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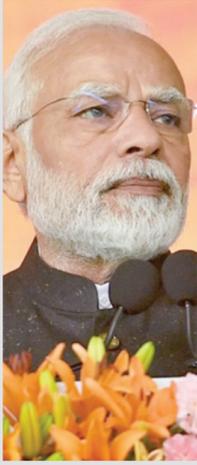
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## PM Modi inaugurates first Global Buddhist Summit in New Delhi

HT News Network

NEW DELHI, APR 20: The Prime Minister, Narendra Modi addressed the inaugural session of the Global Buddhist Summit at Hotel Ashok in New Delhi today. The Prime Minister walked through the photo exhibition and offered flowers to the Buddha statue. He also offered monk robes (Chivar Dana) to nineteen eminent monks. Addressing the gathering, the PM welcomed everyone from different corners of the world to the inaugural session of the Global Buddhist Summit. He underlined that 'Atithi Devo Bhava' i.e. guests are equivalent to God, is a tradition of this land of Buddha and the presence of so many personalities who



Turn.....PM Modi inaugurates.....Pg 02

## 5 Soldiers Killed, Another Injured In Militant Attack In Poonch: Army

M S Nazki

POONCH, APR 20: Five soldiers were killed and another injured in a militant attack in Poonch district, army said on Thursday. "Today, at approximately 1500 hours, one Army vehicle, moving between Bhimber Gali and Poonch in the Rajauri sector was fired on by unidentified (militants), taking advantage of heavy rains and low visibility in the area. The vehicle caught fire, due to likely use of grenades by (militants)," army said in a statement to HT. "Five personnel of the Rashtriya Rifles Unit deployed for Counter Terrorist operations, in this area, have unfortunately lost their lives in the incident," it said, adding, "Another seriously injured soldier was evacuated immedi-



ately to the Army Hospital at Rajouri and is under treatment." Operations are in progress to locate the perpetrators, the army

said. "Further details are being ascertained." Soon after the incident, army Turn.....5 Soldiers Killed.....Pg 02

## India Attaches Special Importance To SCO: Amit Shah

HT News Network

NEW DELHI, APR 20: India attaches special importance to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in promoting dialogue on multi-dimensional political, security and economic subjects, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Thursday.

He said this while chairing a meeting of Heads of Departments of SCO member states responsible for Prevention and Elimination of Emergency Situations in New Delhi.

He said India's priority as the chair of the SCO is to take forward the SECURE theme articulated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at the



Qingdao Summit of the grouping in 2018. SECURE stands S - Security, E - Economic Cooperation, C - Connectivity, U - Unity, R - Respect For Sovereignty and Integrity and E - Environment Protection. Under the leadership of Modi, India attaches special importance to the SCO in promoting dialogue on the subject relating to multi-dimensional political, security and economic Turn.....India Attaches.....Pg 02

### NEWS BRIEF

#### 'People should be aware of fire safety measures'

BUDGAM, APR 20: People should be aware of fire safety measures and follow those in letter and spirit to control situations during fire incidents, said Towseef Hussain, Assistant Director of Fire and Emergency Services Budgam.

Talking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) on the sidelines of an event marking the culmination of the Fire Service Week here, the

Turn.....People should be.....Pg 02

#### Mudslide in Ganderbal closes Sgr-Leh highway

GANDERBAL, APR 20: A mudslide in the Rezan area of Gund in Central Kashmir's Ganderbal district on Thursday led to the closure of the Srinagar-Leh highway.

The incident occurred at approximately 4 am, prompting the rescue workers to quickly respond to the situation.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that

Turn.....Mudslide in Ganderbal.....Pg 02

#### Tulip Garden to be closed for public from today

SRINAGAR, APR 20: Tulip Garden in Srinagar, which is one of the major tourist attractions in Kashmir, will be closed for general public from tomorrow. An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that as the Tulip bloom is almost over, the garden will be closed from tomorrow.

The garden, which is located at the

Turn.....Tulip Garden to be.....Pg 02

#### Avalanche warning issued to 8 districts in J&K

SRINAGAR, APR 20: The authorities on Thursday issued avalanche warning to 8 districts of Jammu and Kashmir amid inclement weather conditions. According to a communique, a copy of which lies with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Jammu and Kashmir Disaster Management Authority said

Turn.....Avalanche warning.....Pg 02

#### Kathua School Gets Facelift After Class 3 Student's Video Appeal To PM Goes Viral

HT News Network

KATHUA/JAMMU, APR 20: Days after a Class 3 student urged Prime Minister Narendra Modi in a video message to ensure basic facilities at her school in Kathua district, the Jammu and Kashmir administration has started work to give it a facelift.

Seerat Naaz's appeal in a video to the prime minister last week, which was shared widely on social media, prompted Director of School Education, Jammu, Ravi Shankar Sharma to visit the gov-



ernment school in the remote Lohai-Malhar block.

"Assalam Alaikum Modiji. Kaise ho Turn.....Kathua School.....Pg 02

#### ECI revises schedule of J&K's voter revision

Exercise to culminate on May 27

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 20: The Election Commission of India has revised the schedule of special summary revision of electoral rolls in Jammu & Kashmir.

The poll-body, in a letter sent to Jammu & Kashmir chief electoral officer, has approved the proposal sent by him for modifying the schedule of voter revision.

The exercise, which otherwise would have concluded on May 10, would now culminate on May 27. As per revised schedule, a copy of which is in

Turn.....ECI revises schedule.....Pg 02

#### 4 JKAS Officer Shifted, Another Gets Additional Charge

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 20: The government on Thursday ordered transfer of four JKAS officers in the interest of administration with immediate effect.

According to an order issued here, a copy of which lies with GNS, Ms. Sumera Shamim, JKAS:2004, Deputy Commissioner, State Taxes (Stamps), Srinagar, has been transferred and posted as Joint Director, Industries and Commerce (Development), Kashmir, against an available vacancy.



Ms. Dilshada Akhter, JKAS:2007, Deputy Director, Tribal Affairs, Kashmir, has been transferred and posted as General Manager, DIC, Anantnag,

Turn.....4 JKAS Officer.....Pg 02

#### Three drug peddlers arrested in Kashmir

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 20: Jammu and Kashmir police on Thursday claimed to have arrested three drug peddlers in Handwara & Budgam and recovered contraband substances from their possession.

In Handwara, a police party of Police Post Zachaldara at a checkpoint established at Sultanpora crossing intercepted 02 suspicious persons who tried to flee from the spot on seeing the police party but were apprehended tactfully, a police spokesman said in a statement issued to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

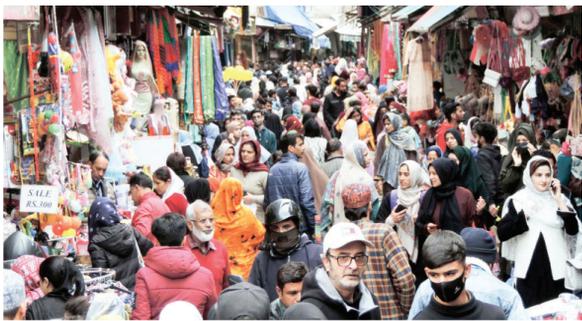
During search, 45 grams of Charas like substance was recovered from their possession. They have been identified as Farooq Ahmad Dar@Jungle son of Mohd Sultan resident of Lachipora and Bilal Ahmad Khan son of Mohammad Anwar Khan resident of Wadipora. They have been shifted to police station where they remain in custody, police said.

In Budgam, a police party of Police Station Chadoora at a checkpoint established at Nowpora Chadoora, intercepted a suspicious person carrying a

Turn.....Three drug peddlers.....Pg 02

#### Increasing Inflation Hits Eid Budget In Kashmir

Markets witness low footfall of shoppers



HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 20: Markets in Kashmir witnessed thin footfall of shoppers ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr with many blaming inflation for hitting Eid budget.

Shopkeepers from several markets told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that they were expecting a good

Turn.....Increasing Inflation.....Pg 02

Traders say sales dip by 50% due to incessant rain before Eid

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 20: Rains drenched valley plains for the third

Turn.....Traders say.....Pg 02

#### HC quashes detention of Journalist Fahad Shah

HT News Network

JAMMU, APR 20: The High Court on Thursday quashed the detention of a journalist Fahad Shah and directed the authorities to release him forthwith. Justice Wasim Sadiq Nargal has said that Fahad should be "set at liberty forthwith if not required in any other case."

"In the present case, the procedural

Turn.....HC quashes detention.....Pg 02

#### G-20 Summit

#### CS conducts city tour; Directs for accelerating pace of work to meet deadlines

Also takes stock of arrangements for Eid-ul-Fitr

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APR 20: In order to take stock of developmental works being carried out in view of hosting G-20 at Srinagar and preparations for Eid-ul-Fitr, the Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta today conducted an extensive tour of the Srinagar city to make on spot appraisal of ongoing developmental works.

The Chief Secretary was accompanied by Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; Deputy Commissioner Srinagar; Commissioner

Turn.....CS conducts city.....Pg 02



CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

**PM Modi.....**

have lived through Buddha's ideals makes us feel the experience of Buddha being present himself around us. "Buddha is beyond the individual, it is a perception", the Prime Minister said. The Prime Minister said that Buddha is a sensation that transcends the individual, he is a thought that transcends form and Buddha is a consciousness beyond manifestation. "This Buddha consciousness is eternal", he said. He said the presence of so many people from diverse areas represents the expansion of Buddha that binds humanity in a single thread. He also underlined the strength of the collective will and resolution of crores of followers of Lord Buddha globally to make for the welfare of the world. Noting the occasion, the Prime Minister expressed confidence that the inaugural Global Buddhist Summit will create an effective platform for the efforts of all nations and thanked the Ministry of Culture and International Buddhist Confederation for this momentous event.

Noting that the Global Buddhist Summit is taking place during India's 75th year of Independence when the nation is celebrating Azaadi Ka Amrit Kaal, the Prime Minister underlined that India has a major goal for its future and new resolutions for the global good. He emphasized that the inspiration behind India achieving the recent global landmarks in various sectors is Lord Buddha himself.

Remembering the Buddhist path of theory, practice and realization, the Prime Minister elaborated on India's adoption of all three points in its journey in the last 9 years. Modi said that India has worked with dedication for the propagation of Lord Buddha's teaching with a sense of dedication. He talked about the development of Buddhist circuits in India and Nepal, the renovation of Sarnath and Kushinagar, Kushinagar International Airport, and India International Center of Buddhist Heritage and Culture at Lumbini in collaboration with the IBC.

The Prime Minister credited the teachings of Lord Buddha for an inherent empathy in India for the issues of humanity. He mentioned peace missions and India's whole-hearted efforts in rescue work for disasters like the earthquake in Turkey. "This emotion of 140 crore Indians is being seen, understood and accepted by the world", he said. Platforms like IBC, he continued, are giving the opportunity to like-minded and like-hearted countries to spread Buddha Dharma and peace.

The Prime Minister said, "The journey from the problem to arriving at the solution is the actual journey of Buddha." Throwing light on Lord Buddha's journey, the Prime Minister reiterated that he left his life of castles and kingdoms because he realized the pain in the lives of others. He emphasized the only way to achieve the goal of a prosperous world is when one gives away the idea of self and narrow-mindedness and realizes the totality of the Buddha Mantra of adopting the idea of the world. He stressed that a better and stable world can be achieved only if we consider the nations dealing with a scarcity of resources. "It is the need of the hour that the priority of every person and nation should be the interest of the world along with the interest of the country", the Prime Minister remarked.

The Prime Minister said that the current time is the most challenging time of this century as there is war, economic instability, terrorism and religious fanaticism, and the challenge of climate change with species disappearing and glaciers melting. He said amidst all this there are people who believe in Buddha and the welfare of all creatures. "This hope, this faith is the biggest strength of this earth. When this hope gets united, the Buddha's Dharma will become the world's belief and Buddha's realization will become the belief of humanity."

The Prime Minister highlighted how each person is affecting the earth in one way or the other, be it with lifestyle, eating or traveling habits and pointed out that everyone can contribute towards fighting climate change. Throwing light on Lifestyle For Environment or Mission LiFE, an initiative by India influenced by the inspirations of Buddha the Prime Minister said that if people become aware and change their lifestyle, then this huge problem of climate change can also be tackled. "Mission LiFE is influenced by the inspirations of Buddha and it furthers Buddha's thoughts", Modi remarked.

Concluding the address, the Prime Minister stressed the need to come out of the definitions of materialism and selfishness and imbibe the feeling of 'Bhavatu Sab Mangalan' i.e. Buddha should not only be made a symbol but also a reflection. He remarked that this resolution will be fulfilled only when we remember the words of the Buddha of not turning back and always moving forward. The Prime Minister expressed confidence that resolutions will become successful with everyone coming together.

Union Minister for Culture, G Kishan Reddy, Union Minister for Law and Justice, Kiren Rijju, Union Ministers of State for Culture, Arjun Ram Meghwal and Smt Meenakshi Lekhi, and Secretary General of International Buddhist Confederation, Dr Dhammapiya were present on occasion.

**5 Soldiers.....**

and police personnel rushed to the spot. Visuals showed semi-burnt bodies of the soldiers lying on the road beside the burning truck.

"Army and police rushed to the spot and cordoned off the area and put halt on the vehicular traffic on the highway," the sources said.

They said traffic shall remain suspended from BG to Surankote Road. "All the commuters are advised to adopt the alternative routes i.e from

BG- Mendhar-Jarran Wali Gali to Surankote-Poonch or via KG Top to Poonch."

**India Attaches.....**

subjects, an official statement said. Shah said India attaches special importance to disaster risk reduction and is ready to share its expertise and experience in this field for greater cooperation and mutual trust among SCO member states.

He said India believes that no hazard is small or big and it does not leave anyone behind.

Shah said India now has more accurate and timely early warning system in place and the country has seen a sea change in the way its early warning systems (EWS) of drought, flood, lightning, heat wave, cold wave, cyclone, have improved.

He said the forecast not only warns India about the disaster but also predicts the potential impact it is likely to cause. According to Shah, at the time of a natural disaster, it is of great importance how quickly the relief reaches the affected area and this speed reflects the preparedness of the team and the efficiency of their training.

He said India has been associated with the SCO since 2005 and playing an important role as an observer country, since then.

At the 17th Summit in 2017, India became a full member of the SCO as part of an important step in the process of expansion of this organization.

Shah said it is a matter of pride that India is donning the mantle of the chair of the SCO Council of Heads of State for the very first time since becoming a full-fledged member state in 2017.

He said the SCO will probably be the largest regional organisation in the world at this time, representing 40 per cent of the global population, 25 per cent of the global GDP and 22 per cent of the world's total land area. Today, the SCO has developed into an international organization and it has provided an excellent platform for harmonising cooperation with all member countries, he said.

Shah said each and every life, family and their livelihood are priceless and all possible efforts should be made to protect it.

He said India's approach to early warning system is people-centric and we want to ensure that our forecasting and warning system is not just scientifically advanced but it is also communicated in a manner that is understandable, usable and actionable by common people.

The home minister said there was a time when cyclonic storms in India used to cause huge loss of life and property, but, India has made 'community empowerment' the basis of its efforts, due to which the damage caused by cyclones has been reduced, which is being appreciated by the whole world today.

He said India has taken several important initiatives of international cooperation in the field of disaster risk reduction.

He said the India-led Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) today has 39 members from across the world.

The CDRI is working with member countries to ensure that all investments in infrastructure are made in a manner that it makes our infrastructure resilient to disasters, thereby securing not just our present but also our future. Along with this, CDRI is placing particular emphasis on some of the most vulnerable regions of the world, such as Small Islands Developing States (SIDS). Also, on India's initiative, a Working Group on Disaster Risk Reduction has been constituted at the G20, and the first meeting of this group was held recently in Gandhinagar in Gujarat, he said.

The home minister said the 'Tsunami Early Warning System' for the Indian Ocean Rim Countries established by the Indian National Centre for Oceanic Information Services (INCOIS) serves not just India but nearly two dozen other countries.

Along with this, he said, India has hosted joint bilateral exercises with SAARC, BIMSTEC, and SCO countries. (Agencies)

**Kathua School.....**

aap... aap sab ki baat suntey ho, meri bhi baat suno (Hello, Modiji. How are you? You listen to everyone, please listen to me also)," Naaz said in the beginning of her over four-minute video.

Speaking about the dilapidated condition of the school, Naaz said students are forced to sit on dirty floors, which often stain their uniforms. She also highlighted the bad condition of the toilets, problems of open defecation and the unfinished construction work of the building.

