it would not leave any space for the PDP in the INDIA block, Abdullah said "the alliance aims to defeat those forces who are hell bent on destroying our identity."



Panic grips Budgam's Samsan village after twin leopard attack incidents

NAVEED UL HAQ
BUDGAM: Panic has gripped the entire Samsan village in Central Kashmir's Budgam district after two recent leopard attack incidents have occurred in the vicinity within a week. The locals however urged the administration to capture the leopard and ensure their safety. The first attack occurred last Monday in which a minor girl was killed while a minor boy was injured in the second attack that took place just a week later in the same village. BO wildlife department Budgam said that the department has been active in the village since the first incident, intensifying search operations and increasing manpower to catch the leopard. "The efforts are on to catch the leopard. The dense bushes and Karewas in the area provide hiding spots for the leopard, but we are vigilant," he said. Officials have advised residents to stay indoors, especially during morning and evening hours, to avoid further attacks until the leopard is captured. The rise in human-animal conflicts has heightened fear among the villagers, prompting urgent appeals for action from the administration. "The recent leopard attacks have left us trembling with fear. We can't even step out of our homes without worrying about the safety of our children. It's a nightmare that we never imagined facing in our own village," said Javed, a resident of Samsan village, whose son was injured in the attack. "We demand immediate action from the authorities to catch this leopard before it claims more innocent lives," Mehmooda, another concerned villager said—(KNO)



PDD suspends 12 employees, initiates disciplinary proceedings

AGENCIES
SRINAGAR: The government Tuesday suspended twelve employees of Power Development Department and initiated disciplinary proceedings against them. Principal Secretary Power Development Department H Rajesh Prasad in this regard has issued suspension orders against 12 employees. The suspension and disciplinary proceedings have been initiated against five In-charge Assistant Executive Engineers (AEE's), two Assistant Engineers (AE's) and five Junior Engineers. Prasad in different suspension orders of the employees of KPDCCL and JPDCL said that the disciplinary proceedings under rule-33 of the J&K Civil Services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules, 1956 are contemplated against them. Accordingly, the Principal Secretary therefore placed all the 12 employees under suspension with immediate effect. "The suspended officers shall remain attached with the concerned Executive Engineers till further orders," it reads—(KNO)