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Delhi-Srinagar Highway Will Increase Tourist Arrivals In J&K 4-Fold: Nitin Gadkari



■ HT News Network

JAMMU, APR 11: There will be a four-fold rise in the footfall of tourists in Kashmir after the completion of the Delhi-Jammu-Srinagar highway, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari has said. The minister for road,

highways and transport on Tuesday inspected a 924-metre-long Banihal-Qazigund tunnel, which will bypass a nearly three-km landslide and accident-prone area in Ramban district, and various road projects in the Union territory.

The completion of the tunnel will

bring much relief to travellers by bypassing a nearly three-km landslide and accident-prone area in the Ramban district. Flanked by Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Union ministers Jitendra Singh and Gen VK Singh, Gadkari also

Turn.....**Delhi-Srinagar Highway**.....Pg 02

Jmu-Sgr Highway Will Have 5 Tunnels That Reduce Travel Time: Nitin Gadkari

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 11: Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari on Tuesday said that four more tunnels will come up on the Srinagar-Jammu national highway which will reduce the travel time.

Speaking to media persons after inspecting Nayvug Banihal-Qazigund tunnel, Gadkari said that on the 245 km stretch of Srinagar-Jammu national highway a three lane marg would come up and work on the 200 km have been completed.

"Today we have achieved a breakthrough
Turn.....**Jmu-Sgr Highway**.....Pg 02

BJP Will Return To Power By Winning Over 300 LS Seats In Next Year's Polls: Shah

■ Agencies

DIBRUGARH (ASSAM), APR 11: Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday asserted that the BJP will win more than 300 Lok Sabha seats across the country in next year's general elections and return to power with Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the helm.

Addressing a rally in Dibrugarh, the senior BJP leader exuded confidence that the saffron party will win 12 out of the 14 Lok Sabha seats in the northeast-ern state.

Launching a scathing attack on the Congress,
Turn.....**BJP will Return**.....Pg 02

Covid-19 mock drills held in different hospitals of J&K

Super ready to tackle any situation: Officials

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 11: Like other parts of the country, the Covid-19 mock drills were held across hospitals in Jammu and Kashmir for the second day for an emergency response to ensure medical equipment and other infrastructure are functioning properly.

A health official told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), that amid a rise in cases, the Covid-19 preparedness-related mock drills were conducted
Turn.....**Covid-19 mock drills**.....Pg 02

NEWS BRIEF

Woman among two LeT militant associates arrested in Bla

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 11: A woman was among two militant associates of Lashkar-e-Taiba who were arrested by security forces in Barmulla district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said
Turn.....**Woman among two**.....Pg 02

5 residential houses gutted in overnight blaze in Tulail

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 11: At least five residential houses were gutted in a massive fire in Tulail Valley of north Kashmir's Baniptora district late
Turn.....**5 residential houses**.....Pg 02

Massive protest in Leh in favor of rape victim

■ HT News Network

LEH, APR 11: People from all walks of life held a protest rally in Leh Division of Ladakh demanding fast-track justice for the minor rape victim.

The rally was attended by political leaders, civil society, school children, government employees, and traders.
KNT correspondent from Leh
Turn.....**Massive protest**.....Pg 02

Police bust a drug module in Sopore, five arrested

■ HT News Network

SOPORE, APR 11: An interesting case of a drug-peddling family has surfaced in North Kashmir's Sopore town. The whole family is under police custody for their active involvement in drug peddling. One of the female members of the family was recently
Turn.....**Police bust**.....Pg 02

Around 3.20 lakh devotees visited Vaishno Devi shrine in first 10 days of Apr: Board

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, APR 11: As the rush of devotees is swelling with each passing day, around 3.20 lakh devotees from all over the country visited the cave shrine of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi situated in Trikuta Hills of Katra town in Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir in the ten days of the current month.

A Shrine Board official on Tuesday said, "with examination season over, the rush of devotees has started increasing at the cave shrine."

"It is a festivity-like atmosphere in Katra town due to unprecedented rush and pilgrims from all across the country are
Turn.....**Around 3.20 lakh**.....Pg 02

Cong Singularly Responsible For All Mess In J&K: BJP

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, APR 11: Senior BJP leader and former legislator Devender Singh Rana on Tuesday accused the Congress of murdering democracy in Jammu and Kashmir, and said it "singularly responsible" for all the "mess and uncertainty" in the Union Territory.

He said holding assembly elections is a prerogative of the Election Commission but his party is ready round-the-year
Turn.....**Cong Singularly Responsible**.....Pg 02

War In Space A Possibility, Need To Develop Dual-Use Platforms In That Domain: CDS Chauhan

■ Agencies

NEW DELHI, APR 11: Highlighting the intense race towards militarisation of space, Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Gen Anil Chauhan on Tuesday made a strong pitch for developing dual-use platforms with a special focus on incorporating cutting-edge technology in the space domain.

Inaugurating a three-day Indian
Turn.....**War In Space**.....Pg 02



CS emphasizes on digital DPRs & billing of all works under OMMAS only



Launches Onboarding Of 08 More Services Under Auto-Appeal

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, APR 11: Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta today highlighted the need for introducing the Online Management & Monitoring System (OMMAS) for raising bills of all works under execution by different Departments such as Public Works
Turn.....**CS emphasizes on**.....Pg 02

Prostitution racket, second in 8 days, busted in Srinagar

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 11: Jammu and Kashmir police has busted a second prostitution racket in Srinagar city in over a week and arrested three persons including a couple for allegedly operating the racket.

Police said the racket was busted during the investigation in the recently unearthed sex racket in Bagh-e-Mehtab area.

"In continuation of the investigation of the recently unearthed prostitution
Turn.....**Prostitution racket**.....Pg 02

'Tanga Sawari' Still Popular In Kashmir

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 11: With the advent of fast and comfortable means of transportation, Horse Cart 'Tanga Sawari', which is considered to be the oldest means of transportation, is dwindling at a very fast pace.



People today prefer to use modern modes of transport to save time and travel comfortably which has its own advantages and disadvantages. However, in some areas of the Kashmir Valley, 'Tange' or horse-drawn carriages are still in operation.

For some people using such a sawari is a hobby. In South Kashmir's Sarnal Anantnag
Turn.....**'Tanga Sawari'**.....Pg 02

Budget 2023-24 to give major infra push towards transforming power, road sectors in J&K

18.36 lakh households to get FHTs, 6000 km roads to be of blacktopped

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 11: The budget 2023-24 will give a major infrastructural push to four core areas of health, drinking water, power and road connectivity aimed at providing succour to the common people and improving developmental parameters of UT at the national level.



The budget has earmarked funds for providing Functional Household Tap Connections to all 18.36 lakh households of Jammu and Kashmir by 2023-24 with a minimum of 55 litres per capita per day (LPCD) drinking water supply of prescribed quality (confirming to BIS 10500) on a regular, longterm and
Turn.....**Budget 2023-24**.....Pg 02



No Need To Panic About Current Spike In Covid Cases: Experts To Chief Secretary

Genome Sequencing Labs Established In Both Cities

NEW DELHI, APR 11: In a meeting with health experts Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta was today assured that there is no need to panic in view of little spike in Covid-19 cases reported across the UT recently.

The meeting was attended by the Secretary, Health; Director SKIMS; Principals of Medical Colleges and Heads of Medicine and Microbiology of Medical Colleges; Directors of Health Services Kashmir/Jammu besides other experts from the Medical field.

Dr Mehta enjoined upon all these health experts to take all the necessary measures to tackle any issues that may arise fully. He asked them to perform the precautionary testing of individuals as per the set protocols and not to resort to either under testing or over testing in the health facilities. He impressed upon them to create ample awareness among public so that no unnecessary scare is created among them.

The Chief Secretary also emphasized on taking stock of medicines and other paraphernalia before hand so that people are served better. He asked the department to give booster doses to the vulnerable groups like elderly and persons with comorbidity. He also directed them for encouraging people to observe the Covid appropriate behavior for safety of all.

On the occasion the Chief Secretary directed for constituting a three member committee under



Director SKIMS with Principals of Government Medical Colleges of Jammu and Srinagar as members for working out a standard protocol for treatment of patients across the health facilities of J&K for various ailments.

He also urged the committee to look into the reasons of high rate of C-section births in the UT. He advised them to suggest the corrective measures to address this issue. He further asked them

to frame a mechanism in consonance with the hospitals in other regions regarding a policy for taking off days in lieu of night duty and working of medics. He also asked the Department to ensure that various wings in all hospitals must follow an inclusive approach with respect to all doctors working in the wing for ensuring equitable opportunities and due process of consultations in management of patients.

The Secretary Health informed the meeting that currently there is no ICU bed occupancy related to covid in the health facilities of the UT. He made out that the testing capacity of J&K has been augmented by many folds. He made out that the full Genome Sequencing facility has been started at SKIMS recently and other at GMC Jammu shall be started soon. He also revealed that every sample of a positive person is sent for its

genome analysis as per the GoI guidelines.

The Secretary apprised the meeting that Mock Drills were conducted in 162 health facilities across the UT on 10th April to ensure Operational Readiness for management of COVID at all identified dedicated facilities including GMCs/ DHs and CHCs with specific focus on Oxygen Plants (LMO/PSA/Manifold), Ventilators, Logistics & Human Resources.

He gave out that the covid vaccination doses given in the age groups of 18 years & Above, 15-17 years and 12-14 years in the UT are above that of the National Average which is quite an encouraging affair. He ascertained that there is no reason to worry and only caution can evade its possible implications.

Moreover the health experts also gave their suggestions regarding the current scenario and preparedness of J&K UT. They informed that the virus is not so lethal this time although the spread may be faster. They advised people to only take precautions so that they keep themselves safe as well as others.

It was revealed that J&K has identified around 3000 Covid beds, 1966 isolation beds, and 330 ICU beds in its hospitals. It has a capacity to generate 1,14,366 LPM of oxygen from its 154 plants. The UT also has 4 CBNAAT, 15 TRUENAT labs in its hospitals to generate tests more accurately and expeditiously.

JK-SCERT formulates Syllabus-cum-Academic Calendar upto 8th standard

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 11: The Jammu and Kashmir State Council of Educational Research and Training (JK-SCERT) has formulated Syllabus-cum-Academic Calendar for Academic Session 2023-24 upto 8th standard.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Director of JK-SCERT has said, "National Education Policy 2020 envisages shift from rote learning to competency and experiential based learning in schooling which require proper planning and thorough understanding of mechanism for teaching learning process at school level."

"JK-SCERT has accordingly, formulated and designed 'Syllabus-cum-Academic Calendar for Academic Session 2023-24 up to Class 8th' in sync with learning outcomes mapped with the contents of prescribed subject and class wise text books of Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education (JKBOSE)," reads the notification issued by the director. It reads, "This Syllabus-cum-Academic Calendar for Academic Session 2023-24 up to Class 8th will serve as a guide for ensuring uniformity."

"It will also help teachers as well as students in achieving the desired competencies within prescribed timelines," it reads.

Bukhari welcomes peace, development in J&K

Hails Gadkari for announcing more road projects

JAMMU, APR 11: Former minister and Apni Party president Altaf Bukhari on Tuesday welcomed "peace and development" in Jammu and Kashmir and said that youth want peace, not war.

Congratulating the Government of India, Security Forces and the administration for "restoring peace", Bukhari said, "Jammu and Kashmir is normal and youth of this belt want to live in peace and do not want war".

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Bukhari was addressing a press conference along with other senior leaders.

Bukhari said, "Jammu and Kashmir is as normal as any place in this country and we must be happy that in the last eight months, no local youth has joined the militancy." The Apni Party president also lauded Union Minister Nitin Gadkari for announcing several road connectivity projects and tunnels for Jammu and Kashmir. "It is appreciable that Nitin Gadkari has fixed a deadline to complete the Zojila tunnel as this historic connectivity is also very important and strategic from the defence point of view," he said.

Bukhari while counting the decisions taken by the Union Minister with regard to road connectivity, appealed for better road infrastructure across the Union Territory and stated that the Zojila tunnel will further be strengthening bonds and connecting people of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, which were bifurcated into two Union Territories in 2019.

He also appealed to the Union Minister to consider suspending Toll Plazas on Jammu-Kathua national highway till the road conditions get better. Bukhari while suggesting the construction of bridges as connectivity instead of digging and cutting mountains, appealed to the administration to engage and employ more local youth at the sites where the projects are underway.

Resident doctors oppose new rules for engagement of faculties

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 11: Resident Doctors' Association (RDA), Government Medical College (GMC) Jammu has strongly opposed the J&K Government's recent order for appointment of faculty members in medical and dental colleges of the Union Territory.

As per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), addressing a press conference at GMC Srinagar president of the Association Dr Junaid said that they condemn the recent Government order which states that 75% of the marks for selection in various disciplines for registrars and faculties posts will be based upon MBBS marks only.