"You listen to the entire nation, please listen to me as well and build a nice school for us so that we can continue our education and not get scolded by our mothers for getting our uniforms dirty," the girl said in her passionate appeal to the prime minister.

Taking note of the video clip, the Jammu and Kashmir administration immediately swung into action to give the school a facelift.

"A project worth Rs 91 lakh was sanctioned to upgrade the school on modern lines but the work was stalled due to some issue related to administrative approval. It has now been sorted out and the work is underway," Sharma said after visiting the school.

The official said hundreds of schools are running in the remotest parts of the Union territory and the government has already chalked out a detailed project to ensure proper and modern facilities at all of these schools.

"We have also started constructing 1,000 new kindergartens in all districts of Jammu province, and in the next three to four years, we will be able to ensure the construction of 250 kindergartens in each of the 10 districts (in Jammu province)," he said.

Sharma said there are three types of funding available for improving school infrastructure under UT CAPEX, district CAPEX and Samagra. Over 2,500 projects have been completed under Samagra since 2018, while 6,000 more are in progress.

He said the department is also utilising the UT capex and district capex to ensure the best facilities for the students.

Naaz, who aspires to be an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer, said she had made a video and she is happy that her message has received a positive response.

"I made the video myself to share my thoughts with our prime minister. I am glad that action was taken and our school is getting a facelift," she said.

Villagers are also cheerful about the renovation of the school and expressed hopes that it will be developed on modern lines like schools in urban areas. (Agencies)

**ECI revises.....**

possession of news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the claims and objections can be filed from April 05 to May 6.

The disposal of claims and objections would be done by May 15.

The final voter list would be published on May 27.

This is the second voter revision in Jammu and Kashmir in a period of less than one year after culmination of delimitation exercise by a three-member panel headed by former Supreme Court judge Justice (retd.) Ranjana Desai. The delimitation exercise concluded on May 5, 2022 by the panel when it unveiled the final electoral map of J&K. Jammu & Kashmir is without an elected government for almost five years.

The erstwhile state is under the central rule from June 19, 2018 when BJP withdrew support to Mehbooba Mufti-led government, citing "deteriorating security situation" in J&K.

**4 JKAS Officer.....**

against an available vacancy. Ms. Nighat Alam, JKAS:2007, Assistant Commissioner Panchayat, Srinagar, has been transferred and posted as General Manager, DIC, Baramulla, against an available vacancy.

Mohammad Muneer Ahmed Bhat, JKAS:2010, awaiting orders of adjustment in the General Administration Department, has been posted as General Manager, DIC, Bandipore, against an available vacancy.

Meanwhile, as per a separate order, Mehmood Ahmad Shah, JKAS:1999, Director, Handloom and Handicrafts, Kashmir, has been asked to hold the charge of the post of Director, Industries and Commerce, Kashmir, in addition to his own duties, till Saloni Rai, IAS, remains on leave.

**Three drug.....**

nylon bag. During search of the said bag, Poppy Straw weighing about 18 Kgs was recovered from his possession. He has been identified as Riyaz Ahmad Ahanger Son of Ghulam Mohiudin resident of Watakal Charar shareef. He has been arrested and shifted to Police Station where he remains in custody. After sustained questioning, on his disclosure 08 more nylon bags containing Poppy Straw weighing about 125 Kgs were recovered from deserted shed located at Nowpora Chadoora, police added.

Accordingly, police said that the cases under relevant sections of law have been registered in respective police stations and investigation has been initiated.

"We urge the common masses that if you witness drug peddling or any other crime anywhere near you, feel free to contact nearest police establishment or dial 112. People are requested to cooperate with police in curbing the menace of drugs from the society. We reassure the community members that police will act tough against the criminals as per law," police said.

**HC quashes.....**

requirement has not been followed and complied with by respondents in letter and spirit and as a corollary thereof, the petition is required to be allowed and the detention order is liable to be quashed," the Court said, as per the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

The Court also said no compelling reasons have been given or shown by the detaining authority while passing the detention order against Shah when he was already in custody and under an FIR in which no bail had been granted. "In absence of any compelling reasons, the order of detention cannot sustain the test of law," the court said.

On March 3, 2022, the District Magistrate Srinagar had passed an order under section 8 of the Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act, 1978, placing Shah under preventive detention to "prevent him from indulging in the activities which are prejudicial to the maintenance of public order."

During arguments, counsel for Shah, N. A. Ronga, described the allegations against Shah as baseless, unfounded vague and without any substance, saying there is not an iota of truth in the allegations.

Shah was arrested on February 2, 2022, by Jammu and Kashmir police in Pulwama district and booked under Section 13 of ULA (P), section 124A and Section 505 IPC. Shah filed a bail application before a Court in Pulwama and he was granted bail. However, when the order of the Court was served upon the police concerned, they did not release him and shifted him to the Police Station Imam Sahib Shopian.

In Shopian, an FIR under sections 153 and 505 of the IPC was registered against him. In this case, he filed a bail application before the Court and

was granted bail. But he was not released by the police and was shifted to the Safakadal area of Srinagar. At the police station, Safakadal another FIR was registered against him. While in custody at Safakadal, the district magistrate Srinagar passed a detention order against Shah.

Ronga argued Shah was not provided with a copy of the dossier, material or other records including the copies of FIRs that have been referred to and relied upon by the detaining authority while framing grounds of detention and passing the detention order. "Thus he was deprived of his constitutional and legal right of making a meaningful and effective representation against his detention."

He also said since the bail was not granted in the FIR registered at the police station Safakadal against Shah there was no reason to detain him under J&K Public Safety Act.

**CS conducts.....**

SMC&CEO Srinagar Smart City; VCLakes Conservation and Management Authority; Chief Engineer Srinagar Smart City Ltd and other officers from line departments besides from Police and Traffic departments.

During the tour, the Chief Secretary visited IG Road, Jhelum Riverfront Development Project, Residency Road, Maulana Azad Road, Gupkar Junction, Boulevard Footpath, Nishat Garden precinct, Northern Foreshore Road including cycle track, Shalimar Canal and Dargah Hazratbal Shrine.

Dr. Mehta while taking stock of the works carried out at all these locations directed the concerned officers to further accelerate the pace of work and ensure completion of all these projects within fixed deadlines.

He also directed to make all necessary arrangements for the upcoming Eid-ul-Fitr festival including sanitation, cleaning, traffic management etc.

Reviewing the progress of Dal Lake cleansing at Nishat precinct, the Chief Secretary directed the VC, LC&MA to expedite the Houseboat sewerage connections and cleanliness of remaining patches of Dal with special focus on shoreline. He also directed him to start water sports activities in Hazratbal basin by 15th of May.

The VC, LC&MA apprised the Chief Secretary that the EO is being floated by I&FC and Tourism Departments shortly. He further revealed that the activities identified for water sports include Waterpark, Jet skis, Zorbing balls, Parasailing etc.

Later, Dr Mehta visited Hazratbal Shrine where he gave necessary directions to the concerned officers for face-lifting of compound wall and other make-over works for the comfort of the devotees.

**Increasing.....**

sale but said the markets lacked enthusiasm.

People were seen jostling and swarming around mutton and bakeries shops. But the overall market sentiment was low, said shopkeepers.

Jahangir Ahmad, a shopkeeper at Pulwama town told KNO despite Covid restrictions in the last two years, sales were good and whosoever was visiting shop was at least purchasing an item or two at least.

But he said that this time sales remained all time low because customers are not in a position to afford.

"Inflation and poverty due to Covid-19 lockdowns have badly hit J&K and the poor are hardly able to fill their bellies," he said.

Javid Ahmad, a shopkeeper dealing with readymade garments said that he used to sale lakhs on festive occasions and whosoever was visiting his shop used to buy at least an item or two. But this year very few customers are visiting his shop and one out of ten customers are able to afford an item.

He said that unemployment is at its peak, poor people have become poorer in last few years and they are hardly able to cater to the requirement of essential items.

They said that on one hand the rates of essential items like rice have doubled in last few months and on the other hand most people don't have any are jobless.

"Most people come to markets to purchase essential items only while sales for other shopkeepers is below par," shopkeepers said.

**Traders say.....**

day in a row on Thursday, with traders expressing disappointment over a "50 percent" dip in sales, ahead of Eid-ul-Fitr.

Mohammad Yaseen Khan, a senior trade leader and chairman of Kashmir Economic Alliance (KEA) – an amalgam of various trade bodies – told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the markets were struggling for quite some time now to gain sales momentum, but the rains ahead of Eid festival played a spoilsport.

"It is just not like that our sales dipped due to rains only; we have been struggling for multiple reasons," Khan said. "However, we were hopeful of picking up good sales ahead of Eid, but the continuous rainfall adversely impacted our sales."

KEA chairman said that ahead of the Eid festival, people mostly buy bakery and mutton products for which rains can hardly hamper people from coming out, but in other areas of the market, it made an effect. "The overall impact made on sales is around 50 percent," he added.

"Clothing, footwear, communication, and other items which used to witness good

sales on Eid witnessed sluggish sales due to rains," he said.

Mehraj-ud-Din Ahmad, general secretary of All Kashmir Wholesale Mutton Dealers Association told KNO that although the rains did not make any negative impact on their sales, the brief closure of the Srinagar-Jammu national highway impacted the supply of stock.

"On festivals, be it any situation, people come out to buy mutton," he said, adding, "Rains did not make any such impact on their sales; however, a brief closure of the highway hampered the supply, and the stock which was scheduled for the day came another day."

Bashir Ahmad, who owns a prominent telecommunication showroom in Srinagar, said they were already struggling to stay afloat in the market but that the incessant rainfall for the last few days dampened the market spirit.

"Rains prevented people from coming out and when there are fewer people in the market, there are fewer sales. Rains played a spoilsport. We were expecting good sales. It is just a helpless situation for us," he rued.

As officials at the J&K's weather department have forecast intermittent light to moderate rain at scattered places on April 20 to 22, the intermittent downpour started early morning on Thursday.

Haji Mohammad Aslam Mattoo, a well-known name in Srinagar, dealing with retail and wholesale footwear items, said the sale of their products is purely dependent on weather conditions.

"In view of the pre-summer and Eid festival, we had planned the footwear stock accordingly, but with this intensity of continuous rainfall who is going to come to the shop? What is to be used on a sunny day can't be worn on a rainy day," he said.

"The already ongoing works in the city have slowed down our sales to a large extent. Out of the remaining expected market, we only witnessed 30 percent of sales," Mattoo said.

Meanwhile, the weatherman on Thursday predicted intermittent light to moderate rain at scattered places towards late afternoon and evening for April 21 and 22, and a decrease in precipitation, predicting mainly dry weather during the subsequent two days.

**'People should.....**

officer said, "To control the situation and minimise losses during fire incidents, the most important thing is educating people about fire safety precautions. They should also strictly adhere to the instructions."

The programme was aimed at raising awareness among the public regarding fire safety measures. Students and employees also participated in the event which included various competitions.

The J&K Fire and Emergency Department organised Fire Safety Week, which began on April 14, to commemorate the firefighters who lost their lives in the line of duty.

In the programme AGNI (Awareness in Fire Safety for Growth of National Infrastructure), students from various schools across Budgam participated in essay writing and lecture competitions. The top three winners received cash prizes and certificates, while all participants received medals and appreciation for their participation.

Senior officers facilitated the employees of the Fire & Emergency Department who were present at the event.

**Mudslide in.....**

there was no loss of life or injury. However, the mudslide did damage the electricity poles which were later restored by the employees of the Power Development Department (PDD), he said.

The Sub-District Magistrate (SDM) Kangan, Tehsilard Gund and other officials visited the spot to take stock of the situation, the official said.

He said the road is currently being cleared and the traffic on the Srinagar-Sonamarg road is expected to resume soon. Till then, the traffic has been rerouted via Zirpora road, he added.

A significant landslide occurred in the same area on February 19 which caused extensive damage to multiple homes.

**Tulip Garden.....**

foothills of the Zabarwan Range, was opened for tourists on March 25 this year. During this period, tourists from different parts of the country thronged to the garden to witness Tulip blooms.

Floriculture officer Shaiyiq Rasool told KNO that Tulip Garden witnessed an overwhelming response from the visitors, especially during the Tulip festival.

He said with the end of the Tulip Bloom season, the authorities have decided to close the garden for general public from tomorrow.

**Avalanche.....**

avalanche with low danger level is likely to occur above 2400 to 3200 metres above sea level in Doda, Kishtwar, Poonch, Ramban, Baramulla, Kupwara and Bandipora districts.

The communication also reads that avalanche with medium danger level is likely to occur above 2800 metres in Ganderbal district in the next 24 hours. "People living in these areas are advised to take precautions and avoid venturing in the avalanche prone areas till further orders," it reads.



# B&J hospital Jammu readying for opening after missing deadlines

## OPD services to start in May, says official

■ HT News Network

**SRINAGAR, APR 20:** After missing several deadlines, the building of Bone and Joint hospital in Jammu is about to get completed with some services being started at the hospital in May.

As per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the 300 bed B&J hospital Jammu was sanctioned under PMDP in 2018 and work was allotted to R&B Department for Rs 38 crore.

A top health official while talking to KNO said that a G+3 storey hospital building was to be completed in two phases within a period of 24 months and its first deadline was March 2021. But



due to Covid, the hospital missed the first deadline.

He added that it was given another deadline that the hospi-

tal must be completed by March 2022 but it missed the second deadline as well. Accordingly, March 2023 was fixed as the final deadline and the hospital is now near completion, he said.

"Final touch is being given to the works at the hospital and few services like OPD, physiotherapy and electro surgical services will be started at the hospital in May," he said. He said joint replacement and spine surgeries will be routine at the hospital and patients will no longer need to go outside J&K for such treatments.

In a phased manner, the facilities at the hospital will be enhanced so that patients can get all facilities in their locality, he

said, adding that the Hospital will be state of the art hospital equipped with the latest machines and modular OTs.

"Bone and Joint Hospital was a long pending demand of Jammu province and after its completion the patients of whole Jammu province as well as the neighbouring States of Punjab and Himachal Pradesh shall be benefited and patients of Jammu province will no longer have to go outside the State for specialized orthopaedic treatment," he said.

The proposal for creation of posts of all cadres for the Bone & Joint Hospital has already been submitted to the Administrative Department, he said.

## Eid prayer at 9 AM at Jama Masjid Srinagar: Anjuman Auqaf

■ HT News Network

**SRINAGAR, APR 20:** Anjuman Auqaf Jama Masjid Srinagar announced that due to inclement weather and water logging at historic Eidgah Srinagar, Eid-ul-Fitr prayer will be held at 9:00 at Jama Masjid Srinagar, instead Inshallah.

In a statement, Anjuman urged Muslims to pay Sadaqah Fitr, which is fixed at Rs 65 per person, before Eid prayer so that deserving people also join Eid festivities.

The Anjuman once again strongly demanded unconditional release of its detained head Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir Dr Moulvi Muhammad Umar Farooq before Eid.

## Affarwat-XI Sports Club President Greet People On Eid-UL-Fitr

■ HT Correspondent

**BARAMULLA, APR 20:** Affarwat-XI Sports Club Baramulla President Sajad Ahmad Lone has extended warm greetings to people on Eid-UL-Fitr.

In his Eid greetings, Sajad Ahmad Lone said "I extend my warm wishes to people on the auspicious occasion praying that the Almighty accepts our month-long fasting, repentance, prayers and rectitude. Lone urge the affluent class in the society to help those who do not have any resource to Celebrate the Eid.

## Div Com Kashmir greets people on Eid ul Fitr

■ HT News Network

**SRINAGAR, APR 20:** On the eve of Eid-ul-Fitr, the Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri today extended his greetings to the people of Kashmir.

In his festival message, Div Com Kashmir prayed that this Eid brings peace and prosperity and espouse harmony among citizens.

He said this festival teaches us to share happiness with poor and needy people by offering charity generously.

## Er. Sahil Bashir Bhat, State Media Secretary of the BJP J&K (Youth), has conveyed his warmest Eid-ul-Fitr greetings to the people of J&K

■ HT News Network

**SRINAGAR, APR 20:** He emphasized the significance of the festival and urged everyone to remember and pray for the peace, progress, and prosperity of the nation during these celebrations.

In his message, Er. Sahil Bashir Bhat prayed that the month-long fasting and nightly prayers of the faithful are accepted and rewarded by the Almighty. He also expressed his hope that the spirit of generosity, discipline, and piety generated through the Holy month continues to inspire and guide people in their daily lives.



