

Dr Sehrish Asgar presides Gram sabha meeting at Fatehpora....



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Srinagar
Tuesday
April 11 | 2023
Ramadan 20 | 1444
Pages: 12
Price: Rs 02/-

Nitin Gadkari, LG Inspect Zojila Tunnel

Kashmir's Tourism Will Increase By 2 To 3 Times Once Zojila Tunnel Is Built: Nitin Gadkari

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 10: Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari along with a 13-member Parliamentary committee on Monday reviewed the construction work of the strategic Zojila tunnel, which will provide all-weather connectivity between Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

While terming the tunnel historic, the minister said that the project is part of a dream to connect the Kashmir valley with Kanyakumari.

The Union minister also announced
Turn.....Nitin Gadkari, LG.....Pg 02



Ready to tackle any Covid situation: J&K Govt

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 10: Jammu and Kashmir government on Monday emphasized that it is ready to tackle any Covid situation that may arise in near future.

Talking to media persons on the sidelines of a mock drill conducted at JawaharLal Nehru Memorial (JLNM) Hospital in Srinagar on Monday Secretary Health and Medical Education Bhupinder Kumar, said that the government is prepared to tackle any Covid situation that may come in the future.

He said, the rate of covid-19 cases are appearing in Jammu and Kashmir but not seen any increase in daily hospitalization.

Today all over the country a mock drill was conducted to see the preparedness to tackle the rising Covid-19 cases and to assess the preparedness if any sort of emergency arises in case of hospitalizations of the patients.

He said an exercise was being conducted all over Jammu and Kashmir today including JLNM Hospital to assess the
Turn.....Read to tackle.....Pg 02

1.7 Lakh Students with 96.6% Pass J&K Middle Standard Exam

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 10: The State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), Monday, announced the Middle Standard Result for the academic year 2022-23. This marks a significant moment as it is the first time the government has implemented a unified academic calendar in J&K UT and conducted exams during the March-April session.

Approximately 175,547 students from both government and private schools in all the 20 districts of J&K took the examination of the second term of the academic year 2022-23. The UT of J&K was divided into two zones: Soft and Hard, to ensure a smooth and efficient examination process.



"The results have been overwhelmingly positive, with a total 169,564 candidates qualifying, resulting in an impressive overall pass percentage of 96.6," the Joint Director said.

The Jammu Division saw a total of 88,506 candidates appearing for the exam, out
Turn.....1.7 Lakh Students.....Pg 02

NEWS BRIEF

Mattu resigns as Apni Party youth president

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 10: Apni Party leader and Srinagar Mayor Junaid Mattu on Monday resigned as president of the party's youth wing.

Mattu was appointed as the youth president by the Apni Party in February 2021. Announcing his resignation
Turn.....Mattu resigns.....Pg 02

3 Employees of ARTO Sopore arrested by ACB

HT News Network

SOPORE, APR 10: Three Consolidated Workers (Employees) of Assistant Regional Transport Office Sopore have been arrested by Special Team of Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Monday from ARTO office at Sopore.
Turn.....3 Employees of ARTO.....Pg 02

Drug peddler held in Pattan; Police

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 10: Continuing its efforts to eradicate the menace of drugs from the society, Police on Monday have arrested drug peddler in North Kashmir's Baramulla district and recovered contraband substance from his possession.

A Police spokesperson said that under the supervision of Mohammad Nawaz-JKPS, SDPO Pattan assisted
Turn.....Drug peddler held.....Pg 02

J&K Govt Appoints 4 DySsP As Incharge Superintendents Of Police

HT News Network

JAMMU, APR 10: The Jammu and Kashmir Government On Monday ordered the placement of four Deputy Superintendents of Police (Selection Grade) as Incharge Superintendents
Turn.....J&K Govt Appoints.....Pg 02

J&K Road Network To Be Equivalent To America's In 3-4 Years: Gadkari

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 10: In the next 3-4



years, the roads of Jammu and Kashmir will be made equivalent to American roads, said Union Road Transport and Highways Minister Nitin Gadkari here on Monday.

"We are working on such a mission that in the coming three-four years we will make the Jammu and Kashmir road network equivalent to that of America," Union Minister Gadkari said at a press briefing here.

The Union Minister is on a two-day-
Turn.....J&K Road Network.....Pg 02

GPDPs should reflect needs and aspirations of the community: Dr Mehta



HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 10: Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta today virtually participated in the panchayat level convergence

meetings across the UT in connection with the finalization of the Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) 2023-24.

These meetings saw the enthusiastic
Turn.....GPDPs should.....Pg 02

No One Can Encroach Even An Inch Of Our Land: Amit Shah

Agencies

ARUNACHAL PRADESH, APR 10: The era when anyone could encroach on India's land has passed and no one can dare to eye its border, Home Minister Amit Shah said here on Monday. Launching the Vibrant Villages programme in the border village of Kibithoo in Arunachal Pradesh, India's easternmost place, Shah said the valour of army and ITBP personnel ensures that no one can encroach even an inch of India's land.

He said border areas are the top priority of the Modi Government, pointing to the infrastructure and other development works carried out in the Northeast. "The



era is gone when anyone could encroach on our lands. Now, not even land equal to 'sui ki nook' (inch of land) can be encroached...." the minister said.

Turn.....No One Can Encroach.....Pg 02

Identification Of Minorities At State Level: SC Gives Raj, Telangana, J&K 6 Weeks As "Last Opportunity" To Respond

HT News Network

NEW DELHI, APR 10: The Supreme Court Monday gave the states of Rajasthan and Telangana and the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir six weeks to submit their responses on the issue of identification of minorities at the state level, after the Centre pleaded for giving them a "last opportunity".

Additional Solicitor General (ASG) K M Nataraj, appearing for the Centre, told a bench of Justices S K Kaul and A Amanullah that responses were still awaited from Rajasthan and Telangana. Part reply from Jammu and Kashmir was
Turn.....Identification Of.....Pg 02

'Teenager Duo Escape Molestation Bid By Jumping Out of Moving Car in Handwara'

Dr. Ab Qayoom

SRINAGAR, APR 10: A teenage duo escaped an alleged molestation bid at the hands of a private vehicle driver and another onboard person by jumping out of a moving car in Handwara area in north Kashmir's Kupwara district.

"Today in April 10, 2023, information was received by PS Kralgund that two teenage
Turn.....Teenager Duo Escape.....Pg 02

Sharp decline in RTI applications in J&K

Findings of CHRI reveal 31% RTI receipts less in 2021-22

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 10: Jammu & Kashmir Union Territory recorded a sharp decline in the number of applications filed with different departments under the Right to Information Act-2005 in 2021-22, a report by a transparency panel said on Tuesday.

According to an analysis of the Central Information Commission (CIC) annual report for 2021-22 by the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI), Jammu and Kashmir administration reported a 31.44% decline in RTI applications received in 2021-22 as compared to 2020-21. "Among the



UTs, Jammu and Kashmir reported a 31.44% decline in the number of RTI receipts in 2021-22 (1,099) as
Turn.....Sharp decline.....Pg 02

J&K Reports 50 Fresh Covid-19 Cases, No Death

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 10: Jammu and Kashmir reported 50 fresh covid-19 cases while there was no death due to the virus during the last 24 hours, officials said on Monday.

They said that 32 cases were reported from Jammu division and 18 from Kashmir Valley,



taking the overall tally to 480223. Among the cases, 174303 are from Jammu division and 305919 from Kashmir Valley.

Providing district wise details of the cases, they told GNS, 20 cases were reported Jammu, nine from Pulwama, seven each from Samba, six from Srinagar, two each from Doda, Reasi, Kupwara and one each from Poonch and Baramulla.
Turn.....J&K Reports 50.....Pg 02

CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

Nitin Gadkari.....

that the Z-Morh tunnel, which connects Gagangir with Sonamarg and provides all-weather connectivity to the resort in the Ganderbal district of central Kashmir, will be inaugurated in October this year.

"This is a historic and important tunnel in the history of India. The tunnel length is supposed to be the highest in Asia," Gadkari told reporters after inspecting the work on the site at an altitude of over 11,500 feet.

The Union minister led a 13-member delegation of the Parliamentary consultative committee on the ministry.

The tunnel project – through the mighty Zojila Pass at an altitude of 11,578 feet on the Srinagar-Kargil-Leh National highway – is of strategic importance as the highway remains closed during winters due to heavy snowfall, cutting off the Ladakh region from Kashmir.

The single-tube Zojila tunnel – from Baltal, in the Ganderbal district of central Kashmir, to Minimarg, in Drass town of Kargil district of Ladakh, is 13 km long with an approach road of 18 km.

Gadkari said the estimated cost of the project was Rs 12,000 crore, but, after discussions with experts and international consultants for a year, its cost was brought down by Rs 5,000 crore.

"This is the first time in the history of our country that we have a saving of Rs 5,000 crore as far as the estimated cost is concerned. This is a very difficult task, the people are working here in minus 26 degrees," he said.

This is to be a state-of-art-project and with the cooperation of J-K LG Manoj Sinha and his administration, it will be very helpful for us, he said.

Laying out a roadmap for connecting several cities across the country, Gadkari said the Zojila tunnel is one of the important things of "our dream to connect Kashmir to Kanyakumari". This will be connectivity between north to south, he added.

He also applauded engineers and contractors, saying it is very difficult to work here.

The union minister said about 38 per cent of the work has been completed, and a part of the project will be inaugurated this year for providing relief to the people.

"With the permission of the prime minister, the LG, we want to try to inaugurate a part of the project because that will give relief to the people," he said.

According to Harpal Singh, Project Head of Megha Engineering and Infrastructure Ltd, which is constructing the project, the total length of the project from Sonamarg to Minimarg is 31 km. From Sonamarg to Baltal, it is 18 km, and then the main tunnel from Baltal to Minimarg is 13 km long. The work is going on at a rapid pace on both projects.

Gadkari said the project once completed would develop tourism in the area.

"The tourism in Kashmir will be increased 3-4 times and tourism is a sector which creates maximum employment avenues," he said.

"I have requested LG and JK government to plan resorts, and adventure sports, and just like Switzerland, we can develop a lot of things here, he said.

People are already coming here, Baba Amarnath road is here, so we can increase the tourism potential here, which will create more employment potential for the people of J-K. It will eradicate the poverty in Ladakh and J-K, the minister added.

He said former prime minister AB Vajpayee at the time of the Kargil war, visualised that we should have a good road between Ladakh and Srinagar.

"This is under the leadership of prime minister Narendra Modi that we have started this and we are hopeful that we will get this tunnel (completed) as early as possible," he said.

Asked about its significance in terms of defence forces on the Indo-China border, Gadkari said while he would not like to comment on the defence point of view, the project is very important because the previous war the country fought was Kargil, for which the tunnel will provide all-weather connectivity.

"So, this is the area we are going to develop and there will be no migration of the people and the most important thing is this will be the world attraction just like Switzerland and people from India and abroad will come here for tourism and it is going to increase the employment potential in this area which will be a great thing," he added.

To a question on developing airstrips near the country's borders, the minister said the government is working on 29 road-cum-airstrip projects, out of which nine have been completed.

"Somewhere, we need permission from the airforce, it is in the process. At the time of emergency, we can use those," he said.

Asked once the breakthrough of the tunnel is achieved, would the army be allowed to travel on the rough tunnel if need be, Gadkari said whatever has to be done at the time of emergency, it will be done at that time.

"In times of emergency and in the interest of the country, a result is achieved with positivity. There has not been a such need, and there is no possibility of such need, but, if there arises a need, then we will surely do what our defence forces say," the union minister said.

Later, the minister inspected the work progress on the Z-Morh tunnel, and announced it will be inaugurated in October this year. "We will inaugurate Z-Morh tunnel in October. This will help the people a great deal and also help increase tourism, and employment opportunities," Gadkari said.

During the event, J-K LG Manoj Sinha requested

the union minister that local youth be given more employment opportunities in the project. The minister assured Sinha that the contractor has been directed to provide maximum employment opportunities to the local youth.

Meanwhile, Following the inspection of the ongoing work on the Zojila Tunnel, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Monday said that tourism will increase by 2-3 times with the construction of the tunnel.

Union Minister Nitin Gadkari and Jammu and Kashmir LG Manoj Sinha visit Zojila Tunnel to inspect the ongoing work.

"With the construction of this tunnel, tourism will increase by 2-3 times and employment opportunities will also grow in Jammu and Kashmir," said Gadkari.

"We will achieve connectivity between Kashmir to Kanyakumari in the true sense," he added.

Gadkari in a tweet said that as many as 19 tunnels are being constructed in Jammu and Kashmir at a cost of Rs 25 thousand crore.

"19 tunnels are being constructed in Jammu and Kashmir at a cost of Rs 25 thousand crore. Under this, construction work of 13.14 km long tunnel and approach road is in progress at Zojila at a cost of Rs 6800 crore. It is a 7.57 meter high horseshoe-shaped single tube, 2-lane tunnel, which will pass under the Zojila Pass in the Himalayas between Ganderbal in Kashmir and Drass town in Kargil district of Ladakh. The project includes a Smart Tunnel (SCADA) system, constructed using the New Austrian Tunneling Method. It is equipped with facilities like CCTV, radio control, uninterrupted power supply, ventilation. The Government of India has also saved Rs 5000 crore by the use of modern technology in this project," tweeted Gadkari in Hindi.

The transport minister further said that with the construction of this tunnel, there will be all-weather connectivity for Ladakh. Now the average travel time to cross the Zojila Pass sometimes takes three hours, after the completion of this tunnel the travel time will come down to 20.0 minutes. The reduction in travel time will ultimately result in fuel savings, he tweeted.

He said that under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the aim is for the all-round development of J-K through better road connectivity.

"The terrain near Zojila Pass is extremely inhospitable, with many fatal accidents taking place here every year. After the completion of the Zojila Tunnel, the chances of accidents will be zero. This tunnel will provide year-round connectivity between the Kashmir Valley and Ladakh, which will be extremely important for the development of Ladakh, the promotion of tourism, free movement of local goods and the movement of Indian armed forces in case of emergency. We are committed to the all-round development of Jammu and Kashmir through better road connectivity under the leadership of respected Prime Minister Narendra Modi," he tweeted.

Earlier on April 9, Hyderabad-based Megha Engineering and Infrastructure Limited (MEIL), which is executing Zoji La Tunnel, is going on at a rapid pace and is likely to be completed by December 2026.

According to the construction company, it is hopeful of completing the project by December 2026.

Ready to.....

functioning of oxygen plants, oxygen beds and availability of medicines besides testing kits.

He said "we are prepared to tackle any situation that may come in the near future".

He said "if there are any shortcomings which we will see during this mock drill will be fulfilled in the shortest possible time.

Kumar said that the symptoms being reported among the patients at present are not as severe as were seen in the past Delta variants of covid cases which were prevalent in the community.

He said the testing guidelines already exist there and if anybody has influenza or respiratory distress must report to hospital and get tested for Covid.

There are sufficient arrangements for covid test facilities in Jammu and Kashmir. He said over the last ten days the testing facilities have also been increased and intensified.

Jammu and Kashmir is witnessing a spike in the Covid cases during the past over one week and authorities in Kashmir valley on April 3 had directed all Chief Medical Officers to increase the rate of Covid-19 testing and establish Flu clinics at all health institutions.

1.7 Lakh.....

of which 86,132 candidates qualified, with a pass percentage of 93.85 for government schools and 97.84 for private schools.

In the Kashmir Division, a total of 87,041 candidates appeared for the exam, out of which 83,432 candidates qualified, with a pass percentage of 95.67 for government schools and 95.53 for private schools.

Director SCERT, Prof Parikshat Singh Manhas, congratulated the students on their success and wished them luck for their future endeavors. He also thanked the SCERT, DIETs and other stakeholders who contributed to making this strenuous exercise possible.

The SCERT and the associated (DIETs) were entrusted with the job of supervising the entire process of conducting the examinations.

J&K Road.....

long visit to the Union Territory.

He said that a four-lane Greenfield Expressway, connecting Delhi-Katra, will also be made, which will reduce the distance between the two cities by 58 Km.

"A total of 32 Green Express Highways are being built, the most important of which is Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Greenfield. This 670 km four-lane Green Field Expressway from Delhi to Vaishno Devi Dham, Katra will be completed by December 2023 at a cost of 37,524 crores," Nitin Gadkari said.

"Presently the distance from Delhi to Katra is 727 km. This expressway will reduce the distance by 58 km. With this, there is a possibility that the distance between Delhi-Amritsar, Delhi-Katra, and Delhi-Srinagar will be covered in 4 hours, 6 hours, and 8 hours respectively," he added.

Gadkari said that we have also taken up a work of a 78 km four-lane Srinagar ring road, a Rs 4,660 crore worth project, which will be completed in 2023-24.

"With the construction of this ring road, the people, coming to Baramulla, Kupwara, Bandipora, Gurez, Kargil, and Leh, will not have to come inside Srinagar city. This will reduce the traffic congestion and pollution in the city," Gadkari said further.

Earlier in the day, the Union Minister accompanied by Jammu and Kashmir LG Manoj Sinha visited 'Asia's largest tunnel', Zojila Tunnel, to inspect the ongoing work.

"With the construction of this tunnel, tourism will increase by 2-3 times and employment opportunities will also grow in Jammu and Kashmir," said Gadkari.

"We will achieve connectivity between Kashmir to Kanyakumari in the true sense," he added.

Gadkari in a tweet said that as many as 19 tunnels are being constructed in Jammu and Kashmir at a cost of Rs 25,000 crore.