"A recent government order with regards to selection of Registrars and faculty on academic arrangement basis seems to have been issued without any due consideration to the effect it would have on doctors who have trained from national medical colleges across the country. The order upon even superficial inspection is very unjust and discriminatory towards the doctors who have made it to the national medical colleges of the different states of India by qualifying the highest level of competitive state and national examinations including erstwhile JKCET or existing NEET UG," he said.

"The order reads that for Registrar/ Demonstrator appointments in various disciplines .75% of the marks will be decided based on MBBS marks only. It is worthwhile to mention that there exists a gross disparity in the paper evaluation system between national medical colleges and foreign medical colleges. Nevertheless, there is a grading system in place in some foreign medical colleges and most of the foreign medical colleges have set different cutoffs for passing their students in contrast to what we have in national medical colleges. So subjecting marks percentages from different evaluation systems to compete under a single umbrella will create an unjust system and unethical platform for future recruitments of Registrars," he said.

"The repercussions unequivocally would be quite alarming and the genuine competitors would be sidelined even without taking part in competition," Dr Junaid said.

The new order in first place should be revoked and in case it is implemented there has to be an unambiguous equivalence to this scoring system to equate the marks or percentage of MBBS, rather we endorse a true competitive examination in the form of MCQs, to be put in place for these posts. So that candidates are selected on the basis of pure merit, only to further strengthen our healthcare system, he said.

Meet Gh Mohammad Zaz: The last maestro bequeathing life into musical instruments

'Zaz was conferred with Padma Shri recently'

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 11: An elderly man from old city of Srinagar is the last craftsman who is bequeathing life into musical instruments and he was conferred with Padma Shri award recently.

Gh Mohammad Zaz an Octogenarian from Zainakadal Siraj Bagh area of Srinagar has been handcrafting stringed musical instruments for around seven decades now.

Zaz while talking to news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said that he was just 12 year old when he started learning to make musical instruments from Grandfather, then father and uncle who all were associated with the same craft.

"When I was 12, I got very weak due to typhoid and then one of acquaintances suggested my grandfather to associate me with the work and as it was in my blood, I learned everything very fast," he said. "Our eight generations have been associated with this art but I am the last now to be associated with this art and have made hundreds of musical instruments."

He is the last and the 8th generation of the family who are known for making finest santoor in the valley over the past many decades but he proudly says that he will continue to make finest Santoor as long as he is alive and with my death, this legacy will end.

"Originally Kashmiri Santoor has 100 strings, however, when it came under Indian Classical Music, it's strings were reduced to 87 with 28 bridges," Zaz said.

"I have been beautifying Santoor



with Shikargah designs (a design of trees and birds) made on the top of it and colorful paper mache designs on every side," he said.

Apart from Kashmiri Santoor, Zaz family was famous for making other old musical instruments like Rabab, Kashmiri Sitar, Sarangi and many other unique instruments.

He said that our great customers like Shiv Kumar Sharma and Bhajan Sopori brought newness in this art and took Santoor to international level.

According to Zaz, Santoor was earlier used for Sufi music and for hymns for what people would assemble together and the Santoor was played in the remembrance of God, however, later on, it found its way in clas-

sical music.

He said: "I have three daughters who all are well settled and there is no one who is possessing such patience to learn this art. With his death, after eight generations, there will be no one associated with this art."

"Neither have I sought nor I got any government support and I am doing it for my own peace not for interests but I was recently conferred with Padma Shri award and award whether small or big is an honour," he said. "It's God's grace and I am highly thankful to the Government for the Award. It has given me a lot of happiness. This award is for those who taught me, 7 generations before me in my family have been making these musical Instruments."

Sopore locality residents protest over lack of basic facilities

■ HT News Network

SOPORE, APR 11: Inhabitants of Maharajpora area of Sopore town in north Kashmir's Baramulla district Tuesday held a protest demonstration over lack of basic facilities in their locality.

Scores of men and women gathered in front of Police Station Sopore and blocked the Sopore-Bandipora road for hours. However, traffic was later restored after police intervention.

Talking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the protesters said that there is shortage of drinking water, poor drainage facility and dilapidated roads in the area.

"The area has been overlooked by the consecutive governments and nobody seems to be taking our issues seriously," they said.

They alleged they have been victimized and befooled by so-called leaders who only visited them during elections.

Meanwhile, the residents urged the LG administration and the concerned authorities to look into their genuine demands so they could heave a sigh of relief.

4

**ZONAL EDUCATION
OFFICER KHAG**

Dulloo chairs meeting regarding early emergence of pests in districts

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 11: Additional Chief Secretary (ACS), Agriculture Production Department, Atal Dulloo, today chaired a meeting regarding early emergence of pests as reported from various districts of J&K at civil Secretariat here.

Vice Chancellor, SKUAST Jammu and Kashmir, Secretary in Agriculture Production Department, Director Horticulture, Jammu and Kashmir, Joint Director Horticulture, Scientists from SKUAST-K, Chief Horticulture Officers, experts from KVKs and the Department of Horticulture attended the meeting in person and online mode.

Director Horticulture, Kashmir, in his detailed



presentation, informed about emergence of pests in many areas of J&K. He also discussed the advisory against such pests recommended by SKUAST-K and issued by the Department of Horticulture in the field.

ACS directed the scientists from SKUAST and experts from the Department of Horticulture to be proactive and identify the hot spot areas of infestation and classify the locations into RED, YELLOW and

GREEN zones based on the percentage/severity of infestation.

Atal Dulloo reiterated that pest/ disease infestation being dynamic process, its spread need to be catch hold off very early before any alarming situation evolves to the disadvantage of Horticulture industry. He informed that online survey form has been designed to collect data regarding infestation of pests in different villages of J&K and the

Department of Horticulture has been directed to assist farmers to fill these forms.

ACS directed the officers and experts to visit affected areas at regular intervals to report if the control measures taken are working and if the pest is under control. Data compilation regarding pest infestation and its spread will assist in working out more appropriate control measures that shall be accordingly issued as fresh advisory, he maintained.

DC reviews status of Aadhaar Enrollment in Rajouri district

HT News Network

RAJOURI, APRIL 11: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Vikas Kundal today chaired a meeting to review the status of Aadhaar enrollment and the progress achieved so far in the district. Sanjeev Mahajan, Director UIDAI Chandigarh also attended the meeting through video conference.

In the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner sought a detailed report on all aspects of Aadhaar enrollment with main focus on enrollment of the 0 to 5 year age group. The meeting was apprised that 58.01 percent achievement has been recorded regarding Aadhaar enrollment of 0 to 5 years age group. Similarly, the DC also reviewed the progress



achieved under Aadhaar enrollment in other age groups including 05 to 18 years and 18 years above.

The Director UIDAI Chandigarh, Sanjeev Mahajan also provided valuable suggestions to the concerned stakeholders for achieving hundred percent Aadhaar enrollment in the district. He urged the officers to work with added zeal to achieve the desired results at the earliest.

While addressing the

meeting, the Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Vikas Kundal, underscored the importance of effective implementation and maximum Aadhaar enrollment in the district.

He also reiterated the commitment of the district administration to ensure enrollment of all citizens to enable them to avail benefits of different schemes. He directed the officers to actively monitor the process for efficiency, accuracy and

full saturation.

Officers who attended the meeting were ASP, Vivek Shekhar; DSEO, Sandeep Sharma; LDM, Sanjeev Bhasin; CDPO Rajouri, Naseer Ahmed and Project Manager CSC e Governance, Shahid. He also reiterated the commitment of the district administration to ensure enrollment of all citizens to enable them to avail benefits of different schemes. He directed the officers to actively monitor.

DC inaugurates Blacktopping work on Pingla Mata road

HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, APRIL 11: Deputy Commissioner, Udhampur Kritika Jyotsna today visited Ramnagar and inaugurated the blacktopping work on Pingla Mata road taken up under Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana. While inaugurating the road work in presence of PRI members, the DC said that road connectivity was the basic requirement for growth and development of any area. Interacting with PRI members and general public of the area, the DC informed that Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana is majorly funded by the central government to provide road connectivity to the rural areas. She called upon the officers to put in sincere and dedicated efforts to take the benefits of all government schemes to the targeted sections of the society.

The Executing Agency was directed to complete the work at the earliest to provide benefits to the general public of the area.

ACR flags off Voters' awareness rally at Panchari

UDHAMPUR, APRIL 11: To generate awareness among the common masses about the importance of election process in Democracy, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Udhampur (Electoral Registration Officer Udhampur West-59 and East-60 Constituencies) Rafiq Ahmad Jaral, today flagged off voters awareness rally here from Government Higher Secondary School Panchari under the aegis of Systematic Voters Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP). BDC Chairman, Jeevan Kumar Sharma; Tehsildar, Panchari Vipin Kumar; BDO, Panchari Sandeep Gupta, besides representatives of other line departments.

BJP thanks LG for deferring power tariff hike

HT News Network

JAMMU APRIL 11- Senior BJP leader Mr Devender Singh Rana today expressed his party's gratitude to Lieutenant Governor Mr Manoj Sinha for positively responding to the plea taken up with regard to the proposed hike in the power tariff and assuring against any such move in the near future to increase the rates to every category of consumers across Jammu and Kashmir in the larger public interest. Addressing a press conference at the party headquarters here this morning, Mr Rana said that this important issue, flagged by a deputation of Federation of Industries Jammu to the Pradesh BJP Trade and Industry Cell, was taken up with the Lieutenant Governor, who responded very positively keeping larger public interest

in view. Mr Devender Rana, who also oversees the working of Industries, Tourism, Trade, Transport & Cooperative Cells, flanked by Conveners & Co-conveners of the respective cells said that the Federation of Industries had vehemently sought the intervention in getting the issue resolved as any move by the Jammu Power Development Corporation to increase the power tariff would be detrimental to the growth of Industry. They had pleaded that the further increase to the already hike of 25 to 38 per cent in the power tariff effected in October, 2022 was not desirable as Jammu and Kashmir was bearing a little less than the tariff structure in neighbouring Punjab and more than Himachal Pradesh, he added.

Mr Rana said that the Lieutenant Governor has been agile to the genuine problems of the people and whenever approached, he has exam-



ined and decided the issues keeping in view the public interest. He also lauded the efforts being made for holistic development, rapid industrialization, massive infrastructural interventions post August 5, 2019 political developments, as part of the Prime Minister's mission of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka

Prayas, Sabka Vishwas.

"With all these efforts in mission mode, Jammu and Kashmir is destined to be topping the north Indian states in respect of development and progress in the next five years", he said, adding that the day is not far when the Union Territory will be a shining part of the nation becoming

Vishwa Guru.

He said due to concerted efforts, peace and tranquility has returned to Jammu and Kashmir and the people are living in harmony under responsive and transparent governance. This is a historic achievement of the BJP under the dynamic leadership of the statesman Prime Minister Mr Narendra Modi, he maintained. On being asked about the conduct of elections in Jammu and Kashmir, Mr Rana said holding of polls is the prerogative of the Election Commission of India. As far as the BJP is concerned, the party remains in the election mode 24x7x365, he asserted. To a question about some opposition parties claiming that the BJP doesn't want elections due to fear of losing, he retorted, "Who are they? The Congress which I believe is responsible for the murder of democracy in J&K.

Bhaderwah gears up to host 3-day Baisakhi Festival from April 13

HT News Network

BHADARWAH, APRIL 11: The Bhaderwah Valley has geared up to host a scintillating 3-day festival here from April 13 to April 15 to mark the celebration of Baisakhi.

In this regard, a meeting of officers of line departments, PRIs and religious organisations was today convened by Additional District Commissioner Chowdhary Dilmir here in his office chambers.

The meeting was attend-



ed by ASP, DFO, SDPO, BDO, PRIs of some panchayats and members of Mandir committees and Langer committees.

Threadbare discussion

was held regarding Celebration of the Festival in the periphery of Bhaderwah. It was informed that Baisakhi mela shall begin from Subar Dhar on 13th

April where government departments put up stalls to showcase their schemes along with amusement activities for the participants.

On April 14 the functions shall be held at Thuba and Gutassa. Nagni Mandir Manthala and Vasuki Nag Mandir Gatha shall host the programme on 15th April 2023.

Security arrangements, arrangements for drinking water at venues, uninterrupted power supply, medical facilities were

finalized. Emphasis was laid on the cleanliness of the venues where dustbins shall be installed by the Departments of BDA and RDD. At the end of the programme Safai Abhiyan shall be held at the venues to make the area pollution free and environment friendly" they added.

The ADC sought cooperation from the Mandir Committees and the Langer Committees for keeping the atmosphere neat and clean in and around the venues.

ADC Kishtwar tours Gahan area, takes spot appraisal of water supply issues

HT News Network

KISHTWAR, APRIL 11: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Kishtwar, Inderjeet Singh Parihar today conducted an extensive tour of the Gahan Area of Sarthal and assessed the issues related to the effective implementation of Water Supply Scheme, Bhadat undertaken under Jal Jeevan Mission.

During the visit, the ADC interacted with local PRIs and other concerned officials to address the issues and find effective solutions for the operationalization of the scheme.