## Youth jumps from Wail Bridge on first day of traffic trial; cops save him

■ HT News Network

**GANDERBAL, APR 20:** The newly-constructed Wail Bridge in central Kashmir's Ganderbal district was opened for traffic on a trial basis on Wednesday. However, on Thursday, a youth attempted to end his life by jumping into the river from the bridge but his life was saved by two alert cops.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the police are trying to ascertain the reason behind the youth's suicide attempt.

The youth (name withheld) is a daily wage worker in the Wildlife Department, the official said, adding that the youth was rescued by the on-duty police personnel of Police Post Gutlibagh Hilal Ahmad and Muzaffar Ahmad.

"The police officers present at the site immediately sprang into action when they saw the youth attempting to end his life. They managed to pull him out of the river and provided first aid to him," the official said, adding that the youth is undergoing treatment at a nearby hospital and his condition is stable.

## Dogs maul minor boy in Awantipora, injures his lungs, other organs

His condition stable: Docs

■ HT News Network

**SRINAGAR, APR 20:** An eight-year-old boy was badly mauled when a stray dog attacked him in Awantipora area of South Kashmir's Pulwama district.

An official told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that a stray dog entered Awantipora area and attacked a minor boy and injured him near his home on Tuesday. He has been identified as Harris Khursheed Mir (08) son of Khursheed Ahmad a resident of Awantipora area of Pulwama district.

Harris was shifted to nearby hospital for treatment from where he was referred to SMHS Srinagar for advanced treatment, he said.

Meanwhile, a doctor from Surgery Unit Head at SMHS Srinagar told KNO that Harris was badly mauled by dogs leaving his different organs damaged.

He was so badly and deep bitten that his lung and other vital organs were also injured, however, he is undergoing treatment and currently his condition is stable, he said.

## Edu Deptt seeks list of Govt schools falling above radius of seven KMs by foot

■ HT News Network

**SRINAGAR, APR 20:** School Education Department Thursday sought a list of government schools falling above a radius of seven kilometers or more on foot.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Personal Officer (PO) at Directorate of School Education Jammu (DSEJ) had

issued a communique to all Chief Education Officers (CEOs) of the region.

"In this regard, you are asked to verify the distance of such schools and furnish the same to DSEJ," it reads.

The PO said, "If any other schools in Jammu Division apart from the list issued by DSEJ where a distance of more than 7 km is required to be covered on foot and same may also

be communicated to DSEJ itself through return mail."

The officer has informed the CEOs to treat the matter as most urgent.

In the meantime, top officials at DSEJ said that the move is aimed for internal purposes.

"As of now, we are consolidating the data for internal use and we will see what will be done to those schools after the transfer drive," the official said.

## Rains damage vital bridge in Langate, public movement restricted

■ HT News Network

**HANDWARA, APR 20:** The intermittent rainfall for the past few days has caused damage to the vital bridge in Lagate area of Handwara, prompting authorities to restrict the public movement as a precautionary measure.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News



Observer (KNO) that Daand Kadal - a bridge over nallah Mawer that connects more than 20 villages has been closed for the public movement as the bridge has developed a partial damage due to intermittent rainfall and increase in the water level of the nallah.

"Though the extent of damages to the bridge is being assessed, however, people are being requested to refrain from crossing the bridge over the nallah," officials said.

Meanwhile, locals alleged that the concerned department didn't pay heed to the worse ning condition of the bridge for the last four years.

Despite repeated attempts, Tehsildar Langate couldn't be contacted for the comments as he didn't receive the phone calls.

## Around Rs 7 lakh recovered from norm violators in last 4 months: FCS&CA

■ HT News Network

**SRINAGAR, APR 20:** Amid the complaints about overpricing of essentials, the government has recovered a fine of over Rs 6,91,950 from the norm violators across Kashmir in the past four months.



According to the data available with the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Directorate of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) has inspected 9328 shops and sealed several among them.

The market checking squads of the department have also realized a fine of over Rs 6,91,950 in the last four months. The data revealed that Rs 6,91,950 have been realized from norm violators across the Valley while Rs 1,91,900 has been recovered in Srinagar alone and the rest of the fine has been realized from norm violators in Baramulla, Bandipora, Bugdam, Ganderbal, Kulgam, Kupwara, Pulwama, Shopian and Anantnag.

## J&K Govt Frames Panel Recommending Books Publication, Media Interaction For Civil Servants

■ HT News Network

**JAMMU, APR 20:** Jammu and Kashmir administration on Thursday constituted a committee for examining and recommending cases for publication of books and media interactions of members of All India Services in terms of All India Services (Conduct) Rules, 1968.

The Committee will be comprised of Administrative Secretary, ARI and Trainings Department as its Chairman while

(GAD), committee has been constituted for examining and recommending cases related to permission(s), sanction(s) for publication of books and media interactions of members of All India Services in terms of All India Services (Conduct) Rules, 1968.

The Committee will be comprised of Administrative Secretary, ARI and Trainings Department as its Chairman while



Administrative Secretary, Information Department, Administrative Secretary, Planning, Development, Monitoring Department, Administrative Secretary, Culture Department, representative of Department of Law, Justice, Parliamentary Affairs and Additional Secretary to the Government, General Member Administration Department will be its members.

## Residential House damaged In Sumbal blaze

■ HT News Network

**SUMBAL, APR 20:** A residential house was gutted in a fire incident in the Inderkot Sumbal area of North Kashmir's Bandipora district on Tuesday afternoon.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), that the two storey house belongs to Syed Zulfiqar Shah, son of Nissar Shah, resulting in the property worth lakhs reduced into ashes.

"However, timely action of locals and fire tenders doused the flames and saved the other nearby properties," he said, adding that the cause of fire could not be confirmed immediately.

The official further said that the cognizance of the fire incident has been taken and further investigation is on.

## District Convergence Plan 2023-24 discussed at Ganderbal

HT News Network

GANDERBAL, APRIL 20: Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Shyambir today convened a meeting to discuss and finalize the District convergence plan 2023-24 under MGNREGA for fruitful utilisation of funds and positive outcomes of the MGNREGA.

At the outset, ACD Ganderbal deliberated upon the features, modes and methods of convergence under MGNREGA.

The DC in detail discussed the specifications and focus areas which shall be entertained while formulating the practicable convergence plan for the district in effective manner.

The DC impressed upon all the line departments for immediate submission of convergence proposals for



its consolidation and approval at the district level.

He urged all the departments to work in coordination with each other so that best convergence plan is proposed for creation of durable assets.

The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner Ganderbal, Mushtaq Ahmad Simnani, ACD, CEO Manasbal Development Authority ACP besides

heads of all line departments. At the outset, ACD Ganderbal deliberated upon the features, modes and methods of convergence under MGNREGA.

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The meeting was attended by Additional District Development Commissioner Ganderbal, Mushtaq Ahmad Simnani, ACD,

## Div Com reviews arrangements for facilitating smooth Seasonal migration of nomads

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 20: Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar today chaired a meeting of Deputy Commissioners and concerned Officers to review the arrangements for facilitating smooth seasonal migration of the nomads Gujjar-Bakerwal community along with their livestock to upper reaches of the districts.

The Div Com directed DCs to issue permissions for movement after seeking proper satisfactory reports from the concerned departments. He also directed DCs to appoint nodal officers and share the number of Trucks required in their respective districts.

The Animal and Sheep husbandry departments were directed to set up first aid camps at different loca-



tions to provide vet services to the migrants. He further directed the revenue, police and forest departments to facilitate smooth movement of nomads.

Animal Husbandry and Sheep Husbandry Departments were also told to ensure tagging of each Animal.

The meeting was attended by Director Animal Husbandry, Director Tribal

cases of Displaced persons (DP) of 1947, 1965 and 1971.

The Deputy Commissioners apprised the Div Com about the total number of WPRs and DPs families in their district, number of applications received, number of applications approved and recommended for relief assistance.

The Div Com instructed the DC Jammu, Samba Kathua to expedite the process of identification of left out families of WPRs and Displaced Persons of 1965, 1971, 1947 in their respective districts. He also directed them to submit all completed cases in his office for providing relief assistance to WPR and displaced persons families under the Prime Minister Development Package. The Div Com instructed the DC Jammu, Samba Kathua to expedite the process of identification of left out families of WPRs.

## Enforcement Squad of FCS conducts market checking drive

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APRIL 20: The Enforcement squad of Food Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Department under the supervision of Assistant Director Enforcement Fayaz Ahmad Shah launched a massive drive within the vicinity of Srinagar City particularly at Sariabala, Jawahar Nagar, Dalgate, Sonwar, Nishat, Hazratbal, Zakura, Eidgah, Khan-yar, Fateh Kadal & Karan Nagar areas, etc. During the course of action as many as 118 establishments were inspected, out of which 25 erring traders were penalized with a sum of rupees 19300 for violating Essential Commodities Act, 1955. The drive will continue in the same passion in future as well & whosoever found violating the norms.

## DC Kupwara hosts iftar party for Bal ashram and Nari Niketan children

HT News Network

KUPWARA, APRIL 20: In a unique and humanitarian gesture, an Iftar party for the students of Bal Ashram Handwara and Nari-Niketan Gulgam was organised by the District Administration Kupwara on Wednesday here at TRC complex. The Deputy Commissioner Kupwara; Dr. Doifode Sagar Dattatray, Chairman, District Development Council Kupwara; Irfan Sultan Pandithpori, Vice-Chairman District Development Council Kupwara; Haji Farooq Mir, ADC Kupwara; Gh. Nabi Bhat, District Social welfare officer Kupwara besides Wardens and staff of both the institutions also attended the Iftar party. The district administration had invited over 80 students of both the institutions which included 35 Girl students. The DC expressed gratitude to the participants and conveyed his best wishes to the whole Muslim community on the culmination of the holy month.

The participants also lauded the District Administration with great applause for hosting the Iftar party. The district administration had invited over 80 students of both the institutions which included 35 Girl students.

The DC expressed gratitude to the participants and conveyed his best wishes to the whole Muslim community on the culmination of the holy month.

## DC Ramban discusses implementation of SANKALP District admin plans to host Entrepreneurship Festival in May

HT News Network

RAMBAN, APRIL 20: Deputy Commissioner, Ramban Musarrat Islam today chaired a review meeting of the District Skill Committee (DSC) for implementation of centrally sponsored flagship scheme SANKALP (Skill Acquisition and Knowledge Awareness for Livelihood Promotion) in the Ramban district.

Additional Deputy Commissioner, Harbans Lal; ACR, Gias-UI-Haq and various senior officers attend-

ed the meeting.

At the outset, the Deputy Commissioner asked the Officers of the line Departments to prepare a comprehensive Action Plan for skilling the youth in potential sectors, boosting the zeal for entrepreneurial initiatives in the District under SANKALP initiative, extending hand holding by the District Administration for business development, to create a pool of skilled human resource and create an environment of sustainable livelihood in the District. In the meeting, a



detailed discussion was held on the training activities proposed by various departments. The DC directed to maintain uniformity in training parameters. He further said that all these activities would be held under the umbrella of

Ramban Entrepreneurship Festival, starting from the first week of May. The Committee identified sectors like Agriculture, Horticulture, Dairy value creation, Handicrafts and Entrepreneurship which offer huge potential to the youth of the

District to venture into. Brainstorming discussion was held on challenges involved, mobilization of candidates and monitoring of skill activities besides hosting an Idea Pitching Competition for the youth of Ramban. The DC reiter-

ated that the objective of the festival should be to upgrade the skill set of the youth by imparting quality and market relevant training to them along with strengthening the institutional skill imparting mechanism with modern technological trends for skill development thereby ensuring placements in ITIs and Polytechnic College along with promotion of shifting of the trend to business creation in the District using the concept of Herd mentality onboarding every section of the society.

## DC Ganderbal reviews arrangements for Youth Entrepreneurship Festival in district

HT News Network

GANDERBAL, APRIL 20: Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Shyambir today convened a meeting of concerned officers to review the arrangements for weeklong Youth Entrepreneurship Festival that is going to be held in the district in the month of May, 2023.

At the outset, the DC deliberated upon the idea behind celebrating Youth Entrepreneurship Festival and said that purpose of Festival is to provide platform to the budding Youth to show case their entrepreneurial abilities and share their innovative ideas.

While reviewing the activities to be undertaken during the week-long event, the DC said that event will be inspiration to the people of the district who have excelled in various fields who will be giv-



en chance to narrate their success stories during the event.

It was given out that main event will be held in the premises of Govt Degree college Ganderbal and Qamaria Stadium.

While discussing the arrangements being put in place at GDC Ganderbal, Executive Engineer R&B was directed to ensure all arrangements including white washing of main block, lighting arrangements shall be completed at an earliest.

## Dubai Expo liabilities shall be paid to service providers through FICCI

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, APRIL 20: Dubai Expo 2020 was held in January 2022, in which the Department of Commerce (DoC), Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India, and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce (FICCI) signed a memorandum of understanding wherein FICCI was given the responsibility of managing the Dubai Expo 2020 event, the Department of Handloom and Handicraft communi-

cated. The department further said that in accordance with the MoU, FICCI was given the responsibility of hiring suppliers and service providers in order to carry out the numerous activities planned for the event.

"In addition, FICCI was tasked with maintaining a ledger of account for the costs

associated with the event."

The H&H department also informed that the event was conducted however, due to a delay in the submission of the bills by FICCI and a change of guard at JKTPD and their shifting to treasury operations caused the delay.

"The amount on account of liabilities is expected to be paid to FICCI, who in turn shall make the payments to the concerned vendors", it added.

Moreover, the statement issued by H&H deptt reads, "With respect to remuneration, the Performance Fee is being paid in accordance with the rates notified by the Cultural Academy, J&K".

"Pertinent to mention, an amount of Rs. 17 Lacs approximately was spent on the Boarding and Lodging of these 11 artists, who were part of the cultural troupe", the department maintained.

## District Administration Anantnag celebrate Civil services Day

HT News Network

ANANTNAG APRIL 20: On the eve of civil services Day, District Administration Anantnag today organised a function at VC Hall of the DC office complex.

21th April every year is dedicated to the civil servants and to reflect back what they have done years back. On this day they make plans for the coming years for their departments. The day was chosen to commemorate the day in 1947 when sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the first home minister of independent India addressed the probationary officers at All India Administrative services training at Metcalfe Delhi.

Various civil service officers of District Anantnag including the CEO PDA, SE Hydraulic, SE KPDC, Dis-



trict programme officer ICDS, ACD, AD FS&CA AC Labour department recall their commitment for the cause of citizens and for the nation besides share their achievements and experience as civil servants.

Deputy commissioner Anantnag Dr Basharat Qayoom on the occasion said that being a civil service

officer one needs to be very, energetic, ambitious, vibrant, honest and foremost very dedicated towards his duties and must have fast disposal rate besides to ensure administrative mechanism.

He directed the officers to be dedicated, towards their duties and ensure the smooth functioning of gov-

ernment offices. Besides the above officers, ADC, (A), CMO, CHO, DAO, EOs, and other officers were present on the occasion. Various civil service officers of District Anantnag including the CEO PDA, SE Hydraulic, SE KPDC, District programme officer ICDS, ACD, AD FS&CA AC Labour department recall their commitment for the cause of citizens and for the nation besides share their achievements and experience as civil servants.

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## DEO Shopian held BLO's, Supervisors Meeting

HT News Network

SHOPIAN, APRIL, 20: Following the extension of SSR time limit by two weeks, District Election Officer, Shopian, Sachin Kumar Vaishya held a meeting with BLO's and BLO Supervisors of 36-Zainpora and 37-Shopian Assembly Constituencies at Meeting Hall of Mini Secretariat Shopian today.

While addressing the gathering District Election Officer said that because of good response to the enrolment, the time limit has been extended up to 6th May 2023 and the same need to be informed to the general public.

BLO's were urged to verify the Assured Minimum Facility (AMF) Status of the polling stations and report the gaps at earliest for the redressal of the same.

The District Election Officer Shopian has asked the departments of PWD, School, Health, PHE, Telecom, RDD regarding the maintenance of AMF facility at all the 247 Polling Stations of District Shopian.

All ERO's and AERO's have been urged to impress upon BLOs to improve the numbers of claims and objections and digitize all the pendency of claims by due dates.

Further all BLO's were asked to deliver all the EPICs to the concerned voters at earliest and furnish the report as per the format through their respective AERO offices.