The transport minister further said that with the construction of this tunnel, there will be all-weather connectivity for Ladakh. (Agencies)

GPDPs should.....

participation of panchayat members, Prabhari Officers, senior citizens, local youth from villages in large numbers. These meetings of Gram Sabhas provide an opportunity for locals to come together and participate in the decision making process for their respective panchayats.

Dr Mehta said that GPDP is a participatory decentralised planning process of Gram Panchayat for overall development of the villages by utilising all available resources, adding that inter-departmental coordination is important in this regard.

Dr Mehta, during this interaction, impressed upon the Prabhari Officers of each Gram Panchayat to take full responsibility of representing Government in their assigned areas. He exhorted upon them to create a proper mechanism for escalation of grievances at appropriate levels so that each of them are resolved up to the satisfaction of the people.

He directed the Prabhari Officers to frame a comprehensive plan in consultation with the members of Gram Panchayats for formulating self-employment, tourism, sports and Swachhta plans, besides others. He directed the POs to ensure that the approved GPDPs are reflective of the needs and aspirations of the community and paves the way for the achievement of Localisation of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs).

He said that common people should come forward and speak up for their villages and be part of the development process. For better monitoring and execution of development works, Chief Secretary said that people should be informed of developmental activities carried in their areas. The PRLs should also be made aware of the developmental works taking place in their respective panchayats.

Stressing on self-employment generation programme in villages, CS said that the youth should take full benefit of the various government schemes as they will be assisted in every possible way. He said that it is the duty of the Prabhari Officers to make sure that they do not face any problems. He said that there is no limit to the numbers of youth that can be provided self-employment under different schemes.

Dr Mehta also laid special emphasis on cleanliness in villages and said that Swachhta Mission should be fully implemented before August 15 this year. He complimented the unique environment friendly initiative started in a far flung panchayat of Sadiwara in Hiller Shahabad block of South Kashmir's Anantnag district and asked others to follow the example. The village head has started a campaign called 'Give Plastic and Take Gold' wherein if someone gives plastic waste of 20 quintals, then the panchayat will give him a gold coin.

He said that efforts have to be put in place so that all aspiring villages move to model villages as quickly as possible as per the norms of government of India.

Chief Secretary also disclosed that ranking of panchayats will be done based on set parameters and panchayats should move ahead while the government will act as a facilitator. He also enquired about the usage of digital services in villages and whether people are being benefited. The villagers expressed satisfaction over the use of online services and said that the online mode has saved them a lot of time and money.

He told them to ensure convergence of sectoral plans in the District and UT plans as per the nature and scope of the work and impressed upon completion of all works before December end.

Dr Mehta asked from the representatives and village level workers about the functioning of Schools, Health Centres, Anganwadi Centres and

other village institutions. He also took appraisals from them about different amenities like condition of roads, water, electricity and monthly ration provided to them. He even enquired from each of them about the status of Sports stadiums, online services and Door-to-Door collection of waste in their villages.

The Chief Secretary has made it a regular feature to reach out to people at grassroots level for directly taking feedback from them about the working of administration and listening to their suggestions and grievances for making instant resolutions and passing on directions to the concerned officers for taking necessary action.

No One Can.....

Paying homage to the martyrs of Kibithoo who laid down their lives during the 1962 war, Shah said they fought with indomitable spirit despite the lack of resources. Shah said no one says 'Namaste' in Arunachal Pradesh as people greet each other with 'Jai Hind' that "fills our hearts with patriotism".

"It is because of this attitude of Arunachal that China which had come to occupy it had to retreat," Shah said. Earlier, people who returned from border areas used to say that they have visited the last village of India but the Modi government has changed this narrative with people now saying that they have visited the first village of India, Shah said.

"Before 2014, the entire Northeastern region was seen as a disturbed area but because of the Look East policy, it is now known for its prosperity and development," Shah said. (Agencies)

Identification.....

also awaited, he said. He urged the bench to give them the last opportunity to furnish their responses.

The bench, while giving them six weeks to respond, said copy of its order be sent to the two states and the Union Territory informing them that the apex court will close the opportunity for accepting their responses if they fail to do so within the deadline.

The top court posted the matter for further hearing in July. The apex court was hearing the pleas, including the one filed by advocate Ashwini Kumar Upadhyay, which has sought directions for framing guidelines for identification of minorities at the state level, contending that Hindus are in minority in 10 states.

While hearing the matter on January 17, the apex court had expressed displeasure over six states and Union Territories (UTs), including Rajasthan and Telangana, not submitting their comments to the Centre on the issue of identification of minorities at the state level.

"We fail to appreciate why these states/ Union Territories do not respond and thus give last opportunity to the central government to obtain the responses from them, failing which we will presume that they have nothing to say," it had said.

On January 17, Attorney General R Venkataramani, appearing for the Centre, had referred to the status report filed by the Ministry of Minority Affairs which said that 24 states and six UTs have so far furnished their comments on the issue.

The status report, filed in the apex court in January, had said that comments from six states and UTs – Arunachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Jharkhand, Lakshadweep, Rajasthan and Telangana – were still awaited.

On November 22 last year, the Centre had told the top court that it has held consultative meetings with all state governments, UTs and other stake holders on the issue of identification of minorities at the state level and 14 states had furnished their views so far.

During the earlier hearing, Upadhyay had told the bench that he has challenged the validity of section 2(f) of the National Commission for Minority Education Institution Act, 2004.

Termining section 2(f) of the Act, which empowers the Centre to identify and notify minority communities in India, as "manifestly arbitrary, irrational, and offending", his plea has alleged that it gives unbridled power to the Centre.

"Can minority status be decided district-wise? How can that be done," the bench had earlier observed during the hearing.

On May 10 last year, the apex court had expressed displeasure over the Centre's shifting stand on the issue of identification of minorities, including Hindus, at the state level and directed it to hold consultations with the states within three months.

In supersession of its earlier stand, the Centre had told the apex court that power to notify minorities is vested with the Union government and any decision with regard to the issue will be taken after discussion with states and other stake holders. (Agencies)

J&K Reports.....

There was no death either from Jammu division or Kashmir valley during the time. So far 4788 people succumbed to the virus and among them include 2355 from Jammu division and 2433 from the Valley.

Besides, they said, 16 Covid-19 patients recovered during the last 24 hours—all from Jammu division. There are now 426 active cases— 158 in Jammu and 268 in Kashmir

'Teenager Duo.....

girls had sought lift from a private vehicle at Rasripora to go towards Watergam".

"However, on boarding the vehicle, the driver and another person attempted to molest the girls, upon which they jumped off the vehicle at Rasripora", reads the statement adding an FIR no 33/2023 under relevant sections of law has been registered at PS Kralgund and investigation initiated.

"In public interest, parents and guardians are urged to counsel their children and wards to avoid taking or accepting lifts from strangers", reads the statement further.

As per reports a driver and his accomplice allegedly attempted molestation of two girls, believed to be in her teenage years, after the latter asked for a lift. The girls have received some bruises and are being treated at a nearby health facility.

Sharp decline.....

compared with the 2020-21 figure (1,603)," the CHRI said in its findings.

The CHRI findings accessed by news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) further reveal that although Jammu & Kashmir reported only 94 RTI applications carried over from 2020-21, it was nevertheless a 683.33% increase over the 2019-20 figure (12 RTI applications).

The CHRI further said that J&K reported a sharp decline in the proportion of RTIs transferred by PIOs in 2021-22 as compared to 2020-21.

In 2021-22, 4.73% RTI applications were transferred in J&K while it was 38.74% in 2020-21, the CHRI said.

It is pertinent to mention that Central Right to Information Act-2005 became applicable in Jammu & Kashmir UT after the Centre effected constitutional changes in 2019.

Before these changes, Jammu & Kashmir had its own RTI law.

Mattu resigns.....

on social media, Mattu thanked party president Altaf Bukhari for the responsibility.

"Have tendered my resignation as the Youth President of @Apni party online. I thank Party President @Altaf Bukhari 01 Sb for this responsibility and also extend gratitude to the @YouthJKAP team. With all humility at my command, I extend my full support to my successor and the party," Mattu tweeted.

He, however, didn't divulge any reason for resigning from the party post. Mattu, has hopped different parties, ever since he joined politics.

The Apni Party was founded by Altaf Bukhari in March 2020, eight months after the abrogation of Articles 370 and 35A.

3 Employees.....

Sources told CNS that arrested employees were identified as Ajaz Ahmad Mir, Feroq Ahmad Wagay and Mohd Ashraf Dar consolidated workers, they have been arrested in Previous Case during the course of investigation, he said.

All three employees have formally taken to Custody and will be produced before Anti Corruption Court tomorrow for their Remand.

ACB Sources further said that there were frequent complaints against these officials that in connivance with various touts they were indulging in corrupt practices and taking bribe from various people visiting ARTO office Sopore.

Drug peddler.....

by PSI Zilal Ahmad, ICPP Mirgund arrested Drug Peddler. The accused identified as Aadil Ahmad Budha resident of Sher Colony Sopore who travelling in Load Carrier bearing registration number JK01N-8052 and was intercepted during naka checking at Chenabal Pattan and upon seeing the naka party tried to flee from the naka but were apprehended tactfully.

During search of the load carrier 5 Kgs of contraband Poppy Straw like substance was recovered and was taken into custody immediately.

Accordingly, Case under NDPS Act registered in Police Station Pattan and investigations set in motion.

General Police of the area hailed the efforts of Baramulla Police and showed their willingness to support police to eradicate menace of drugs from the society which is the real sign of Police Public relationship.

J&K Govt.....

of Police. "Sanction is hereby accorded to the placement of the following Deputy Superintendents of Police (Selection Grade) as Incharge Superintendent of Police in their own pay and grade, with immediate effect: i) Sajad Ahmad Sheikh, KPS 16055, ii) Vishal Manhas, KPS 116201, iii) Vinod Kumar, KPS 116212, and iv) Ajay Sharma KPS 116202," reads an order.

"The arrangement is purely on a Stop-Gap basis and shall not confer any right on the incumbents to claim preferential treatment for their promotion, as and when, the same is made, in accordance with the rules. Further, the placements shall be without prejudice to the outcome of Writ Petition(s)/O, if any, pending consideration before the Court(s)/ Tribunal(s) of competent jurisdiction," further reads the order.



Advisor Bhatnagar addresses 'G-20 University Connect; Engaging Young Minds' lecture series at SKICC

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 10: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, today addressed the lecture series 'G-20 University Connect; Engaging Young Minds' at SKICC here.

The lecture series was organised by Central University Of Kashmir (CUK) in association with Ministry of External Affairs and Research and Information System for Developing Countries.

Addressing the huge gathering of scholars, educators, professors and large number of students, Advisor Bhatnagar said that it is a matter of pride for the entire nation that our country is holding G20 presidency, adding that India is on the path of becoming world leader. He added that the main objective of the country-wide G20 programmes is to engage the people and youth as brand ambassadors to spread awareness regarding India's role in world.

Advisor said that the theme of India's G20 Presidency - "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (One Earth-One Family-One Future) affirms the value of all life -human, animal, plant and microorganisms and their interconnectedness on the planet Earth and in the wider universe. He added that the G20 Presidency also marks the beginning of "Amritkaal, the 25-year period beginning from the 75th anniversary of its inde-



pendence on 15 August 2022, leading up to the centenary of its independence, towards a futuristic, prosperous, inclusive and developed society, distinguished by a human-centric approach at its core. Advisor Bhatnagar further remarked that India's G20 Presi-

dency is a sign of the country's recognition as a global economic and political power. He added that under India's presidency, the country will seek to bolster the G20's status and authority as the premier global forum for cooperation on global economic and

financial issues with a focus on climate change and sustainable development.

Speaking in the significance of lecture series, Advisor Bhatnagar said that the youth are the future of the world and their power should be harnessed in all

domains. He added that this lecture series focused on engaging young minds in the G-20 countries. "The lecture series aimed to bring together scholars and experts from various fields to discuss the importance of global education and research collaboration among universities", Advisor Bhatnagar said.

Former Ambassador and Professor Emeritus and Director international Relations, Sushant University Gurugram, Ambassador J.S Mukul; Professor, Centre for Canadian United States, and Latin American Studies, School of International Studies, JNU, Professor Arvind Kumar and Vice Chancellor CUK, Professor A Ravinder Nath also spoke on the occasion.

On the occasion, Advisor Bhatnagar also distributed prizes among the students who excelled in different competitions of the G20 University Connect.

Among others, Vice Chancellors of other universities, faculty members, senior functionaries of CUK and students were also present on the occasion.

Pertinently, Ministry of External Affairs had designated 75 universities, across the country to hold different activities under the G-20 University Connect Programmes, and the Central University of Kashmir (CUK) being was one among them, organised more than 35 programmes till date under the series.

Prices of essentials skyrocket in Bandipora

Consumers seek authorities' attention

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 10: Since the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan in Bandipora, the prices of all essential commodities, including fruits and vegetables, have skyrocketed. Consumers are expressing concern over the administration's failure to check prices.

As per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the agitated consumers have accused the authorities of leaving them at the mercy of profiteers and hoarders. They have pointed out that shopkeepers and street vendors are busy fleecing poor customers, as there is no mechanism in place to curb overpricing.

Meat sellers have closed their shops for the past month and are selling meat at exorbitant rates of up to Rs 700 per kg, with impunity, as the administration has failed to act against these erring traders.

One consumer, Showket Ahmad Wani, has pointed out that no shopkeeper or street vendor is bothering to comply with the rate list issued by the Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) department. "Bananas are being sold at Rs 130-180 a dozen, and Saag at Rs 80," he said. He added that the wholesalers are equally responsible for the sky-high rates.

The other consumers said that local bread makers and retailers have increased prices at their own whims and fancies, with market checking squads not visible in the markets. They have further alleged that no essential commodity is being sold at the rates fixed by the government.

"The prices of essential commodities, including fruits and vegetables, have witnessed a hike, and common people are being pushed to the wall," said Jahangeer Ahmad.

According to the FCS&CA rate list, the price of potatoes has been fixed at Rs 18 (white potato) and Rs 22 per kilogram (red potato), onions at Rs 22 per kg, and tomatoes at Rs 26 per kg.

The price of Saag has been fixed at Rs 50 per kg. The price of bananas, depending on their quality, has been fixed at Rs 80 and Rs 120 per dozen. However, consumers argue that these prices are rarely adhered to. In different markets in Bandipora, tomatoes are being sold at Rs 60 a kg, beans at Rs 80, potatoes at Rs 50, and chicken at 150-160 per kg.

Mohammad Arif, another consumer, said that he had bought a tray of eggs containing two and a half dozen eggs for Rs 150, while yesterday the same tray cost him Rs 190. Vegetable sellers have no rate lists, and they have hiked the prices of locally grown vegetables such as nadru, turnip, and radish. Meanwhile, the administration is passing the buck.

Local residents have said that the government has failed to put market checking squads in place, resulting in a hike in the prices of essential commodities.

An official of the Food Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs in Bandipora said that market checking is being conducted to curb overpricing. Joint teams have been formed to implement government rates and take action against violators.

The official also urged locals to cooperate with the government by paying only government prices and identifying violators so that action can be taken against them.

J&K demotes officer after inquiry establishes violations during his stint with LCMA

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 10: The Jammu & Kashmir government has demoted a retired officer from the date he was placed as in-charge deputy superintendent of police (DySP) after an inquiry established that there were building plan and master plan violations during his stint with the Lakes & Waterways Development Authority which has been renamed as the Lake Conservation and Management Authority (LCMA).

In an order, a copy of which is in possession of news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), J&K's Home department has imposed a penalty of "reduction to a lower post" on Shah Sikander, in-charge DySP (now retired).

The Home department's order states that Shah Sikander, in-charge DySP, is demoted to the post of inspector with effect from 20.07.2012, the date he was placed as in-charge DySP.

Sikander, the then enforcement officer of Lake and Waterways Development Authority (LAWDA),



was arrested by then State Vigilance Organisation on March 14, 2017 in a case registered against him in 2015 for violations in peripheral areas of Dal Lake.

According to the order, Sikander was served charge-sheet on June 21, 2017 for submitting a written statement of defence within period of 21 days.

He submitted his statement on September 25, 2017 and refuted all the charges. As per the order, the response submitted by the officer was found unsatisfactory and accordingly, it was decided that the charges were required to be inquired thoroughly.

On January 01, 2018, the government appointed an inquiry officer to probe the charges against him.

In the report, the inquiry officer established that there was violation of building permission norms and instances of illegal construction around the Dal lake during his posting with LAWDA (now LCMA).

"The competent authority decided to impose the penalty of "reduction in rank" for violating J&K Government Employees (Conduct) Rules, 1971," reads the order.

Leopard captured in Budgam, believed to be the one found roaming in Srinagar outskirts

Animal shifted to Dachigam health centre for treatment of injuries: Official

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 10: Wildlife authorities on Monday captured a leopard in central Kashmir's Budgam district which they believe is the same that was found roaming around the Rawalpura area on Srinagar outskirts two months ago. The wild animal was captured near the water filtration plant in the Kralpora area of Budgam, the Wildlife Department officials told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

Ifshan Dewan, Wildlife Warden Wetlands, told KNO that after receiving infor-

mation about the movement of a leopard in the Kralpora area, they laid a trap on Sunday and were successful in capturing the wild animal.