He urged the locals to repose their trust in the administration, which is committed to address their issues promptly.

Moreover, ADC Parihar emphasized the importance of collective efforts for the holistic and equitable development of the region and encouraged the removal of any obstacles in the path of developmental projects. During the tour, the ADC also listened to the grievances of people at various locations and assured them that their concerns would be taken up with the concerned authorities for immediate resolution.

He also passed necessary directions telephonically to the concerned officers for immediate action to address the highlighted grievances. ADC Parihar was accompanied by BDC Chairman Drabshalla Suraj Singh, EXEN PHE Sunil Sharam, Concerned AEES of PHE department, the local Sarpanches during his visit.

JJM Ray of Hope For Pharou Villagers, BDC Chairman Langate Seek People Cooperation.

DR. AB QAYOOM

Langate, Apr. 11: The Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) has proven to be a ray of hope for rural India. The foundation stone laying event for bore well water supply scheme for different Villagers under the Pirkhan Abad Water scheme is a perfect example how JJM is transforming the lives of people. The foundation stone was graced by DDC member

Mawar, BDC Chairman Langate, Showkat Hussain Pandith and SE PHE Div. Handwara along with PRI members and Civil Society Members including Aapsha committee chairman Farooq Ah Dar. Under this mission they are working towards achieving the goal of connecting every rural household with a functional household tap connection by 2024. The funding of Rs 75 lac under the JJM programme is a significant invest-



ment towards improving the lives of people who belongs to different in rural areas of Pharou. Once the bore well water supply scheme is completed, it will provide access to clean drinking water for the entire community. BDC chairman Langate Showkat Pandith said, "Such initiatives go a long way in improving the overall health and well-being of rural populations especially Pharou residents, and it is heartening to

see the government's commitment to making it happen. JJM is a positive step towards a better future for rural India, and we hope to see more such programmes in the coming days." Pandith has urged stakeholders to work with cooperation to ensure the speedy and successful implementation of the scheme in both villages, he added. This scheme will end the water crisis of Pohrupeth villages.

ADDC Kishtwar sets deadline for completion of ongoing works

HT News Network

KISHTWAR, APRIL 11: Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Kishtwar, Sham Lal on Tuesday chaired a meeting to review the progress made under the Aspirational Block Development Programme. The meeting was attended by several district and sectoral officers, including Joint Director Planning Mohammad Iqbal; ACD, Sunil Bhutyal; SDM Marwah, Dr Mohsin Raza; DSEO, DSWO, CDPO Warwan, CEO, CAHO, CHO, CMO, ExEn PWD Marwah, and ExEn REW besides others. The meeting focused on the programme's indicators and the plans proposed for the next fiscal year for the Aspirational Blocks of Marwah and Warwan. During the meeting, the ADC reviewed the progress made under the programme and identified areas that required improvement.

HT News Network

KATHUA, APRIL 11: As part of the ongoing Special Summary Revision 2023, the District Election Cell, under the guidance of the District Election Officer (Deputy Commissioner), Kathua, Rahul Pandey, today conducted a series of events under the aegis of Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) Programme.

The activities were organized to educate the prospective voters about the importance of voting and their role in the electoral process.

The SVEEP programmes were held at various locations including government schools and public places in the district. In particular, special awareness sessions were held at all the polling stations where hundreds of youngsters & the general public participated.

The awareness exercise under



SSR is aimed to highlight the importance of voter participation in a democracy and educating prospective voters about the Special Summary Revision 2023. The Election Staff is emphasising the need for greater participation of voters and the significance of exercising the "Right to Vote."

The newly eligible voters were also informed about the online portal for registering as a voter on the National Voters Service Portal (NVSP) and the Mobile

Voter Helpline App.

The SVEEP activities held in Kathua are gaining momentum with every passing day & are successful in raising awareness about the importance of voter participation and educating prospective voters about the Special Summary Revision 2023. The Election Cell is committed to conducting further awareness activities in the district to ensure maximum voter registration and participation in the upcoming elections.

EDITORIAL

All Weather National Highway from Jammu to Srinagar: Continues To Be A Distant Dream

Just yesterday horrific Scenes of Shooting Stones hitting Vehicles at Panthal went Viral on social Media. Much publicized Tunnel at this spot had generated hope among the masses that Panthal issue is over now. However, yesterday's incident proved it wrong.

The recent blockade of the Jammu-Srinagar highway, particularly the Chennani Nashri Tunnel, has caused severe consequences for the region and its people. The blockade, which lasted for several days, was a result of heavy snowfall and landslides and continuous rains on plains, leading to the closure of the highway and causing a major disruption in commuting and in the transportation of goods and people.

The Jammu-Srinagar highway is a vital lifeline for the region, connecting the two important cities and serving as a major trade route for the entire region. The Chennani Nashri Tunnel, which is a part of this highway, is the longest road tunnel in India, measuring around 9.2 kilometers. It is a crucial infrastructure project that has significantly reduced the travel time between Jammu and Srinagar.

The blockade of this highway has caused severe consequences for the people of the region, particularly for those who rely on the highway for their livelihood. The transportation of essential goods, such as food, medicine, and fuel, has been severely affected, leading to a shortage of supplies in the region. The closure of the highway has also led to the cancellation of several flights and train services, leading to a major disruption in the transportation system of the region.

The consequences of the blockade have been particularly severe for the people living in the remote areas of the region, who are heavily dependent on the highway for their daily needs. The closure of the highway has also led to a significant increase in the prices of essential commodities, making it difficult for the people to afford basic necessities.

The blockade has also had a severe impact on the tourism industry of the region. Jammu and Kashmir is a popular tourist destination, and the closure of the highway has led to a significant decline in the number of tourists visiting the region. This has caused a major setback for the tourism industry, leading to a loss of revenue for the people and the government.

It has also been affecting those who want to take the roadways due to the skyrocket pricing of air tickets. People have been suffering because of the incessant highway closures on and off making it difficult for people living outside Jammu and Kashmir who cannot afford the air tickets with unreasonable prices. The Delhi-Srinagar ticket prices have been higher than what it would take to reach Dubai. There are many people, especially students who have dropped their plans of coming back home because of the unreasonable rates of the air tickets.

The government must take immediate steps to address the consequences of the blockade and ensure that the people of the region are not left stranded without essential supplies. The government should work towards the timely restoration of the highway and the Chennani Nashri Tunnel, to ensure that the transportation of goods and people is not disrupted in the difficult times.

The government should also invest in the development of alternative modes of transportation, such as air and rail, to reduce the dependency on the Jammu-Srinagar highway. The development of alternative routes and transportation modes would not only reduce the impact of future blockades but also improve the overall transportation system of the region.

In conclusion, the blockade of the Jammu-Srinagar highway, particularly the Chennani Nashri Tunnel, has caused severe consequences for the region and its people. The government must take immediate steps to address the consequences of the blockade and the timely restoration of the highway and the tunnel would not only ensure the smooth transportation of goods and people but also prevent the recurrence of such incidents in the future.



VIJAY GARG

Our career planning decisions and the career path we choose will determine the patterns and texture of our life and career. Nevertheless, after years of research and work were done in career planning, it has been concluded that most students leave high school and college without any clear plan in their mind which guide them in selecting and pursuing a career or occupation.

It has been estimated that when people feel overwhelmed by a job or career, they sometimes become over-confident and often fail to plan adequately for the changes which they need to make for restoring balance in their lives. Many students face a career problem and also struggle so much to achieve their goals in life. But, students should become more strong and capable for following the path of difficulties which will lead them to their career and for sure alleviate their problems.

Good career planning provides a plan that is marked with intelligence, hard work, focus determination, strong will-power and aim to achieve the best output. It requires the integration of Career Factors which combine to make every individual unique and best – his innate abilities, his skills, his interests, his values, his goals, his family history, his personal style and characteristics, and his position in the Career Development Cycle.

Career planning is a lifelong process which includes first-choosing an occupation, second- getting a job, third-growing in a job, fourth- changing careers, fifth- rotating job and lastly-retiring from a job. For planning our career we have to first define ourselves and our goals in a systematic way. At present, the level of competition is increasing day-by-day due to which students should need to plan their careers actively and valiantly. And also they should be taught now how to shift from one organization to another now for gaining maximum industry experience. The task and path of career planning are quite laborious, significant, organized, optimistic and well-defined. It requires systematic planning at every step and calculated execution of every plan. The most important step in career planning for students is to collect information about their own-self while deciding about a particular career option in their life. Students should always analyze their interest, skills, abilities, personal traits, thoughts so that they can easily understand and study the relationship between their career and themselves.

Three Aspects of Career Planning for Students

Career Option in Life: Students should give straight direction towards their career and choose a particular one by involving themselves completely in it and should gain correct information with the help of the decision-making process. You should analyze the career option by keeping in mind about your present educational skills and qualifications.

Action Oriented Plan: Students should make plans in detail and wide range so, that they can become more determined and put all their efforts into it. Whenever you get an opportunity to prove yourself and get a chance to get into your desire career, that time always tries to maintain it.

The setting of Goals: Students should set their goals according to their qualifications, priorities, work experience and expectations in life. Well, you should always remember that a successful professional is really an opportunistic in his/her moves, thoughts by examining every opening to turn easily to his/her way.

Career planning is the most important step that needs to be considered in totality and in a wide range. Students should not feel hesitant to seek the help from professional and find out the best and suitable career planning for yourself. At present, every day different careers, routes and professional opportunities are emerging, so only you have to choose the best and suitable option for yourself. Unique strengths, abilities, interests, aspirations, weaknesses will help you to decide which are the suitable options for you. The process of career planning is vital to your success. The entire process of career planning should be ideally done in a systematic manner with your career counsellor so that you will get professional help at every step of your career. A trained career counsellor can help you identify several professions in which you can be good. It is the sole responsibility of every student to make themselves so capable that nobody should dare to say you that 'YOU ARE GOOD FOR NOTHING'.

At last the real fact is that we all have talents in ourselves that are hidden in us, so it is important to identify that and then work hard to develop them further. Another equally important aspect of self-assessment is self-analysis or soul-searching. We are the best judge for ourselves. If you concentrate and decide to be honest with yourself the self-analysis can project remarkable results. Students who will work-hard towards their studies, acquire new skills, make efforts will definitely get success and recognition in their life. Every student should identify his/her goals, values, aspirations and ambition. Now-days, as the organizations are becoming more demanding and mature which is obviously counted as a serious problem in our career path. So, students must gain experience as quickly as possible at this stage of their career so that they can move with their peers

in same speed of pace. It is truly said that without good career development opportunities, you can't achieve your long term goals in life. Always keep an open eye for every opportunity and be ready to take them as they come to you every time.

Advantages of Career Planning for Students

Decide What you want to Achieve in your Career: Goal setting is time-consuming and also involves more soul-searching, which will help to bring focus on your personal aspirations and goals. It will help you to crystallize what you want to achieve and how you will utilize your all efforts.

Testify your Current Position: Well, it is very much important to understand where are you at present so that you become more realistic in identifying the number of options which are open to you due to which you can use all the available resources which you are having in the best manner. You should have complete knowledge, skills and experience.

Find out your Strength & Research your Options: For, knowing And identifying your career options, it is important to do some basic research on your own. Students should always need to know whether the career which they have chosen is increasing or decreasing in importance. So, that it becomes easy for you to know how well you will be paid in it.

Plan your Career & Approach: Identify the most intermediate steps that you need for utilizing your skills, experience, desires, will-power, thoughts, actions and education. Always try to work out in a systematic manner to know how you will easily position yourself. Therefore, if you need new skills to make the change, then without any doubt you need to begin for acquiring them.

Become Independent & Take Action: Students should have a good idea of all the actions which they need to take to progress their career. All the efforts which are involved by the students will determine its values and bring out the quality role for each of them. The best careers come out through a mixture of careful planning and useful opportunities.

All the students take this into consideration that while you are implementing your career plan, always make sure that you do not ignore good and active career opportunities. It is conducted that Planning your career will help you to avoid stress, monotonous atmosphere, boredom, frustration which fails your will-power to achieve your potential. Career planning is the most significant and first step for achieving success in your career. It is the responsibility of the students to use reliable resources which will help them to learn more about their areas of interest.

A valuable career self-assessment is only done by them who are really honest and mindful in life. Students should

cover their career gaps and shortcomings so that they can achieve their goals in the best possible manner. Well, the essence of a career plan is knowing and also what you want and always determining how to get it.

Always choose that decisions which will take you to achieve your career goals. In-fact your career should be a series of calculated steps which leads you to an end result.

These decisions and actions basically include formal education, training, internship, certification and work experience. Some of the cases required a change of job, attitude, work environment or location. You should always consider all these steps properly and choose the best ones that you only believe will definitely work for you. Students should own the process, set their course and stick with it. Don't ever avoid challenges in life because to succeed you always have to face the challenges and vanish away the obstacles to achieve your career goal.