It was further impressed upon ERO's and AERO's to identify and propose the district icon from third gender category of voters. Assistant Commissioner, Revenue, Shopian, Shahbaz Ahmed Bodha, Dy. DEO, Jahangir Ahmed and other concerned were present.

### LOST OF RC

I have lost front Number of my Bike with Raristration No JK01L-7687 while travelling Jawhar Nagar TO Dalgate. Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the R T O Srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

PUPINDER PAL SINGH  
S/O FOJWANT SINGH  
R/O JAWHAR NAGAR  
MOB NO 9796740800

### LOST OF RC

I have lost RC of my vechile (Etiga) bearing Ragistration No: JK06B/2648 at Home . Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the A R T O Doda within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Name:-Sajad Ahmad  
S/o:- Mohammad Ayoub  
R/o:- Ganda Chali Doda

# DC Rajouri inspects provision of amenities in shelter home- Parisha

## Distributes Sweets and Gifts among inmate on Eid

HT News Network

RAJOURI, APRIL 20: Deputy Commissioner Rajouri Vikas Kundal conducted an inspection of Parisha, a shelter home for girls in distress or in need of care and shelter. The purpose of the visit was to review the arrangements and facilities being provided to the inmates and to interact with them to seek feedback on their stay. During the visit, the Deputy Commissioner distributed sweets and other gifts among the inmates and wished them a happy Eid. This gesture was appreciated by the girls living in the Parisha and expressed their gratitude to the Deputy Commissioner for his concern and support.

The District Social Welfare Officer also briefed the Deputy Commissioner about the functioning of Parisha and the initiatives being taken to provide support to the girls who are in need of care and protection.

The Deputy Commissioner appreciated the efforts of the Social Welfare Department in providing necessary care and support to the inmates.

While interacting with inmates, the Deputy Commissioner reiterated the administration's commitment to providing a safe and secure environment for girls living in distress. He emphasised the need for providing necessary facilities and support to the inmates and directed the concerned officials to take all necessary measures to ensure their safety and security.



"The visit was aimed at ensuring that the inmates are provided with all necessary facilities and support", said DC Rajouri.

The administration is committed to the welfare of the women living in distress and will take all necessary steps to provide them with a safe and secure environment.

In addition to the visit at Parisha, the Deputy Commissioner also inspected the Phulwari and reviewed the facilities being provided to the newborns. He directed the concerned officials to ensure that all necessary measures are taken to provide a safe and secure environment for the babies and their mothers. The Deputy Commissioner also talked telephonically to some of the complainants to ascertain the status of their grievances and sought their feedback on the level of satisfaction with the department's response. He urged the officials to take

the grievances seriously and provide prompt and satisfactory solutions to the public. Speaking at the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner emphasized the importance of addressing public grievances in a timely and effective manner. He directed the officials to ensure that every grievance is resolved in a transparent and accountable manner to instil confidence among the public. The meeting was aimed at ensuring that the public grievances are addressed promptly and effectively by the concerned departments. The administration is committed to providing efficient and effective public service delivery and will take all necessary steps to ensure that the grievances of the public are resolved in a timely and transparent manner.

## SDRF organises Mock Drill on Disaster Management in GCOE

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 20: Awareness cum demonstration event on Disaster Management was today conducted by SDRF 2nd Bn. Jammu here in Government College of Education Canal Road.

The event was held under the supervision of Atul Sharma, SSP Commandant SDRF 2nd Bn. Jammu.

Aekta Gupta, Principal Government College of Education along with Prof. Anju Bala (DSW) inaugurated the programme and highlighted the role of Disaster Management and need of these techniques.

Arvinder Kotwal, Dy. SP SDRF 2nd Bn. Jammu, and Sunil Sharma, Inspector were the overall incharge of the Mock Drill Exercise/demonstration. They also briefed the students on the occasion.

During the programme, the SDRF personnel gave demonstrations on First Aid, CPR, Medical First Responder, Earthquake, Mountaineering Rescue Techniques (MRTs), Various Rescue operation Techniques of Disaster management were conducted by the SDRF instructors among the students and staff members. A successful mock exercise, demonstration on Disaster Management as well as the Rescue Techniques were conducted by the SDRF Team.

## Reasi: DHEW team organise awareness programme on Women Centric schemes

HT News Network

REASI, APRIL 20: District Hub for Empowerment of Women Reasi, under Mission Shakti, today organised an awareness programme here at Panchayat Bhagtha on Government Schemes and programmes meant for the uplift and Empowerment of women.

During the programme, Monika Sharma, District Mission Coordinator, DHEW Reasi imparted awareness to a large number of women about the eligibility criteria, Documentation and the "procedure to avail the benefits under different government schemes viz. ISSS, Marriage Assistance Scheme, One Stop Centre, Women Helpline-181, BBBB, Sukanya Samridhi Yojana, PMMVY, Skill development courses by SBI RSETI, PMKVY, Women Entrepreneurship programme like Tejaswini, PMEGP etc.

The programme was attended by PRIs, Women of JKRLM. Grievances of the women were also noted and they were assured to provide assistance with the help of the concerned department. Pamphlets regarding women centric schemes were also distributed.

## JKTPO, Invest India (DPIIT) organised Organic Certification program for Kishtwar Saffron Growers under ODOP initiative

HT News Network

KISHTWAR, APRIL 20: Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organisation (JKTPO) under the guidance of Principal Secretary, Industries and Commerce, Prashant Goyal and under supervision of Managing Director JKTPO, Khalid Jahangir, organised the National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) Awareness Drive for organic certification of Saffron, ODOP product of Kishtwar District in collaboration with Invest India (One District One Product) team, DPIIT, Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry at District office complex here.

The workshop organised with the vision to provide training and certification to farmers who are already pursuing organic farming but don't have the necessary certification for their products

authenticity. This workshop is one of the initiatives of JKTPO for the promotion of ODOP products in Jammu and Kashmir which includes conduction of Buyer Seller meets, participation in national and international trade fairs/ exhibitions and capacity building programs. The drive will increase the export potential of saffron as organic certified products have huge international market. National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) under Ministry of Commerce & Industries, Government of India involves accreditation of Certification Bodies, standards for organic production, promotion of organic farming and marketing etc. The NPOP standards for production and accreditation system have been recognized by European Commission and Switzerland for unprocessed plant products as equivalent to their country standards. With these recognitions, Indian



organic products duly certified by the accredited certification bodies of India are accepted by the importing countries.

This was the second National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) Awareness Drive after Pulwama for organic certification of Saffron organized by JKTPO. The workshop was attended by more than 45 saffron producers of Kishtwar district, and more farmers will come under organic

certification. "On this occasion, Saffron Development Officer, Kishtwar, said: "there is a huge demand of Kishtwar saffron in India and abroad due to its unique aroma and flavour but farmers are not getting good prices due to less marketing linkages. This organic certification of Saffron will boost the demand of saffron and will help to increase the income of farmers." This workshop is one of the initiatives of JKTPO

for the promotion of ODOP products in Jammu and Kashmir which includes conduction of Buyer Seller meets, participation in national and international trade fairs/ exhibitions and capacity building programs. The drive will increase the export potential of saffron as organic certified products have huge international market. National Programme for Organic Production (NPOP) under Ministry of Commerce & Industries, Government of India involves accreditation of Certification Bodies, standards for organic production, promotion of organic farming and marketing etc. The NPOP standards for production and accreditation system have been recognized by European Commission and Switzerland for unprocessed plant products as equivalent to their country standards. With these recognitions, Indian organic products duly certified by the accredited certification.

## Cultural program mesmerises audience at Valedictory function of Fire Service Week

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 20: A scintillating cultural and allied activities mesmerized the audience as the Fire Service Week concluded across the Union Territory today.

A series of functions were held across the UT and the main functions were held at Jammu and Srinagar headquarters.

A cultural program was held at F&E HQs Gandhi Nagar, Jammu under the supervision of Raj Kumar Raina, Deputy Director Fire & Emergency Services Command Jammu. Earlier, a welcome address was presented by Mohammad Jaffer I/C F&E HQs Gandhi Nagar, who also conducted the event. The singing programme began with the melodious performance of Narinder Singh, Mechanical Driver FES RS Pura, which enthralled the entire audience.

This was followed by the performance of Riaz Ahmed, Fire Man who sang a Dogri song in a typical style. Later, a beautiful Kashmiri song was sung by Veer Ji Raina,



SGFM DFO Office City.

The brilliant performances by the talented officials made the programme look utterly professional.

On the concluding ceremony, the officers and officials pledged to continue the awareness programmes as per the directions of Alok Kumar (IPS), Director Fire & Emergency Services, who appreciated the jawans while addressing the event virtually for conducting the week long activities in a most befitting manner. Prominent among others the programme was attended by Foreman, RL Raina, Mandeep Singh and Kanwal Peshin, Divisional Fire Officer City and all In-charges of Jammu Command besides office staff and jawans.

## Div Com Jammu reviews preparations for Investors meet

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 20: Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Ramesh Kumar today chaired a meeting to review the preparations for Northern Level Laghu Udyog Bharti Sammelan and Investors meet scheduled to be held on April 23, 2023 at KC Regalia hotel Jammu.

During the meeting, threadbare discussion was held on various important issues while the President Laghu Udhog Bharti apprised the Div Com about the investors meet programme. It was informed that around 300 to 350 business delegates from different parts of the country



were expected to participate in the meet.

The Div Com instructed Industries and Commerce Department, Pollution Control Board, JDCL, Handicraft and Handloom department to establish stalls during the meet to highlight the schemes of their respective departments and apprise the visiting Investors about

the procedure of applying for different types of required permissions.

All the concerned departments were asked to appoint nodal officers for the meet. The Div Com observed that the meet would attract more investments, generate jobs and strengthen the economy of the UT.

## Students Pledge to make GDC Ramgarh Nasha Mukht

HT News Network

SAMBA, APRIL 20: National Service Scheme unit 'Prabha' and the Department of Physical Education and Sports of Government Degree College Ramgarh on Thursday organised a 'Pledge and Awareness Lecture' on Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan.

The event was organized under the leadership and supervision of Principal of the College, Prof. (Dr.) Satinder Kaur.

The lecture on the theme was delivered by the Principal of the College. In her address, she said that the College has declared at the



outset that it will conduct awareness lectures on Nasha Mukht Bharat Abhiyan twice every week. All the enrolled students, faculty members and non-teaching staff took the pledge to refrain from the consumption of drugs and narcotics.

She added that one must attempt to identify those members of the community who are into drugs, alcohol and tobacco use in order to help them stay away from substance use. She stressed upon the fact that people must come

closer to their religious faiths and beliefs, which shall help them create mental and ethical resistance against drugs. Students and Youth must participate in sports and physical activities along with the practice of meditation. She also told students to keep a vigil on use of such substances by friends in college, family and surrounding and help them to refrain from use and de-addiction. The Series of are being conducted to implement the points of NCORD.

On the occasion, the students, faculty members, and non-teaching staff took the pledge to refrain from the consumption and abuse of drugs and narcotics.

## RBI approves appointment of Kaizad Bharucha as Deputy Managing Director and Bhavesh Zaveri as Executive Director of HDFC Bank

HT News Network

Mumbai, Apr 20, KNT: The Reserve Bank of India has approved the appointment of Kaizad Bharucha as the Deputy Managing Director and Bhavesh Zaveri as Executive Director of HDFC Bank for a period of three years.

A meeting of the Board of Directors of the Bank will be convened in due course inter alia to give effect to these appointments.

Kaizad Bharucha is a career banker with over 35 years of experience. He has been associated with the Bank since 1995. In his current position as Executive Direc-



tor, he is responsible for Wholesale Banking covering areas of Corporate Banking, PSUs, Capital & Commodities Markets, Financial Institutions, Custody, Mutual Funds, Global Capability Centre & Financial Sponsors coverage, and Banks coverage. Bharucha has rich and

extensive experience in Risk Management, Credit Management, Banking and Business management. Bharucha has previously been on the boards of HDB Financial Services Bhavesh Zaveri is the Group Head - Operations, Cash Management & ATM Product of HDFC Bank.

Zaveri joined the Bank in 1998 in the Operations function. He became Business Head - Wholesale Banking Operations in the year 2000 and was appointed as Group Head - Operations in 2009. In his current role, he is responsible for Business and Operations across the country and for creating and delivering a flawless operations execution capability across the diversified product suite of the Bank to the Corporate, MSME & Retail verticals including for Asset, for Liabilities and for Transaction Services of Payments & Cash Management, Trade Finance & Treasury, and ATM Product.

EDITORIAL

## Dog Scare Scaring Human Lives....

The recent incident of an eight-year-old boy who was badly mauled when a stray dog attacked him in Awantipora area of south Kashmir's Pulwama district has once again highlighted the issue of dog menace in Kashmir. This tragic incident has not only left the family of the victim devastated but has also sparked outrage among the local residents.

The problem of stray dogs in Kashmir is not new, but it has escalated in recent years. The growing population of stray dogs has become a major concern for the people, particularly in urban areas. These dogs have been responsible for attacking people, especially children and the elderly, causing serious injuries and sometimes even death. The problem has become so severe that people are afraid to venture out in the streets, particularly at night.

The authorities have failed to address this issue effectively. The government has been carrying out dog sterilization drives, but they have not been successful in controlling the population of stray dogs. The sterilization drives have been criticized for being inadequate and poorly implemented. Moreover, the sterilized dogs are often released back into the same areas, leading to a recurrence of the problem.

In yet another incident, an elderly woman was also attacked by dogs outside her house in Srinagar where trash is dumped right outside their gate but nothing was done to prevent that tragic incident by concerned officials despite being informed already.

The lack of effective measures to control the dog menace has resulted in a situation where the people have taken matters into their own hands. In many areas, residents have resorted to poisoning the dogs, which is a cruel and inhumane way of dealing with the problem. This has led to a public outcry, with animal rights activists demanding that the government take action to stop such practices.

The recent incidents of the young children or elderly being mauled have brought the issue to the forefront once again. There is a need for a comprehensive plan to control the dog population and ensure the safety of the people.

The government must take immediate steps to address the issue. They need to formulate a plan that includes a combination of measures such as sterilization, vaccination, and adoption. The sterilization drives should be carried out on a large scale and should be properly implemented to ensure their effectiveness. The sterilized dogs should be kept in shelters, and efforts should be made to find them homes through adoption programs.

In addition to this, the government needs to enforce strict laws to prevent the abandonment of dogs. Many of these dogs are abandoned by their owners, which add to the problem. The government needs to ensure that the owners of dogs are held accountable and penalized if they abandon their pets.

Finally, there is a need for public awareness campaigns to educate people about responsible pet ownership. The campaigns should focus on the importance of sterilization, vaccination, and the need to adopt dogs instead of buying them. People should be encouraged to report cases of dog attacks to the authorities so that action can be taken promptly.

To sum it up, the issue of dog menace in Kashmir is a serious problem that needs urgent attention. The recent incident of the child being mauled to death has highlighted the need for a comprehensive plan to control the dog population and ensure the safety of the people. The government must take immediate steps to address the issue and enforce strict laws to prevent the abandonment of dogs. Public awareness campaigns should be carried out to educate people about responsible pet ownership. Only then can we hope to tackle this problem and make our streets safe for everyone.

# Sustainable Cities: Balancing Progress and Preservation



AUBAID AHMAD AKHOON

"We must remember that the choices we make today will shape the world our children inherit tomorrow. Let's make those choices wisely, with a focus on sustainability and responsible development."

In recent years, sustainable development has become a crucial focus for many cities worldwide. The recognition of Srinagar, the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir, as one of the creative cities in the world by UNESCO, and the city's current transformation into a smart city, with a budget of \$360 million, is a testament to this. However, it's essential to remember that progress and modernization must never come at the expense of the natural environment and cultural heritage that make our cities unique.

Sustainable development practices are being implemented globally, with cities integrating green spaces and parks into their urban planning. These initiatives not only provide fresh air to city-dwellers but also promote biodiversity, preserving the natural world for future generations. Infrastructure projects are also designed with a focus on minimizing environmental impact and preserving cultural landmarks. These endeavors ensure that our cities retain their charm and character while still embracing progress.

It's inspiring to see people taking responsibility for building smarter, more sustainable cities that prioritize the environment and cultural heritage. As we continue to innovate and develop new technologies, it's crucial to remain conscious of their impact on our planet and strive towards a greener future for all.

Our world is a diverse and complex place, and the same is true for every city. While it's essential to keep moving forward, it's equally important that we do so responsibly, without sacrificing the natural beauty and cultural heritage that make our cities special.