"There was already a movement of leopard in Rawalpura, Hyderpora and its adjoining areas for more than a month; and it is highly likely that the animal that has been captured is the same one," she said. Ifshan said the traps were earlier laid by the central wildlife division, but the fresh trap was laid by their Budgam wildlife division. A team from Hokersar established the trap and successfully captured the leopard, she said, adding

that the leopard has been taken to the wildlife health centre at Dachigam for treatment of some injuries in the paws.

Another senior official from the central wildlife division told KNO that they are sure that the captured leopard is the same one that was witnessed around the city outskirts. Around two months ago, a leopard was sighted in Rawalpura, following which the central division of the wildlife department launched a massive operation to capture the wild animal. The officials had said that it sometimes takes them too long, even months, to capture the animal.

No parking charges for drop & go at Srinagar airport: Director

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 10: There will be no parking charges for vehicles for drop & go in the departure area at the Srinagar International Airport, its Director said on Monday.

The development, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), followed after a person tagged the Director of Srinagar International Airport Kuldeep Singh Rishi on Twitter, asking him why people have to pay for parking charges if one is just dropping off passengers or picking them up without using the parking space.

"Can you also tell us why we have to pay parking charges if one is just dropping off passengers or picking them up without using the parking space?" the person asked in a tweet. Responding to the tweet, the Director said there will be no parking charges for drop & go in the departure area; however, the vehicles parked in the parking area will have to pay the charges.

"No parking charges for Drop & Go in Departure area Parking fees for parking the vehicles in the parking area Please do not leave your vehicle in No Parking area to avoid congestion Please contact Terminal Manager in case of overcharging/ wrong charging Mob 9419016404," Rishi posted on his Twitter handle.

In an appeal, the Director said people should always park their vehicles in the parking area only for the convenience of other users at the airport.

Similarly, last Sunday, a Twitter user asked for the paint of the speed breakers for their clear visibility to avoid any inconvenience to which the Director airport posted pictures of painted speed breakers and wrote, "You say it We obey it."

Amid record tourist arrivals; Shikara in high demand

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 10: With highest numbers of tourists visiting Kashmir, the builders of shikaras in Kashmir say that demand is on rise as unemployed youth are earning their livelihood by signing up as a boatman in Dal Lake.

A third generation shikara maker, Ghulam Nabi of Baba Mohalla Dal Lake told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), that since last 35 years, he has been making Shikara but demand has

picked up since last year.

"As last year there was a good tourism season, the demand for Shikara has increased as more and more unemployed youth are starting Shikara so as to at least earn some money for themselves," he said as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

According to him, they too have to face many challenges as timber is not easily available and rates are high.

"It usually takes a person around 15-20 days to make one

Shikara and mostly deodar strongest timber is used in making it," he said.

A Shikara costs around 2.5-3 lakhs and around 35 ft of timber is required to make a boat.

His Shikaras are in use in Mansar and Tawi in Jammu, Hyderabad, Bengal, Rajasthan and other places as well.

But he complained that the government has never supported them while requesting the authorities to give them timber for continuing their craft.



Dr Sehrish Asgar presides Gram sabha meeting at Fatehpora, Calls for Holistic Development of District

HT News Network

BARAMULLA, APRIL 10: District Administration Baramulla today organized a daylong session of the officers and field functionaries of all line departments for finalization of Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) in the district.

The main function of Gram sabha meeting in Baramulla was held at Fatehpora Panchayat under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Dr Syed Sehrish Asgar in presence of Assistant Commissioner Panchayat Baramulla Gulzar Ahmad Khan and some senior officers.

It is worth here to mention that Fatehpora Panchayat of Block Baramulla was recently conferred for



National Panchayat Award 2022-23 by the Union Ministry of Rural development and Panchayat Raj Govt. of India in recognition to the women friendly services rendered towards their welfare and empowerment.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Sehrish Asgar underlined the objectives of these Gram Sabhas and said that main focus is to involve all the concerned stakeholders so that the mission of holistic

development of four villages is achieved. She urged the people to come forward and participate in such events as the people centric and people led governance is the main priority of the present dispensation.

She highlighted the role of PRIs and other functionaries in resource mobilization and said that several initiatives are being taken to make our panchayats self reliant in terms of the

national goal of Atmanirbhar Bharat.

While informing about the GPDP, the DC said that the plan under nine thematic areas encompasses all the localised Sustainable goals for over all development of rural areas. She added that different welfare and sponsored schemes like SBM, MGNREGA, PMAY, IWPM, NRM and many other CSS schemes of line departments are being executed and implemented in convergence and mission mode.

Furthermore, the Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Gulzar Ahmad Khan further added that the mission of total sanitation of all the villages is also being realized through the GPDP as it contains all verticals of SBM like construction of segregation sheds.

Director JKEDI chairs Gram Sabha at Shadab Karewa Shopian

HT News Network

SHOPIAN, APRIL 10: Director, Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI), Ajaz Ahmad Bhat presided over a special Gram Sabha meeting today at Shadab Karewa Shopian in South Kashmir.

The meeting was held in connection with the approval and finalisation of Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) 2023-24.

Meanwhile, Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary, J&K Government also joined virtually in the Gram Sabha and interacted with the locals, sarpanchs and officers present. He informed public that the Gram Pan-



chayat meetings are being held across Jammu and Kashmir to finalise the GPDPs and ensure that they reflect the needs and aspirations of the community. The meetings provide an opportunity for locals to come together and participate in the decision-making process for their respective panchayats.

A local resident, Abdul Rashid Khan also interacted with the Chief Secretary.

This process will pave the way for the achievement of the Localisation of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs). The GPDPs are to be aligned with the 09 thematic areas for LSDGs, which are an integral part of the 2030 agenda for Sus-

tainable Development Goals and are key to ensuring that no one is left behind in the journey towards sustainable development.

In his address, Director, who is also the Prabhari Officer of the Panchayat, highlighted the role of Gram Panchayats in the overall development of the rural areas and urged the members to work towards improving the welfare of their respective villages.

In order to ensure that the desired results are achieved, he stressed on the importance of collaboration and coordination among the various stakeholders. It was also directed that the concerned departments must come up with detailed plans as immediately.

Gram Sabhas held across Bandipora to approve GPDP

HT News Network

BANDIPORA, APRIL 10: Special Gram Sabhas were held across all the Panchayats of Bandipora district on Monday to discuss and finalise Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDP).

The Gram sabhas were presided over by prabhari officers and were attended by PRIs, General Public and officers from line departments besides local population.

Detailed discussions were held for the finalization of GPDP. The partici-



pants gave their suggestions and there plans were accordingly modified as per the local needs.

After detailed discus-

sions various plans under GPDP 2023-24 were approved during the special Gram Sabhas.

During the Special Gram

Sabhas Chief Secretary J&K UT virtually interacted with the PRIs and general public of Sonerwani Panchayat.

On the occasion the visiting officers urged the locals to actively participate in the Gram Sabhas to be part of the decision making process. They said the Gram Sabhas are like parliaments of a village and every citizen is member of it. They said every citizen is duty bound to participate in the gram sabhas to decide about their developmental needs so that funds can be used accordingly.

DC Srinagar chairs workshop cum meeting of DLCC to review implementation of COTPA in District

HT News Network

SRINAGAR APRIL 10:- In order to review the implementation and enforcement of Cigarette and Other Tobacco Product Act (COTPA) in the District, a Workshop cum Meeting of District Level Coordination Committee (DLCC) was held under the Chairmanship of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Srinagar, Mohammad Aijaz Asad here today at Meeting Hall of DC Office Complex.

Additional Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar, Superintendent of Police, Chief



Medical Officer, Chief Education Office, Assistant Commissioner Drug & Food Control, senior Health functionaries, Tehsildar Headquarter, Executive Director, J&KVHA other concerned and representatives of NGOs were present in the

meeting.

At the outset, a threadbare discussion was held in order to chalk out a plan to ensure visible impact of implementation of COPTA on ground by arresting the problem through effective surveillance, feedback

mechanism and taking timely measures to curb the menace of Tobacco products.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner laid stress on the need of awareness generation among the masses regarding the harmful effects of using Tobacco products. He asked the Officers to work in close coordination so that Tobacco Control laws are implemented effectively on ground across Srinagar.

The DC directed for launching special drives for strict enforcement of tobacco Control Laws particularly around Hospitals and Educational institutions, public places.

Gram Sabhas held across District Shopian

HT News Network

SHOPIAN, APRIL 10: In connection with organising Gram Sabhas in all Panchayat Halqas of the district, special Gram Sabhas were held in 98 Panchayat Halqas of the District.

The Gram Sabhas were conducted in Panchayat Halqa Heerpora in Block Shopian, Panchayat Halqa Chotipora in Block Shopian, Panchayat Halqa Barbugh in Block Imamsahib, Panchayat Halqa Losedenow in Block Imamsahib and Panchayat Halqa Nadigam in Block Imamsahib Shopian presided over by respective Prabhari officers of these Panchayat Halqas of the district

Similarly, Gram Sabhas were also held in various other Panchayat Halqas of the district where Prabhari officers presided over the Gram Sabhas.

A large number of people actively participated in these Gram Sabhas, during which agenda points along with other issues were discussed in detail and focus was laid on the developmental activities of respective Panchayati Halqas. People were also made aware about the significance of the Gram Sabhas. Special thrust was also laid on the Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) adoption and adoption of Gram Sabha resolution. The concerned people of the said Panchayati Halqas were enthusiastic for active participation. During the Gram Sabhas, Prabhari officers,

GPDP is an all-encompassing plan across all sectors for the development of Gram Panchayat: DC Pulwama

HT News Network

PULWAMA, APRIL 10: Under the directions of Deputy Commissioner Pulwama Mr. Baseer-Ul-Haq Choudhary, meetings of the Gram Sabha were held in all 190 Panchayat of the District Pulwama for approval of GPDP 2023-24.

The Deputy Commissioner Mr. Choudhary visited many Halqa Panchayats and supervised the Gram Sabha. The Deputy Commissioner visited Block Shadimarg, Halqa Panchayat Drabgam and presided over the special Gram Sabha Meeting there.

A large number of people, senior citizens, PRIs actively participated in the Gram Sabhas, during which agenda points along with other issues were discussed in detail and focus was laid on the developmental activities of respective Panchayati Halqa.

The DC impressed upon the local people present in the Gram Sabha Meeting to speak up for their village, discuss and finalize the Gram Panchayat Development Programme (GPDP). He insisted upon the local people that by participating in the Gram Sabha Meeting, they are actually becoming a part of the development



process of their areas. The Deputy Commissioner was accompanied by ADDC Pulwama Dr Sheikh Abdul Aziz and BDO Shadimarg, Officers/officials from all line departments.

Speaking on the occasion, DC said that the Gram Pan-

chayat Development Programme (GPDP) is an all-encompassing plan across all sectors for the development of Gram Panchayats in the District. He said, it is imperative for development of a participatory plan that the representatives of the

different line Departments come together in the Gram Sabha, which serves as the fulcrum of the Panchayat and a vital platform where people discuss issues of local governance.

The DC said that this integration helps to augment awareness about the Central and State schemes and in preparing a comprehensive, inclusive GPDP through participatory mechanisms.

The DC added that GPDPs are to be aligned with the 09 thematic areas for LSDGs, which are an integral part of the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development Goals and are a key to ensuring that no one is left behind in

the journey towards sustainable development.

The DC further said that these meetings of Gram Sabhas will provide an opportunity for locals to come together and participate in the decision-making process for their respective panchayats.

This will ensure that the approved GPDPs are reflective of the needs and aspirations of the community and will pave the way for the achievement of the Localisation of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs).

The prime aim of the Gram Sabhas is to ensure expeditious improvement in the socio-economic.

Secretary Tourism chairs special Gram Sabha meeting at Kanispora Panchayat

HT News Network

BARAMULLA, APRIL 10: With an aim to achieve sustainable development of villages, special Gram Sab-

ha meetings were organised today in all panchayats of the district wherein the concerned stakeholders including PRIs, Prabhari Officers, heads of line departments, frontline workers among other prominent sections of the society ensured enthusiastic participation.

The Gram Sabha meetings were aimed at to discuss and finalize Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) wherein the line departments presented their respective development plans for socio-economic development of our panchayats.

At Baramulla, Backto Village nominated Prabhari Officer, Secretary Tourism and Culture, Dr Syed Aabid Rasheed Shah, participated in the event at Kanispora Panchayat-A and interacted with the people and listened

to their developmental aspirations.

Addressing the function, the Prabhari Officer urged upon all the officers and field functionaries of Rural Development Department to work in tandem for smooth implementation of Gram Panchayat Development Plan ensuring holistic development of the district.

He elaborated that the objective of holding the session was to shape the already made GPDP of panchayats in the district which shall touch the development of economy, status and living standard of the people. He asked the participants to think beyond common works like protection bunds and drains and make innovative ways for effective development of the villages.

Dr Syed Abid also highlighted the role of PRIs and other functionaries.

Tourism Deptt Kulgam launches Rural Tourism Planning at village Tangmarg Aharbal

Farooq Rather

KULGAM, April 10: The Tourism Department Kulgam today launched a Rural Tourism Planning Programme at the village Tangmarg Aharbal. Speaking on the occasion, Asstt Director Tourism Kulgam said that the main focus of the programme is to stimulate rural economy through rural tourism, besides creation of the new business and self employment opportunities especially through home stays. The officer said that revitalization of local art & craft, home stays and best tourism village are other agendas of the programme. The convergence between tourism and rural development through involvement of panchayat will be key to development of village tourism.



The panchayats, tourism department, Aharbal development authority (ADA) and RDD are key contributors to this success. The programme was launched in collaboration with RDD & PR Kulgam. The Sarpanches, Panchs, youth club members and many local people participated in the programme. The officers/officials of Tourism, ADA and RDD departments also remained present. All the participants appreciated the move to revitalize.

Needless to mention that due to special focus on Aharbal through summer and winter festival, tourism in Kulgam has doubled.

FATEH KHAWANI

With sorrow this is informed that Bashir Ahmad Waza S/O Ghulam Rasool Waza Sakina Shalla Kadal Kani Kadal left for heavenly abode on 10/04/2023 19 Ramadan 1444. Congregational Fatiha prayers (Fatiha Khwani) will be observed Funeral for only Three days at their residence.



Office of the Naib Tehsildar Qazigund

LEGAL HEIR

1. Burhan Abass, Son of; Late Mohammad Abass Malik Resident of; Checki Badwani Kurigam Tehsil; Qazigund and District; Anantnag, do hereby solemnly affirm and declare on oath as under:-

1. That I am the permanent resident of U.T of residing at the above given
2. That my Father Namely, Mohammad Abass Malik expired on 26/10/2022, at Home.

3. That the following are legal heirs of the deceased.

S. NO	Name	Address	Occupation	Relationship with Deceased	Age
1	Shameema Banoo	Checki Badwani Kurigam	House Wife	Widow	46
2	Burhan Abass	Same	Student	son	22
3	Salima Akhtar	Same	Student	Daughter	20
4	Aqsa Jan	Same	Student	Minor Daughter	16
5	Ubaid Abass	Same	Student	Minor Son	14

That I solicit this affidavit to the concerned authorities for issue of Legal Heir in my favour. That the made averments are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Naib Tehsildar
Qazigund

Special Sabhas held in all 257 panchayats of Kathua District

Prabhari Officers play guardians' role in finalising annual GPDs

HT News Network

KATHUA, APRIL 10: The Special Gram Sabha Meetings were on Monday held in all 257 panchayats of Kathua District to finalize and approve the Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) 2023-24. Prabhari Officers and Officers of Line departments attended the meetings.

The Panchayats met with members and other stakeholders to finalize the priorities of respective Panchayat halqas, while 21 Line departments also came up with their development Plans for panchayats so as to formulate a workable and inclusive GPDP. The front-line workers/supervisors of



all key sectors were also roped in to get feedback on the key issues of the panchayats.

After extensive and brainstorming discussion, all 257 Gram Panchayats approved the GPDP aligned with the 09 thematic areas for LSDGs, which are an

integral part of the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development Goals and are the key to ensure that no one is left behind in the journey towards sustainable development.

While throwing light on the extensive exercise of holding Special Gram Sab-

has for GPDP, the Prabhari Officer for Kardoh Panchayat, Dr Mushtaq Ahmed (Special Secretary, Information Department) said, "The event holds prime importance in the development calendar of the PRIs as it provides an opportunity to the locals to come together and participate in the decision-making process for their respective panchayats". He further said "the approved GPDPs are reflective of the needs and aspirations of the community and will pave the way for the achievement of the Localisation of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs)".

During the Special Gram Sabhas, panchayats were also sensitised about the ongoing Special Summary

HT News Network

DODA, APRIL 10: The Health Department on Monday conducted mock drills in different health institutions of the district to review and upgrade the arrangements for dealing with Covid-19 Patients.

Following the instructions of the Health Secretary J&K and DDC Doda, Chief Medical Officer, Dr Ab Hamid Zargar conducted mock drill exercises to check the functionality in respect of key facilities and logistics for Covid management in healthcare institutions.

After reviewing status of activities carried out at different healthcare institutions and assessing the data uploaded on the national portal, the CMO expressed



satisfaction over successful completion of mock drills carried out by the healthcare institutions and their preparedness for handling Covid cases. The CMO informed that the day-long exercise as part of Mock Drill included checking of

Oxygen Generation Plants installed at different locations, availability of machinery and equipment, availability of drugs, diagnostics and other Covid logistics. All the healthcare institutions were found to be in the state of preparedness to

tackle any surge in Covid cases in the District, the CMO added. After reviewing status of activities carried out at different healthcare institutions and assessing the data uploaded on the national portal, the CMO expressed satisfaction over successful completion of mock drills carried out by the healthcare institutions and their preparedness for handling Covid cases.