We should always set our priorities first so, that we can move ahead easily towards our career path. The order which we follow is often determined by opportunities and resources which are available to us. It is not enough to plan only, we must follow it also and try to implement our career advancement preferences. For, planning our career it is not only about decision making but also about collecting career information in a wise, intelligent and purposeful manner. Students can also discuss their career goals with their teachers, parents, counsellors, and instructors. They can also visit on different websites and online career guides for their choice of subjects. Every student should keep this thing in their mind that career planning should be dynamic, and not static. All should be sensitive while doing changes in your career path by being flexible and twister.

The continual study of different and new technologies has become necessary to keep update our computer skills on the current basis. It is our own responsibility to keep on investing ourselves. We should always look out for different ways to grow in our career and skills, through the medium of skill development, by attending career-related training in MNC's, by taking online courses etc. Career planning is all about taking your destiny in your hands.

It is very truly said that nobody can succeed with career planning if they approach their life in an unplanned, useless, careless manner and by just hoping for the best to be done. Always try to approach your career planning with full sincerity, honesty, and wisdom. Well, career planning is neither difficult, boring nor much time to consume, it is just you simply need to be focused and active.

Vijay Garg Retired
Principal Educational Columnist
Malout Punjab



Role of Technology to achieve Gender Equality

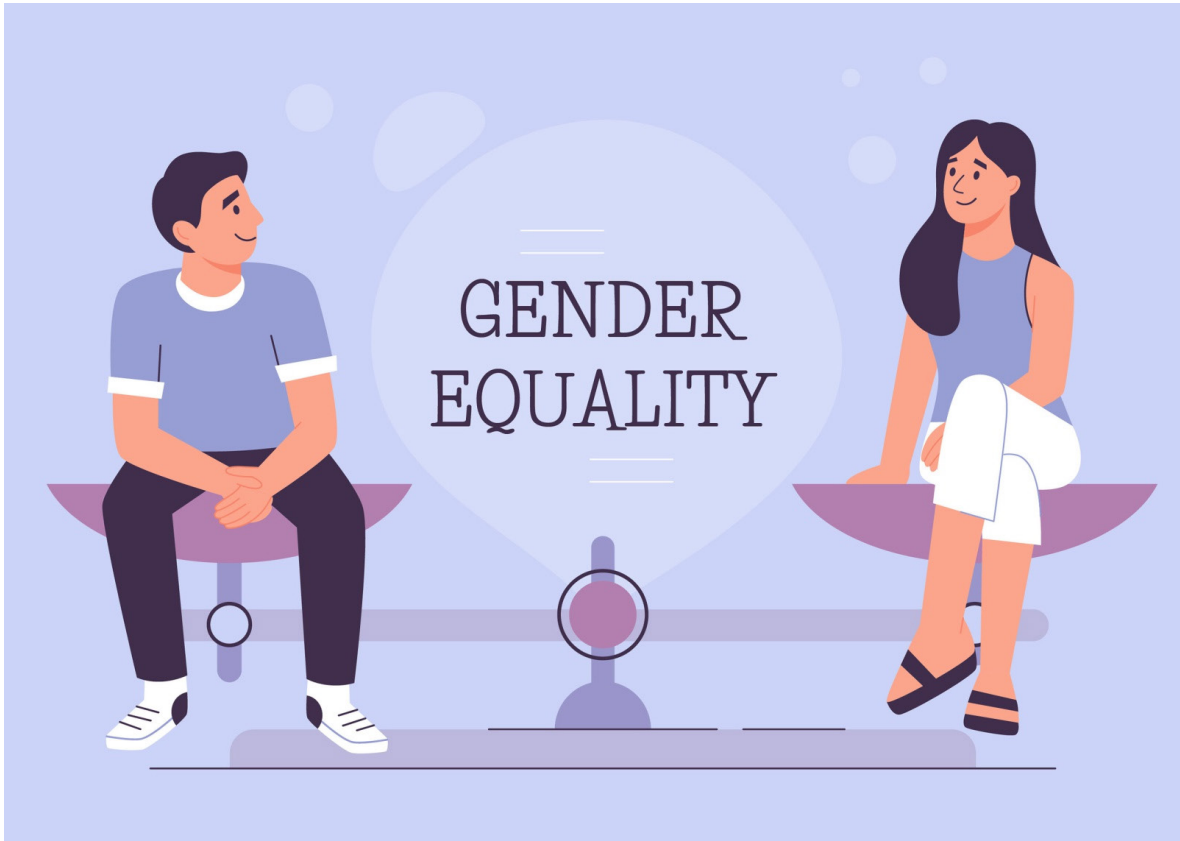


DR. PARSHOTAM S. MANHAS

Gender equality is a fundamental human right that is essential for the advancement of all mankind but the inequalities that are still prevalent in society today hold women and girls back. Digital literacy offers immense opportunities for the development and growth of society to promote gender equality by encouraging equal participation in social, economic, cultural, and political activities. The responsibility of society as a whole is to create an atmosphere where women and girls have equal access to technology and innovation to achieve gender equality. Women have traditionally been underrepresented in the technology industry, with most tech-based jobs being male-dominated. This lack of diversity creates an imbalance in the sector, leading to biased technology approaches, which in turn reinforce existing gender inequalities.

One-way society can promote gender equality in technology is by providing girls with equal opportunities to develop digital skills at a young age which can be achieved through initiatives such as coding camps, hackathons, and other tech-based programs. By empowering girls with digital skills, they become better equipped to pursue tech-based careers, creating a more diverse and balanced industry. Additionally, society must address the gender digital divide, which refers to the gap between men and women in accessing and using technology. This divide creates barriers for women to access online education, job opportunities, and other resources that technology can provide. Governments and organizations can work towards bridging this gap by providing women with affordable access to technology and digital literacy training. Furthermore, tech companies can also work towards creating a safe and inclusive environment for women by implementing policies that prohibit harassment and discrimination in the workplace.

Digital technologies can contribute significantly to the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) for gender equality by the application of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to encourage the empowerment of women. In this regard, the UN has also been organizing high-level events to bring together technologists, innovators, entrepreneurs, and gender equality activists to provide a chance to emphasize the role of all stakeholders in enhancing access to digital tools. When women are involved in technology, more innovative ideas and inventions that support gender equality and cater to the needs of women are created. Contrarily, their exclusion has significant financial consequences.



Through examining the current state of gender inequality and exploring potential solutions, we can work towards creating a more inclusive and equitable digital space for all genders, especially the women and girls who represent half of the population of the world.

Only 63% of women used the Internet in 2022 compared to 69% of men (ITU, November 2022).

75% of jobs by 2050 will be related to STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics). Yet today, women hold just 22% of positions in artificial intelligence, to name just one (WEF Report)

A study of 51 countries revealed that 38% of women had personally experienced online violence (UN Women's Gender Snapshot 2022 Report)

65% of women under the age of 29 consider the Internet to be unsafe for them.

The lack of women's inclusion in technology comes with massive costs too. Their exclusion from the digital world has shaved US\$1 trillion from the gross domestic product of low- and middle-income countries in the last decade – a loss that will grow to US\$1.5 trillion by 2025 without action (Gender Snapshot 2022).

Innovation and technology have played a significant role in empowering women in various ways:

Increased access to education: Technology has made it

possible for women to access education and learning resources regardless of their location enabling them to acquire skills and knowledge that can improve their lives.

Improved healthcare: Technology has also led to the development of better healthcare services such as telemedicine and wearable health devices enabling them to access healthcare services and monitor their health from the comfort of their homes.

Greater Access to opportunities: Women's inclusion in technology can help to increase access to job opportunities in the sector. This can lead to greater economic mobility and career advancement for women, which can help to promote gender equality.

E-commerce platforms and online marketplaces have made it easier for women to start and grow their own businesses, while online job platforms have created new opportunities for women to work remotely.

Increased safety: Technology has also led to the development of safety tools and apps such as GPS tracking, and emergency response systems which can be especially useful for women living in areas with high rates of violence and crime.

Social networking: Social networking platforms have enabled women to interact with each other and share their experiences, knowledge, and resources. This has

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helped to create communities of support and collaboration, which can be especially beneficial for women who may face social isolation or discrimination.

Bridging the gender gap in STEM fields by providing education and training opportunities to women and enabling more women to take on leadership roles in technology.

Breaking down gender stereotypes in technology can create more inclusive workplaces and a more gender-balanced society.

Promoting Diversity and Inclusion: Including more women in technology can help to promote diversity and inclusion more broadly. This can lead to more excellent representation of marginalized groups in the workforce and help to create more equitable workplaces.

Overall, innovation and technology have opened new opportunities for women and helped to empower them in various ways. However, it is important to ensure that these opportunities are accessible to all women, regardless of their socio-economic background or location, to ensure that the benefits of technology are truly inclusive and percolate to the lowest strata of society.

The author is Associate Professor at GDC Samba



M S NAZKI



A soldier can perform many duties at one and the same moment, his mind works faster because he knows how to read a person's mind!

'To be heroic is to be courageous enough to die for something; to be inspirational is to be crazy enough to live a little.' 'I know what I'm capable of, I am a soldier now, a warrior. I am someone to fear, not hunt.' 'Even in times of trauma, we try to maintain a sense of normality until we no longer can!.....(An unknown soldier)!'

We got an extract from an officer (Indian Army) and he spilled out his feelings. We will interpret the same in our signature style and stamp!

The opening lines of the passage said, 'I am a permanent resident of J&K and currently serving as an officer in the Indian Army. For your knowledge there are two types of officers in the Indian army one is permanent commission officer who can serve till 60 years of age and second category is short service commission officers who serve for 10 years and latter gets a chance to continue in Army or switch to other government jobs/private jobs/start businesses.' These were the opening lines but we will elaborate it further!

There are many defense services premier institutions where officers are trained, developed and given the 'Arm' they want. The three prominent ones in the armed forces are NDA (National Defence Academy), IMA (Indian Military Academy) and OTA (Officers training Academy). All three are based in three different places in India, Pune (Khadakwasla), Dehradun, and.....

A brief description of all the three: National Defence Academy:

The National Defence Academy (NDA) is the joint defense service training institute of the Indian Armed Forces, where cadets of the three services i.e. the Indian Army, the Indian Navy and the Indi-

an Air Force train together before they go on to respective service academies for further pre-commission training. The NDA is located in Khadakwasla, Pune, Maharashtra. It is the first tri-service academy in the world. The alumni of NDA include 3 Param Vir Chakra recipients and 12 Ashoka Chakra recipients. NDA has also produced 27 service Chiefs of Staff till date. The current Chiefs of Staff of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force are all NDA alumni from the same course. A 1999 stamp dedicated to the 50th anniversary of the National Defence Academy, featuring its Sudan Block. At the end of World War II, Field Marshal Claude Auchinleck, then Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army, drawing on experiences of the army during the war, led a committee around the world and submitted a report to the Government of India in December 1946. The committee recommended the establishment of a Joint Services Military Academy, with training modelled on the United States Military Academy at West Point.

Indian Military Academy:

The Indian Military Academy (IMA) is one of the oldest military academies in India, and trains officers for the Indian Army. Located in Dehradun, Uttarakhand, it was established in 1932 following a recommendation by a military committee set up under the chairmanship of General (later Field Marshal) Sir Philip Chetwode. From a class of 40 male cadets in 1932, IMA now has a sanctioned capacity of 1,650. Cadets undergo a training course varying between 3 and 16

months depending on entry criteria. On completion of the course at IMA cadets are permanently commissioned into the army as Lieutenants. The academy, spread over 1,400 acres (5.7 km²), houses the Chetwode Hall, Khetarpal Auditorium, Somnath Stadium, Salaria Aquatic Centre, Hoshiar Singh Gymnasium and other facilities that facilitate the training of cadets. Cadets in IMA are organized into a regiment with four battalions of four companies each. The academy's mission, to train future military leaders of the Indian Army, goes hand in hand with the character building enshrined in the IMA honour code, warrior code and motto. Cadets take part in a variety of sports, adventure activities, physical training, drills, weapons training and leadership development activities. The academy's alumni include six recipients of India's highest military decoration, the Param Vir Chakra. Other achievements by alumni include 73 Military Crosses, 17 Ashoka Chakras, 84 Maha Vir Chakras and 41 Kirti Chakras. In 2017, Lieutenant Ummer Fayaz Parray was the 847th name to be engraved on the IMA War Memorial, which honours alumni of the academy who have fallen in the course of action.

Officers Training Academy:

The Officers Training Academy (OTA) is a training establishment of the Indian Army that trains officers for the Short Service Commission (SSC). The 49-week course at the OTA prepares graduates for all branches of the Army, except for the Army Medical Corps. Established in

1963, the first academy is located in Alandur, a southern neighborhood of Chennai. OTA Chennai has an impressive tally of gallantry award including 1 Param Vir Chakra, 8 Ashoka Chakra, 10 Maha Vir Chakra, 22 Kirti Chakra, 63 Vir Chakra, 119 Shaurya Chakra and 587 Sena Medal earned by the officers commissioned from this academy bears testimony to the Valor and dedication displayed by the Alumni. A new academy was set up at Gaya in 2011 but was given the go-ahead in December 2019 to be disbanded!