Europe is leading the way in adopting sustainable practices, with highways built around trees to protect and promote their longevity. China is preserving historic homes by building roads around them to retain the country's cultural heritage. As the Native American proverb states, "We don't inherit the earth from our ancestors; we borrow it from our children."



We must preserve our legacy for future generations by adopting sustainable development practices.

Sustainable development practices are not limited to just creating green spaces and minimizing environmental impact. Many cities are also implementing renewable energy sources and reducing carbon emissions by promoting public transportation and electric vehicles. For example, Amsterdam has set a goal to be carbon-neutral by 2050 and is promoting cycling as the primary means of transportation.

Furthermore, sustainable development practices can also lead to economic benefits, such as job creation in the green sector and cost savings through energy-efficient infrastructure. In San Francisco, the city's sustainable development efforts have led to the creation of over 10,000 jobs in the green sector.

In addition to the economic benefits, sustainable development practices can also lead to improved public health. For example, green spaces in cities have been shown to reduce air pollution and mitigate the effects of climate change, leading to improved respiratory health for residents.

It's important to note that sustainable development requires a collaborative effort between governments, businesses, and residents. Governments must provide incentives for businesses to adopt sustainable prac-

tics, and residents must make lifestyle changes, such as reducing their carbon footprint and using public transportation.

Bottom Line :sustainable development practices are essential for building smarter, greener, and healthier cities. Such practices can lead to economic benefits, improved public health, and a better quality of life for residents. It's crucial that we work together to implement sustainable development practices in our cities to ensure a brighter future for generations to come. We must preserve the natural environment and cultural heritage that make our cities unique while embracing progress and modernization. Let's work together to build a better future for our children by adopting sustainable development practices.

"Sustainability isn't just a buzzword; it's a responsibility. It's up to all of us to do our part in building a better, more sustainable future for ourselves and generations to come."

**Educational Columnist, Motivational Speaker, Associate Editor of the weekly 'Education Quill', Senior EDP Head at DD Target PMT in Kashmir, which is a reputed institute for medical/JEE/ Foundation Coaching Classes. Insta id UBI9305, akhoon.aubaid@gmail.com**

# Delusional Illusion



VIJAY GARG

Many people are found saying about their relatives and other knowledgeable people that 'such and such a person is very superstitious. Don't know what all he keeps the illusion of..! His entire family is of superstitions. Immediately after saying this, people often say that we never have superstitions like them, we have complete control over our superstitions.

Such behavior is common especially in India. One relative will be found calling another relative a fan, a neighbor keeps on giving this title to another neighbor. Small From shopkeepers to big businessmen, this word remains present twenty-four hours a day. Where a buyer told two shortcomings while buying something, the shopkeeper will say as soon as he leaves that it is just your illusion. Even if the customer has found a legitimate fault in the goods, this is such a prevalent behavior in the general public that one can easily feel it.

These are some such bright and manifest truths which are visible to everyone in one form without any complication, like the rising of the sun. The central question in this discussion is whether only six people are victims of delusion and it doesn't even touch many people? Or do everyone except a few sensible people follow illusions? The fact of the matter is that except very rare individuals, all of us are more or less superstitious about something or the other.

The only problem is that a person does not understand his fault or weak side. There is a saying that everything



in this world is found by seeking, except for one thing and that is our own fault. Basically delusion is the root cause of all our miseries. Give it the proper perspective. It is important for every human being to understand. If its illusion is not understood properly, then the joy in life dries up. 'Wham' is basically an Urdu word.

Its parallel word is 'illusion'. Illusion is actually the name of that state of mind, in which the thing that a person has considered as truth, in reality it is not even a particle of truth. Just that pseudo-disguiser of truth sits inside and makes you feel the lie as truth. From there, fear takes birth in human life. Idioms and proverbs have been made from time to time in India to remove 'illusion' or 'illusion' from the mind. For example, a person who is a victim of delusion is often told such sentences in Indian folklore - 'Why are you engaged in making a snake of rope... don't make a pigeon of a feather', that is, do not spread the rumor of a pigeon dying by seeing a feather of a pigeon.

All of us should use these idioms

given by our forefathers to remove misconceptions from other's mind. It is necessary to understand how deeply this emotional condition harms a person's life. Indian sages say that knowledge is really gained by that person or the knowledge gained is beneficial to that person only.

Can reach, who is not a victim of illusion. In confusion, knowledge will be fragmented. The mirror in the form of knowledge shows us the differences of the world, it gets fragmented in the event of any illusion. Then what is the use of carrying a broken mirror? The question is, how does the illusory talk make a home in the human mind? It needs to be understood that a dangerous situation of illusion occurs when a person has lost his 'nir-ksheer-judicious' decision power due to stress due to some major reason. From the psychological point of view, he has control over himself.

The debt does not remain. There only psychiatrists can give solution with proper treatment. A separate category is those who are in a con-

scious state. He has complete control over the intellect. They fall prey to delusion by telling such a thing which is not confirmed. How many superstitions would die before they were born, if all men, in conversation with others, did not refer to that which they themselves did not know to be sure of.

But in reality this does not happen. The factories of our mind keep creating illusions. All one to get him out to help others. After all, the responsibility of building a healthy thinking society is shared by all of us. If every person adopts such a careful and honest behavior towards his communication that he will not tell anyone unconfirmed things and by being a false well-wisher, he will not make such comments about someone's home, family, body or business, which will poison his mind. Then half the solution of this issue will come out like this. We too can make such a resolution.

**Vijay Garg Retired Principal Educational Columnist Malout Punjab**

# Unveiling the Intricacies of Bureaucratic Rule in J&K



DR. NASEER AHMAD LONE

Jammu and Kashmir is a region that has seen many changes in its political and administrative history. The state was under the rule of a hereditary monarch until 1947 when it acceded to India. Since then, Jammu and Kashmir has undergone various political and administrative transformations. However, the most significant change in recent times came in 2019 when the Indian government revoked the state's special status and bifurcated it into two Union Territories.

The administrative changes that followed the revocation of Jammu and Kashmir's special status were drastic. The central government assumed direct control of the region, and a large number of bureaucrats were deployed to oversee the administration. The bureaucracy became the primary instrument of governance, and its decisions dictated the region's fate. While the government claimed that the changes would bring development and prosperity to Jammu and Kashmir, the reality has been far from it.

The imposition of the bureaucratic rule in Jammu and Kashmir since 2019 can be linked to the Plato's theory of cave man. Just like how those living in a cave are unaware of the world outside and only perceive shadows of reality, the bureaucrats in Jammu and Kashmir are disconnected from the true needs and wants of the region. They are more concerned with upholding the status quo than addressing the issues faced by the people. Since the abrogation of Article 370 in August of 2019, the region has seen a dramatic increase in bureaucratic intervention, with officers taking control and determining the destiny of the people. This has resulted in a shift in the power dynamics of the region, with the bureaucrats having the ultimate say in matters that greatly affect the lives of the people.

To understand the impact of bureaucratic rule in Jammu and Kashmir, it is important to examine Plato's Theory of the Cave Man. According to Plato, people live in a cave and only perceive shadows of reality cast by the fire behind them. The cave dwellers believe that these shadows are real, and their perception of the world is limited. Plato suggests that those who have seen the light outside the cave and know the truth are responsible for leading society.

In the context of Jammu and Kashmir,

the bureaucratic rule can be seen as the shadow cast by the fire behind the cave. The officers who run the region have limited exposure to the ground realities and rely on their assumptions and perceptions to make decisions. This approach often leads to policies that are out of touch with the needs of the people. The bureaucratic rule might be effective in maintaining order and stability, it can also lead to abuses of power and violations of individual rights. For instance in the case of the forced eviction of individuals from state land in Jammu and Kashmir, the rule-bonded officers may be following the letter of the law, but they may be doing so without regard for the human impact of their actions.

Moreover, in situations where bureaucratic rule takes over society, the officers become rule-bonded, leading to a situation where they prioritize the rules over the needs of the people. For instance, bureaucratic officials may implement policies that are technically correct but are not practical in real-life situations. This can also be analyzed through the Weberian concept of the "iron cage," which suggests that modern society

However, in regions like Jammu and

Kashmir where the majority of population belonged to the minority community, the rule of bureaucracy may not be justifiable here. This is because it is easier for any individual to manipulate the bureaucratic rule established by the government to exploit the population of the minority in the state. Might be that resulted in widespread mistrust among the people towards their own State. As we see the trend of protest against the government declines in the past few years in the region of Jammu and Kashmir. However, it is important to recognize that protests can serve as a powerful means of resistance against government policies. When protests occur within the framework of the law, they demonstrate the trust that people have in their government's ability to address their concerns and grievances. When protests are suppressed, they can exacerbate mistrust and disillusionment with the government, leading to further divisions between the state and its citizens.

In conclusion, bureaucratic rule in Jammu and Kashmir since 2019 has had a significant impact on the region. It has led to officers assuming power and making decisions that often do not reflect the ground realities. Plato's Theory of the Cave

Man provides a useful framework to understand this phenomenon. The situation when rule-bonded officers rule society can lead to policies that are out of touch with the needs of the people, and it is imperative that the government finds a balance between bureaucracy and responsiveness to ensure the well-being of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Also the Weber's concept of the "Iron Cage" highlights the potential for bureaucracy to become oppressive and limit human freedom and creativity. In response, democratic regions have established checks and balances on bureaucratic power to maintain balance in society. However, it is important to recognize that in certain regions, mistrust may impede citizens' ability to engage in protests against the government, thereby limiting their ability to influence policy. To build trust and prevent further divisions, it is important to allow for peaceful protests within the framework of the law.

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## Parliament: A Temple of Democracy or Akhara for Dangal?



KB JANDIAL

Parliament's yet another session was washed as a result of continuous ruckus, frequent adjournments and finally adjourned sine die with almost any work. This is the new normal of the 'highest temple of Indian democracy.' While the world is told that Indian democracy is under threat and needs 'foreign intervention', the most disturbing part of these developments is that the faith of the people in democratic institutions is shaken.

The 'hon'ble' members didn't allow the Parliament to function because of matters which had nothing to do with public welfare. The issues used for the ruckus were JPC on Adani issue, apology from Rahul Gandhi for his uncharitable and demeaning observations in London on Indian democratic institutions and "foreign intervention", 2-year sentence to Rahul in criminal defamation case and subsequent disqualification from Lok Sabha. All these matters had been in the public domain and bitterly debated at all public fora, evening national TV debates and on social media to the point of disillusionment. But, still the MPs from all sides 'contributed their might' to stall the proceedings daily, sparing no one from heckling- the Presiding officers, PM, Ministers, or any other members.

What did they gain out of it? What public good did it finally accrue? All these matters could be important, but don't override the larger public good for which these democratic representative institutions. People wait for redressal of their problems which MPs seek through Questions, Zero Hours, Calling Attention Motions, Short Notice debates, budget debates etc. All these opportunities were thrown away for petty politics or political one-upmanship.

Entering in its last year, the 17th Lok Sabha is in for a record, for lowest number of sittings since 1952. So far, the 16th Lok Sabha had the lowest number of 331 sittings. The current Lok Sabha with 230 sittings so far, is unlikely to cross this figure. It has economic fallout as well. The cost of running Lok Sabha is Rs. 2.5 lakhs to Rs 3 lakhs per minute. So, non-functioning of the highest pedestal of democracy; murder or survival of which many parties keep crying hoarse, has cost the nation to the tune of Rs.150 crore of public money. Was it worth it?

The disruption and adjournments without any parliamentary work for which the MPs are elected, are the new political achievement. In the parliamentary history of India, the first instance of disruption took place when President Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan's address to both the Houses on February 18, 1963 was disrupted for not speaking in Hindi. But the next day, MPs cutting across party lines, condemned the Presi-

dent's heckling and regretted their unsavoury behavior. There was a positive fallout of this unparliamentary conduct. The Lok Sabha issued a reprimand to the concerned MP. Later, political parties resolved to treat the President's Address sacrosanct and agreed not to interrupt it.

The Rajya Sabha on 1 September 1997 adopted a resolution which inter alia stated, "That the prestige of the Parliament be preserved and enhanced, also by conscious and dignified conformity to the entire regime of Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business of the Houses and directions of the Presiding Officers relating to orderly conduct of business, more especially by maintaining the inviolability of the Question Hour, refraining from transgressing into the official areas of the House, or from any shouting of slogans."

The next serious disruption was recorded in 1998 when the Women Reservation Bill was introduced and MPs tore it. This was repeated when the Bill was again introduced in Rajya Sabha in 2010.

Perhaps for the first time, eight members entered the "Well" of Rajya Sabha during Question Hour on 3 March 2008, shouting slogans. The action was dropped after their Party leader expressed regrets. But, since December 5, 2013, parliamentary proceedings had been marred due to opposition MPs coming into the 'well' of the House with banners and slogans in gross violation of the rules of procedure and parliamentary etiquette. This became order of the day during UPA's time with BJP's leaders Sushma Swaraj in Lok Sabha and Arun Jaitley in Rajya Sabha redefining the 'democratic protest' in the House during 2009-2014.

Sushma Swaraj, then leader of opposition in the Lok Sabha, had announced that "not allowing Parliament to function is also a form of democracy, like any other form".

In an article in August 2012, Arun Jaitley, then leader of opposition in Rajya Sabha, too argued in favour of disruptions. He wrote: "If parliamentary accountability is subverted and a debate is intended to be used merely to put a lid on parliamentary accountability, it is then a legitimate tactic for the Opposition to expose the government through parliamentary instruments available at its command." According to Jaitley, disruption should not be described as preventing work from being done, because "what we are doing is very important work itself."

Now, the Congress and the BJP have changed roles. It was the turn of Jaitley to criticise the ruckus. As Union Finance Minister, he hit out at the Congress and other opposition parties, describing them as being "obstructionist" when he was unable to push through the NDA's key reforms like the insurance bill in Parliament. Similarly, the coal bill relating to the facilitation of auction of coal blocks also fell by the wayside because of disruption.

Forty percent of 15th Lok Sabha was lost in disruptions, mainly due to the 2G scam. And the session was described as the least productive when Congress led UPA was in power and BJP in opposition. After 2014,

**In an article in August 2012, Arun Jaitley, then leader of opposition in Rajya Sabha, too argued in favour of disruptions. He wrote: "If parliamentary accountability is subverted and a debate is intended to be used merely to put a lid on parliamentary accountability, it is then a legitimate tactic for the Opposition to expose the government through parliamentary instruments available at its command."**

the situation was reversed with BJP led NDA becoming the ruling coalition and the decimated Congress as opposition party, but the trend of disruption continued, albeit, assumed even higher proportions today.

One of the most disgusting behaviours was witnessed when Congress MP Pratap Singh Bajwa climbed on the table of the officers in Rajya Sabha to protest three Farm Laws. Tearing papers of the House and throwing these towards the Presiding Officers to blocking their view and keep shouting till adjournment was a daily scene of the second half of the budget session. None of them had regret, including Bajwa, over their behaviour, and quickly quoted Sushma Swaraj and Arun Jaitley to justify their rowdy conduct. But intriguingly, they keep calling it the "murder of democracy" within and outside India.

Congress which is spearheading these disruptions, is, in fact, oblivious to the "pain" Pt Jawaharlal Nehru suffered at the heckling of President Radhakrishnan. He had said that such disgusting incidents needed "to be met effectively or else the functioning of Parliament and State Assemblies would become difficult." It is not that in the past the Parliament did not witness harsh remarks, even from the great parliamentarians but there was a difference. Parliamentarians like Atal Behari Vajpayee, I K Advani, Somnath Chatterjee or even Indira Gandhi would next day make suitable amends and express regrets for the language they had used in the House. In that period of parliamentary history, there would be unmet instances to show members' faith in discipline, decorum, and dignity of the Parliament which represent the will of the people and constitute the fora of democracy. Its principal tasks relate to legislation and scrutiny of the executive.

The Congress leaders who do not get tired of talking of its glorious history, are advised to read and emulate what Pt. Nehru had said on such irresponsible conduct

of parliamentarians. At that time, the imprudent MPs had regretted their conduct but today, they take pride in this shameful behaviour and justify it. With backing of leadership, they scoff at the idea of apology - then why not, they are the followers of an iconic family whose shining star boasted, "Main Savarkar nehi, main Gandhi huon, Gandhi kisi se maafi nahi maangta." Has not he put his great grand nana and Dadi to shame, and sent a loud message to Congress cadre. Abusive language within and outside the Parliament and Assemblies has come to stay as an effective political tool to create narratives.