The CMO informed that the day-long exercise as part of Mock Drill included checking of Oxygen Generation Plants installed at different locations, availability of machinery and equipment, availability of drugs, diagnostics and other Covid logistics. All the healthcare institutions were found to be in the state of preparedness to tackle any surge in Covid cases.

GHSS Ploura students educated about environment conservation

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 10: Member Red Cross Society and social activist Kewal Krishan Wadhwa today visited Government Higher Secondary School Paloura and interacted with the staff and students.

He enriched the students about moral values, ethics, hazards of single use plastic and environment protection.

Emphasizing the need to protect and conserve environment, Kewal Krishan Wadhwa propagated sustainable ways in all walks of life. He presented saplings to students and staff members whose birthday fall in the month of April.

A handmade cloth bag was gifted to Principal of the school. He encouraged all the staff members to make 5 cloth bags and distribute among their friends to discourage the "Single Use Plastic bags."

GDC Ramgarh organises Seminar on 'Healthy Life Style'

SAMBA, APRIL 10: Government Degree College Ramgarh on Monday organized a seminar on 'Healthy Life Style' under here under the guidance and coordination of Prof. (Dr.) Satinder Kaur, Principal of the College. The activity was organized by Eco-Club, RRC and NSS of the College.

A large number of students as well as staff attended the event with great zeal and enthusiasm. Speaking on the occasion, the Principal of the College said that Good nutrition, daily exercise and adequate sleep are the foundations of healthy living. "A healthy life style not only keeps fit & energetic but also reduces risk for diseases.

Development Scheme for urban areas: DC Rajouri discusses Contours with presidents of MCs

HT News Network

RAJOURI, APRIL 10: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Vikas Kundal, on Monday presided over a meeting of Presidents elected Municipal Bodies to discuss the Infrastructure Development Scheme for Municipal areas. The meeting was attended by all the Presidents of the ULBs in the district.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner set a ceiling for the formulation of Plan and urged the Presidents to follow the same. He emphasized the importance of using funds judiciously for the development of infrastructure in the urban areas of the district.

"The development of urban areas is our top priority and the Infrastruc-



ture Development Scheme is a crucial step in that direction," said the Deputy Commissioner. He asked MCs to liaison with administration to formulate a comprehensive plan that prioritizes the development of infrastructure in our urban areas. He urged the Presidents to ensure that the plan is formulated within the ceiling limit and the funds are

utilized judiciously for the people's benefit."

The Municipal body Presidents expressed their gratitude to the LG and Deputy Commissioner for the scheme and assured that the funds would be utilized efficiently for the development of infrastructure in their respective areas.

The Municipal Members reiter-

ated their commitment towards the development of the district. The Infrastructure Development Scheme is expected to bring about a significant change in the urban areas of the district, and the judicious use of funds will ensure that the benefits of the scheme reach the people in the most efficient manner. Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Vikas Kundal,

on Monday presided over a meeting of Presidents elected Municipal Bodies to discuss the Infrastructure Development Scheme for Municipal areas. The meeting was attended by all the Presidents of the ULBs in the district.

During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner set a ceiling for the formulation of Plan and urged the Presidents to follow the same. He emphasized the importance of using funds judiciously for the development of infrastructure in the urban areas of the district.

"The development of urban areas is our top priority and the Infrastructure Development Scheme is a crucial step in that direction," said the Deputy Commissioner. He asked MCs to liaison with administration

DC Kulgam visits several Panchayats, participates in gram sabhas

Farooq Rather

KULGAM, APRIL 10: The Deputy commissioner Kulgam Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat today toured several panchayats in Kulgam and witnessed the proceedings of Special Gram Sabhas held in these panchayats.

Accompanying the DC were ACR Mir Imtiyaz-ul-Aziz, ACD Mohammad Imran, ACP Shurjeel Ali and other officers from line departments.

Special Gram Sabhas were conducted today in

all gram pachayats across the district where people and PRI members participated enthusiastically to discuss and finalise Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) 2023-24 and people prioritized the works in their areas during these sabhas.

During these sabhas Prabhari Officers, officer's and officials from line departments were also present and overwhelming response of people was seen in these Sabhas.

Youth from these areas



also participated in these sabhas who also participated to discuss and finalise Gram Panchayat Development Plan. Accompanying the DC were ACR Mir Imtiyaz-ul-Aziz, ACD Mohammad Imran, ACP Shurjeel Ali and other officers from line departments.

Special Gram Sabhas were conducted today in all gram pachayats across the district where people and PRI members participated enthusiastically to discuss and finalise Gram.

DLTP Placement Drive: Polytechnic, ITI trained get Job offers

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 10: Director Skill Development Department, Sudershan Kumar today distributed Job letters to Polytechnic and ITI trained candidates offered by Private Sector Enterprises.

M/s SKH Metals Ltd, Gurugram, Haryana has selected pass out students from Government Polytechnics in Electrical, Mechanical and Automobile Engineering as Operational Engineer Trainees (OET) with Rs 16619 CTC per month. Revant Communication Pvt. Ltd. and E.T.L selected 3 and 2 pass out students from ITIs, respectively.

The Director congratulated the selected students and advised them to work hard. He thanked the companies to provide the job opportunities to the polytechnic & ITI students and impressed upon the students to participate in different placement drives with full enthusiasm and make full use of their professional and technical skills for employability to various organization.

The placement drive was organized by the Division Level Training and Placement (DLTP) Cell Jammu and ITI Placement cell of Skill Development Department. Er. Arun Bangotra, Principal Govt. Polytechnic Jammu, Er. G.M Bhat, Joint Director Skill Development Jammu, Jatinder Kesar, OSD, Rajesh Khajuria, Neema Dulloo, Karan Singh Training and placement officers were present on the occasion.

SVEEP awareness Prog held at SP College Srinagar

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APRIL 10: As the part of extensive Systematic Voter Education Electoral Participation (SVEEP) Campaign in District Srinagar, awareness cum registration programme was held at Government Sri Pratap College, M.A Road Srinagar by the District Election Authority.

The programme was organized by electoral literacy club of the College in association with Dean Stu-

dent's welfare while Service Support was facilitated by department of IT.

The programme was presided over by the Principal Sri Pratap College, Srinagar Prof. (Dr) Gh. Jeelani Quershi, Prof Rabia Ahmad Head Department of English, Dean Student Welfare Dr Khalida Hassan, Dr shazia Mushtaq, Dr Rais Mohammad, Coordinator Electoral literacy Club of Sri Pratap College, Dr Syed Javid Ahmad Andrabi, was attended by coordinator SVEEP Zahoor Ahmad Mir, National Level Master Trainer/Con-



sultant and Sr. Election Officials from District Election machinery, besides Administration, Staff and Students of the College.

The Programme witnessed large participation of the students who were apprised about the ongoing Special Summary Revision of Electoral Rolls 2023. The students who have attained age of 18 were sensitized about the process of registering themselves as voters to become eligible to exercise their franchise to cast their vote to elect their representative. Speaking on the occasion principal said that "Such programmes are very important and which will increase the level of

awareness among voters, especially students and facilitate their participation in the election process." He said that students have a greater and much important role in strengthening the democratic institutions of the country and for that they should come forward and exercise their right to franchise.

Over 300 students and college faculty members participated in the programme and more than 200 enrolment forms were distributed among the students on spot.

Govt Dental College releases tentative merit list of House Surgeons

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APRIL 10: The Government Dental College & Hospital today informed that the tentative merit list of House Surgeon has been compiled and is now available on official website www.gdc.srinagar.org.

The notification issued today reads, "It is for information of all the candidates, who have applied for engagement as House Surgeon and appeared in written examination held on 08-04-2023 in response to this office Advertisement Notice issued under endorsement No. GDC/Estt/Notification/HJ/2023/407-421 dated 18-01-2023, that their tentative merit has been formulated and compiled."

Jammu Film Festival cements its status as a truly international event in J&K with the culmination of 3rd edition

Glitz and Glamour: Glittery red carpet, impressive award ceremony, Walk and Trek to Neverland Premieres, Bollywood Celebrities Attend

HT News Network

Jammu, India - The third edition of the Jammu Film Festival concluded with a grand award ceremony on Sunday. The festival, which spanned over two days, screened more than 50 films including feature films, short films, and documentaries from around the world. With the grand

and very successful 3rd edition Jammu Film Festival has been able to establish itself as a truly international event in J&K.

The event was graced by several Bollywood celebrities including actors Deepika Singh and Rahul Roy, directors Rohit Raj Goyal and Nitin Gupta, and senior actor MK Raina. Festival directors Rakesh Roshan Bhat and Rohit Bhat were honored by two orga-

nizations, the JKC Cine Association and DADAA, for their efforts in hosting the successful event.

Rakesh Roshan Bhat, one of the festival directors, expressed his gratitude towards the organizers and participants, saying, "It has been an incredible journey to be a part of the Jammu Film Festival. We are overwhelmed with the response we have received and are grateful to all our sponsors,



supporters, and delegates who made this possible."

Rohit Bhat, the other festival director, added, "We were able to showcase some of the best films from around the world, and it was a delight to see such a diverse audience in attendance. We hope to continue this tradition and make the Jammu Film Festival even bigger and better in the coming years."

EDITORIAL

Waste Management in Srinagar City: A Tough Challenge

Srinagar is currently grappling with a major issue of solid waste management. The city has been facing a garbage crisis for years, and the situation has only worsened with time. The city's landfill sites are overflowing, and the municipal dumps are not only an eyesore but also a health hazard for the residents.

The municipality dumps in Srinagar are a menace, and they pose a severe threat to the environment and public health. The dumps are located in residential areas, and the stench emanating from them is unbearable. The garbage heaps attract stray dogs and other animals, which further aggravate the problem. The municipality has failed to ensure proper waste segregation and disposal, which has resulted in the accumulation of garbage on the streets.

There's been a surge in the cases of dog mauling pedestrians to death with so many kids being killed and injured. In today's case of the dog mauling an elderly woman and injuring her grievously just outside her location in Nowshera area of down town Srinagar which has been turned into a dumping yard where scores of dogs are seen mostly to scare the most out of the people living in the vicinity.

The lack of a proper solid waste management system in Srinagar is not only harming the environment but also posing a significant health risk to the citizens. The garbage dumps are breeding grounds for disease-carrying pests like rats, mosquitoes, and flies. The people living in the vicinity of these dumps are exposed to the risk of contracting diseases like dengue, malaria, and other illnesses.

The situation is particularly alarming in light of the recent dog scare in Kashmir. Reports suggest that stray dogs in the region have become increasingly aggressive, attacking and biting people, and causing panic in several areas. The authorities have been struggling to control the dog population and address the issue, but the problem persists.

The connection between the dog scare and the garbage crisis in Srinagar cannot be ignored. The municipality dumps provide a steady source of food for stray dogs, and the garbage heaps attract them to residential areas. The lack of proper waste management has resulted in an increase in the number of stray dogs, and their aggressive behavior is a result of their struggle for survival in an environment that is hostile and unhealthy.

It is high time that the authorities take swift action to address the garbage crisis in Srinagar. The municipality must invest in a proper solid waste management system that ensures proper segregation, collection, and disposal of waste. The dumps must be cleared, and alternate sites must be identified for waste disposal. The people must be made aware of the importance of waste segregation and the hazards of improper disposal.

Furthermore, the issue of stray dogs in Kashmir needs to be addressed urgently. The authorities must take measures to control the dog population and ensure their safety and welfare. The dog scare has caused widespread panic and fear among the citizens, and it is the responsibility of the authorities to restore their confidence and trust.

The garbage crisis in Srinagar and the dog scare in Kashmir are significant issues that require immediate attention and action. The authorities must work together to address the underlying causes of these problems and find sustainable solutions that promote a healthy and safe environment for the citizens. It is time for the government to take decisive action and demonstrate its commitment to the welfare of its people.



Understand the Needs of Your Special Child



VIJAY GARG



Which parent might not wish their child for standing out in the extracurricular and academics activities? However, in a few cases, even children having average intelligence levels face troubles in picking the fundamental skills like reading, speaking, and writing. It should be considered that those children might be suffering from learning disorder so might find all the conventional learning methods difficult. Children having diverse physical abilities or physically disabled children also toil hard in school. However, it is significant to recognize that you just cannot disregard the future of your child only because he or she is suffering from a learning disability. Parents may do many things for the special children through sheer determination, positive attitude, and proper approach.

Building a Support System

It is about creating the conducive environment. Here are some measures that you may take to handle your special child's requirements:

Love and Care: Special requirements are managed with true love and care. Love, care, and family help must outline the foundation of the method you take for dealing with the special child requirements.

Collect Information: Collect information about your child's position. Supervise your child's condition. Collect information about a particular condition which he or she suffers and adopt a holistic and tangible approach. Contact the families and parents who face similar situations. It will aid you in boosting your confidence.

Positive Determination: Positive approach with great determination is needed. It is examined that learning about disorders like Autism (neurobiological disorder), Dysgraphia (impaired writing), Dyslexia (impaired language ability), and Dyscalculia (difficulty in understanding fundamental mathematical operations) may easily be overcome with a firm combination of special training, grit, and care. Physically challenged children can easily be admitted to normal schools with the help of bionic or artificial limbs, special desks, and wheelchairs.

Environment: The atmosphere at home must be relaxed for the special child. You have to offer a comfortable and healthy environment for your children so that their everyday routine, studies, as well as other activities, continue unhindered. Make your house children-friendly so that your children's friends can meet them easily. Parents feel low if they realize that their child has a disability. Parents do not make out what to do. Rather than concentrating on the external factors, first they must shed their negative feelings. When they recover from mental obstruct, the road in front gets brighter and easier. Therefore, do not feel the burden that your child is not like others. Think that you have a special child with special interests and talents. Put in your best efforts in making your child feels comfortable and make sure he or she doesn't feel embarrassed.

Special Child with Special Requirements

All the children want ample love and kindness without boundaries and limits to steer their behaviour. Think if the behaviour of your child is a part of natural development. Majority of children endure stages since they throw foodstuff. Some children could need more help with knowledge and might develop behaviour which is rather unusual. It doesn't show they want specialist involvement. It might show they have difficulty in understanding what is being requested to do.

Commend good behaviours and ignore bad ones if possible. Source and effects are among the earliest models any child learns. If he or she learns that you notice (even though it is to warn him or stop him physically) while he reacts improperly, he will carry on his poor behaviour by looking for your negative attention.

Special children might not recognize you as they have the problem with concentrating. They could not realize what you say or they (may) not remember what you have said. You could also need to repeat obvious instructions many times. Several children are very sensitive to cold or hot. They could get some textures very frightening, or they don't make out how to take part in the games. They could also be tired or hungry.

Some Ideas to deal with a Special Child

Be constant. This is very important in case your child is having difficulty in understanding instructions.

Praise them when they do some good work.

Don't physically assault your child, although you're actually frustrated. They could copy your actions or become afraid of you.

If you become very angry, walk off and take a few deep breaths.

Just see their behaviour and try to analyze it. Are they frustrated, scared, tired, and sensitive to the situation or your touch?

You need to have a well-structured routine so that every day your child sleeps and eats at a particular time.

Life with the special child can be extremely demanding. Contact your friends, take help of the support groups as well as keep your relatives engaged. You need people who can talk to you and support you and the people with whom you can enjoy the life.

Special Requirements from Parent's Viewpoint

Parents need early childhood instructors to apply them as partners for supporting their family with the majority of all care and love for their children, despite the disabilities associated. A few parents may feel tentative to share the diagnosis of their child with his or her teacher. It may look odd, however, parents who struggle to understand how they may help their children and at times themselves can be scared of teacher's conclusion or the cure their child get when the special child is identified. Often parents are scared of being liable, and generally, have an unwholesome dose of guiltiness themselves; after being encouraged that disability is not a fault. A few parents can feel relieved to finally recognize what's happening with the child. At times these emotions may look wrong to the stranger observer, however, no parents with a special need for their child. The reprieve comes to know what is mistaken for the child and has a suitable plan of action.

Teacher's Role

At times, busy teachers can feel extinguish at special accommodations which a parent needs

from them. Though these requests help the child as well as create a bond between the family and the staff. Being a teacher, ask the children's parents with special requirements for suggestions and ideas in the classroom. For instance, a child who is very sensitive against touching should bring a particular pillow and blanket from home. A child having taste problems wants to know a menu one week earlier and is permitted to bring a packed lunch on particular days. Besides, it may be really helpful to chat with the occupational therapist honestly about activities which can be incorporated into a standard curriculum which all the children will like. Make sure to get written consent from parents as well as share results of the conversation with parents.

Discipline Techniques for Special Child

Disciplining any special child is tougher than disciplining any normally developing child. This is not any kind of punishment. This is an instrument to be used for promoting positive behaviours as well as decreasing negative behaviours. This need to be used as a means of encouraging child's progress across all the development aspects. Every child is different show different behaviours when they grow. Some discipline techniques are there for the special child. Let's go through them:

Commend good behaviours and ignore bad ones if possible. Source and effects are among the earliest models any child learns. If he or she learns that you notice (even though it is to warn him or stop him physically) while he reacts improperly, he will carry on his poor behaviour by looking for your negative attention. So, the better option is to educate him that good behaviour will result in the praise and attention he seeks.