The officer writing in his second lines wrote that:

As after holding a class- job for 10 years, an individual seeks a class-I job in state or centre. I want to put the urgent matter into your kind notice that all the states like Himachal, Punjab, Haryana, Uttarakhand, UP etc give reservation to their defense personnel in their respective state Administrative jobs (state PCS) in terms of age relaxation and moreover some seats are reserved for defense personnel. But in our state (J&K) there is no age relaxation and reserved seats for defense personnel for Class-I jobs in our state. Even JKAS doesn't have a reservation for ex-servicemen.

Incidentally what Jammu and Kashmir is today is all because of the defense forces! Administration is still second! The officer further wrote, "I am writing to you in a hope that these issues will be addressed because addressing these issues will motivate talented Short Service Officers to join state government jobs else as usual everybody will join

the corporate sector and start working for MNCs. It is from the Officers Training Academy Chennai from where the Short Service Commissioners come from!

'To be heroic is to be courageous enough to die for something; to be inspirational is to be crazy enough to live a little!.....An unknown soldier!'

The extract further stated this:

These officers are selected via written examination and SSB interview which is the world's toughest selection procedure which is far tougher than UPSC/ CSE also because it's based on psychometric evaluation, group performance and interview. All carried out over a period of five days testing candidates in different conditions. Today India needs such officers in various departments as they can act as a catalyst as far as implementation of various schemes are considered and can prove to be instrumental in controlling risk and whistle blowing. These officers are selected into Armed Forces through the same procedure and undergo the same training and perform similar duties as permanent commissioned officers but despite a shortage of officers in Armed Forces they are asked to move out which may be an outcome of vintage policy or shortsightedness. I humbly request you to please take some action so that these officers can live their life with dignity and can work towards achieving sustainable development goals. This is the high time that we must take full advantage of demographic dividend and should not waste such a talented pool of human capital to be exhausted at the hands of some capitalist or performing sub optimal role in State Government. Jai hind!

In conclusion, I will say that it is a proud privilege to be a soldier – a good soldier ... [with] discipline, self-respect, pride in his unit and his country, a high sense of duty and obligation to comrades and to his superiors, and a self confidence born of demonstrated ability. This was said by a man who was known as George. S. Patton but I will love to add a line here, a soldier will live as a soldier even if he is dethroned! There are many of these also!

52 Fresh Candidates Among 189 Names In BJP's First List For Karnataka

HT News Network

Bengaluru: The BJP has announced the first list of 189 candidates for the



Karnataka assembly election. Several MLAs have been dropped and Congress turncoats chosen in the first list. A second list will come soon, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai said.

RAshok will contest from his home seat Padmanabhanagar and Kanakapura, where he will face the state Congress chief DK Shivakumar.

V Somanna will face-off against Congress leader and former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah in Varuna. Mr Somanna will also contest from a second seat, Chamarajnagar. He has always contested from Govindaraja Nagar constituency in Bengaluru. This would be the first time he is contesting in two seats - both strongholds of the Congress.

The BJP's election committee met in Delhi over the weekend to finalise the names. Karnataka has 224 assembly seats.

Mr Bommai will contest from Shiggaon constituency, his current seat.

BY Vijayendra, the son of former Chief Minister and BJP leader BS Yediyurappa, will contest from Shikaripura seat, the same constituency where his father had won seven times since 1983.

State minister B Sriramulu will contest from Bellary Rural.

In Udupi, a key coastal town, Yashpal Suvarna will contest for the first time in place of the current MLA Raghupathi Bhat. Mr Suvarna had aggressively campaigned for hijab ban. He is seen as a rising star among his local supporters. His claim to fame also includes activism in cow protection.

Other key BJP leaders Ramesh Jarkiholi and Govind M Karjol will contest from Gokak and Mudhol, respectively.

from Gokak and Mudhol, respectively.

BJP National General Secretary CT Ravi will contest from Chikkamagaluru.

BJP General Secretary Arun Singh said there are 52 new candidates this time, 32 are Other Backward Classes (OBC) candidates and 30 are Scheduled Castes (SC). Nine candidates are doctors, five lawyers and two retired bureaucrats. There are eight women in the first list.

In Athani, the BJP has chosen a candidate, Mahesh Kumathahalli, against the request of party leader and former Deputy Chief Minister Laxman Savadi. Mr Savadi last week tried to convince the BJP that his chances of winning were higher and the BJP would lose the seat if the ticket was given to Mr Kumathahalli. Karnataka will vote on May 10 and votes will be counted three days later. Karnataka election 2023: BJP's R Ashok will face the Congress's DK Shivakumar in Kanakapura; the BJP's V Somanna will face-off against Congress leader and former Chief Minister Siddaramaiah State minister B Sriramulu will contest from Bellary Rural.

In Udupi, a key coastal town, Yashpal Suvarna will contest for the first time in place of the current MLA Raghupathi Bhat. Mr Suvarna had aggressively campaigned for hijab ban. He is seen as a rising star among his local supporters. His claim to fame also includes activism in cow protection.

Other key BJP leaders Ramesh Jarkiholi and Govind M Karjol will contest from Gokak and Mudhol.

EAM calls on Ugandan President, discusses further bilateral cooperation

HT News Network

New Delhi/Kampala, Apr 11 (UNI) External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, who is on an official visit to Uganda, called on Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni and conveyed the personal greetings of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. They also discussed cooperation in trade and investment, infrastructure and energy, among other subjects.

In a tweet, the EAM said that he also congratulated the Ugandan President on his country assuming chairship of the Non Aligned Movement.

"Privileged to call on President @KagutaMuseveni of Uganda at his farm in Rwakitura. Conveyed the personal greetings of PM @narendramodi.

"Appreciated his guidance on furthering our traditional and long-standing ties.

"Discussed cooperation in trade & investment, infrastructure, energy, defense, health, digital and agricultural domains."

"Congratulated Uganda on assuming the chairship of the NAM and affirmed our strong coordination at multilateral forums includ-



ing the United Nations." President Museveni, in a tweet, said that he hosted EAM Jaishankar at his home in Rwakitura, and the two sides discussed issues of mutual interest and agreed to cooperate in the areas of agriculture, defence and security, ICT among other issues.

"Hosted @DrSJaishankar, India's Minister of External Affairs at my home in Rwakitura this afternoon.

We discussed issues of mutual interest and agreed to cooperate in the areas of agriculture, ICT, defense & security, development of the pathogenic economy, etc. "I welcome him," the President said.

Uganda, which is holding the chair of the Non Aligned Movement till 2025, is pre-

paring to hold the NAM Summit in January 2024.

EAM Jaishankar also participated in the launch of the Tulsi Ghat Restoration Project in Varanasi and appreciated the BJP party's Ugandan wing to contribute to further beautifying the ancient Indian city.

"While in Kampala, delighted to participate in the launch of the Tulsi Ghat Restoration Project in Varanasi. Appreciate OFBJP-Uganda's initiative to contribute to further beautifying the oldest living city in the world. "Living in a land of the Nile, their commitment to a ghat on the Ganga reflects the confluence of our two cultures. "The conservation of Varanasi's heritage underlines the cultural revival of India. This

has profound global implications.

"Confident that many more members of Indian community in Uganda will keep visiting Varanasi and continue their efforts for its redevelopment," he said in another tweet.

During his visit to Uganda, a landlocked country in East Africa, from April 10-12, EAM is also to hold delegation level talks with his counterpart Foreign Minister of Uganda General Jeje Odongo. He is also expected to meet other Ministers.

EAM will inaugurate the transit campus of the National Forensic Science University (NFSU) in Jinja. A bilateral MoU between the Government of India and Government of Uganda, on setting up of the first ever campus of NFSU outside India, is likely to be signed during the visit, an official statement said.

EAM Jaishankar will participate in the ground-breaking ceremony of a solar powered water supply project in Uganda. He will also address the trade and business community of Uganda and have an interaction with the Indian diaspora.

New Data Protection Bill In Monsoon Session Of Parliament: Centre To Supreme Court

HT News Network

New Delhi: The Centre today told the Supreme Court that a new data protection bill is ready and will be introduced in the Monsoon session of Parliament. Attorney General R Venkatramani told a Constitution bench headed by Justice KM Joseph that the bill is ready. The bench also comprising justices Ajay Rastogi, Anirudha Bose, Hrishikesh Roy, and CT Ravikumar took note of the submission. They directed that the matter be placed before Chief Justice DY Chandrachud so that a new bench can be constituted as Justice Joseph is set to retire on June 16. The matter has been posted for hearing in the first week of August 2023.

Karnataka BJP Veteran Quits Electoral Politics, Weeks Before Polls

HT News Network

Bengaluru: Senior BJP leader KS Eshwarappa today said he would not contest the May 10 Karnataka election, adding to the intense speculation about the party delaying the announcement of candidates. "I am withdrawing from electoral politics," Mr Eshwarappa said in a letter to BJP president JP Nadda. "The party gave me a lot of responsibilities in the last 40 years. I went from a booth in-charge to state party chief. I also had the honour of becoming Deputy Chief Minister," he wrote in a brief letter in Kannada. He said the decision was his own. This may have been a preemptive move by Mr Eshwarappa, who had hinted last month that he would be dropped as a candidate. Mr Eshwarappa turns 75 this June, hitting the unofficial age bar in the BJP for leaders to contest polls and hold posts. The veteran legislator has often been at the centre of controversies due to his unfiltered statements. Last month, he had controversially wondered in public, while Azaan prayers were playing from a mosque, whether "Allah is deaf" that loudspeakers are required to call him.

Twitter Ex-CEO Parag Agrawal, 2 Others Sue Elon Musk Over Legal Bills

HT News Network

San Francisco: Three top Twitter executives who were sacked by Elon Musk last year when he took over the social media company filed suit on Monday, seeking to be reimbursed for costs of litigation, investigations and congressional inquiries related to their former jobs. Ex-CEO Parag Agrawal, along with the company's former chief legal and financial officers, claim in the suit that they are owed a total of more than \$1 million, and that Twitter is legally bound to pay them. Twitter responded to an AFP request for comment with a poop emoji, as has become its practice. The court filing outlined numerous expenses related to inquiries by the US Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and the Department of Justice (DOJ), but does not include details on the nature of the investigations or whether they are still ongoing. Agrawal and then-chief financial officer Ned Segal provided testimony to the SEC last year and "have continued to engage with federal authorities.

"Poll Body Decision Over Parties On Decline As Per Rules": Minister Anurag Thakur

HT News Network

Bulandshahr: Union minister Anurag Thakur today said the Election Commission acted as per rules in denying the national and the state party status to those who were not getting support of the people and were "continuously on decline".

On Monday, the EC stripped the national party status of Trinamool Congress, NCP and the CPI, and recognised AAP as a national party. It also revoked the state party status of Rashtriya Lok Dal (RLD), which is active in western Uttar Pradesh, and some other parties.

"Those who did not get votes, who did not get acceptance by the public and had continuously been on the decline, on them the Election Commission has given its decision as per the rules," Mr Thakur, who was in Bulandshahr to attend an event, said when asked about the Election Commission decision.

After the latest reorganisation of party status by the EC, the country now has six national parties - BJP, Congress, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), CPI(M), National People's Party (NPP) and AAP.

A national party tag allows an outfit to get a common poll symbol across the country, more star campaigners, free air time



on national broadcasters for election campaigns and by convention office space in Delhi. Benefits on similar lines are also allowed to a state party. On the upcoming Karnataka election, Mr Thakur expressed confidence that the BJP will win the state.

"The BJP won Gujarat, Tripura won, Assam won, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand... and will also win Karnataka," he added.

The Union minister also said training is being given to lakhs of youths through skill development. On Monday, the EC stripped the national party status of Trinamool Congress, NCP and the CPI, and recognised AAP as a national party.

Defiant Sachin Pilot Holds Fast. Can't Miss - No Congress Symbol At Venue

HT News Network

Jaipur: Congress leader Sachin Pilot sat on a protest fast in Jaipur today, defying a warning last night that his move would be seen as an "anti-party activity".

With a backdrop devoid of the Congress name or symbol, Sachin Pilot sat at the "Shaheed Smarak Sthal" surrounded by supporters, for a one-day fast largely aimed at his party rival Ashok Gehlot, whom he accuses of not acting on allegations against the BJP's Vasundhara Raje.

The absence of any Congress branding on his campaign intensified speculation that Mr Pilot may be spoiling for a confrontation that will drive him out of the party.

Moments after he began his protest, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot posted a video in which he listed his government's welfare policies, attempting to counter Mr Pilot's "corruption crusade" narrative with his own about a "pro-poor, common man's Chief Minister".

"Rajasthan will be No. 1 by 2029," Mr Gehlot said, declaring price rise as an election issue.

The public squabbling between its two top leaders in Rajasthan has hugely embar-



assed the Congress as it prepares for elections in one of the few states it rules.

The party has not formally responded to Mr Pilot's defiance. Last evening, it had strongly warned Mr Pilot against the fast.