Another factor responsible for this conduct of the leaders in the temples of democracies is that in the sixties, the MPs had come to the House with toiling past some contributions in the freedom struggle and today, most of them have criminal background and hooliganism is their forte.

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was concerned with the issue of discipline and decorum in the Parliament. When the Constitution was being adopted, Ambedkar had said, "If we wish to maintain democracy... the first thing in my judgment is to hold fast to constitutional methods of achieving our social and economic objectives". Referring to "unconstitutional methods" to achieve the objectives, he called these as "the grammar of anarchy and the sooner they are abandoned, the better for us". He had cautioned that "going beyond scope of rules, procedures and constitutional methods would make us vulnerable to a harsh judgment by history as the authors of the Grammar of Anarchy". The prophetic words of Dr Ambedkar are proving proverbially correct today.

The Presiding Officers should also conduct themselves in an impartial manner which should appear to be so, and allow some space to the opposition respecting the voice of dissent. What is the harm in allowing Adjournment Motion, an extraordinary move to interrupt the normal business in Lok Sabha to draw the attention to a definite matter of urgent public importance. With a brute majority, Modi Govt had nothing to worry about. Instead, it would take away the punch out of the opposition and hopefully the House could run better.

The rules empower the Presiding Officers to 'discipline' the erring Members instead of being the mute spectators to the conversion of the 'Temple of Democracy' into 'Akhara of Dangal'. Time has come to use the whip and discipline them in the interest of democracy and the people.

Some suggest that the size of the 'well' should be reduced to bare minimum. But they forget that we have 'Hon'ble' members like Bajwa who would stand on the table of the staff. The time has come to amend business rules, if needed, to take stringent action like suspension for full session and in case of persistent inappropriate behaviour, disqualification. Soft options are not in the larger interest of Indian democracy.

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# Surat court rejects Rahul Gandhi's plea

HT News Network

New Delhi/Surat, Apr 20 (UNI) A Surat court on Thursday rejected Congress leader and former MP Rahul Gandhi's request to put on hold his conviction in a defamation case over his "Modi surname" remark.

Additional Session Judge Robin P. Mogera after hearing arguments said, "I hold that the Ld. Counsel for the appellant has failed in demonstrating that by not staying the conviction and denying an opportunity to contest the election on account of disqualification u/s. 8(3) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 an irreversible and irrevocable damage is likely to be caused to the Appellant.

The Hon'ble Apex Court has held in numbers of pronouncements that the powers accorded under section 389(1) of CrPC to suspend/stay the conviction is required to be exercised with caution and circumspection and if such power is exercised in a casual and mechanical manner, the same would have serious impact on the public perception on the justice delivery systems and such order will shake public confidence in judiciary.

Hence, I am of the opinion that the Appellant has not made out any case to suspend the conviction recorded against him."

The court said, "An application Exh.5 -preferred by Appellant Mr. Rahul



Gandhi u/s. 389 and 389(1) of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 for staying the conviction imposed by the judgment and order dated 23/3/2023 by the Ld. Chief Judicial Magistrate, Surat in Criminal Case No.18712/2019 is

hereby dismissed". The Surat Court granted bail to the Gandhi on April 3, for filing an appeal against his conviction order.

The court also issued notices to complainant Purnesh Modi and the State Government on the Congress leader's appeal for a stay on his conviction.

Additional Session Judge after hearing argument on behalf of Gandhi and Government Counsel reserved its

order for pronouncing on April 20. Rahul Gandhi, who was a Lok Sabha MP from Wayanad was disqualified after a trial court in Surat sentenced him to two years in jail on March 23 under sections 499 and 500 (defamation) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) in a case filed by Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) MLA Purnesh Modi.

Rahul Gandhi made a remark using the surname 'Modi' while addressing a campaign event ahead of the 2019 Lok Sabha elections in a rally and said, "How come all the thieves have Modi as the common surname?"

Under the Supreme Court ruling in 2013 any MP or MLA is automatically disqualified if convicted and sentenced to two years or more.

# Assam, Arunachal Sign Pact In Presence Of Amit Shah To Resolve Border Row

HT News Network

New Delhi: The Assam and the Arunachal Pradesh governments on Thursday signed an agreement in presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah here to resolve their decades old border disputes.

Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and his Arunachal Pradesh counterpart Pema Khandu signed the agreement.

Assam and Arunachal Pradesh share an 804.1-km-long border.

The two states have been in discussions to resolve the border dispute with Mr Sarma and Mr Khandu signing the Namsai Declaration on July 15 last year where they had pledged to find a solution soon.

Officials said the two states decided to resolve the dispute in 123 villages. Mr Shah termed the border agreement as a "historic" event and said it ended decades long disputes.

Mr Sarma said the deal is a "big and successful" moment.

Mr Khandu described the deal as "historic". Regional committees dealing with



specific areas were formed last year, comprising ministers, local MLAs, and officials from both sides to take the discussion forward.

Arunachal Pradesh, which was made a union territory in 1972, has been maintaining that several forested tracts in the plains traditionally belonged to hill tribal chiefs and communities and these were "unilaterally" transferred to Assam earlier.

After Arunachal Pradesh achieved statehood in 1987, a tripartite committee was appointed, which recommended that certain territories be transferred from Assam to Arunachal Pradesh.

Assam contested this and the matter was in the

Supreme Court for a long time. Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma and his Arunachal Pradesh counterpart Pema Khandu signed the agreement.

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## 'Will continue to avail all options...': Cong on Rahul defamation case

HT News Network

New Delhi, Apr 20 (UNI) The Congress on Thursday said it will continue to avail all the options available under the law in connection with the defamation case of its former party president Rahul Gandhi.

"We will continue to avail all options still available to us under the law," said Congress general secretary in-charge Communications Jairam Ramesh in an apparent reference to the former party chief defamation case. The statement of the Congress MP comes amid reports that a court in Gujarat's Surat dismissed Rahul Gandhi's plea seeking stay on his conviction in the defamation case. Last month, the Congress leader was convicted in a defamation case by Surat court for his alleged "all thieves have Modi surname" remarks at a rally in Karnataka's Kolar in 2019. The court had sentenced him to two years in jail. Later, he was disqualified from Lok Sabha as a member following his conviction by the court. The Congress had termed the judgement "erroneous".

## India records 12,591 fresh Covid cases

HT News Network

New Delhi, Apr 20 (UNI) India has recorded a slight jump in fresh Covid-19 cases with 12,591 in the last 24 hours as per Health Ministry on Thursday.

On Wednesday the total Covid-19 cases recorded in the country were 10,542. With this the active caseload stood at 65,286, which is 0.15 per cent of the total cases as per the Health Ministry. The death toll has risen to 531,230, with 29 new deaths reported in the last 24 hours in various parts of the country. As many as 10,827 patients recovered from the disease in the last 24 hours. The total number of people who have recuperated from the disease is 4.42 crore (4,42,61,476). The COVID-19 recovery rate stood at 98.67 per cent whereas the fatality rate was recorded at 1.18 per cent. Meanwhile, the daily positivity rate was recorded at 5.46 per cent while the weekly positivity rate was pegged at 5.32 per cent. The Ministry said, 574 vaccine doses of COVID have been administered during the last 24 hours under the nationwide vaccination drive.

## India numero uno in mobile data consumption in the world : Anurag Thakur

HT News Network

Chennai, Apr 20 (UNI) India was now ranked number one in mobile data consumption in the world, Union Minister for Youth Affairs & Sports and I & B Anurag Thakur said today. Delivering the 3rd convocation address of the Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD) at Sriperumbudur, about 40 km from here in which 877 candidates received their degrees, he highlighted India's remarkable growth in digital transformation. Stating that Digital India campaign was launched in 2015, he said now India consumes more than 12 times the mobile data consumed in 2015.

"India now ranks number one in mobile data consumption in the world. India ranks third globally in the startup ecosystem and has about 77,000 startups.

## Jaishankar speaks with Egyptian FM on Sudan situation

HT News Network

New Delhi, Apr 20 (UNI) External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on Thursday discussed the situation in Sudan with Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry over a phone call and said that he values his insights and helpful attitude.

In a tweet, he said: "Discussed the concerning situation in Sudan just now with Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry.

"Deeply value his assessments and insights, as also his very helpful attitude. Agreed to remain in close touch."

On Tuesday, EAM had spoken with his counterparts from Saudi Arabia and UAE with regard to the Sudan situation, and both had assured their practical support on the ground.

The situation in Sudan is very tense and India is coordinating closely with various countries to ensure the safety and security of Indian nationals in Sudan.

The Quartet countries of US, UK, Saudi Arabia and UAE have a key role and we are engaging them accordingly, said sources.



"Our Ambassador in Washington DC and High Commissioner in London are in touch with their respective host Governments. We are also working with UN, which has a substantial presence in Sudan," the sources added.

In New Delhi, the Ministry of External Affairs has set up a dedicated Control Room. The MEA is in continuous touch with the Embassy in Khartoum and is getting regular reports of the status of the Indian community.

The Embassy in turn is in touch with the Indian community and individuals through multiple methods including WhatsApp groups, the sources added.

## Vice President Cautions Of "Anti-India" Activities At Some Foreign Universities

HT News Network

New Delhi: Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Thursday said "Dangers are emanating from outfits", including some foreign universities doubling up as centres of subversive anti-India activities out to demolish the country's civilisation ethos and sully and muddy its growth.

He said disturbing insights in the hidden agenda of the so-called elites in India is alarming and unfortunately getting reflected in our constitutional institution working.

It is the responsibility of the Parliament to safeguard India's national sovereignty and cultural integrity, from any kinds of threats internally or externally, the vice president said.

"Our democracy, on path to unprecedented growth and glory, needs that its wings - the legislature, the judiciary and the executive - act in tandem and togetherness for smooth upward



flight journey. We all must ensure this," he said at the inauguration ceremony of two-day celebrations to mark the 16th Civil Services Day here.

These constitutional entities can ill afford to weaponise authority by effecting incursions in the domain of the other, he said, adding that the legislature, judiciary and executive serve best while functioning in their respective domain.

"Dangers are emanating from outfits, within and without, including some foreign universities doubling up as centres of sub-

## All Accused, Including BJP's Maya Kodnani, Acquitted In Gujarat Riots Case

HT News Network

Ahmedabad: Former Gujarat minister and BJP leader Maya Kodnani and the Bajrang Dal's Babu Bajrangji are among over 60 accused who have been acquitted in the Naroda Gam case during the 2002 Gujarat riots.

A special court in Ahmedabad gave its judgment today in the communal riots case in which 11 Muslims were killed when their homes were set on fire in Ahmedabad's Naroda Gam.

Home Minister Amit Shah appeared in court as a defence witness for Ms Kodnani in 2017. She was a minister in the Gujarat government headed by the then Chief Minister Narendra Modi in 2002, when the riots broke out following the burning of a coach of the Sabarmati Express in Gujarat's Godhra.

"All the accused have been acquitted. We are waiting for a copy of the judgement," the lawyer of those who have been acquitted told reporters outside the special court of SK Baxi today.

Ms Kodnani was also convicted in the Naroda Patiya riots case in which 97 people were massacred and was sentenced to 28 years. She was later discharged by the



Gujarat High Court. The massacre at Naroda Gam was one of the nine major 2002 communal riots cases investigated by a special team appointed by the Supreme Court and heard by special courts.

Over 80 people were named as accused in the Naroda Gam case; 18 died during trial.

The acquittal comes as a setback for the families of those who died in the Naroda Gam massacre.

The latest acquittal is likely to raise a big political storm, especially after 11 men convicted in the Bilkis Bano gang-rape case were given remission just before the Gujarat election last year in November. Seven members of her family, including her three-year-old daughter, were also murdered in the 2002 Gujarat riots.

## India conveys condolences over stampede in Sanaa, hopes for peace in Yemen

HT News Network

New Delhi, Apr 20 (UNI) India on Thursday conveyed its condolences to the government and people of Yemen over the stampede that led to the deaths of around 80 people in Sanaa, and also said it hopes for early establishment of peace, stability and security in Yemen.

Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson Arindam Bagchi, in a briefing, said:

"We would like to convey our deepest condolences to the government and people of Yemen on the sad incident in Sanaa, in which more than 78 people lost their lives. We hope and pray for the speedy recovery of the injured.

"This tragic incident comes at a time when there have been encouraging developments in the Yemen situation. In particular we welcome the release of nearly 1,000 prisoners by the parties to the conflict which has taken place over the last few days.

"India hopes for an early establishment of peace, stability and security, in Yemen."

On Wednesday evening, around 80 people were killed and dozens more suffered injuries during a stampede at an event to distribute financial aid in Yemen's capital.

The crush took place in the Old City in the centre of Sanaa when hundreds of poor people gathered at an event organised by merchants, according to the Houthi-run Interior Ministry.

The crowd apparently panicked by gunfire and an electrical explosion at an event to distribute financial aid during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, according to witnesses and officials from the Houthi rebel group which controls the city.

It was the deadliest incident in Yemen in years that was not related directly to the country's long-running civil war.

# 85 dead, hundreds injured in Yemen crush at Ramazan cash handout

HT News Network

At least 85 people were killed and hundreds injured in a crush at a Ramazan cash handout in Yemen early on Thursday, as the impoverished country suffered one of its worst tragedies just as optimism was growing over its bitter civil war.

Three people were detained over the incident in Sanaa — Yemen's rebel-held capital — after large crowds gathered at a school to receive gifts of 5,000 rials (about \$8) for the end of Ramazan.

Harrowing footage screened by the Iran-backed Houthi rebels' Al Masirah TV showed a tightly packed crowd screaming and shoving, unable to move, while others attempted to haul stricken people out of the crush.

Other shots showed dead bodies on the ground as the panic continued. Afterwards, piles of abandoned sandals, clothing and a crutch littered the scene, while an investigator in white protective gear collected evidence.

At least "85 were killed and more than 322 were injured", a Houthi security official told AFP on condition of anonymity, adding that around 50 were in serious



condition. "Women and children were among the dead," the official said. A health official confirmed the toll.

The incident comes just ahead of Eid al-Fitr and punctures a buoyant mood over the war in the Arabian Peninsula's poorest country, following peace talks and an exchange of nearly 1,000 prisoners last week.

The Houthis, who seized Sanaa in 2014, are fighting a military coalition led by Saudi Arabia that

intervened in March 2015 in an attempt to reinstall the ousted government. Hundreds of thousands of people have been killed by the war's direct or indirect causes, and millions pushed to the brink of famine. But momentum is growing for a truce and peace process, with the Saudis and Houthis holding talks last week. "People flocked in a huge way," eyewitnesses said, gunfire sparked a stampede after crowds gathered at the school, in Sanaa's

historic Bab Al-Yemen district, to receive the handouts from a businessman. AFP could not verify the reports of gunfire.

The head of the Houthi's Supreme Revolutionary Committee, Mohamed Ali al-Houthi, blamed "overcrowding", saying that people were packed in a narrow street leading to the school's back entrance. Once the gates opened, the crowd streamed into a tight staircase leading to the courtyard where the distribution

was taking place.

"Citizens were informed a week ago that sums of money would be disbursed without ID verification," said one witness.

"People flocked in a huge way, the gate opened, and with the large numbers, the stampede happened."

The Houthis' political chief Mahdi al-Mashat said a committee had been formed to investigate, and a Houthi security official said three people had been detained on suspicion of involvement. After the stampede, families converged on hospitals but many were not allowed to enter as senior officials were also visiting the dead and wounded.

An AFP correspondent in Sanaa saw large crowds outside one hospital entrance.

At the school, heavily deployed security forces were seen blocking relatives from entering the facility to locate family members.

Footage from one hospital showed dazed and bandaged survivors recovering in a ward, some with visible wounds on their limbs and heads. Yemen is no stranger to tragedy, most stemming from its brutal war. In 2016, a coalition airstrike killed more than 140 people attending a funeral.

## Child abuse suspects being pursued in Pakistan: UK police

HT News Network

LONDON: The Greater Manchester Police (GMP) chief on Wednesday said police were "actively pursuing" child sexual exploitation suspects in Pakistan so that they can be extradited to the United Kingdom to face criminal charges.

Chief Constable Stephen Watson on a radio show confirmed that GMP were "seeking to bring suspects in from Pakistan" but did not share details on suspects or cases due to judicial processes.

Without sharing names or timelines, Mr Watson said the pursuit was for "more than one" suspect and hinted that an announcement on the issue would be made shortly.