If possible, find out the fundamental source of behaviours and deal with it. It may be very frustrating not to successfully communicate for meeting the requirements. Before you reply, check the position and offer as much help as you can for help him communicate with you. After that, authorize his feelings and give your order.

Avoid punishments if possible. Research tells that behaviour management and positive discipline are more successful than physical punishment.

Decide suitable behaviours for them yourself. Special children will not recognize all the things. Children will copy what they watch in their environments. Consider how and when you lift your vote or while you show listening abilities for your special child.

In case you have any trouble, give options. If you say to your child about doing something, he or she must complete that requested action, though you may give him options for how he or she completes that activity.

Consequences need to be associated with the activities. Timeout is great to calm down but can't be effective for decreasing the behaviour in case the child does not realize that the result is associated with the behaviour. In case your child chucks a toy, he has to stop his action and go get back that toy (using your help if needed). If he declines to finish an activity, he should not complete other activity until the first request is done (using your help if needed).

Conclusion

Some defiant behaviours are a normal part of the development of all children. This is the way to learn more about their roles as well as the way of applying for independence. It may be uncomfortable and difficult to cope with the public meltdowns as well as shattering unhappy children. Special children are intelligent and talented human beings. As a parent, you need to work out the finest way of bringing out the hidden skills and beauty of your child.

Vijay GarG Retired Principal Educational Columnist Malout Punjab



M S NAZKI



The Charm of City of Nawabs, a bit of military history and the story of Central Command!

This is for the first time we are attempting a story on the Central Command of the Indian Army but we needed time to give it a proper treatment and a bit of book reading! We knew that it was not going to be enough and thus decided that we should go into this with two parts. The first one is about the Military History of Lucknow! And needless to mention the history is interesting, in fact very!

Uttar Pradesh, a northern Indian state, is home to the capital city of Lucknow. It was established by Nawab Asaf-ud-doula in 1777 and named after his son, Nawab Muhammed Ali Khan Bahadur (1699-1793). Lucknow was founded as a city by Nawab Asaf-ud-Doula. The foundation stone was laid at Kalanagar, but due to some disputes between him and his brother Mirza Najaf Khan over succession rights, he shifted its site to Allahabad, where he built a fort that later came into being known as 'Lucknow'.

In addition to being an important political centre, Lucknow has many attractions worth visiting: culture, cuisine (including sweets), beautiful monuments, and gardens are just some examples.

Some facts: Lucknow is a place full of heart-touching experiences and unforgettable moments.

Lucknow is the city of beauty and grandeur, where you will find a lot of things to explore."

Lucknow is a city filled with history and cultural heritage."

Lucknow has seen great lights of time and a lot of wisdom.

Lucknow is the city of royal courts, royal cuisine and royal traditions.

The city of lights shines brighter than any other city when it comes to Lucknow. Lucknow is a place of contrasts. Have an enlightening experience in this city and enjoy!

Lucknow is a city of moments.

Lucknow is a city of contrasts, lively yet laid back.

Lucknow is a city of eternal intrigues, where truth is not always what it seems.

The Military History Indian Rebellion of 1857:

The siege of Lucknow was the prolonged defense of the British Residency within the

city of Lucknow from rebel sepoys (Indian soldiers in the British East India Company's Army) during the Indian Rebellion of 1857.

After two successive relief attempts had reached the city, the defenders and civilians were evacuated from the Residency, which was then abandoned.

The state of Oudh/Awadh had been annexed by the British East India Company and the Nawab Wajid Ali Shah was exiled to Calcutta the year before the rebellion broke out.

This high-handed action by the East India Company was greatly resented within the state and elsewhere in India. The first British Commissioner (in effect the governor) appointed to the newly acquired territory was Coverley Jackson.

He behaved tactlessly, and Sir Henry Lawrence, a very experienced administrator, took up the appointment only six weeks before the rebellion broke out.

The sepoys of the East India Company's Bengal Presidency Army had become increasingly troubled over the preceding years, feeling that their religion and customs were under threat from the evangelizing activities of the Company.

Lawrence was well aware of the rebellious mood of the Indian troops under his command (which included several units of Oudh Irregulars, recruited from the former army of the state of Oudh).

On 18 April, he warned the Governor General, Lord Canning, of some of the manifestations of discontent, and asked permission to transfer certain rebellious corps to another province.

The boiling point of the rebellion was the introduction of the Enfield rifle; the cartridges for this weapon were believed to be greased with a mixture of beef and pork fat, which was felt would defile both Hindu and Muslim Indian soldiers.

On 1 May, the 7th Oudh Irregular Infantry refused to bite the cartridge, and on 3 May they were disarmed by other regiments.

On 10 May, the Indian soldiers at Meerut broke into open rebellion, and marched

on Delhi. When news of this reached Lucknow, Lawrence recognized the gravity of the crisis and summoned from their homes two sets of pensioners, one of sepoys and one of artillerymen, to whose loyalty, and to that of the Sikh and some Hindu sepoys, the successful defense of the Residency was largely due.

On 23 May, Lawrence began fortifying the Residency and laying in supplies for a siege; large numbers of British civilians made their way there from outlying districts. On 30 May (the Muslim festival of Eid ul-Fitr), most of the Oudh and Bengal troops at Lucknow broke into open rebellion. In addition to his locally recruited pensioners, Lawrence also had the bulk of the British 32nd Regiment of Foot available, and they were able to drive the rebels away from the city.

On 4 June, there was a rebellion at Sitapur, a large and important station 51 miles (82 km) from Lucknow. This was followed by another at Faizabad, one of the most important cities in the province, and outbreaks at Daryabad, Sultanpur and Salon.

Thus, in the course of ten days, British authority in Oudh practically evaporated.

On 30 June, Lawrence learned that the rebels were gathering north of Lucknow and ordered a reconnaissance in force, despite the available intelligence being of poor quality. Although he had comparatively little military experience, Lawrence led the expedition himself.

The expedition was not very well organized. The troops were forced to march without food or adequate water during the hottest part of the day at the height of summer, and at the Battle of Chinhath they met a well-organized rebel force, led by Barkat Ahmad with cavalry and dug-in artillery.

Whilst they were under attack, some of Lawrence's sepoys and Indian artillerymen defected to the rebels, overturning their guns and cutting the traces. His exhausted British soldiers retreated in disorder. Some died of heatstroke within sight of the Residency.

Lieutenant William George Cubitt, 13th

Native Infantry, was awarded the Victoria Cross several years later, for his act of saving the lives of three men of the 32nd Regiment of Foot during the retreat.

His was not a unique action; sepoys loyal to the British, especially those of the 13th Native Infantry, saved many British soldiers, even at the cost of abandoning their own wounded men, who were hacked to pieces by rebel sepoys.

As a result of the defeat, the detached turreted building, Machchhi Bhawan (Muehee Bowan), which contained 200 barrels (27 tons) of gunpowder and a large supply of ball cartridge, was blown up and the detachment withdrew to the Residency.

This changed the Military history of Lucknow! Time fled by and World Wars happened, India became independent and it was time for the Britishers to hand over the baton to Independent India. With that came the setting up of commands. Central Command happened to be one of them! HOWIT came into existence we will tell you later in the script! So please keep reading!

Happiness is as elusive as a butterfly, and you must never pursue it. If you stay very still, it might come and settle on your hand. But only briefly. Savor those precious moments, for they will not come your way very often! A visit to Central Command Headquarters will prove us right! Trust us it will!

Some facts::

Central Command, also known as Surya Command, was raised on 01 May 1963 at Lucknow, in the aftermath of the Chinese aggression of 1962, with an aim to guard the Central Sector on the Line of Actual Control.

Lt Gen Kanwar Bahadur Singh was the first GOC-in-C of Central Command.

The insignia in the formation sign of Central Command is 'Surya', the Sun. The ethos of Surya, the 'Eye of the Universe' and the most profound source of energy that sustains all life in Earth, lies in its centrality to everything.

From the borders with Tibet and Nepal

to the shores of Bay of Bengal, the Central Army is spread centrally across eight states of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Odisha. It shares its boundary with all other Commands of the Indian Army and is Central to Victory.

Over time, Surya Command has grown in size and stature. Today, the Command is operationally responsible for the defense of the Central Sector along the LAC and International Border with Nepal stretching across the four states of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

Surya Command is home to 13 Category 'A' Training establishments, 18 Regimental Centres and a large number of logistic establishments.

Valor in operations and sensitivity in internal security duties while providing aid to civil authorities are the hallmarks of Surya Command.

The distinctive flavor of Surya Command lies in the variety of terrain, military heritage, tourist and pilgrimage destinations that it offers.

Surya Command has played a pivotal role in Nation Building and Human Assistance and Disaster Relief operations, not only within the country but also in friendly foreign countries.

Surya Command stands out for its professionalism and indomitable spirit as it stands vigil on the Northern Borders while providing crucial support to the entire Indian Army through the training establishments and logistic nodes.

Lt Gen NS Raja Subramani is the new man who has taken over this Army command and is a genius all the way. Hewas commissioned in Garhwal Rifles in 1985. He has a distinguished and illustrious military career spanning more than 37 years. An alumnus of National Defence Academy and Indian Military Academy, the General Officer also attended the Joint Services Command Staff College, Bracknell (UK) and National Defense College, New Delhi.

Well we will talk about the subject more in tomorrows concluding part of this s Article because it could not have been finished in one go! But we will leave you with some more lines from Lucknow! Lucknow: the city of Nawabs and the cradle of Indian Classical Music. Lucknow the city that never sleeps, the city of dreams and romance in India. The city of Nawabs, where history is made. The officers and men of the Central Command are no less than Nawabs! The men who believe in sophistication but hard core action when required but again the sophistication and without any complexity!

Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana: Credit saturation for livelihoods

The scheme has supported small enterprises and revitalized the Indian micro-credit ecosystem in its eight years of existence



SOUMYA KANTI GHOSH

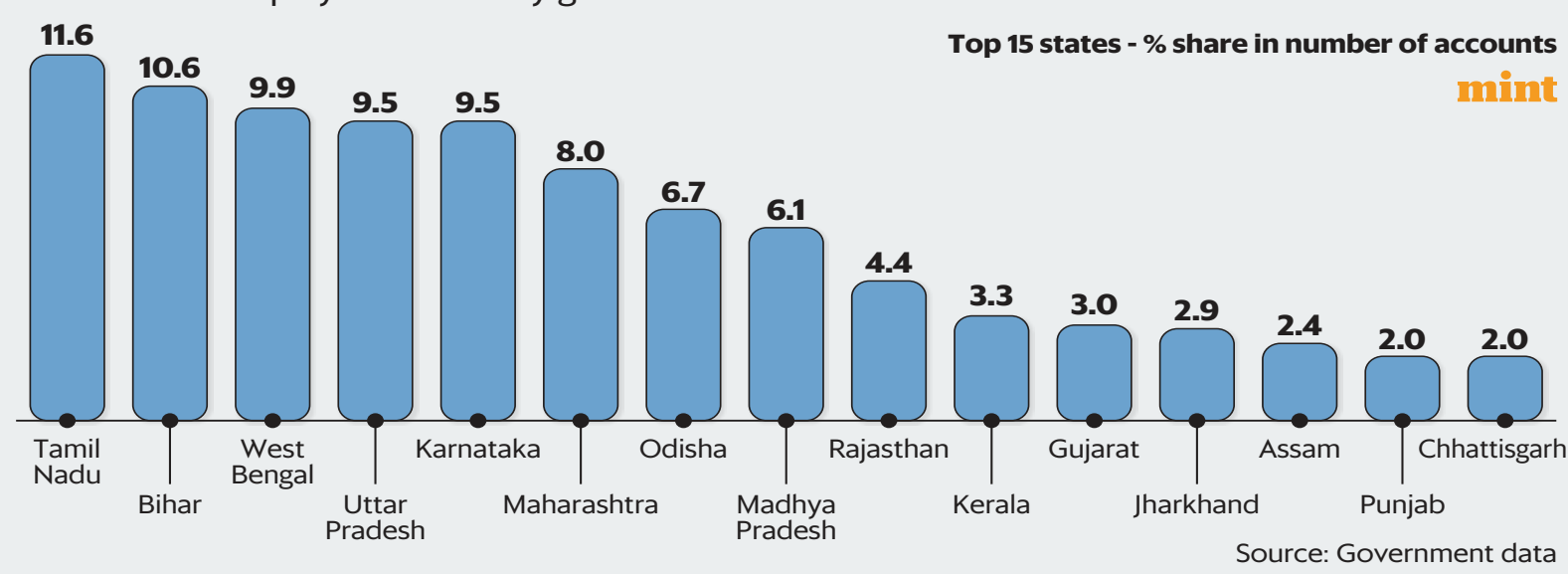
As India's Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) completed eight years on 8 April, we can glance back at the changes wrought by this mass credit saturation programme that was envisaged during the bleak days of 2014-15 when our formal financial sector was reeling under bad loans, especially its impact on the sociocultural fabric of the country. The PMMY is one of the flagship schemes of Union government to encourage self-employment. The scheme targets micro and own-account enterprises that constitute a vibrant business ecosystem in India. Micro enterprises are mostly engaged in manufacturing, processing, trading and services, and many of these units are single-ownership businesses.

The country's formal or institutional architecture was unable to reach out to them and meet their financial requirements. These units were largely self-financed or reliant on either personal networks or moneylenders. With this gap kept in mind, the PMMY was floated with the objective to create an easily accessible bridge between a large unbanked sector and formal lenders. Launched in 2015, PMMY provides collateral-free institutional credit up to ₹10 lakh, as provided by Member Lending Institutions (MLIs); i.e., Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs), Regional Rural Banks (RRBs), Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) and Micro Finance Institutions (MFIs).

Under the aegis of the PMMY, the Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency (MUDRA) created three sub-schemes that differ by the loan amount: Shishu (for loans up to ₹50,000), Kishore (₹50,001-₹5 lakh) and Tarun (₹50,001-₹10 lakh). The

Fairly even spread

Mudra loans display a reasonably good distribution across India's states.



names Shishu, Kishore and Tarun also signify the stage of the beneficiary micro unit's growth or development and its funding needs. Any individual who is otherwise eligible to take a loan and has a business plan for a small business enterprise can avail of credit under the scheme.

Since its launch, the scheme has undergone numerous changes. Its target area, for example, has been widened to maximize its positive economic impact. Initially, the PMMY covered income-generating activity only in the sectors of manufacturing, trading and services. However, since 2016-17, activities allied with agriculture and their support services promoting livelihoods have been brought under its ambit; since 2017-18, loans have been sanctioned for the purchase of tractors and power tillers; and from 2018-19, loans to buy two wheelers for commercial purposes have also been included.

Total disbursement under the scheme showed an average 33% growth in its first three years, indicating that its unique selling proposition was well received. The outbreak of the covid pandemic and subsequent slowdown in economic activity impacted the demand for these loans. During this phase, a special relief provision of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) permitted all lending institutions to grant a moratorium of six months on the payment of all instalments under the scheme.

After the economy's re-opening, loan demand under the PMMY has gathered pace. In most categories, disbursements have surpassed pre-covid levels. Data as on 24 March 2023 puts the scheme's cumulative disburse amount at ₹22.65 trillion. The share of Shishu loans is the highest, at 40%, suggesting that the PMMY has largely supported first-time entrepreneurs.

The PMMY's economic impact is now well established. As per survey

results of the ministry of labour and employment, the scheme had helped in generating 11.2 million net additional jobs during the period 2015 to 2018.

The social impact of the PMMY is a much deeper story and can be understood at three levels. These three levels include the scheme's impact on (1) broad social groups; (2) women; and (3) members of minority communities.

In terms of the first, the PMMY has benefited all segments of Indian society: General, Schedule Caste/Tribe (SC/ST) groups and Other Backward Classes (OBCs). The increasing participation of OBCs and SCs in availing these loans in recent times is an indication of the scheme's outreach.

One of the scheme's most commendable achievements is its impetus to women's entrepreneurship. In its cumulative data since inception, the share of accounts held by women is as high as 69%, while the share of women in the

sanction list is 45%. Disbursements to women entrepreneurs registered an average growth of 23% in the scheme's first four years. In 2022, it surpassed its pre-covid level, registering a robust growth of 28%.

The PMMY also fares well on other measures of inclusivity. The scheme has been able to cater to the requirements of minorities. Loans to members of minority groups touched an all-time high in 2022, with their overall share at 10%, with Shishu and Kishore loans accounting for 85% of total cumulative disbursement.

Since the PMMY is a national scheme, its spatial dispersion is an important consideration from the point of view of balanced economic growth. One of the objectives of India's growth policy has been to bridge the divide between the thriving western and lagging eastern parts of the country. A Herfindahl Concentration Index estimate of the number of accounts and disbursed

amounts shows significant dispersion across states and products. This indicates an impressive geographical coverage.

States such as Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and Bihar have recorded all-round gains from the PMMY. West Bengal and Tripura have also seen a rise in their total share (and also in the Kishore and Tarun categories), indicating an eastward flow of beneficiaries. Developed regions such as the national capital region, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Goa have seen their shares decline, even though they dominate the scheme in absolute terms.

Overall, the PMMY has achieved its objectives of equitable and fair spatial distribution of benefits during its ninth year of operation by fostering self-employment across social groups, doubling the participation rate of women over that observed in commercial-bank lending and boosting the participation of minority groups.

In the coming years, it is imperative that the PMMY reaps the benefits of 5G technology and e-commerce, even as Mudra cards are popularized further. Encouraging the registration and formalization of own-account enterprises could be another way of taking this scheme to new heights.