"Sachin Pilot's day-long fast on Tuesday is against the party interests and is anti-party activity. If there is any issue with his own government, it can be discussed in the party forums instead of in the media and public," the Congress's Rajasthan in-charge Sukhjinder Singh Randhawa said in a statement on Monday, in an effort to deescalate the friction between Mr Pilot, who has been eyeing the Chief Minister's post for a long time, and Mr Gehlot, the current Chief Minister.

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

Surkhab Zehra

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 M K Raina. Festival directors Rakesh Roshan Bhat and Rohit Bhat were honored by two organizations, the JK Cine Association and DADAA, for their efforts in hosting the successful event. The Chief Guest for the occasion was Director Tourism Jammu, Vivekanand Rai. He praised the festival for promoting tourism in Jammu and Kashmir and providing a platform for filmmakers to showcase their talent. Joint Director Jammu Tourism, Sunaina Mehta, said that Jammu Tourism has been organising events at a grand scale to showcase places beyond Patnitop and Sanasar and promote tourism through innovative means such as film tourism.

Bharat Singh Manhas, secretary JKAACL,

which was the prime sponsor of the event, lauded the efforts of Vomedh and said that academy will always support programs for promotion of culture.

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."

The festival also recognized the outstanding talent in the film industry with several awards in different categories. Some of the winners included Cage: Between Two Battles from Turkey for Best Director and Best Actor, Trek to Neverland from India for Best Cinematography and Best Actor - Jury award, and Banwari's Mother from India for Best Film. Other winners included Titu Ambani from India for Best Actress (Deepika Singh), Best Editing, and Best Direction - Jury award (Rohit Raj Goyal), Cake from India for Special Mention - Children's film, and Sandhanam from India for Best Film - Jury award.



International winners included A Few Steps Further from Iran for Best Screenplay, Matty Boy from the United Kingdom for Best Sound, Nahid from Iran for Best Direction, Fatih the Conqueror from France for Best Cinematography and Best Actor, and Liturgy of Anti-Tank Obstacles from the United States for Best Documentary. Sakal Bhatt's Exile and Exodus Forgotten Tragedy - Nadimarg massacre won the best documentary jury award while War and Worship won best director. Nybreum - The Unsettled Shade, won best director jury award M K Raina and Rahul Roy were presented with prestigious KL Saigal award for their contribution to cinema. The associate partner was leading consumer care division of Glenmark and Sanjay Bhat Sr. GM Glenmark pharmaceutical Ltd, from Mumbai, graced the event with his presence. Local participants were also recognized for their efforts with participation certificates. The festival also saw the world premieres of two films, Walk and Trek to Neverland. Walk, which starred Rahul Roy and was directed by Nitin Gupta, won the Best Film - Jury award. The festival was anchored by Kusum Tickoo and Bindiya Tickoo very well and their charm added to the grace of the event. The event was a grand success, attracting audiences from all over India, and it was a celebration of the art of filmmaking. The festival organizers have promised to return with an even bigger and better festival next year.

Ukraine cities pounded as US scrambles to find source of leaked documents

■ HT News Network

Russian forces pounded front-line cities in eastern Ukraine with air strikes and artillery attacks, while US officials stepped up efforts to locate the source of a leak of classified US documents, including those on Ukrainian counter-offensive plans.

The Russians pressed on with their offensive in the eastern Donetsk region where several cities and towns came under heavy bombardment, Ukraine's general staff said on Tuesday.

Municipal workers clean up a graveyard after a shelling of the central cemetery in the town of Kramatorsk, — AFP

Ukrainian forces repelled several attacks, it said, as the Russian military kept up its effort to take control of Bakhmut.

A top Ukrainian commander accused Moscow of using "scorched earth" tactics.

"The enemy switched to so-called scorched earth tactics from Syria. It is destroying buildings and positions with air strikes and artillery fire," Colonel General Oleksandr Syrskyi, commander of Ukraine's ground forces, said of Bakhmut.

The battle for the small and now largely ruined city on the edge of



a chunk of Russian-controlled territory in Donetsk has been the bloodiest of the 13-month war as Moscow tries to inject momentum into its campaign after recent setbacks.

Municipal workers clean up a graveyard after a shelling of the central cemetery in the town of Kramatorsk, — AFP

Both sides have suffered heavy casualties in the Bakhmut fighting, but Syrskyi said: "The situation is difficult but controllable." The head of the Moscow-con-

trolled part of Donetsk, Denis Pushilin, said Russian forces now held 75 per cent of the city, though he cautioned it was too early to talk about Bakhmut's fall.

Moscow's military was also targeting the city of Avdiivka.

"The Russians have turned Avdiivka into a total ruin," said Pavlo Kyrylenko, Donetsk's regional governor, describing an air strike on Monday that destroyed a multi-storey building.

"In total, around 1,800 people remain in Avdiivka, all of whom

risk their lives every day."

In Chasiv Yar, the first major town to Bakhmut's west, few buildings remain intact and those queuing for food and other aid do not even flinch at the sound of artillery.

"It used to be scarier, but now we have got used to it," said 50-year-old humanitarian volunteer Maksym. "You don't even pay attention," he added, his words nearly drowned out by the sound of explosions.

Municipal workers clean up a

graveyard after a shelling of the central cemetery in the town of Kramatorsk, — AFP

As the battles ground on, US broadcaster CNN said Ukraine was forced to amend some military plans ahead of its long-anticipated counter-offensive because of the leak of dozens of secret documents.

US officials are trying to trace the source of the leak, reviewing how they share secrets internally and dealing with the diplomatic fallout.

The documents detail topics such as information on the Ukraine conflict, in which Washington has supplied Kyiv with huge amounts of weapons and led international condemnation of Moscow's invasion.

Asked about the report, Ukrainian presidential aide Mykhailo Podolyak said Kyiv's strategic plans remained unchanged but that specific tactics were always subject to change.

Some national security experts and US officials have said they suspect the leaker could be American, but have not ruled out pro-Russian actors.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov declined to comment on the leak, but said: "There is in fact a tendency to always blame every-

Egypt Planned To Secretly Supply 40,000 Rockets To Russia: Report

■ HT News Network

Egypt planned to secretly produce and ship about 40,000 rockets to Russia to augment its depleted supply of ammunition during the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war, according to leaked US intelligence documents obtained by Washington Post. The outlet also said that Egyptian President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi held a meeting with his top military officials in which they discussed also providing artillery rounds and gunpowder to Russia. El-Sisi asked the officials to keep the entire plane under wraps "to avoid problem with the West".

The classified document is dated February 17, according to Washington Post.

The development has stunned American officials and politicians.

"If it's true that Sisi is covertly building rockets for Russia that could be used in Ukraine, we need to have a serious reckoning about the state of our relationship," junior senator from Connecticut Chris Murphy told the outlet.

Fox News said National Security Council spokesperson John Kirby has declined to confirm the validity of the documents, but warned that the material is not for public consumption.

It can impact America's relationship with Egypt, one of its closest allies in the Middle East and North Africa.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken met with El-Sisi in late January in Cairo, after which the State Department issued a statement which said Mr Blinken "expressed the United States' solidarity with Egypt as it contends with the economic impact of Russia's brutal war in Ukraine."



US President Joe Biden also travelled to Egypt in November last year and met with El-Sisi. He had commended the Egyptian President for his country's stance on the war. Egypt decided to help Russia to repay Moscow's "unspecified help earlier", according to an official named Mohamed Salah al-Din, the minister of state for military production.

The nature of that help is unclear. However, Egypt increased its reliance on Russian wheat last year amid disruptions to the global market stemming from Russia's war in Ukraine, according to news agency Reuters. "If it's true that Sisi is covertly building rockets for Russia that could be used in Ukraine, we need to have a serious reckoning about the state of our relationship," junior senator from Connecticut Chris Murphy told the outlet.

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Bangladesh PM Declares National Daily "Enemy" Of The Country: Report

■ HT News Network

Dhaka: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Monday slammed Bangla-language daily Prothom Alo and described it as "an enemy of the Awami League, democracy, and the people of Bangladesh," reported bdnews24.com.

She criticized Prothom Alo for acting under the "cover of darkness" after a seven-year-old child was encouraged to tell a lie about food shortage.

"Those who speak out against corruption are now talking in favour of the people who are convicted in corruption cases," PM Hasina said during a session in Parliament, reported bdnews24.com.

The MPs banged on their tables in agreement with the prime minister, saying 'shame, shame'. They also sounded their support when Hasina described the Prothom Alo as an enemy of the Awami League, democracy and the people.

"A seven-year-old child was encouraged to tell a lie by paying him Tk 10. And that too for a statement like -- we need the freedom to ensure meat and rice [food] for everyone. They published his words. It was all done by a popular daily. The name is Prothom Alo, but they act under cover of darkness," said PM Hasina.

She also slammed Prothom Alo for talking in favour of an unelected government for an interim period, asking them to think who had benefited from such a government during the 2007-2008 period.

"With a heavy heart, I must say that they never want stability in the country. They were elated when an emergency was declared in 2007. It was then that two newspapers rolled up their sleeves [to achieve their goals]," PM Hasina said.



The prime minister told the countrymen that they can better realise who is favouring an unelected government, adding that those who fear to face the people and know that they will not be voted to power through elections are out to destabilise the country through different means, reported bdnews24.com.

Sheikh Hasina, also President of the Awami League, said the then caretaker government had been forced to give an election (in 2008) in which Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) got only 30 seats out of 300 while her party-led grand alliance won the remaining ones.

"They got only 30 seats (in the 2008 election) and how will they get more? We have gained support from the people through work and this is not our fault. We will continue to work for the people's welfare," she added.

She said in continuation of the election, her government has been in power since 2009 to date through the people's mandate following the democratic process.

"They are trying to eliminate democracy and introduce a government that will not act democratically. It will be an undemocratic action. Some of our intellectuals, who live on selling their intellect.

West Bank violence kills Palestinian teen, British-Israeli mother

■ HT News Network

A Palestinian teenager was killed and an injured British-Israeli mother succumbed to her injuries on Monday as violence continued to surge in the West Bank.

Violence has escalated in the territory and flared into bloodshed since last week, following an Israeli police raid on Al Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem. The recent episode of violence has marred a period when the holy month of Ramadan coincides with the Jewish Passover and Christian Easter.

And on Monday, several ministers from Israel's hard-



right government joined a protest march by Jewish settlers, held under tight security in the north of the occupied West Bank.

Palestinian teenager killed in the latest West Bank shooting, Israeli forces killed a Palestinian teenager and wounded two

other people, the Palestinian health ministry said, during what the army described as a raid to arrest a "terror suspect". Mohammed Fayed Balhan, 15, died after being shot "with live occupation [Israeli] bullets in the head, chest and abdomen", the ministry said,

having earlier reported that two others were injured by Israeli bullets. The Israeli army confirmed its forces were operating in the Aqabat Jabbar camp, the site of previous deadly Israeli raids this year, near Jericho, where soldiers were seeking "to apprehend a terror suspect". The army claimed that troops responded with live fire after "suspects opened fire toward [soldiers], hurled explosive devices and Molotov cocktails". They added that a "suspect" was taken in by security forces. Palestinian news agency Wafa reported clashes in the camp after the Israeli army entered it and surrounded several houses.

Unregulated weapons trade threat to peace, warns Pakistan

HT News Network

UNITED NATIONS: Pakistan warned the international community on Monday that unregulated sale of weapons and military equipment was a threat to world peace.

Speaking at a UN Security Council meeting on the need to regulate weapon sales, Pakistani representative Ambassador Aamir Khan said that ultra-nationalist and hegemonic policies of some states had further complicated the situation.

In a 2020 report to the Security Council, UN Under-Secretary-General Izumi Nakamits said the spread of almost one billion small arms and light weapons remained a major global threat. From 2010 to 2015, they contributed to some 200,000 deaths every year. Ms Nakamits, who is also the United Nations High Representative for Disarmament, briefed the council on Monday as well. In a similar report, Amnesty International highlighted another key issue: reckless production, and stockpiling of weapons. The report noted that 80 per cent of the world's weapons exports were from six countries — China, France, Germany, Russia, the UK and the United States. "In most cases, peace and security is threatened by the ultra-nationalist and hegemonic policies of some states, particularly those that are turbocharged by the extremist.

Biden teases 2024 re-election bid, again

■ HT News Network

WASHINGTON: President Joe Biden did everything on Monday to look and sound like someone running for re-election — but again insisted he has no official announcement to make.

The 80-year-old Democrat has delayed an expected campaign launch for months, while teasing repeatedly that his intention is to run.

Hosting hundreds of members of the public at a festive Easter event — the White House Easter Egg Roll — Biden once more delivered his almost-but-not-quite confirmation.

"I plan on running now but we're not prepared to announce it yet," Biden said in a brief interview with NBC News on the South Lawn, accompanied by his wife First Lady Jill Biden.

Biden noted he intended to attend numerous more egg rolls, a traditional event where children race to push coloured eggs over the grass. He only has one more Easter left in his first term ahead of the 2024 election.