He said, "The reality is, we will hunt down people who commit these offences. We will hunt people down." The crime that took place in the past "doesn't stay in the past", he added.

His comments come in the aftermath of controversial comments made by Home Secretary Suella Braverman, who came under fire when she said child sexual offenders are predominantly British-Pakistani men whose cultural values are at odds with British values.

Ms Braverman made the statement while referring to the sex grooming scandal that occurred in Rotherham, which was rocked by a child sexual exploitation scandal in which five British-Pakistani men were convicted of grooming, raping and exploiting young girls.

## Focus on reproductive rights, not population numbers: UN

HT News Network

GENEVA: Rather than fixating on the impact of the world's soaring population, the world should look at women's reproductive rights to shore up "demographic resilience," the UN said on Wednesday.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) — the UN's sexual and reproductive health agency — acknowledged there was widespread anxiety over the size of the world's population, which is expected to peak at around 10.4 billion during the 2080s.

But the UNFPA said, the focus should be on giving women more power to control when and how they have children.

"The question is: 'Can everyone exercise their fundamental human right to choose the number and spacing of their children?' Sadly, the answer is a resounding no," said UNFPA chief Natalia Kanem.

She said that "44 per cent, almost half of women, are unable to exercise bodily autonomy. Unable to make choices about contraception, healthcare and whether or with whom to have sex. And globally, nearly half of all pregnancies are unintended."

She said countries with the highest fertility rates contribute the least to global warming and suffer the most from its impact.

## Panda on loan from China dies in Thailand aged 21

HT News Network

BANGKOK: A giant panda on loan from China to Thailand who captivated animal lovers through a 24-hour live broadcast of her antics died on Wednesday aged 21, said the zoo where she was housed.

Lin Hui was the last of three pandas in Thailand and had lived in an air-conditioned enclosure at Chiang Mai Zoo since 2003, but was due to return to China in October.

The notoriously sex-shy bear and her mate Chuang Chuang — who died of a heart attack in 2019 — were part of Beijing's so-called "panda diplomacy" programme.

Zoo director Wutthichai Muangman said Lin Hui suffered a nosebleed on Tuesday and was in a critical condition by the evening, before dying in the early hours of Wednesday.

"We helped her as much as we could until Lin Hui left us," Wutthichai told reporters.

Dejboon Maprasert, chairman of the Zoological Park Organisation of Thailand, said Chinese and Thai experts would jointly conduct an autopsy.

For years Lin Hui and Chuang Chuang struggled to conceive, following artificial insemination, Lin Hui finally gave birth to Lin Ping in 2009, sparking panda mania in Thailand.

## 155,000 Canadian public workers go on strike

HT News Network

OTTAWA: About 155,000 federal workers in Canada walked off the job on Wednesday after failing to reach a deal for higher wages and work-from-home guarantees, a strike that affects a range of public services from tax returns to passport renewals.

The Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) union said contract negotiations would continue, and Prime Minister Justin Trudeau stressed the urgency of resolving the dispute.

"Let's make sure that while this is going on, we are at the negotiating table," Trudeau told reporters. "I know that Canadians will not be terribly patient if it continues too long."

Striking workers picketed and waved union flags in front of Trudeau's office in Ottawa, one of 250 picket lines across the country.

## UN to consider 'baby steps' towards recognising Taliban

HT News Network

UNITED NATIONS: The United Nations is ready to take 'baby steps' towards recognising the Taliban as it considers options to persuade Afghanistan's de facto rulers to soften their attitude towards women.

For reviewing the option, and its repercussions, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres will host a meeting of special envoys for Afghanistan from around the world in Doha on May 1.

UN Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed told an audience at the Princeton School of Public and International Affairs (SPIA) this week that the Taliban's desire for recognition provides an opportunity for engaging it on various issues.

"We'll gather them now in another two weeks in the region, (at a) meeting of envoys across the board — the region and internationally — with the secretary-general for the first time," she said. "And out of that, we hope that we will find those baby steps to put us back on the pathway to recognition."

Secretary general to host meeting of special envoys in Doha on May 1; spox dispels impression of 'leaving' Afghanistan. She added: "Is it possible? Don't know." Her comments, however, surprised the interviewer, SPIA's dean Jamal Amaney. "Recognition of?" she asked. "Of the Taliban. A principled recognition. In other words, there are conditions I mean," Ms Mohammed replied. "Quid pro quo?" Ms Amaney asked. "Let's see, let's see what that does."



Because that discussion has to happen," Ms Mohammed replied.

The deputy secretary general noted that there were some in the international community who "believe this can never happen. There are others that say, well, it has to happen".

Asked if the Taliban regime was seeking recognition, Ms Mohammed said: "Yes. The Taliban clearly want recognition. And that's the leverage we have" for persuading them to change their attitude towards women and on other issues.

Ms Mohammed did not give a specific date for the meeting but Zalmay Khalilzad, the former US special envoy for Afghanistan who negotiated the US-Taliban deal, said the meeting will be held in Doha on May 1. In a series of tweets, he recommended four measures for the meeting to consider, which include "full implementation" of the agreement he negotiated. "The agreement has not been fully implemented, and no alternative has comparable broad support,"

## Foreign players lurk as Sudan generals battle it out

HT News Network

KHARTOUM: Sudan has degenerated into a battleground for two rival generals, but they are backed by complex webs of international alliances with conflicting interests that could imperil the country's future, analysts say. Missiles, air strikes and gunfire have been ceaseless in Khartoum since April 15 as army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan wages war with his former deputy Mohamed Hamdan Daglo, who leads the powerful Rapid Support Forces (RSF) paramilitary group.

Amid international calls for an end to hostilities, thousands of residents fled Sudan's capital on Wednesday as fighting between the army and paramilitaries raged for a fifth day after a 24-hour truce collapsed. Japan has begun necessary preparations to evacuate its countrymen from Sudan, Berlin aborted an evacuation attempt, according to German weekly Der Spiegel, after three military transport planes were made to turn back. Other nations urged their citizens in Sudan to provide their names and contact details to their embassies, with the US embassy in Khartoum urging Americans to remain indoors and stay away from windows.

Thousands flee Khartoum as fighting rages; nations scramble to evacuate citizens

Around 200 have been killed and 1,800 injured, according to the UN, in the fighting between the one-time partners and authors of a 2021 coup. With a long history of coups, the impoverished north African nation



enjoys a strategic location and has long been courted for its natural resources.

Gulf states to 'pick winning side'

Abu Dhabi's approach to the current conflict is best described as "pragmatism, pushed to the level of cynical indifference", a specialist told AFP on condition of anonymity. "If the war drags out, it's not necessarily a bad thing from either a Russian or an Emirati perspective. It lets the UAE keep its influence, which it couldn't do with a conventional power structure," he added.

Like its fellow Gulf heavyweight Saudi Arabia, the UAE is unlikely to antagonise either general, both of whom have served Gulf interests in the past.

"Both Burhan and Hemeti fought the Huthis" as part of the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen in 2015, and Riyadh offers "no real advantage for either" general, said Eric Reeves, a fellow at the Rift Valley Institute.

"Gulf states... will pick a winning side, but wait until victory is clear," he added. European support

## Shift In Global Governance Needed To Tackle Climate Crisis: UN Report

HT News Network

New York: There needs to be a major shift in global governance to better tackle such current and looming challenges as the climate crisis and rising security threats, according to a new UN report.

Launched by the UN's High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism, A Breakthrough for People and Planet: Effective and Inclusive Global Governance for Today and the Future, outlines an ambitious plan to overhaul the global architecture.

Co-chaired by former President of Liberia, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, and former Prime Minister of Sweden, Stefan Lofven, the Advisory Board was appointed by the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in 2022, tasked with advising Member States on issues of key global concern where better governance could make a difference. "Future generations will judge us



by the decisions we take today," Mr Lofven said.

"Multilateralism can work, but it must work better and faster," he added. "Our people-centred recommendations aim to strengthen international cooperation and support an accelerated implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement (on climate change)."

Johnson Sirleaf agreed, "I am confident that the report provides the framework that the UN, Member States, and others need to strengthen

international cooperation for current and future generations," she said, noting that the report stemmed from a year-long engagement with hundreds of networks, organizations, and civil society groups committed to addressing global challenges.

"The solutions they shared will help current and future generations to avoid the catastrophic implications of our current trajectory and secure a more sustainable, just and peaceful world for people and planet," she said.

The recommendations include strengthening the global architecture for peace, security, and finance, delivering just transitions for climate and digitalization, and ensuring more equity and fairness in global decision-making. The report also argues that gender equality needs to be at the heart of a reinvigorated multilateral system along with recommendations to ensure that system becomes more networked, more inclusive, and more effective.

## Nigerian Man Builds Remote-Controlled Aircraft From Trash

HT News Network

Lagos: Bolaji Fatai has never set foot in an airplane, but that hasn't stopped him from building his own remote-controlled model aircraft from trash and sending it soaring over the sprawl and chaos of Lagos, Nigeria's commercial capital.

On a recent cloudy day, the single-propeller plane withstood cross-winds high above a sandy football field and swooped low over the heads of onlookers in Oworonshoki, the poor neighbourhood where Fatai lives in the east of the city.

The body, wings, tail and fin are constructed from recycled styrofoam gathered from dump sites.

He bought the propeller and remote control in a shop, but constructed the body, wings, tail and fin from pieces of recycled styrofoam gathered in dump sites and held together with sticky tape. The wingspan is about one metre.

"I started this when I was seven. I started picking things around, making some little projects," the 21-year-old said.

"Whenever I see an airplane flying, it gives me a very overwhelming joy," Mr Fatai's labour of love is now propelling his dreams: a tech company gave him an internship after he was spotted piloting the plane -- an important first step towards his goal of becoming an aeronautical engineer.

"As our country is an under-developing country, so I hope to be a part of the people that will develop the country using this, my drone technology," he said.

# District Admn Ganderbal organises Block Diwas at Wakura

HT News Network

GANDERBAL, APRIL 20: District Administration Ganderbal today conducted weekly Block Diwas at Govt Higher Secondary Wakura for block Wakura.

The Block Diwas was chaired by Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Ganderbal, Mush-taq Ahmad Simmani.

The camp was attended by PRI members of block Wakura and prominent citizens of adjoining areas who highlighted the issues and demands pertaining to their areas.

The demands highlighted included

augmentation of power and water supply, development of roads, dredging of irrigation canals and other issues of public importance.

The ADDC listened to all of the issues raised by the public and PRIs and assured that demands raised will be taken up with the concerned departments for prompt redressal.

He passed necessary directions to the officers for ensuring timely redressal of the genuine concerns and several issues were redressed on spot.

While interacting with the PRIs, the ADDC urged them to work in close coordination with the line departments to ensure their timely completion of works.



The programme was attended by CPO, Irfan Giri; ACD, Dr. Bashir Ahmad; ACP, Tehsildar Wakura, BDO Wakura besides other district and sectoral officers. The Block Diwas was chaired

by Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Ganderbal, Mush-taq Ahmad Simmani.

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# ADC Kupwara Chairs HADP meet, discusses measures for conduct of successful baseline survey, awareness

HT News Network

KUPWARA, APRIL 20: To discuss the measures for awareness for farmers and conduct of successful baseline Survey of Farmers regarding Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP), ADC Kupwara, Gh. Nabi Bhat today chaired a meeting of concerned officers at the Mini-meeting hall of the DC Office Complex here.

At the outset, the concerned officers apprised regarding the arrangements put in place for the successful conduct of farmer's orientation programme under the HADP in the district.

The ADC Kupwara stressed upon the Sectoral Officers of Agriculture and allied departments to give the programme wide publicity using social media apps and other tools of communication so that mass participation of the farming community can be assured.

It was apprised in the meeting that the Sheep Husbandry Department in Kupwara district which is nodal department in collaboration with other Agriculture and allied departments is going to conduct Farmers Orientation programme under Holistic Agriculture Development Programme (HADP) in all 24 CD blocks of the district. It was said that the pro-



gramme is commencing from 24th April and will cover all panchayats of the district.

It was further said 133 Panchayat Ghars in Kupwara district have been identified as orientation spots to cover all the panchayats across the district.

The orientation programme shall be conducted

by the Resource Persons including Gazetted officers and Supervisory Staff of the Agriculture and allied departments who shall record and collect the basic data and feedback from the farmers.

The programme shall cover 45 projects conceived under HADP programme in which Audio visual aids

will be put into use for effective orientation and awareness. For proper monitoring and supervision of the programme, each district officer of Agriculture and allied department shall look after 3 CD blocks.

Booklets shall be provided to unemployed educated youth for mass awareness. ADC Kupwara also asked the concerned to raise awareness among the farmers about modern tools and techniques that have been incorporated in HADP to overcome the prevailing constraints and use different extension methods to motivate the farming community in adoption of proposed interventions in the approved projects.

Meanwhile, the ADC assured all possible help from District Administration for the successful implementation of the programme in the district to uplift the livelihood of the farming community.

With regard to the collection of baseline survey for the holistic programme the ADC Kupwara said that while conducting the baseline survey accurate and first hand information should be collected and besides information regarding landholding of farmers should also be recorded.

ADC Kupwara also directed the concerned staff and filed functionaries to keep themselves updated and additional knowledge.

# Dar-ul-Khair Mirwaiz Manzil distributes relief among Hazratbal fire-hit families

HT News Network

Srinagar, Apr 20: Dar-ul-Khair Mirwaiz Manzil while expressing grief over the damage to six residential houses and several shops in a recent fire incident at a complex outside Kashmir University in Hazratbal, expressed heartfelt sympathy and solidarity with the victims on behalf of its patron Mirwaiz-e-Kashmir Dr Moulvi Muhammad Umar Farooq and emphasised the need for immediate rehabilitation of the victims.

A delegation of Dar-ul-Khair Mirwaiz Manzil, under the leadership of its member Mufti Ghulam Rasool Samoon, went to the Asar Colony and presented rice, flour, blankets, kitchen kit and other basic necessities to the victims of the Asar Sharif Welfare Committee, and expressed sympathy and solidarity with them.

The Millat-e-Kashmir is aware of the fact that Dar-ul-Khair Mirwaiz Manzil since its inception has been providing financial and material support to the people in need during the calamities without discrimination of caste, creed and religion, and is engaged in the rehabilitation of the victims as much as possible. As such, it has reiterated its appeal to the affluent people to continue supporting this welfare organisation so that it continues with its work of providing help to the needy and affected people.

# Police observes Thana Diwas in Kulgam

Farooq Rather



KULGAM, April 20: As a part of public outreach programme and an initiative by Government of J&K, Police have observed Thana Diwas meetings at Police Station Yaripora, Police Station Manzgam, Police Station Devsar, Police Station Kund and Police Station Behibagh.

These Thana Divas meetings were chaired by respective jurisdictional Police officers and were attended by the respectable citizens of surrounding areas of Yaripora, Kanchloo, Kraloo, Kund, Palnoo, Matipora, Behibagh, Manzgam, Pahlloo, Devsar including respectable members of Auqaf Committees, Numberdars, Chowkidars and Traders Federation. During the meetings, participants highlighted various issues of public importance. They were assured that their genuine grievances pertaining to Police will be resolved on priority and that of civil administration will be taken up with the concerned departments for their early redressal. While speaking on the occasion,

# District Admn Pulwama tightens noose around erring traders, imposes fine

HT News Network

Pulwama, APRIL 20: Acting tough against delinquent and erring business establishments, traders & dealers, the Executive Magistrates and the market checking squads of FCS&CA Pulwama today carried out an extensive market checking drive throughout the length and breadth of the district, imposing strictly the directions of Worthy District Magistrate Pulwama regarding rates and quality.

The aim of holding extensive market checking was to regulate price line and quality control of essential commodities in the markets of Pulwama district during these holy days.

A team of revenue officials and MC Pulwama headed by Naib Tehsildar Pulwama carried out a market checking in order to foil any bid of overpricing and to ensure smooth regulation of traffic.



Similarly, market checking was conducted by the officials of MC Khrew and a fine of Rs 1700 was charged against adulteration and overpricing from various shopkeepers.

While interacting with the shopkeepers, the team members asked them to display rate lists at prominent places and adhere to the rates approved, keep

ing, and adulteration especially during these holy days.

He, however, appealed to the general public to cooperate with the Department and come forward wherever any instance of wrongdoing is found. Public has a greater role to play in checking violations at trade and other public places, DM added.

The violator traders were warned of more stern action against them in case they continue doing violations.

Further, the shopkeepers were advised to display the rate list on the conspicuous place of their shops and restrain from overcharging and in case of failure, action as warranted under relevant law shall be taken against the erring traders.