The celebrated anthropologist Oscar Lewis had once argued in his seminal work, 'The Children of Sanchez', that a "culture of poverty" tends to perpetuate itself over time, often transcending boundaries. The PMMY, in a short span, has not only attacked and altered the course of this culture of poverty, but infused a sense of vibrancy and can-do spirit in the Indian micro-credit ecosystem. The PMMY has clearly been an uncommon solution to 'common problems'.

Group chief economic advisor, State Bank of India. These are the author's personal views.

AAP Now National Party; Trinamool, Sharad Pawar's NCP, CPI Lose Status

HT News Network

New Delhi: Arvind Kejriwal-led Aam Aadmi Party, or AAP, which emerged out of Anna Hazare-led anti-corruption movement in 2012, got elevated to a national party status on Monday. The party is currently in power in two states - Delhi and Punjab.

The Election Commission said the AAP has been named as a national party based on its electoral performance in four states - Delhi, Goa, Punjab and Gujarat.

Party boss Arvind Kejriwal termed the development a "huge responsibility" and "nothing less than a miracle" as the AAP achieved the national party status in record time.

"National party in such a short time? This is nothing less than a miracle. Many congratulations to all. Crores of people of the country have taken us here. People expect a lot from us. Today people have given us this huge responsibility. Lord, bless us to fulfill this responsibility well," Mr Kejriwal tweeted in Hindi. Sharad Pawar's Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) and Mamata Banerjee's Trinamool, in a big setback, have been downgraded to the status of regional parties. The CPI too was assigned the regional party status.

For a political party to be recognised as a national party, it has to be a recognised state party in four or more states (or) 2% seats in Lok Sabha, say rules.

Once a party loses a national party



status, the party will not get common symbol for its candidates in states where it's not recognised.

For example, Trinamool candidates will not get its symbol for elections in Karnataka if it chooses to contest. In the multi-party system that India enjoys, there are six national parties after today's restructuring - Congress, BJP, CPM, Bahujan Samaj Party, National People's Party (NPP) and the latest entrant, the Aam Aadmi Party.

"All of us at AAP are thrilled at this good news. I congratulate every single worker of AAP who worked tirelessly through the last decade to make AAP a success. Under the leadership of Arvind Kejriwal, AAP is India's fastest growing political start-up," AAP MP Raghav Chadha told NDTV minutes after the news broke.

"Despite all odds, despite every single trick in the book to eliminate

AAP from the national political space, AAP is going strength-to-strength," he added. Last week, AAP MP Sanjay Singh said that getting the status of a national party will boost the party in the upcoming state elections in Karnataka. The AAP is contesting on all 224 seats in Karnataka which votes after today's restructuring - Congress, BJP, CPM, Bahujan Samaj Party, National People's Party (NPP) and the latest entrant, the Aam Aadmi Party.

India 'disengages' from FTA talks with UK over Khalistani issue

HT News Network

New Delhi/London, Apr 10 (UNI) India has "disengaged" from the trade talks with the UK over Britain's failure to condemn pro-Khalistani activists who vandalised the Indian High Commission last month, reports said.

According to The Times and Bloomberg, the Indian government has made it clear to the UK that there would be no progress in the FTA negotiations without a public condemnation of the Khalistani movement.

While, the UK government had condemned the March 19 attack on the Indian High Commission, the Indian government wants it to publicly condemn the Khalistani group, the reports said.

Senior British government sources are quoted as saying that the Indian government has "disengaged" from trade talks and made it clear that there would be no progress without a public condemnation of the Khalistani movement.

On March 19, late on Sunday evening, India had summoned the senior-most UK diplomat in New Delhi to

convey its strong protest incidents.



after some Khalistani activists had removed the Indian flag from outside the Indian High Commission in London.

India had also demanded an explanation for the complete absence of British security that allowed the Khalistani elements to enter the Indian High Commission premises.

In a statement, India had said it finds "unacceptable the indifference of the UK Government to the security of Indian diplomatic premises and personnel in the UK". India also demanded that the perpetrators be immediately arrested and prosecuted and stringent measures be put in place to prevent recurrence of such

Videos on social media showed a group of Khalistani supporters shout pro-Khalistan slogans, and one person clambering on the verandah of the Indian High Commission and removing the Indian flag, to cheering and shouting of Khalistani slogans by the crowd. The India-UK FTA was progressing well. The two sides had concluded the seventh round of the free trade agreement (FTA) talks in February, and the eighth round of FTA negotiations were due from March 20-24 in hybrid mode. In the February talks, technical discussions were held across 11 policy areas over 43 separate sessions. They included detailed draft

treaty text discussions in these policy areas.

The February session was conducted in hybrid fashion, with a number of Indian officials travelling to London for negotiations and others attending virtually.

The India-UK FTA negotiations cover 26 policy areas. The negotiators had closed discussions on 13 of them, and the trade ministers of both sides had met in December 2022, and January this year to take stock of the progress.

India accounts for 1.7 percent of total UK exports and India was the 12th largest export market for the UK in the four quarters to the end of Q3 2022.

The UK Business and Trade Secretary Kemi Badenoch also expressed optimism about business and export trade prospects with India, saying, "India's growing economy and middle class represent an enormous opportunity for entering UK companies looking for new markets."

Key issues for India-UK FTA negotiators include liquor, automobiles, intellectual property, and mobility of students and professionals.

Anti-Terror Agency Raids 14 Location In Jharkhand In Maoist Conspiracy Case

HT News Network

New Delhi: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) has conducted searches at 14 locations in Lohardaga and Latehar districts in Jharkhand and arrested one suspect namely Sajjan Kumar in its ongoing probe in the case of a conspiracy by active cadres of CPI (Maoist) to attack security forces in June 2022, the agency said on Monday. The anti-terror agency conducted these searches on Sunday at the premises of accused and suspected persons at nine locations in Lohardaga and five locations in Latehar. During the searches, the agency said, "One country-made pistol along with six live rounds, one magazine, electronic gadgets and incriminating documents pertaining to financial transactions and property were seized." One suspect namely Sajjan Kumar, a resident of Chakla in Jharkhand, was arrested from one of the search locations at Lohardaga. Sajjan used to work as Munshi at a brick kiln namely Raju Bricks owned by suspect Raju Kumar alias Raju Sao. Raju is allegedly involved in the collection and investment of levy money on behalf of Maoist Ravindra Ganju, who is still evading arrest and Sajjan was fully aware of the transactions. The NIA had taken up the case of a conspiracy by active cadres of CPI (Maoist) to attack security forces in June 2022.

Covid-19: India logs 5,880 fresh cases, hospitals to conduct mock drill

HT News Network

New Delhi, Apr 10 (UNI) India recorded a single-day jump of 5,880 fresh Covid-19 cases during the last 24 hours, taking the active caseload to 35,199 according to the Union Health Ministry on Monday. The toll has risen to 5,30,979 with 12 more deaths - four each reported from Delhi and Himachal Pradesh, and one each from Gujarat, Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra, and Rajasthan. As many as 205 patients recovered from the disease during the past 24 hours. The total number of people who have recuperated from the disease is 4.41 crore (4,41,96,318). The recovery rate currently stands at 98.73 percent. The daily positivity rate was recorded at 6.91 percent while the weekly positivity was pegged at 3.67 percent. Meanwhile, 92.28 cr Total Tests have been conducted so far; 85,076 tests were conducted in the last 24 hours as per Ministry data. Meanwhile, Delhi on Sunday logged 699 fresh Covid-19 cases with a positivity rate of 21.15 percent, according to data shared by the city government's health department.

BJP may release 180 plus candidates' list by evening: Yediyurappa

HT News Network

New Delhi, April 10 (UNI) Former Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa on Monday said that the names of candidates for 180 plus seats would probably be announced by the evening. "Today most probably, they (BJP leadership) are going to announce names of 170 to 180 plus names of the candidates," he told reporters here. Remaining names will be released later after holding another round of talks, Yediyurappa said. Replying to a query, ex-CM said almost all sitting MLAs will get the tickets.

Fugitive Amritpal Singh's Aide Arrested, Both Had Escaped Cops Together

HT News Network

New Delhi: Fugitive radical Sikh preacher Amritpal Singh's close aide Pappalpreet Singh was today arrested by the counter-intelligence unit of Punjab police from Punjab's Hoshiarpur. He has been detained under the stringent National Security Act, police said. The two were constantly together after their dramatic escape from a police dragnet in Jalandhar last month. They had taken different routes to escape after reaching Hoshiarpur. The arrest was part of a joint operation of the Punjab Police and the special cell of the Delhi police. Amritpal Singh, who has evaded arrest so far, sought a meeting of the Sikhs later this month, after which the Punjab police cancelled the leaves of all cops in the state till Baisakhi celebrations on April 14. The separatist has asked the chiefs of the top Sikh body, Akal Takht, to convene the "Sarbat Khalsa" gathering in Punjab's Bathinda on the occasion of Baisakhi. He also asked the jathedars (chiefs of Akal Takht) to take out a religious procession from the Akal Takht in Amritsar to Damdama Sahib in Bathinda ahead of the gathering on Baisakhi. Security arrangements in Bathinda have been stepped up following an unverified video appeal from



the 'Waris Punjab De' chief about the Baisakhi gathering. Akal Takht chief Giani Harpreet Singh has appealed to Amritpal to surrender in front of the police, saying that he will neither be allowed to surrender at Akal Takht nor will the Sikh body negotiate with the cops over this. Only the Akal Takht chief can decide whether to call such a congregation after consulting with Sikh scholars and intellectuals, top gurdwara body Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (SGPC) said following Amritpal's request. Sarbat Khalsa' congregations were called only on two other occasions - in 2015 and 1986. The last one was held on February 16, 1986. The fugitive Khalistan leader had recently appeared in a video saying he was not "a fugitive".

SC to hear Muslim side's plea seeking permission for ablution inside Gyanvapi premises on Apr 14

HT News Network

New Delhi, Apr 10 (UNI) Supreme Court on Monday decided to hear on April 14 a fresh plea by the Muslim side seeking permission for Wuzu (Ablution) near the spot where a Shivling was reportedly found. The Muslim parties cite Ramzan, seeking suitable arrangements, and urgent hearing in the case.

Senior Advocate, Huzefa Ahmadi, appearing for the Muslim party, mentioned the Gyanvapi mosque matter to the Supreme Court bench headed by the Chief Justice of India (CJI) Dr Dhananjaya Yeshwant Chadrachud. This being the month of Ramzan, there are more worshippers, hence they requested listing of the matter for hearing.

The CJ led bench of the Supreme Court, assured Ahmadi that the matter would be heard on April 14.

"We will take it for hearing on April 14," the Apex Court said.

Ahmadi, pleaded to the Supreme Court that the Muslim side is insisting because of Ramzan, and they should have approached earlier.

The CJ, however, said, we will hear on April 14. This is a procedural matter.

The Supreme Court, had earlier on April



06, agreed to hear a plea also filed by the Muslim side, seeking a direction that worshippers should be able to pray inside the Gyanvapi premises, keeping in view the Ramzan, after hearing a mentioning by the lawyer Ahmadi.

He had told the Top Court earlier in the last date of hearing that this is the month of Ramzan and the worshippers should be able to pray inside the premises, to which, the Apex Court agreed to hear it on April 14.

Ahmadi had pleaded in the Supreme court that the practice of wuzu be allowed inside the mosque premises.

It is to be noted that the wuzu area is the centre of dispute since the Hindu side claims that a Shivling has been found at the centre of the wuzu area.

Indian tradition has always been environment friendly: Yogi

HT News Network

Lucknow, Apr 10 (UNI) Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Monday said that development is absolutely necessary, but the people need to be responsible towards environment and it can't be ignored and we all are facing the negative consequences of over-exploitation of nature by mankind for its selfish ends.

While inaugurating the two-day National Climate Conclave-2023 organised at Indira Gandhi Pratishthan, the CM said, "We are all aware of how environmentally friendly Indian tradition has always been. We are all the sons of the earth, according to a hymn from the Atharva Veda, so we should all feel connected to it. There is no need to tell what a son's duty towards his mother is."

Pointing out that today the world is facing the challenge of climate change, he said, "You must be experiencing unexpectedly heavy

rains. In the past, the monsoon used to arrive earlier, around June 15, but last year

it did when the time came to reap the harvest, damaging the crops. It highlights



we saw no rain in June, very little rain in July, and drought in August. The monsoon arrived in October, and for the first time in many years, the tragedy of a flood had to be dealt with in that month." Yogi said he had not experienced floods in October in the last 25 to 30 years, but this time it did occur. "In March of this year as well, it rained. It did not rain when the farmer needed water, but

the negative consequences of climate change. Because of what man has done to the environment out of selfishness, we are now suffering from its side effects," he said. He maintained that it is a matter of pride that India is guiding the world in this direction. He said Uttar Pradesh is the most populous state in India having more population than its area, but the state has enough water resources,

fertile land, and at one time even had enough forest cover.

The CM said, "Forests were cut down as a result of the population boom. When the government was formed, I got a chance to go to the 'Van Mahotsava'. I asked the department to proceed with it as a campaign. Five crore saplings were to be planted as the initial goal and ten crores the following year. We accomplished a great deal by planting 133 crore saplings over the past six years." He informed that the forest cover of the state has increased in the last six years along with awareness among people. "The Prime Minister has started several campaigns for water conservation. Every gram panchayat and every district was targeted to make 75 Amrit Sarovar within the state as a part of Azaadi Ka Amrit Mahotsava. It is a pleasure that this campaign started in every village in UP and 8,000 Amrit Sarovars.

Maha: 7 killed, 36 injured as tree falls on devotees

Akola, April 10 (UNI) At least seven devotees were killed and 36 injured when a neem tree fell on a shed where they had gathered for a religious ceremony at Paras village in Maharashtra's Akola district, a senior police official told UNI on Monday. According to the official, the incident occurred on Sunday night at Babuji Maharaj temple located in Paras village under Balapur taluka when some people had gathered for the 'Maha Aarti'. At least seven people died and 36 sustained injuries when a Neem tree fell on a tin shed under which around 50 people were standing in the temple premises after heavy wind and rains lashed the region. The injured were taken to a local hospital. Total 36 people were admitted to the hospital and four of them were declared brought dead while three died on the spot. While five are reported to be critical, the official said. Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Devendra Fadnis has announced Rs 4 lakh compensation each for their families and given directives for a depth inquiry into the incident.

BRS suspends fmr Minister, former MP for "anti-party activities"

Hyderabad, Apr 10 (UNI) The ruling Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) party on Monday suspended former Minister Jupally Krishna Rao and former MP Ponguloti Srinivasa Reddy for indulging in "anti-party activities". Both were suspended on directions of BRS Party president and Chief Minister K. Chandrababu Naidu, the party said in a statement here. Such actions may be expected in the next few months as the State moves closer to face the Assembly elections. Krishna Rao, who was associated with the Congress party for long, joined BRS (TRS) before the 2014.

China rehearses 'sealing off' Taiwan, US deploys naval destroyer

HT News Network

China simulated "sealing off" Taiwan during a third day of wargames around the self-ruled island on Monday, as the United States deployed a naval destroyer into Beijing-claimed waters in a show of force.

China launched the exercises in response to Taiwan President Tsai Ing-wen last week meeting US House speaker Kevin McCarthy, an encounter it had warned would provoke a furious response.

After two days of exercises that included simulating targeted strikes on Taiwan and encirclement of the island, the Chinese military said the wargames also included "sealing" it off.

One of China's two aircraft carriers also "participated in today's exercise," the military said.

The United States, which had repeatedly called for China to show restraint, on Monday sent the guided-missile destroyer the USS Milius through contested parts of the South China Sea.

"This freedom of navigation operation upheld the rights, freedoms, and lawful uses of the sea," the US Navy said in a statement. It added the vessel had passed near the Spratly Islands—an archipelago claimed by China, Taiwan, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia and Brunei. It is about 1,300 kilometres (800 miles) from Taiwan.



The deployment of the Milius immediately triggered more anger from China, which said the vessel had "illegally intruded" into its territorial waters.

"No war" on Beigan island, part of Taiwan's Matsu archipelago that is within eyesight of China's mainland, 60-year-old chef Lin Ke-qiang told AFP he simply did not want war. "We, common people,

just want to live peaceful and stable lives," Lin said, adding Taiwan's military was no match for China's. "If any war happens, now that their missiles are so advanced, there's no way our side could resist. This side will be levelled to the ground." China and Taiwan split at the end of a civil war in 1949. China views democratic Taiwan as part of its territory and has vowed to take it one day.

The United States has been deliberately ambiguous on whether it would defend Taiwan militarily. But for decades it has sold weapons to Taipei to help ensure its self-defence, and offered political support. Tsai met McCarthy outside Los Angeles on her way home from a visit with two allied countries in Central America.

In August last year, China deployed warships, missiles and fighter jets around Taiwan in its largest show of force in years following a trip to the island by McCarthy's predecessor, Nancy Pelosi. Tsai met with McCarthy last week in the United States,

rather than in Taiwan. This was viewed as a compromise that would underscore support for Taiwan but avoid inflaming tensions with Beijing.

But China had repeatedly warned against any meeting, and began the latest wargames soon after Tsai returned to Taiwan.

"These operations serve as a stern warning against the collusion between separatist forces seeking 'Taiwan independence' and external forces and against their provocative activities," said Shi Yin, a PLA spokesman, said about "Joint Sword." Tsai responded to the drills by pledging to work with "the US and other like-minded countries" in the face of "continued authoritarian expansionism." Live-fire exercises

Exercises on Monday were set to include live-fire drills off the rocky coast of China's Fujian province, about 80 kilometres (50 miles) south of the Matsu islands and 190 kilometres from Taipei.

