

Djokovic must abstain from political messages at French Open, says French...

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World No Tobacco Day: Tobacco smoking in public places on decline in J&K

P3



LG interacts with citizens to address grievances and to ensure time-bound delivery of key public services

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 31: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha interacted with citizens during the "LG's Mulaqaat-Live Public Grievance Hearing", at the Civil Secretariat, today.

The Lt Governor addressed the grievances filed on JKIGRAMS and directed the Senior officers and DCs to ensure time-bound delivery of key public services such as health, education & social welfare.

"Administrative machinery in J&K has been made more responsive and efficient in meeting the needs of the masses. Number of grievances registered on JKIGRAMS and the overwhelming percentage of redressal is a sign of responsive administration," said the Lt Governor.

The Lt Governor directed the District



Administration to ensure early disposal of grievances, non-discretionary approach towards decision-making and to build a competitive governance mod-

el at local level. Districts must adopt collaborative approach across levels of governance for both grievance redressal and public service delivery, he added.

He impressed upon the Deputy Commissioners to monitor and improve performance of departments and

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Rains continue, more forecast as temp dips in J&K

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 31: Rains continued to lash Jammu and Kashmir and barring Pahalgam and Kupwara, night temperature recorded below normal on Wednesday.



The meteorological department here has also forecast widespread intermittent light to moderate rain, thunder and lightning with possibility of hailstorm and gusty winds at

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

NEWS BRIEF

J&K gets approval for 12 more DNB seats

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 31: As a significant step towards strengthening public healthcare scenario in J&K, 12 more seats have been sanctioned by National Board of Examinations in Medical Science (NBEMS) under DNB for the public institutions of J&K. These seats shall be in addition to the earlier granted 270 DNB seats.

As per detailed breakup, Srinagar Hospital received approval for 2 seats in Orthopedics; GMC Rajouri for 2 seats in Paediatrics; DH Poonch for 2 seats in Surgery, DH Reasi 2 seats in General Medicine and Department of Anesthesiology GMC Baramulla given accreditation for starting DNB

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

DAK seeks blanket ban on tobacco products in Kashmir

SRINAGAR, MAY 31: Doctors Association Kashmir (DAK) on Wednesday sought a blanket ban on all tobacco products in Kashmir.

On world no tobacco day, DAK President Dr Nisar ul Hassan said "ban on tobacco products would prevent cancer that has reached to epidemic proportions in the valley".

Dr Hassan said according to union health ministry figures, Jammu and Kashmir has reported an estimated 51,577 cancer cases in the last four years with lung cancer most

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

NIA Raids 3 Locations In Kashmir

NEW DELHI, MAY 31: The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Wednesday said that continuing its cracked down on the newly floated militant outfits in Jammu and Kashmir, they seized incriminating literature and several digital devices.

In a handout to GNS, the NIA said that the searches were conducted at three locations in the Kashmir valley, in the residential premises of sympathizers/cadres, hybrid militants and Over Ground Workers (OGWs) linked with the newly-formed offshoots and affiliates of several proscribed Pakistan-backed militant outfits, such as Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM), Hizb-ul-Mujahideen

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Centre Puts J&K Ahead of All UTs in Providing Housing for All

LG Expresses Gratitude to Hon'ble PM & Union MoRD

SRINAGAR, MAY 31: The Union Ministry of Rural Development has allotted additional 1,99,550 houses under Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojna-Gramin (PMAY-G) to UT of Jammu Kashmir to saturate the Awaas Plus permanent Waiting List during the year 2023-24. The newly targeted houses shall be sanctioned by the Rural Development

Department by 30 June, 2023. The massive allocation for J&K, under flagship scheme, is also the highest across all UTs in India.

The Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj Sinha has expressed gratitude to Hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi and Union Minister for Rural Development Shri Giriraj Singh for giving top priority to the Union

Territory of J&K and fulfilling the dreams of lakhs of families.

In a tweet, the Lt Governor said: "Extremely grateful to Hon'ble PM Shri @narendramodiji & Union Minister @MoRD_Gol, Hon'ble Shri @girirajsinghbjpi for allotting PMAY(G) target of additional 1,99,550 houses in favour of J&K UT, which will

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

India, China review situation along LAC, discuss proposals for disengagement

NEW DELHI, MAY 31: India and China held the 27th Meeting of the Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on Border Affairs (WMCC) today in person in New Delhi, during which they reviewed the situation along the LAC in the Western Sector and discussed proposals for disengagement in the remaining areas in a frank and open manner.

Joint Secretary (East Asia) from MEA Shilpak Ambule led the Indian Delegation. The Chinese delegation was led by the DG of Boundary and Oceanic



Affairs Department of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

"The two sides reviewed the situation along the LAC in Western Sector of India-China border areas and

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Man Sentenced To 10 Years In Jail For Raping Minor Girl

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 31: A court here on Wednesday awarded ten years rigorous imprisonment to a 42-year-old man convicted of raping a minor girl here in 2012.

The Court of 2nd Additional Sessions Judge Srinagar, Renu Dogra Gupta, also imposed a fine of Rs 25,000 to the convict, Irshad Ahmad Malik of Kokernag Anantnag at present Anchar Soura, for the commission of the

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

World no tobacco day

32 percent men, one percent women consume tobacco in J&K: NHFS-5 data

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 31: Around 32 percent men and one percent women consume tobacco in Jammu and Kashmir with cigarettes being the main tobacco product, NHFS-5 data revealed.

Official data available with news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) showed that only 1 percent of women in

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

3 terrorist nabbed after brief gunfight near LoC

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, MAY 31: After a brief exchange of fire, Army has arrested three terrorists along with a huge consignment of arms and narcotics, an Afghan-made cookers fitted with 10 Kg of Improvised Explosive Device (IED) on the Line of Control (LoC) in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir.