District Magistrate Pulwama Baseer-Ul-Haq Choudhary earlier said that no one will be allowed to resort to overcharging, black marketing, profiteer-

# Eid-ul-Fitr: Joint team of JMC, SHD conduct inspection of Mutton, Chicken Shops in Jammu City

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 20: Joint team of JMC and Sheep Husbandry Department today conducted surprise inspection of Mutton and Poultry Shops here in different parts of Jammu city to ensure availability of wholesome, good quality mutton and mutton byproducts to the consumers on the auspicious occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr.

The Corporation stated that on the directions of Commissioner, JMC, Rahul Yadav, a joint team of Jammu Municipal Corporation and Doctors deputed by Sheep Husbandry Department, under the supervision

Officer Dr. Sushil Kumar Sharma, conducted a surprise inspection drive on the eve of Eid-ul-Fitr 2023 in different areas of Jammu City to ensure the sale of wholesome, good quality mutton and its byproducts to the consumers. The surprise drive was conducted in Talab Tillo, Bohri, Muthi, Bantalab, Paloura, Janipur, Amphalla, CPO Chowk, Narwal, Gandhi Nagar, Gangyal, Satwari etc.

During the drive, mutton shops, chicken shops & fishmongers were inspected and about 20 Kg of substandard meat was seized and later on disposed of properly. A fine to the tune of Rs 21,500 was recovered from the mutton sellers for sell-



ing unstamped, unhygienic & substandard stuff.

Notices have also been served to the mutton shop owners to install the black

colour glasses in front of their shops and restrain the open display of mutton/chicken. The owners were also instructed to keep

separate bins to collect the daily waste generated on account of refused/inedible mutton & chicken parts for further proper disposal through JMC vehicles.

Municipal Veterinary Officer, Jammu Municipal Corporation also sensitize all the shopkeepers dealing with meat/chicken products to maintain hygienic environment in and around their shops and adhere with the various provisions of Food Safety Act, 2006, Municipal Corporation Act, 2000 and other directions & guidelines issued by the JMC from time to time so that good quality hygienic meat shall reach to the consumers. During the drive, mutton shops, chicken

shops & fishmongers were inspected and about 20 Kg of substandard meat was seized and later on disposed of properly. A fine to the tune of Rs 21,500 was recovered from the mutton sellers for selling unstamped, unhygienic & substandard stuff.

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# ECI extends date for filling claims, objections

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 20: The Election Commission of India has extended the date for filing claims and objections in connection with Special Summary Revision of Photo Electoral Rolls up to 6th of May 2023.

According to a communiqué issued here today by the office of Chief Electoral Officer, J&K, the eligible persons can now file their applications for inclusion, deletion and correction/shifting of their names in the electoral rolls on form number 6, 7 and 8 respectively as the case may be, upto 6th of May 2023.

# DFCO team conducts intensive market checking in Doda Town

HT News Network

DODA, APRIL 20: Team of Food Safety (DFCO) today conducted an intensive market checking in Doda Township and adjoining areas.

The team tested 25 samples on the spot using MFTV. This was done on the directions of Commissioner FDA J&K, with the able support of District Administration Doda. The team checked the quality and safety of different food items, including mutton, chicken, bakery, milk and milk products, vegetables, sweets and essential commodities for consumer safety and public health.

During the market inspection, the MFTV was used to conduct on the spot test of 25 samples, including milk (7), spices (4), edible oil (3), and sweets (10).

The team warned FBOs not to violate the FSS Act, as it is against public health. Violators will be fined under Section 69 of the Act.

# DIPR Cultural Unit presents cultural program at GPS Pacca Talab

HT News Network

JAMMU, APRIL 20: A cultural program was today organised by the Cultural Unit of the Department of Information and Public Relations on the theme Nasha Mukta Bharat at Government Primary School Pacca Talab Bahu Fort Jammu.

Artists of Cultural Wing Information Department Jammu, Vijay Anand, Surjeet Singh, Balbir Singh, Bunty Kumar, Kamal Kumar and Mukesh Kumar participated in the event and presented Folk songs, patriotic songs and theme based songs. Students of the school and teachers also presented a colourful cultural program,

While speaking on the occasion Incharge Headmaster of the school Subhash Chander shared his views on the topic and also lauded Cultural Unit of Department of Information and Public Relations for organizing the program to aware the future of the nation.

Among others, staff members of the school, officials of the Information Department and a large number of audience witnessed the program.

# Skin Cancer: Vaccine May Help Prevent it From Returning

A new report from Moderna and Merck found that a personalized mRNA vaccine in combination with an immunotherapy drug helped reduce the recurrence of melanoma.

The drug-vaccine combination reduced the risk of death or recurrence of melanoma, the most deadly type of skin cancer, by 44% compared with Merck's immunotherapy Keytruda alone.

The vaccine is still being tested and Merck said they expect to start a Phase 3 trial soon.

This week scientists have announced we may be one step closer to getting a vaccine that can help prevent skin cancer.

A clinical trial looking at the combination of a personalized mRNA cancer vaccine from Moderna and Merck's immunotherapy drug Keytruda reportedly showed that this treatment can work to help prevent a recurrence of skin cancer.

Keytruda, a type of immunotherapy called an immune checkpoint inhibitor, is now approved for more than a dozen types of cancer treatments.

New vaccine along with drugs drastically reduced skin cancer recurrence

The drug-vaccine combination reduced the risk of death or recurrence of melanoma, the most deadly type of skin cancer, by 44% compared with Merck's immunotherapy Keytruda alone, according to Merck.

In a press statement, Dr. Kyle Holen, MD, Moderna's Senior Vice President and Head of Development, Therapeutics and Oncology, said, "The profound observed reduction in the risk of recurrence-free survival suggests this combination may be a novel means of potentially extending the lives of patients with high-risk melanoma."

He added that the company will move to the Phase 3 melanoma trial soon and will



also expand testing to lung cancer and beyond.

Vaccine can rev up the immune system. This neoantigen cancer vaccine is designed based on an analysis of a patient's tumors after surgical removal. The vaccines are designed to rev up the immune response to recognize and attack specific mutations in cancer cells.

While the mRNA cancer vaccine is still considered experimental, for those who enrolled in the trial, it could be precisely what they've been hoping for.

Dr. Michelle Brown, executive director, oncology at Moderna, told Healthline that this is just the beginning of something that is potentially game-changing.

"When I think of the history of vaccines and immunotherapies and look at where we are now, it is clinically significant. But we are standing on the shoulders of immu-

nology pioneers that allowed us to integrate technologies to generate this personalized therapy," Brown said.

She added that when she thinks of the inflection points in cancer treatment development, a few come to mind.

"First came chemotherapy, which was very untargeted but it changed treatment," she said. "Then we had the movement toward personalized, targeted options and molecular pathways. Then we lived through the immune inhibitors and the harnessing of the immune system. And now we are in the fourth frontier which is the neoantigen individual approach."

Vaccine could be a "game changer" Dr. Hubert Greenway, from Scripps Clinic in San Diego, has performed more than 41,000 surgeries for people with skin cancer and has trained 65 fellows, while also leading an annual melanoma conference for

more than 30 years.

"I believe we're going to look back at this trial as an absolute game changer," Greenway told Healthline. "Not just for this subset of melanoma patients, but also because the success of this mRNA approach also opens the door for vaccine trials for other cancers."

Dr. Greg Daniels, MD, PhD, a medical oncologist and professor of medicine at UC San Diego who was not a part of this trial, has been working in the field of immunology for 20 years.

He, too, believes this is the beginning of something new and big.

"Yes, this does take it to another step," he said. "I would explain this by simply saying that you have a lot of horses with the vaccine. You lead them to the water, and Keytruda enables them to drink."

Are more vaccines to prevent cancer on the way?

Moderna's Brown said that virtually everyone working in this field hopes to see this technology expand to many other cancer types.

"We're hopeful about what is to come in other types of cancer," said Brown. "We hope that these treatments will give people longer remissions, positive experiences."

Brown said one issue that she wants to address is the fact that it takes about six weeks to manufacture these products — from tumor blood collection to the sequencing, selection and manufacturing.

"It takes time. We are looking at how we can address these things. We are excited about the potential here but we want to make sure the experience is a good one for patients," she said.

Several other companies are working to leverage these technologies. These include BioNTech and Gritstone Bio Inc.

## NEWS

### IUST organizes Drug De-addiction Programme under Nasha Mukth Bharat Abhiyan

Awantipora, : IUST's Alamdard Memorial College of Nursing and Medical Technology, charar-i-sharif, in collaboration with Drug De-addiction centre SMHS Srinagar organised an awareness programme under Nasha Mukth Bharat. The programme was conducted in the premises of Government Drug De-addiction Centre SMHS Srinagar and was attended by the inpatients, outpatients, hospital visitors, hospital staff and nursing students of Alamdard College. Addressing the gathering, Principal Nursing colleges, IUST Dr Asmat Parveen talked about the menace of drug addiction and the need for societal intervention to eradicate this menace. She highlighted the extent of the problem and said that if the society does not awake to the problem, a serious human catastrophe is awaiting us. She quoted statistics and said most of the drug abusers are in the age group of 17-33 years, which portends very ill for the community. She further said that the main objective of organizing such awareness programmes is to reach out to masses and spread awareness about the impact of drug abuse on the individuals as well as on the society.

Teaching faculty AMCONMT, including Mr Tabashir Bashir and Mr Sayed Shahid also talked about the magnitude of the problem and the need to sensitise the people about the bad effects of drug addiction. Students also spoke on various modes of drug addiction, causes, consequences and preventive measures and rehabilitation. The hospital administration appreciated the efforts of College in spreading awareness against drug abuse and congratulated the students for leading the campaign.

### Exercise improves brain health with chemical signals: Study



Washington: Physical activity is frequently mentioned as a way to improve both physical and mental health. Researchers at the Beckman Institute for Advanced Science and Technology discovered that it may also directly improve brain health. They investigated how the chemical signals released by muscles during exercise promote neuronal development in the brain. When muscles contract during exercise, like a bicep working to lift a heavy weight, they release a variety of compounds into the bloodstream. These compounds can travel to different parts of the body, including the brain. The researchers were particularly interested in how exercise could benefit a particular part of the brain called the hippocampus. "The hippocampus is a crucial area for learning and memory, and therefore cognitive health," said Ki Yun Lee, a Ph.D. student in mechanical science and engineering at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and the study's lead author. Understanding how exercise benefits the hippocampus could therefore lead to exercise-based treatments for a variety of conditions including Alzheimer's disease.

To isolate the chemicals released by contracting muscles and test them on hippocampal neurons, the researchers collected small muscle cell samples from mice and grew them in cell culture dishes in the lab.

## Study Finds Fish Linked to Skin Cancer Risk, But You Don't Need To Give Up on Seafood

Higher consumption of tuna and other non-fried fish has been linked to an increased risk of melanoma, but more research is needed.

Experts say you don't need to stop eating fish.

Instead, they suspect eating fish lower in toxins might be best.

Greater consumption of tuna and other non-fried fish was associated with an increased risk of melanoma, the most serious type of skin cancer, according to a new study.

Researchers suspect this link may be due to toxins rather than the fish itself.

"We speculate that our findings could possibly be attributed to contaminants in fish, such as polychlorinated biphenyls, dioxins, arsenic and mercury," study author Eunyoung Cho, ScD, an associate professor of dermatology and epidemiology at Brown University, said in a news release.

However, the researchers caution against making any changes to your fish consumption, saying more research is needed to better understand the link seen in the study.

The study was published June 9 in the journal Cancer Causes & Control.

Certain fish linked to higher melanoma risk

Although melanoma accounts for only a small fraction of skin cancers, it causes the vast majority of skin cancer deaths, according to the American Cancer Society Trusted Source (ACS).

The see if there was a link between melanoma risk and fish consumption, the authors of the new paper analyzed data from over 490,000 adults who took part in the National Cancer Institute's NIH-AARP Diet and Health Study between 1995 and 1996.

Participants reported how often and how much fish they ate, including fried fish, non-fried fish



such as flounder and cod, and canned tuna. Researchers obtained data from cancer registries to determine how many participants developed melanoma over the next 13 to 16 years. They also tried to consider other factors that might affect a person's risk of melanoma, such as body mass index, physical activity level, smoking, family history of cancer, alcohol and calorie intake, and

participants' average local ultraviolet (UV) radiation levels. Researchers found that people who ate the highest amount of fish per day on average (42.8 grams) had a 22 percent higher risk of malignant melanoma compared to those with the lowest average daily intake (3.2 grams). They also had a 28 percent higher risk of developing abnormal cells only in the outer layer of the skin;

this is known as melanoma in situ. A serving size of cooked fish-Trust Source is approximately 85 grams, although this varies based on your weight. A standard can of tuna is 142 grams.

In addition, people in the study who ate 14.2 grams of tuna per day on average had a 20 percent higher risk of malignant melanoma and a 17 percent higher risk of melanoma in situ compared to those who ate 0.3 grams per day on average.

For those who ate an average of 17.8 grams per day of non-fried fish, the risk of malignant melanoma was 18 percent higher than those who ate 0.3 grams per day. Their risk of in situ melanoma was also 25 percent higher.

Researchers found no link between fried fish consumption and the risk of either types of melanoma. However, even people who ate the most fried fish had, on average, only 7.1 grams per day.

## Dementia: This Memory Test Can Predict Who's at Risk of Cognitive Decline

A recent study finds that a simple memory test may help predict people's risk of cognitive decline.

Memory recall tests have been used for decades and impaired performance on these tests has been linked to mild cognitive impairment and dementia.

Early detection of cognitive impairment, especially with Alzheimer's disease, can help people combat long-term memory issues.

A simple memory test may be able to predict future cognitive decline in people with no current memory or thinking problems, new research shows.

The study, published in Neurology, the medical journal of the American Academy of Neurology, on Wednesday, found that people's performance during the memory test — known as the Stages of Objective Memory Impairment (SOMI) system — could expose subtle signs of early cognitive impairment that are indicative of future

memory issues.

Memory recall tests have been used for decades and impaired performance on these tests has been linked to mild cognitive impairment and dementia, says Dr. Irina Sklyar-Scott, a cognitive and behavioral neurologist at a Stanford Health Care and clinical assistant professor at Stanford University.

Given the study's findings, future prevention-focused Alzheimer's disease drug trials could selectively screen for high-risk individuals with high SOMI scores.

Those at risk could also be counseled to adopt interventions, like medications and healthy lifestyle modifications, to combat further decline.

"The SOMI system, which subcategorizes participants based on their performance on this test, is a validated staging approach for impaired memory and has been previously shown to map memory performance to clinical outcomes and to biomarker tests that look for hallmarks of



Alzheimer's disease," Sklyar-Scott, who was not part of the research, told Healthline.

Subtle memory issues may predict later decline

The researchers recruited 969 people, with an average age of 69, who had normal cognition at the start of the study.

All participants completed a simple

memory test that asked them to identify and recall items belonging to various categories.

Participants were shown four cards and asked to identify the pictured items (for example, a grape) along with the category the item was in (i.e. fruit).

They were then asked to recall the items, which helped the researchers gauge each person's ability to remem-

ber and retrieve information.

Those who forgot any items were given category clues to see if it jogged their memory — a step that evaluated memory storage.

The participants were split up into five groups that were based on their test scores and were tracked for up to 10 years.

Researchers found 47% of the group were in stage zero, which marked no memory problems.

Another 35% were in stage one and 13% were in stage two, which meant they experienced some difficulty remembering information, and based on prediction models, may develop dementia within five to eight years.

Finally, 5% of the group were in stages three and four, meaning they had trouble recalling all of the items, even when hints were given.

Stage three and four are believed to precede dementia by one to three years.

Out of the entire group, 234 people,

or 24%, developed cognitive decline by the end of the study period.

Compared to the stage zero group, those in stages one and two were twice as likely to develop impairment.

The participants in groups three and four were three times as likely to have cognitive impairment.

Based on their calculations, the researchers estimated that 72% of people in stage three and four, 57% in stage two, and 21% in stage one would develop cognitive impairment after 10 years.

According to the researchers, the findings support the use of the SOMI system to predict future risk of cognitive impairment.

"A non-invasive screening test that would stratify future memory loss and cognitive risk would be of great use for clinical neurologists who care for and diagnose people with dementias," says Dr. Clifford Segil, DO, a neurologist at Providence Saint John's Health Center in Santa Monica, CA.

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