The local maritime authority said the exercises would be held between 7:00 am and 8 pm around Pingtan, a southeastern island that is China's nearest point to Taiwan. AFP journalists on Pingtan did not see any immediate military activity in an offshore area on Monday.

Iranian delegation set to visit Saudi Arabia this week

HT News Network

TEHRAN: Iran's foreign ministry said on Sunday a delegation will visit Saudi Arabia by Friday to pave the way for reopening its diplomatic missions there following a similar move by Riyadh.

The announcement comes a day after a Saudi delegation arrived in Tehran on a similar diplomatic trip, and follows a historic meeting between the two Gulf countries' foreign ministers in China.

"We are expecting a foreign ministry delegation to visit Saudi Arabia" by Friday, Deputy Foreign Minister Alireza Enayati said in an interview with state television.

"Two separate delegations will go to Riyadh and Jeddah", ahead of reopening Iran's embassy and consulate respectively.

The two countries have pledged to bring back security and stability to the turbulent Gulf.

Saudi Arabia severed relations with Iran in January 2016, after its embassy in Tehran and consulate in the north-western city of Mashhad were attacked by protesters demonstrating over Riyadh's execution of cleric Nimr al-Nimr.

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian and his Saudi counterpart Prince Faisal bin Farhan met in the Chinese capital on Thursday after Tehran and Riyadh agreed last month to restore diplomatic ties.

In a joint statement, the ministers pledged to bring back security and stability to the turbulent Gulf.

Iran and Saudi Arabia have backed rival sides in conflict zones across the region, including in Yemen. Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi has been invited by Saudi King Salman to Riyadh, a trip planned to take place after Ramadan.

Riyadh leads a military coalition that supports the internationally recognised government in the Arabian Peninsula country, while Tehran backs the Houthi rebels who control the capital Sanaa and large areas of the north.

The two Middle East powerhouses had held several rounds of dialogue in Iraq and Oman before reaching the agreement in Beijing, negotiated over five days between Iran's secretary of the Supreme National Security Council Ali Shamkhani and his Saudi counterpart Musaad bin Mohammad Al-Aiban.

Pope expresses 'deep concern' over unrest in Israeli-held areas

HT News Network

VATICAN CITY: Pope Francis noted his "deep concern" on Sunday over a flare-up in tensions between Israel and Palestinians, delivering an Easter Mass in which he denounced the barriers to peace in the world.

He said the renewed violence "threatens the desired climate of trust and mutual respect needed to resume dialogue", addressing a crowd of some 100,000 gathered in Saint Peter's Square.

The Argentinian pontiff, a week after leaving hospital, also cited a string of "stumbling blocks" to peace in the world during his traditional Easter message, making special mention of the war in Ukraine.

"Help the beloved Ukrainian people on their journey towards peace, and shed the light of Easter upon the people of Russia," he said.

"Comfort the wounded and all those who have lost loved ones because of the war, and grant that prisoners may return safe and sound to their families." He drew attention to conflicts around the world, from Syria to the Democratic Republic of Congo, and offered prayers for victims of the earthquake in Turkey and Syria.

This week has seen a surge in violence and unrest between Israel and Palestinians at the same time as the Ramadan, Passover and Easter have coincided.

The pope called for a resumption in dialogue to ensure peace "in the Holy City (of Jerusalem) and in the entire region".

The 86-year-old pope has returned to his duties after a recent stay in hospital following a bout of bronchitis.

World's Most Expensive Car Number Plate Sells For ₹ 123 Crore. It Reads...

HT News Network

New Delhi: A wealthy bidder has splashed out a world-record 55 million dirhams (\$15 million or 123 crore) for a rare car license plate in Dubai, smashing a bar set in the United Arab Emirates more than a decade ago. Emirates Auction LLC sold plate number P 7 - which, at first glance, looks like the number 7 alone, with the P off to the side - on Saturday during a charity auction, according to the company. Proceeds will go to Dubai ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid's global food aid initiative, the 1 Billion Meals Endowment. The UAE has made a habit of auctioning off vanity plates, used by the ultra-rich to show off their status and wealth, for charity. The latest auction broke a record set in 2008 by local businessman Saeed Abdul Ghaffar Khouri, who paid 52.2 million dirhams for a plate bearing the number 1 in Abu Dhabi. Vanity plates have also fetched eye-watering prices outside the Middle East: Someone bought the single-letter "R" plate at auction in Hong Kong earlier this year for HK\$25.5 million (\$3.2 million). For years, Dubai has been a safe space for the mega-wealthy to flash their wealth and live a tax-free lifestyle. While other parts of the world worry about an economic downturn, the emirate's economy remains strong - with high oil prices benefitting its neighbors and most important.

Worshippers celebrate in Jerusalem amid violence

HT News Network

JERUSALEM: Thousands of worshippers held tense celebrations in Jerusalem on Sunday, as Christian Easter coincided with Jewish Passover and Ramadan, amid a surge



erations recent events, but still I decided to go," said 50-year-old Paulius Majauskas, visiting from Lithuania.

Near the church, thousands of Jewish pilgrims gathered at the Western Wall for the traditional priestly blessing of Passover. Judy Green, 60, said the blessing was "beautiful, very uplifting" at the Western Wall, the holiest place where Jews can pray.

The Western Wall lies in Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem and sits below the Temple Mount, the most sacred site to Jews, known to Muslims as Al-Haram al-Sharif.

The raised compound is home to Al Aqsa mosque, the third-holiest site in Islam and the focal point for Ramadan celebrations. Israel has since struck targets in Gaza, Lebanon and most recently Syria in response to rocket fire mostly blamed on Palestinian militants, while separate attacks in the West Bank and Tel Aviv killed three people, including an Italian tourist.

On Sunday, pilgrims crowded into the narrow alleyways of Jerusalem's Old City, flanked by heavily-armed Israeli security forces deployed following the recent deadly attacks.

Churchgoers were ushered through the courtyard of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, built on the site where Christians believe Jesus was crucified, buried and resurrected.

"[I had] some doubt, taking into consideration recent events, but still I decided to go," said 50-year-old Paulius Majauskas, visiting from Lithuania.

in violence in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Israel has since struck targets in Gaza, Lebanon and most recently Syria in response to rocket fire mostly blamed on Palestinian militants, while separate attacks in the West Bank and Tel Aviv killed three people, including an Italian tourist.

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Macron says Europe must not be 'follower' of US or China on Taiwan

HT News Network

PARIS: French President Emmanuel Macron said in an interview published on Sunday that Europe must not be a "follower" of either the US or China on Taiwan, saying that the bloc risks entanglement in "crises that aren't ours".

His comments risk riling Washington and highlight divisions in the European Union over how to approach China, as the US steps up confrontation with its closest rival and Beijing draws closer to Russia in the wake of its invasion of Ukraine.

"The worst thing would be to think that we Europeans must be followers and adapt ourselves to the American rhythm and a Chinese overreaction," Macron told media including French business daily Les Echos and Politico as he returned on Friday from a three-day state visit to Beijing.

Citing his prized ideal of EU "strategic autonomy", the French leader said that "we must be clear where our views overlap with the US, but whether it's about Ukraine, relations to China or sanctions, we have a European strategy." "We don't want to get into a bloc versus bloc logic," he added, saying Europe "should not be caught up in a disordering of the world and crises that aren't ours".

China views democratic, self-ruled Taiwan as part of its territory and has vowed to take it one day, by force if necessary.

Macron discussed Taiwan with Chinese leader Xi Jinping on Friday, during a visit in which he was feted but more hawkish EU Commission President Ursula von der Leyen was kept mostly at arm's length.

His Elysee Palace office said the talks had been "dense and frank" and that the French



president was concerned about "growing tensions in the region" that could lead to "a terrible accident". His comments risk riling Washington and highlight divisions in the European Union over how to approach China, as the US steps up confrontation with its closest rival and Beijing draws closer to Russia in the wake of its invasion of Ukraine.

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"Supporting Ukraine Only Right Choice For True Vishwaguru": Top Minister In India

HT News Network

New Delhi: Supporting Ukraine is the "only right choice" for true Vishwaguru, Ukraine's First Deputy Foreign Minister, Emine Dzhaparova who arrived in India said today. Ms Dzhaparova tweeted, "Happy to visit India - the land that gave birth to many sages, saints and gurus. Today, India wants to be the Vishwaguru, the global teacher and arbiter. In our case, we've got a very clear picture: aggressor against innocent victim. Supporting Ukraine is the only right choice for true Vishwaguru." During her four-day visit, Ms Dzhaparova will hold talks with Secretary (West), Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Sanjay Verma, during which both sides are expected to discuss bilateral relations, exchange views on the current situation in Ukraine and global issues of mutual interest. It is pertinent to mention that this is the first



official visit of the East European country since the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine conflict last year.

The Ukrainian Deputy Foreign Minister will also call on Minister of State for External Affairs and Culture, Meenakshi Lekhi and meet with Deputy National Security Adviser, Vikram

Misri during the visit, according to the external affairs ministry.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has maintained that Russia-Ukraine conflict can only be resolved through dialogue and diplomacy and that "India is ready to contribute to any peace efforts."

He has spoken to both Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Russian President Vladimir Putin several times since the start of the conflict. Earlier, while holding a press conference with Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, PM Modi said, "From the beginning of the Ukraine conflict, India has clarified that this dispute can only be resolved through dialogues.

India stalls trade talks with Britain over Sikh separatist group: report

HT News Network

India has "disengaged" from trade talks with Britain after accusing it of failing to condemn the Sikh separatist group that attacked the Indian High Commission in London last month, The Times reported on Monday, citing British government sources.

"Indians don't want to talk about trade until they get a very public demonstration of condemnation of Khalistan extremism in the UK," a Whitehall source told The Times.

The incident occurred on March 19, when protesters with 'Khalistan' banners staged a demonstration at the High Commission and took down an Indian flag from the building's first floor balcony to denounce recent police action in Punjab.

Khalistan refers to an independent Sikh state sought by some groups but which does not exist.

Subsequently, India had summoned the most senior British diplomat in New Delhi to protest at the actions taken by "separatist and extremist elements" against the country's mission in London. Moreover, British foreign minister James Cleverly has said the country will review security at the Indian High Commission in London following "unacceptable acts of violence" towards the mission's staff.

Dir Horticulture presides Gram Sabha at Lolab

Reyaz Badana

SRINAGAR, APRIL 10: Director Horticulture Kashmir, Mr. G. R. Mir presided over a special Gram Sabha meeting today at Panchayat Halqa Chandigam-A Lolab, Kupwara as Prabhari Officer.

The meeting was held in connection with the approval and finalization of the Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP), 2023-24.

The meeting was attended by all the panchayat members besides the representatives of line departments and local people.

During the meeting, the proposed 'Gram Panchayat Development Plan' (GPDP) for the year 2023-24 was thoroughly discussed and approved. Additionally, the action plan for MGNREGA 2023-24 was also discussed.

After the conclusion of the meeting, Dir expressed his heartfelt appreciation to the members of the Gram Panchayat, officers, and local residents for their active participation and engagement throughout the meeting.

He stressed on the significance of the Gram Panchayat members, officers, and local residents' participation in the decision-making process for their respective panchayats. Their

involvement can lead to better decisions and outcomes, as all stakeholders' opinions and needs are considered.

Later, he visited the Fruit Plant Nursery at Base Station Chougul, Handwara, where he assessed the progress of various developmental activities and discussed the management practices being implemented in detail. He further urged the staff to prioritize the production of top-quality planting material while instructing them to expedite the spraying, fertilizer application, and other nursery operations. Director Horticulture Kashmir, Mr. G. R. Mir presided over a special Gram Sabha meeting today at Panchayat



Halqa Chandigam-A Lolab, Kupwara as Prabhari Officer.

The meeting was held in connection with the approval and finalization of the Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP), 2023-24.

The meeting was attended by all the panchayat members besides the representatives of line departments and local people.

During the meeting, the proposed 'Gram Panchayat Development Plan' (GPDP) for the year 2023-24 was thoroughly discussed and approved. Additionally, the action plan for MGNREGA 2023-24 was also discussed.

After the conclusion of the meeting,

Dir expressed his heartfelt appreciation to the members of the Gram Panchayat, officers, and local residents for their active participation and engagement throughout the meeting.

He stressed on the significance of the Gram Panchayat members, officers, and local residents' participation in the decision-making process for their respective panchayats. Their involvement can lead to better decisions and outcomes, as all stakeholders' opinions and needs are considered.

Later, he visited the Fruit Plant Nursery at Base Station Chougul, Handwara, where he assessed the progress of various developmental activities,

Lt. Gen RS Reen delivers expert talk at NIT Srinagar

Such sessions provide a platform for students to interact, and exchange ideas with experts: Director

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, Apr 10: An alumnus from National Institute of Technology (NIT) Srinagar, Lt. Gen RS Reen on Monday delivered an expert talk on "Role of Engineers in nation building and technology adoption initiatives through incubators and startups for finding solutions to region-specific engineering problems."

The function was presided over by Director NIT Srinagar; Prof (Dr.) Rakesh Sehgal, who was Chief Guest on the occasion, Institute's Registrar, Prof. Syed Kaiser Bukhari was 'Guest of Honor' on the occasion.

On the occasion, Prof (Dr.) Rakesh Sehgal said such lectures are aimed to expose students to a variety of topics beyond their



curriculum and provide a platform to interact and exchange ideas with eminent experts. Institute's Registrar, Prof. Syed Kaiser

Bukhari said such lectures will not only benefit students but would also help them to explore more career options in their future.

He said such lectures are aimed to stay current, learn new skills, and connect with other professionals in your field. They are an essential aspect of academic growth and students should take advantage of such things, Prof. Bukhari said.

The event was attended by more than 100 participants and it was coordinated by Dr. Ranjeet Kumar Rout, Assistant Professor, Department of Computer Science and Engineering.

Lt. Gen is a 1986 batch officer and an alumnus of Indian Military Academy, Dehradun. The Officer has done BE (Electrical) from NIT Srinagar and has specialization in Radio Engineering and Post-Graduation

in Communication Engineering from MC EME, Secunderabad.

The Officer is currently holding the appointment of Director General of Quality Assurance at HQ DGQA, New Delhi. For his dedication to duty, he was awarded COAS Commendation Card and DG DGQA Commendation Card.

Lt. Gen has also commanded workshops in J&K and Eastern Command. The Officer has also been Senior faculty at Defence Institute of Quality Assurance, Bangalore.

In his key speech, Lt. Gen RS Reen focused on the crucial role that engineers play in nation-building and how incubators and startups can be utilized to find solutions to region-specific engineering problems.

"Engineers play a critical role in nation-building and technology adoption initiatives through incubators."

DDC Kupwara chairs Gram Sabha at Manigah Hyhama for GPDP preparation

Dr Abdul Qayoom



KUPWARA, APRIL 10: District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kupwara, Dr. Doifode Sagar Dattatray today chaired a well attended Gram Sabha at far flung Panchayat Manigah-C in Kupwara district.

Addressing the gathering, the DDC said that Gram Sabhas were held in all 385 panchayats of Kupwara district today and the objective of holding the Gram Sabhas was approval of Gram Panchayat Developmental Plan (GPDP) for financial year 2023-24. He said the GPDP is the basic platform for the holistic development of villages. This public participatory process involves full convergence of centrally sponsored schemes and UT level schemes for registering overall development at grass root level.

In his speech, the DDC familiarized the people with the concept of GPDP and said that this system has revolutionized the rural economy of the district. He said gone are the days when people used to visit officers for resolving their developmental issues adding that today all officers are participating in Gram Sabhas in the Panchayats at the doorsteps of the people.

G N Pandithpori grieved over demise of mother of Ex-Sarpanch Harwet

DR. AB QAYOOM



Langate, Apr, 10: The People's Democratic Party (PDP) senior leader and state coordinator, Gh Nabi Pandithpori, expressed his heartfelt condolences to the family of Ex-Sarpanch Ab Majeed on the demise of his mother. Pandithpori paid a visit to Harwet Upper Qaziabad where the family resides to convey his sympathies and support. He was accompanied by senior party workers who joined in to offer their solidarity and grief. The loss of a loved one is a deeply saddening experience and the PDP leader expressed his condolences to the bereaved family, praying for strength and courage to overcome this trying time. The party stands by the family in this difficult period and offers their support in any way possible. We hope that the family finds comfort and solace in the love and prayers of those around them during this time of mourning.

Principle Secretary Forest reviews ongoing works on Jambu Zoo

JAMMU, APRIL 10: Principal Secretary Forest, Ecology and Environment, Dheeraj Gupta, today convened a review meeting regarding ongoing Jambu Zoo works.

Dheeraj Gupta asked the officials of department of wildlife protection, contractors and service providers to expedite the works to ensure that under construction Jambu Zoo be dedicated to public in the month of April 2023. He emphasized enhanced coordination among various agencies to ensure timely completion of vital works such as main road, parking area development, water supply and allied infrastructure. Principal Secretary also reviewed different services to be offered to public in Jambu Zoo such as ticketing, cafeteria, kiosk, drinking water points, shelter sheds, battery cars, viewpoints and parks. He issued instructions to the officials for timely mobilization and trial run of various services by 3rd week of April 2023. He directed the department to gear up for animal shifting plan for relocating the Manda Mini Zoo animals in the upcoming Zoo by 24th.