"I plan on at least three or four more Easter Egg Rolls," he said. "Maybe five..., maybe six, what the hell — I don't know." If Biden's statement left a little wiggle room, his candidate-style crowd dive did not.

Biden has often appeared most comfortable away from the stiff formalities of the presidency. Hugging children and taking cell phones from multiple people in the Easter crowd for selfies, he gave a good impression of a president gearing up for the campaign.

Already the oldest president in US history, Biden would be 86 years old by the time he completed a second term.

His refusal so far to formally declare has left any would-be replacements from the Democratic party waiting quietly in the wings. However, if he does declare, he would not face serious challenges from his own party.

On the Republican side, the current frontrunner is former president Donald Trump whom Biden defeated in 2020.

Cleric, three others held in Bangladesh for stoning woman over affair

■ HT News Network

DHAKA: A cleric and three village elders were arrested in Bangladesh on charges they ordered a woman to be caned and stoned after she was accused of an extra-marital affair, police said on Monday.

Police said Hamida Sultana was "caned 82 strokes" and "stoned 80 times" with small brick pieces after an imam issued a fatwa punishing her last week.

Sultana said she was "a victim of terrible injustice". "I can't express in language what they did to me," the 30-year-old said.

Bangladesh has a secular legal system and applying Sharia in criminal cases is illegal.

The fatwa triggered an outcry, with feminist groups and rights activists staging protests to demand the perpetrators' prosecution.

"They acted like mediaeval people," Fauzia Moslem, the president of the country's largest women's group, said.

Police inspector Zakir Hossain said officers arrested four people, including the imam of the mosque in Habiganj, in the northeast, after Sultana filed a criminal case on April 7 against 17 people.

Turkiye launches its first aircraft carrier

■ HT News Network

ANKARA: Türkiye launched its first aircraft carrier on Monday, aiming to extend its drone capabilities from land-based to naval operations amid increased regional tensions as war rages in Ukraine on the other side of the Black Sea.

The TCG Anadolu can handle only light aircraft, chiefly helicopters and jets that can take off from shorter runways. It is 232 metres long and 32 metres wide, and can carry some 1,400 personnel — one battalion of soldiers — combat vehicles and support units to operate overseas.

"This vessel will allow us to conduct military and humanitarian operations in every corner of the world, when needed," President Tayyip Erdogan said at the launch ceremony in Istanbul.

"We see this vessel as a symbol that will consolidate Türkiye's regional leadership position," he said.

News presenter generated with AI appears in Kuwait

■ HT News Network

KUWAIT CITY: A Kuwaiti media outlet has unveiled a virtual news presenter generated using artificial intelligence, with plans for it to read online bulletins.

"Fedha" appeared on the Twitter account of the Kuwait News website as an image of a woman, her light-coloured hair uncovered, wearing a black jacket and white T-shirt.

"I'm Fedha, the first presenter in Kuwait who works with artificial intelligence at Kuwait News. What kind of news do you prefer? Let's hear your opinions," she said in classical Arabic. The site is affiliated with the Kuwait Times, founded in 1961 as the Gulf region's first English-language daily.

Abdullah Boftain, deputy editor in chief for both outlets, said the move is a test of AI's potential to offer "new and innovative content".

In future Fedha could adopt the Kuwaiti accent and present news bulletins on the site's Twitter account, which has 1.2 million followers, he said.

DC Bandipora reviews enrollment for registration under PMJJBY/PMSBY

HT News Network

BANDIPORA, APRIL 11: Deputy Commissioner Bandipora Dr. Owais Ahmed on Tuesday chaired a meeting of concerned officers to review the enrolment drive for registration of beneficiaries under social security schemes including Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY) and Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY).

Dr. Owais on the occasion asked all the concerned officers and representatives of Banks and financial institutions to gear up for the saturation campaign and ensure active involvement of PRI members to cover all

eligible beneficiaries under the social Security schemes.

He calls for joint efforts of the banks and other departments and active participation of the District Administration to ensure that benefits of the two Jan Suraksha schemes PMJJBY and PMSBY reach the masses.

The Deputy Commissioner stressed upon the Officers of concerned Departments and financial institutions to utilise their field functionaries for identification and mobilisation of the Scheme beneficiaries for cent percent enrolment.

He also stressed on intensive awareness among the people regarding awareness of the scheme.

Dr. Owais on the occasion asked the



departments to achieve the targets within shortest possible time.

Besides ADDC Bandipora Ali Afsar Khan, the meeting was attended by Joint Director Planning Imtiyaz Ahmad, DIO Bandipora Jahangeer Akhoun, Lead District Manager Bandipora and other concerned. Dr. Owais on the occasion asked all the concerned officers and representatives of Banks and financial institutions to gear up for the saturation campaign and ensure active involvement of PRI members to cover all eligible beneficiaries under the social Security schemes. He calls for joint efforts of the banks and other departments and active participation of the District Administration to ensure that ben-

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Deputy Commissioner Rajouri reviews progress on JJM projects, SBM works

HT News Network

RAJOURI, APRIL 11: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Vikas Kundal today chaired a meeting to review the progress of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) schemes and works executed under Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) in the district.

The meeting focused on the status of works undertaken so far and the progress made to provide access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities in rural areas. During the meeting, the SE Hydraulics provided an update on the progress of the JJM schemes, stating that work on 105 schemes is in progress out of the 293 approved schemes.

The Deputy Commissioner



stressed on the importance of timely completion of schemes and quality work for successful implementation of the JJM projects. He asked the concerned officers to work with added zeal and make dedicated efforts to ensure that the work on the JJM schemes is completed at the ear-

liest. The meeting also discussed the progress of works under SBM, with an update on completed segregation sheds, door-to-door waste collection, and employment provided under door to door collection.

It was informed that the work on 176 segregation sheds has been

completed and door-to-door waste collection is in place, and 312 persons have been provided employment under door to door collection. Additionally, 150 CSCs have also been completed.

The Deputy Commissioner also stressed the importance of proper supervision for the successful

implementation of SBM works to ensure that the rural population benefits from access to clean and hygienic surroundings.

Officers who attended the meeting were CPO Mohammad Khurshid; SE Hydraulics, Bhram Jyoti Sharma and Assistant Commissioner Panchayat Sheraz Chowhan. The meeting also discussed the progress of works under SBM, with an update on completed segregation sheds, door-to-door waste collection, and employment provided under door to door collection.

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SVEEP Awareness Prog Held At Imtiyaz Memorial Govt. Degree College Shopian

HT News Network



SHOPIAN, APRIL 11: On the directions of District Election Officer Shopian, Sachin Kumar Vaishya a SVEEP Awareness programme was organized today at Imtiyaz Memorial Govt. Degree College Shopian by a team of election employees under the supervision of District Nodal officer SVEEP Mohammad Mushtaq who is also the Chief Education Officer Shopian, and Dy. District Election Officer Shopian. A large gathering of teachers, students and other officers/officials were present on this occasion. Mushtaq Ahmed, Assistant Professor Political Science conducted the proceeding of the function. Dy. District Election Officer, spoke on the occasion about significance of electoral participation and electoral roll registration in the ongoing Electoral Roll revision and stressed upon participants for maximum voter registration.

Election Naib Tehsildar and Booth level Officers were also present during the programme and shared their experiences among the participants to register themselves through their concerned BLO's.

To accelerate MSME growth, J&K Bank signs MoU with CIMSME

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APRIL 11: Forging partnership with Chamber of Indian Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (CIMSME) to accelerate growth of manufacturing enterprises, J&K Bank today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the country's apex chamber of MSMEs that represents their interests and issues with the Government and various Regulators while being active participant in MSME related policymaking.

General Manager (Corporate Banking/MSME/ Agriculture) Ashutosh Sareen signed the MoU on behalf of the Bank, while as, President Mukesh Mohan Gupta put in his signatures representing CIMSME in presence of MD & CEO J&K Bank Baldev Prakash, Executive Director Sudhir Gupta, General Manager Narjay Gupta, Director (CIMSME)



Subhash Joinwal, DGMs and other senior Bank officials. Bank's Divisional Heads also joined the function through VC Mode.

While lauding the role of CIMSME in promotion of MSMEs, MD & CEO Baldev Prakash expressed pleasure over the signing of MoU. He said, "As a responsible financial institution we understand that MSME sector plays a critical role in fostering entrepreneurship and generates huge employment opportunities thereby contributing greatly to the country's GDP. Moreover, MSME lending is prof-

itable for banking industry and we need to translate this MoU into solid business growth especially in the rest of India because this is the sector which complements the large industries in the form of subsidiary units that are vital to the entire eco-system."

"J&K Bank has always been on the forefront of creating employment opportunities and we have robust numbers to back our commitment towards encouraging the MSME growth in the country. There has been a growth of 440% in the number of

Bank's MSME accounts during the last six years while as the credit exposure to the sector has witnessed 232% increase from Rs 4768 Cr to Rs 15872 Cr," he added.

Asserting that MSME sector will bolster economy of the UT and the country alike, MD said, "We will ensure that bankable leads generated by the CIMSME are processed in a time bound manner."

Speaking on the occasion, President (CIMSME) Mukesh Mohan Gupta said, "We feel honoured for J&K Bank's acceptance of our request for the tie up. Having J&K Bank on board is great boost for us that will eventually help MSME sector a great deal."

Citing the lack of awareness about various MSME schemes and processes to avail the facilities, he stressed upon the need to educate lenders particularly at operational levels and borrowers.

DC Kupwara inspects transit accommodation of GMC Handwara

Dr Abdul Qayoom

KUPWARA, APRIL 11: Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Dr. Doifode Sagar Dattatray today visited Handwara for inspection of transit accommodation for Government Medical College (GMC) Handwara. Principal GMC, Dr. Iffat Hassan Shah; ADC Handwara, Nazir Ahmad Mir; Medical Superintendent DH, XEN R&B, Tehsildar and concerned officers were present at the occasion.

During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner had a detailed inspection of various apartments of the transit accommodation which include Laboratory block, Library, Class Rooms, Cafeteria and other sections.

While talking to media persons, the DC said it is a matter of great privilege for the people of Kupwara district that the transit accommodation for GMC is at finishing level and shall be completed within 15 to 20 days for functioning of the Medical College. He said this was a dream that has come true now adding that classes will start shortly there.

During the inspection, the Deputy Commissioner passed on spot directions to the concerned officers to make proper arrangements of electricity, water, lighting and approaching links to the College accommodation for its smooth functioning.

Police hosts farewell function for outgoing Police Officers in Baramulla

HT News Network

BARAMULLA April 11: Police in Baramulla organised an impressive farewell function at Officers Mess Baramulla for outgoing Officers including SDPO Tangmarg Shri Javid Ahmad-JKPS & DySP Ops Kunzer Shri Aumer Iqbal-JKPS upon their transfer from district Baramulla.

During the event, SSP Baramulla Shri Amod Ashok Nagpure-IPS threw light on the tenure of departing officers and commended their supervisory skills, professionalism, human nature and decision making during toughest situations. The departing officers also shared their experiences and extended their gratitude to all ranks of District Police Baramulla for their cooperation and indention towards duty.

On the occasion, ASP Baramulla, DySP Hqrs Baramulla, DySP DARDPL, SDPO Uri, SDPO Kreeri, SHO Baramulla, SHO Boniyar, SHO Kunzer, SHO Gulmarg, IC PP Babareshi were also present. While speaking on the occasion, officers of District Police Baramulla threw light on the tenure of departing officers and applauded their policing skills and professionalism.

As a goodwill gesture, the departing officers were presented mementoes and gifts and SSP Baramulla extended his best wishes to the outgoing officers for their future assignments.

LCMA holds 128th Building Permission Authority meeting



SRINAGAR, APRIL 11: The Lake Conservation & Management Authority today held 128th meeting of the Building Permission Authority under the Chairmanship of Vice Chairman, J&K-LCMA at Head Office Complex, LCMA, Miskeen Bagh, Khanyar, Srinagar.

Joint Commissioner (P) SMC, Executive Engineer Lake Division 2nd LCMA, Executive Engineer Electric Inspection Division & representative Chief Town Planner Enforcement Officers LCMA, representatives Executive Engineer UEED Division 1st, & PHE, representative Tehsildar Khanyar and Law officer LCMA as members of the Building Permission Authority were present in the meeting. The agenda for the meeting was discussed threadbare and a total of 29 cases were decided upon by the BPA on merits. Meanwhile, the Vice Chairman J&K LCMA who is also the Chairman of BOCA has requested the people residing in the local jurisdiction of LCMA to apply online for proper building permission through its building permission authority, before starting any sort of Construction. Construction raised illegally shall be dealt seriously under law & will be demolished.

SIDBI launches several MSME Cluster Intervention programs in Kashmir

HT News Network

Srinagar: Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) initiated the cluster intervention program in the Tourism Cluster of Jammu & Srinagar (J&K) in 2021 with KPMG and Foundation for MSME Clusters, as the implementing partners in Jammu and Kashmir and launched many programs for the promotion of various activities here.