Special Gram Sabhas held across the district Anantnag

HT News Network

ANANTNAG, APRIL 10: Special Gram Sabhas were held throughout the length and breadth of district Anantnag in all its 335 panchayat halqas along with other districts of the UT as an extra ordinary step to ensure convergence of various government schemes executed by different departments at panchayat level with the consent of general public so as to ensure all round development in a transparent manner.

Furthermore, it is a step towards theme based budgeting which aims to achieve sustainable development goals envisaged by UNO and perused by GOI and nine themes to be achieved by 2030 by all Panchayats.

District Development Commissioner, Dr Basharat Qayoom oversaw the programme and ensured its smooth conduct in the district. People in good numbers participated and put forth their demands before their respective Prabhari Officers, in who's presence Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) has been given final shape and approved for implementation/execution in the current financial year. Official from all other line departments also participated in the programme. Additional Deputy commissioner S.M Ashraf visited the panchayat halqas Sofigund, Semthan of block Anantnag and Bijbehara. The representatives of the concerned departments were present in the gram sabhas and the people discussed the further plans of their concerned panchayats. ADC while speaking on the occasion said that the programme is being organised to pan the panchayat plans as per the desire of the people and as per the primary requisition of the public.

Hand Holding cum Awareness programme for JJM Stakeholders held at Kathua

DC Kathua flags off 'Prachar Rath'; calls upon Paani Samitis to own protection of public assets

HT News Network

KATHUA, APRIL 10: The Project Management Consultancy, Mission Directorate, Jal Jeevan Mission, J&K, in collaboration with District Jal Jeevan Mission, Kathua today conducted a day-long mega handholding cum awareness programme here in the Auditorium of Government Degree College.

The sessions witnessed participation of different stakeholders including PRIs, Pani Samiti members, and field staff of Jal Shakti Department, Poshan Abhiyan, Health viz. ASHAs, AWWs, District Project Management Unit JJM Staff, Implementation Support Agency, water testing lab staff and other concerned.

The programme was presided over by the Deputy Commissioner Kathua, Rahul Pandey, who kick-started the proceedings of



the programme by flagging off the 'Prachar Rath'. The 'Prachar Rath' will spread awareness about water testing, hygiene and sanitation, Pani Samitis' role and water conservation provisioned under Jal Jeevan Mission.

While speaking on the occasion, the DC said the JJM is one of the greatest flagship programme of Government of India to pro-

vide tap water connection to every household. He said 299 water supply schemes, with 820 works, have been sanctioned for covering length and breadth of Kathua district. He informed that as many as 751 works have been tendered for the construction of tubewells, borewells, besides laying pipe network to provide drinking water supply to all

households in line with the Prime Minister's resolve to provide "Har Ghar Nal se Jal". He expressed hope that the water supply schemes coming up under JJM will resolve the shortage of drinking water supply in the district especially in kandi and hilly areas of the district.

The DC exhorted the stakeholders, including Pani Samitis, to understand in detail their role and duties and adopt best practices of water management and rain water harvesting. He further motivated them to play their role in a missionary zeal towards fulfilling the vision of JJM. He said people need to owe the responsibility at individual and collective fronts in preserving water bodies and using water judiciously in view of scarce availability of water resources.

Earlier, representative of Implementation Support Agency (ISA) for JJM.

J&K Pollution Control Committee conducts public hearing at Khatri Palce Vijaypur

Farooq Rather

SSAMBA, APRIL 10: Jammu and Kashmir Pollution Control Committee today conducted public hearing for the Environmental Clearance of Minor Mineral (River Bed Material) Block 1/5 Devak River upstream Railway Bridge Samba and Block 1/11 Devak River Downstream NHIA Samba, at Khatri Place, Near Railway Crossing, Village Thalori, Vijaypur.

A large number of the people and public representatives including Chairman, Municipal Committee Vijaypur, Ganesh Dutt Sharma, Sarpanches/Panches of the adjoining Panchayats of Gurahslathia, Thalori Brhamana and public from Vijaypur town participated in proceeding.



During proceeding of public hearing, Deepak Abrol, Divisional Officer, JKPC, Samba (South) briefed the public about the

importance of conducting public hearing and Role of JKPC. The Project consultant from M/s Vitasta Enviro Service Pvt Ltd.,

Jaipur gave the details about salient features and Environmental impact Assessment (EIA) & Environment management plan

of the project.

All the related issues were discussed and queries raised were answered by the project consultant.

Naib Tehsildar, on behalf of Additional Deputy Commissioner and District Mineral Officer, Samba, also attended the public hearing and addressed the gathering & assured that all the important issues/ concerns raised by project affected people have been recorded by videography and will be incorporated in the report to be submitted to Competent Authority.

Narayan Thakur (Field Inspector) JKPC, Kathua and Draftsman Subash Chander of JKPC also attended proceeding of the public hearing.

Basil seed drink, a must in Ramadan

**IFTAR
SPECIAL**

**BASIL
SEEDS
DRINKS**



Rayees Ahmad Kumar

Breaking fast during Ramadan with basil seed drink (babri treash) has been a centuries old practice in Kashmir. I remember during my childhood days when children in groups of ten to fifteen used to throng mosque during Magrib prayers to receive this drink at Iftaar times. It hardly mattered whether they kept the fast or not during the day but basil seed drink had been their own choice. Any Muslim who offers a piece of date, a glass of plain water, a glass of milk or a glass of any drink to any other person at Iftaar time to break the fast gets reward equal to that of a fasting Muslim.

Basil Seed Drink and Ramzan are so closely associated to each other in Valley that it is almost impossible to think of Ramzan without this special drink. Men, women children and young all are fond of this mind refreshing drink during the month of fasting. During the month of Ramzan, in addition to the preparation of different delicious dishes in the kitchen, special focus is given for the preparation of basil seed drink by our female folk. In advance men buy these basil seeds from the market so that this drink is available for the family members from the very first day of fasting.

Basil Seeds are a blessing in view of their richest nutritive value. These are enriched with calcium, fats, fibres, manganese, phosphorus, vitamins, iodine, thymine and antioxidants. An hour or half an hour before the Iftaar time, few seeds of basil are soaked either in plain water or milk or a mixture of milk and water then sugar is added to the solution to make it a

sweet drink.

In view of its tremendous medicinal benefits, this drink is recommended medically as well. Let's see how this special drink has been a boon for us.

Basil Seeds help us in losing our overweight. When soaked in water or milk these seeds expand to many times of its original volume and we don't feel hungry for some

time. As these seeds are full of fibres, they help us in easy bowel movements as well as getting rid off from the constipation. Basil Seeds have a hypoglycemic effect thus help diabetic patients to normalize their blood sugar level. As soon as basil seed drink is

taken during Iftaar times, we feel somewhat relaxed and it also helps us in lowering the body heat. Thus it acts as a coolant. For those men and women who often complain about stomach acidity after taking some meals, basil seed drink can come to their rescue in regulating their stomach acidity. Raised levels of bad cholesterol are always injurious to heart and blood ves-

health. This special drink of basil seeds is also helpful in decreasing the stress level and mental fatigue. To get rid off from mouth ulcers and bad breath, it is recommended to take basil seed drink during Iftaar times. It acts as a tonic for the kidneys in view of its diuretic effects. However pregnant mothers should not take this drink as basil seeds have been found to

and this special basil seed drink is always preferred when it comes to break the fast at Iftaar times. In villages and also in towns some people and also some notable families are famous for serving eatables especially basil seed drink at Iftaar times during the fasting month. They consider it a great rewarding deed to serve eatables during Iftaar. Besides having a religious connection, serving eatables especially basil seed drink at Iftaar has now become a cultural tradition in Valley.

Different organisations, NGOs and some offices have been conducting the Iftaar parties for last few years as a goodwill gesture to attract the public support. In these parties apart from dates, fruits and biryani, basil seed drink is specially served in mass gatherings. People enthusiastically throng in good numbers to these parties to make the Iftaar party a success.

Our women folk also who toil extremely hard during this month both inside the kitchen as well as in outside chorus like in kitchen garden etc do not feel burdened when asked for basil seed drink preparation. Instead they feel pleased to prepare it to be served during Iftaar. In view of its much popularity in Kashmir, some people think that it is endemic to valley only but the case is not so as it is found and taken with same spirit outside the valley as well.

It doesn't need any special skill or tough task to prepare this popular drink but when it comes to the rewards for serving during Iftaar and also its medicinal benefits, it is really a big gift from God. Let's pledge to serve eatables especially basil seed drink during Iftaar every Ramzan so that Allah would be pleased to us and our sins are erased during this sacred month.

(The author is a columnist and hails from Qazigund south Kashmir)



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time. As these seeds are full of fibres, they help us in easy bowel movements as well as getting rid off from the constipation. Basil Seeds have a hypoglycemic effect thus help diabetic patients to normalize their blood sugar level. As soon as basil seed drink is

sels. Taking basil seed drink can do wonders in lowering its level. Since basil seeds are highly packed with vitamin A and K, proteins, iron, beta carotene, minerals like copper, calcium, folates, manganese, magnesium and flavonoids etc it improves skin and hair

lower down the oestrogen levels. Since it is highly rewarding for a Muslim to make his brethren to break the fast during Ramzan at Iftaar times, people take different eatables in mosques and other places of worship during this month. Dates, juice packets, milk

NEWS

Broccoli Can Improve Digestion & Even Heart Health



Broccoli is a member of the cruciferous family of vegetables and is known for its nutritional benefits. Broccoli is rich in vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. It is a versatile vegetable that can be added to many dishes, and its delicious taste makes it a favourite among many people. In this article, we will discuss eight benefits of consuming broccoli.

1. High in Nutrients

Broccoli is a nutritional powerhouse, as it is a great source of vitamins A, C, K, and B-complex. Additionally, it is rich in minerals such as potassium, calcium, and iron. It is also high in fibre, making it a great addition to any diet. The nutrient density of broccoli makes it an excellent choice for individuals who are looking for added health benefits.

2. Reduces Inflammation

Broccoli is high in antioxidants, including flavonoids, carotenoids, and phenolic compounds. These antioxidants help to reduce inflammation in the body by fighting free radicals. Inflammation is linked to many chronic diseases, including heart disease, cancer, and arthritis. Eating broccoli regularly can help to reduce the risk of these diseases and promote overall health and well-being.

3. Supports Healthy Digestion

Broccoli is an excellent source of fibre, which is essential for healthy digestion. Fibre helps to promote the growth of beneficial bacteria in the gut, which can improve digestion and promote regularity. Eating broccoli also supports healthy bowel function by preventing constipation and reducing the risk of colon cancer.

4. Boosts Immunity

Broccoli is high in vitamin C, which is essential for a healthy immune system. Vitamin C improves the production of white blood cells, which help to fight off infection and disease. Additionally, eating broccoli regularly can help to reduce the risk of colds, flu, and other infections.

5. Promotes Healthy Skin

Broccoli is an excellent source of vitamin A, which is essential for healthy skin. Vitamin A helps to promote collagen production, which helps to keep the skin firm and healthy. Additionally, vitamin A can help to reduce the risk of premature ageing by reducing wrinkles and fine lines.

6. Reduces the Risk of Cancer

The antioxidants in broccoli, particularly sulforaphane, have been shown to reduce the risk of cancer. Sulforaphane is known to help fight off cancer cells by promoting cell death and inhibiting the growth of cancer cells. Eating broccoli regularly can help to reduce the risk of breast, prostate, lung, and colon cancer.

7. Supports Bone Health

Broccoli is a great source of calcium and vitamin K, which are essential for strong bones. Calcium is needed for healthy bone growth and maintenance, while vitamin K is necessary for bone mineralization. Eating broccoli regularly can help to reduce the risk of osteoporosis and promote overall bone health.

Emmer wheat or Khapli: Everything we should know about this healthy grain

Of late several doctors and nutrition experts have started recommending Emmer wheat as a healthier substitute of regular wheat. This variety of wheat is gaining popularity because it contains less gluten than regular wheat, has versatile culinary utility and is also a good source of nutrition.

What is Emmer wheat?

Also known as Farro, it is an ancient grain that has been cultivated for centuries. A native of the Middle East, historical evidence traces it to the Middle Pre-Pottery Neolithic Age (10,200 to 9,500 BC) when it was collected and consumed by hunter-gatherers. It has been discovered in several Neolithic archaeological sites. Emmer is grown in parts of Africa, Spain, US, Albania, Turkey, Switzerland, Germany, Greece and Italy. It has a huge demand in Italy due to its health benefits as some research has linked its use to the prevention of colon cancer. Another reason is that

it can be used in making good quality bread. Emmer bread can be found in the supermarkets of Germany, Switzerland and the Netherlands. In Armenian cuisine, its porridge and pilaf is quite popular.

Health benefits

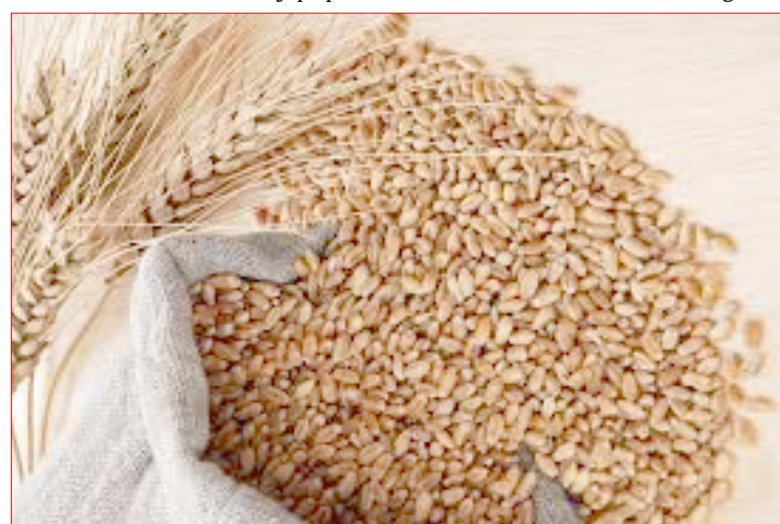
-It has more protein than regular wheat and is a good source of iron and magnesium along with essential fibre.

-Emmer wheat contains less gluten than regular wheat, making it a better choice for people who want to avoid gluten without compromising on taste.

-Emmer wheat is not genetically modified and also due to its low gluten content it is more easily digestible than regular wheat and has a low glycemic index making it healthy for diabetics.

-Due to its high fibre content, it keeps one satiated for long, preventing mid-meal snacking and hence is good for weight watchers

-Some studies have linked its use to the prevention of colon cancer which has made it really popular



among health enthusiasts. The wheat has also been linked to good cardiovascular health, though more research is needed in this regard.

A sustainable grain

One argument that goes in favour of Emmer wheat is that it can be grown

sustainably. It is a sturdy crop that can grow in poor soil and with less amount of water, making it a sustainable choice for farmers and a resilient crop in times of drought.

Cultivation in India

Emmer wheat known as Khapli in India is not commonly cultivated. It is traditionally cultivated on a limited scale in Karnataka, parts of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Andhra and Tamil Nadu. Due to an increased awareness towards its health benefits, Emmer wheat is available in specialty stores and online markets in India, where it is often sold as a health food due to its high nutritional value and low gluten content.

As per a report published by AB Damania, Department of Plant Sciences, University of California, "Archaeological findings from Kunal in Haryana, Kanishkapura in Kashmir, Harappan settlement of Rohira in Punjab also show evidence of Khapli cultivation. It is speculated that Khapli wheat came to Kashmir from the Middle East through Persia and Afghanistan and to southern India by sea from north eastern Africa. Today Khapli wheat forms only 1% of all wheat grown in India."

Conclusion

According to celebrity nutritionist Sandhya Gugnani, "Emmer wheat is high in protein and low in calories as compared to refined flour. It is a rich source of vitamin B3, magnesium, selenium and iron. Since it's high in fibre, protein and other vitamins and minerals, this makes it a complete plant based high-protein food source for a vegetarian diet. One can add legumes and other vegetables too. It's widely used in soups and is a healthy substitute for rice. It's easy to digest but people with gluten intolerance should avoid it completely." This ancient wheat variety can be used both in grain and flour form. It is hard to distinguish it from the regular atta consumed in Indian households and hence it can be a good substitute for the regular flour due to its numerous health benefits. From chapatis and parathas to dalia, pulao and salads, the grain can be conveniently incorporated in Indian recipes.

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فاتحہ خوانی



انتہائی افسوس کے ساتھ یہ اطلاع دی جاتی ہے کہ میر محمد مقبول ساکنہ لال وانی محلہ کدل بل پامپور مورخہ ۱۰ اپریل ۲۰۲۳ء مطابق ۱۹ رمضان المبارک ۱۴۴۴ھ بروز سوموار بوقت صبح ۱۱ بجے دانی اجل کو لبیک کہہ گئے۔ اناللہ وانا الیہ راجعون۔

اللہ مرحوم کو جنت میں اعلیٰ مقام عطا فرمائے۔ فاتحہ خوانی مقامی حضرات کے لیے جمعرات صبح سات بجے اُنکے آبائی مقبرے پر انجام دی جائے گی۔ جبکہ غیر مقامی حضرات اسی روز گیارہ بجے اجتماعی فاتحہ خوانی میں شرکت کر سکتے ہیں۔

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مصریح الدین وانی

سوگوان

The Prophet (SA) said:
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"Whoever builds a mosque, desiring thereby Allah's pleasure, Allah builds for him the like of it in paradise." [Bukhari]

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