The Chairman & Managing Director of SIDBI, S Ramann said, "We have been working very closely with the Jammu and Kashmir tourism department in the union territory and other stakeholders to ensure wider coverage and amplification of impact. The program has been focusing on

promoting entrepreneurship, conservation and ecotourism awareness, adventure and MICE tourism promotion, skill and capacity building of personnel engaged in the sector."

He further said that the interventions aim to create replicable and scalable models in the cluster while strengthening the overall cluster ecosystem. We propose to organize a series of events in partnership with the Department to share the key interventions and the learnings with all the stakeholders and promote cross-learning.

On the first day, the team of SIDBI met Ski Patrol Guides in Gulmarg who have undergone soft skills training. Later in the afternoon, homestay at Yousmarg



was inaugurated by CMD, SIDBI. Yousmarg is recognized as one of the 75 offbeat destinations by the government. Homestay entrepreneurs have been trained and facilitated under the program by SIDBI, for which the Certificate award ceremony was held and felicitated by CMD, SIDBI.

A formal launch of training Programme of Tour Guides to promote the downtown area of Srinagar in association with the Indian army- the programme will aim at training to provide sustainable livelihoods to the local youth Yousmarg & Srinagar. On Day 3, a formal event was

held at SKICC, which was graced with the presence of senior officials from Dept. of Tourism and several important tourism stakeholders. The event was kicked off by inauguration of Coffee table Book, under the programme to promote MICE tourism amongst corporates and other potential tourist categories. A formal launch of the Training Program of Tour Guides to promote the downtown areas of Srinagar was also held. Felicitation of candidates trained under the capacity building training programme for Hotel staff in Srinagar also took place. The program was wrapped up by an meaningful and interaction session with key tourism stakeholders.

National Motherhood Safety Day: Why pregnant women need to be cautious about COVID-19



BY DR ANJALI KUMAR

India contributes to at least 20 per cent of the global maternal mortality rate. In an endeavour to raise awareness about the importance of women's health, especially while attaining motherhood, we are the first country in the world to officially declare April 11 as a National Safe Motherhood Day. According to WHO, of the total maternal deaths globally, 99 per cent of them occur in developing countries, accounting for approximately 850 deaths per day. India accounts for 20 per cent of global maternal deaths with 56,000 casualties annually, which is a serious matter of concern. Latest data also suggest that post-partum haemorrhage (PPH) contributes to around 22 per cent of the maternal mortality rate in India. It has been witnessed that the MMR is significantly higher in the rural/remote areas with poor

socio-economic backgrounds, especially those in the adolescent age bracket in comparison to women in the older age bracket. Many expectant mothers find pregnancy worrisome as they manage not only their own health but also that of their unborn child. Given the hormonal changes, pregnancy itself takes a toll on a woman's mental health, causing stress anxiety, depression, anger, mood swings. Everything, from nutrition and adequate sleep to medicines and mental health must be adequately monitored before, during and after birth of the baby.

Covid safety

In view of the current COVID spiral, there is a dire need for everyone to take care of the protocols, especially those in the vulnerable group, which include children, elderly and pregnant women. Strict adherence to COVID precaution protocols — of maintaining social distancing, avoiding visits to

crowded places whenever necessary, making use of a mask while visiting hospitals or for check-ups, washing your hands regularly, eating healthy and a high-fibre diet and avoiding oily, junk and processed food — is a must.

The changes in the immune system of pregnant women make them more prone to respiratory viruses. That's why pregnant patients with COVID-19 are at an increased risk for severe illness compared with women not pregnant. Pregnant women with moderate to severe disease have a higher rate of Caesarean delivery, hypertensive disorders and pre-term birth. Research is still ongoing but we do know that high fevers during the first trimester of pregnancy can raise the risk of birth defects. Hence this year's theme focusses on Covid care for pregnant women.

Nutrition and diet

In terms of nutrition, expecting

mothers should consume one additional meal per day during pregnancy. Milk and dairy products such as curd, buttermilk and paneer, which are high in calcium, nutrients and minerals, should be part of their diet. Consume fresh, seasonal fruits and vegetables, which are high in minerals and iron. Protein can be found in cereals, whole foods, beans and lentils. Green vegetables are high in iron and folic acid. In vegans, a handful (45 grams) of nuts and at least two servings of dal meet daily protein needs. Non-vegetarians can get enough protein, vitamins and iron from meat, eggs, poultry or seafood.

Early and timely screening

Every woman should have a minimum of four prenatal check-ups (ANC), which should include assessment for hypertension, diabetes, anaemia, immunisation for expecting women, iron, folic acid and calcium supplementation.

Depending on the body condition, the doctor may prescribe medication, which should be strictly adhered to, throughout the gestation/pregnancy.

Regular antenatal check-ups are very important for the baby's health as well as identifying and reducing any risk to both mother and baby. It also gives a chance for the mother to clarify questions she is unsure of like aches and pains, the birthing process, feeding your baby or any other concerns. Mothers also get support and help regarding their lifestyle, mental health, dietary advice or help in quitting smoking or drinking alcohol.

Despite the fact that the worldwide MMR has dropped by at least 45 per cent from 1990 to 2015, yet according to the WHO's Sustainable Development Goal 2030, the target is to restrict the MMR to below 70 per 1,00,000 live births.

Study Finds These Simple Non-Drug Interventions Can Help People With Alzheimer's Disease

A new study examined four dementia care interventions and found that non-pharmaceutical care models saved between \$2,800 and \$13,000 in costs.

Alzheimer's disease and Alzheimer's related dementias affect over 6 million Americans. There is no cure for the disease.

The conventional way of taking care of patients who have Alzheimer's disease and dementia is believed to only involve medication, but now experts are looking at better ways to help care for people without relying solely on medication.

Although medications receive more public attention in comparison, non-medication therapies "are not associated with adverse events including hospitalizations and mortality," according to a new study published in Alzheimer's & Dementia: The Journal of the Alzheimer's Association/Trusted Source.

A new study looked at how programs that prioritize helping caregivers of people with dementia may help keep people out of the hospital and in better health.

Alzheimer's disease and Alzheimer's related dementias affect over 6 million Americans and it is considered to be



one of the most costly diseases in the United States. Not only are there costs associated with the use of medication, but there's a higher risk of these individuals having to use a nursing home, needing additional assistance, and also an increased risk of having to utilize an emergency room or hospital. By using interventions that don't require drugs, there's an effort to reduce not only the cost burden of the illness but also the overall well-being of the patient.

This follows a push from major public health groups to

help people with Alzheimer's and dementia to get care while at their home

What the study found

The new study examined four dementia care interventions through computer simulation models and found that non-pharmaceutical care models saved between \$2,800 and \$13,000 in societal costs.

These savings come by "reducing time spent caregiving and its associated cost and reducing the out-of-pocket spending — mostly through keeping people at home longer", said Eric Jutkowitz, PhD, the study's lead author and associate professor at Brown University's School of Public Health in Providence, Rhode Island.

"Nursing home care can be very expensive and many people pay for it out of pocket", he continued.

Jutkowitz's team examined four interventions to understand the impact of these non-pharmaceutical interventions: Maximizing Independence at Home, New York University Caregiver, Alzheimer's and Dementia Care, and Adult Day Service Plus. These programs allow families to have the training, skills, and support they need to manage the challenges associated with caring for a loved one with dementia conditions.

NEWS

Gut: These 8 Foods Can Help You Fight Chronic Bloating



Bloating is an uncomfortable sensation that can make you feel like you have gained weight or expanded from the inside. It is often caused by excess gas, water retention, or digestive issues. Chronic bloating can be a sign of underlying health conditions, such as irritable bowel syndrome, celiac disease, or gut dysbiosis. Bloating can also result from dietary factors that can be managed through food choices. In this article, we will highlight eight foods that can help you fight chronic bloating and improve your overall digestive health.

1. Ginger

Ginger has been used for centuries as a traditional remedy for digestive complaints. Ginger contains gingerols, which have anti-inflammatory and anti-spasmodic properties that can soothe the intestinal muscles and reduce bloating. Ginger also stimulates the production of digestive juices and enzymes that support healthy digestion. You can add fresh ginger to your tea, smoothie, or stir-fry, or take ginger supplements in pill form.

2. Peppermint

Peppermint is another popular natural remedy for bloating and other digestive issues. Peppermint contains menthol, which can relax the muscles of the digestive tract, improve bile flow, and ease abdominal discomfort. Peppermint tea, capsules, or essential oil are widely available and can be used as needed. However, people with acid reflux or GERD may experience worsened symptoms from consuming peppermint.

3. Pineapple

Pineapple contains bromelain, an enzyme that can break down protein molecules and reduce inflammation in the gut. Bromelain has been shown to improve the symptoms of digestive disorders such as irritable bowel syndrome and ulcerative colitis.

4. Yogurt

Yogurt is a fermented dairy product that contains beneficial bacteria known as probiotics. Probiotics can help balance the gut microbiome, reduce inflammation, and enhance nutrient absorption. Yogurt can also be a good source of calcium, protein, and vitamins.

5. Papaya

Papaya is a tropical fruit that is rich in vitamins, fibre, and digestive enzymes. Papain is an enzyme found in the papaya fruit and stems that can aid in breaking down protein in foods, making digestion smoother. Eating papaya can reduce bloating, constipation, and stomach pain.

6. Fennel seeds

Fennel seeds are commonly used as a digestive aid in traditional medicine practices. These seeds contain anethole, which can relax the gastrointestinal muscles, reduce inflammation, and promote healthy digestion. Fennel can be eaten raw or cooked, and its seeds can be chewed, infused into tea, or added to spice blends.

7. Cucumbers

Cucumbers may help reduce bloating as they are rich in water. It is also packed with antioxidants, vitamin C, and caffeic acid, each of which can soothe swollen and irritated tissue. People can add cucumber slices to water, eat cucumbers in a salad or cucumber soup, or incorporate them into smoothies.

Mifepristone: Everything to Know about What's Going on With the Abortion Pill

A common pill used for abortion that has been approved for 20 years by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), could soon be pulled from the market due to a court case.

The medication, called mifepristone, has been approved by the FDA for ending early pregnancies for over 20 years.

On Friday in Texas a federal judge ordered the FDA overturn their approval of the drug, but on the same day a judge in Washington ordered that the FDA not restrict the medication.

The FDA is now currently under two competing court orders regarding the medication.

The Justice Department announced today they have filed an appeal in Texas case. In the Texas decision the judge had delayed the decision from going into effect to give the Justice Department time to file an appeal.

Medical experts call Texas decision unjust

Major health groups have come out against the Texas court decision.

Leaders at the American College of Gynecologists and Obstetrics released a statement Friday the Texas decision.

"This decision decidedly misrepresents medication abortion care. It is inflammatory, brazenly substitutes the court's judgment for that of trained professionals, and distorts the reality of the ACOG members who compassionately provide abortion care, of the millions of patients whose health and lives have been impacted by medication abortion, and of the decades of decisive scientific data that prove its safety and efficacy.

"Mifepristone has been used safely and effectively for medication abortion for more than two decades. That safety and efficacy is backed up by robust, evidence-based, clinical data and its observed use by millions of people with support from clinicians, including obstetrician-gynecologists.

Regardless of the opinion of one judge on this matter, mifepristone is a safe, effective part of comprehensive health



care.

Pfizer CEO and other drug executive condemn Texas ruling

On Monday over 400 executives and leaders at pharmaceutical companies issued a statement condemning the Texas ruling calling it "judicial

activism."

"The decision ignores decades of scientific evidence and legal prece-

to continue regulating medications.

"If courts can overturn drug approvals without regard for science or evidence, or for the complexity required to fully vet the safety and efficacy of new drugs, any medicine is at risk for the same outcome as mifepristone. While the drug development, approval and monitoring process is not perfect, the Agency's framework has resulted in decades of unsurpassed medical innovation and in statutory mechanisms to remove drugs from the market if, among other reasons, they fail to maintain the anticipated safety and efficacy profile."

The case to overturn approval of the drug

The judge who is overseeing the case — Judge Matthew J. Kacsmaryk — ordered a hold on federal approval of the drug, essentially overturning the FDA approval.

The FDA asked the judge to deny the motion, claiming that removing access to mifepristone would cause

worse health outcomes and irreversible harm for many patients looking to terminate their pregnancies.

Research has consistently shown that the abortion medications — which account for over half of all abortions in the United States — are safe and effective.

If medication abortions were to be banned, millions of Americans — particularly those in marginalized populations — would lose access to safe abortions and the number of counties with an abortion care provider would plummet.

"I believe if access to safe methods for pregnancy termination are banned there will be more botched abortions, septic abortions, hysterectomies, hemorrhages, and maternal deaths," Dr. Kecia Gaither, a double board-certified OB/GYN and maternal-fetal medicine specialist, told Healthline. In an earlier interview, Jessie Hill, JD, a constitutional law professor at Case Western Reserve University specializing in reproductive health rights, .

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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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