A defence spokesman told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the terrorists were arrested

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Congratulations To Muhammad Yousuf Mir Sahib For The Job Well Done...



Retirement from Active Service is not an End, But a Fresh Beginning of a New Inning of Your life When you have Enough Freedom and Time to Play it at the Comfort of Your Home.

I am thrilled that you have made us proud by Serving the Department of Information in a splendid manner and you are leaving the department as an Inspiration to one and all.

Team HT Welcomes you back home and wishes you a Healthy Post Retirement Life Ahead...

... Jahangir Bukhari
Editor in Chief (Daily Headlines Today)

WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY: TOBACCO SMOKING IN PUBLIC PLACES ON DECLINE IN J&K, SAYS SECRETARY H&ME

Leading personalities being roped in to help in campaign to educate people about ill effects of tobacco

SRINAGAR, MAY 31: Tobacco smoking at Public places in Jammu and Kashmir is on decline even as leading personalities of J&K are being roped in to help in campaigns to educate people about ill effects of tobacco smoking, Secretary Health and Medical Education Bhupinder Kumar said on Wednesday. Talking to reporters at the side-lines of an event regarding "World No Tobacco Day" at Dental college Srinagar, Kumar said

that this day is being observed to educate people about the ill effects of tobacco consumption and how to work jointly to decline the percentage of tobacco smoking and smokeless consumption", he said. "Every year this campaign is being run and laws are in place due to which tobacco smoking in open is on decline in J&K," he said, adding, "Tobacco continues to remain a risk factor for deadly diseases like cancer and there is need to work jointly to fight this menace". "We have started a campaign in this regard and leading personalities like Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, Dr Sushil Razdan, Parvaiz Rasool are being roped in as brand ambassadors to be part of campaign of educating people about ill effects of tobacco so as to decrease its percentage and keep young generation away from it so as to develop a



healthy society," he added. He said that due to government efforts smoking in public places and women folk is on decline in J&K. "All arrangements are being made to provide better facilities to Yatriis," Kumar said. Around 3000 vaccines in the health department have been

already being referred to concerned agencies and among them around 2000 have been filled and it is a continuous process and all vaccines will be filled," Health and Medical Education Secretary Said. Doctors who spoke during the event said that smoking is a gateway of drug abuse as almost all drug abusers start from smoking and then he is lured for drugs easily. They said that 50 percent families get affected by second hand smoking, that is smoke that comes from the burning of a tobacco product and smoke that is exhaled by smokers and more importantly third hand smoking is the main concern which means smoking is residual nicotine and other chemicals left on indoor surfaces by tobacco smoke. "People are exposed to these chemicals by touching con-

taminated surfaces or breathing in the off-gassing from these surfaces," they said, adding that "Cigarette contain around 4,000 chemicals which include 200 are hazardous and around 60 cause cancers and smoking is known for causing multi organ cancers." They said that parents and teachers have to play a role in this regard to keep children away from smoking. "Taking of e-cigarettes is more hazardous and unregulated sale of imported cigarettes is there without labelling and branding with no hazardous symbols and signs," they said. "Multi-pronged strategy is required to reduce cigarette consumption and its ill effects," they added. Meanwhile, MD NHM Ayushi Sudan on the occasion appreciated the health department for taking such initiatives and she was

impressed with the idea of naming brand ambassadors as according to her more and more people need to be involved to carry forward the message of ill effects of tobacco consumption. She said that the most important part of tobacco control is awareness and there is need to educate more and more people about its harmful effects and there is need to work in tandem to reduce the prevalence of tobacco consumption. On the occasion Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary and Parvaiz Rasool who were present on the occasion and Dr Razdan in video message vowed to fight for tobacco control measures in J&K and hoped that their involvement will help in reduction in the number of tobacco users in J&K. They appealed people to quit smoking as tobacco is cause of many cancers

DC Ganderbal reviews functioning of revenue department

GANDERBAL, MAY 31: Deputy Commissioner Ganderbal, Shyambir today chaired a meeting of Officials of the revenue department here in the Conference Hall of Mini Secretariat Ganderbal to review their performance under various priority indicators. Threadbare discussion was held regarding all revenue matters which includes Implementation of online services; Details of Revenue Court cases; Identification of land for Revenue Buildings; Attestation of pending Mutations, land acquisition cases. The DC reviewed the disposal of online services under PSGA and stressed upon the officials that no application should be served out of timeline. He also directed that all the departmental land transfer cases should be disposed off within the shortest possible time, besides all



the land allotted cases should be taken with the concerned departments and ADC shall ensure close liaison with concerned HOD's. While reviewing the pending payment regarding the land acquisition cases, the DC directed the concerned that the such cases should be disbursed in all rightful owner immediately. The DC also reviewed the available infrastructure with the department and directed the concerned that no work should hamper due to lack of any basic infrastructure requirement. While interacting with the officials the DC accorded a supportive hand to the department and directed all the Revenue Officers to remain available/ accessible to the public in office reiterating that public services and grievances redressal must be our foremost priority. The meeting was attended by ADC, Mehraj-ud-Din Shah, ACR, SDM Kangan, all Tehsildars, and other concerned officials.

Work on duly sanctioned projects worth Rs. 4.5 crore started during follow up Block Diwas at Chararipora Pakherpora

BUDGAM, MAY 31: Work on duly sanctioned projects worth above Rs 4.5 crores was started today in the follow up Block Diwas held by Deputy Commissioner (DC), Budgam, Akshay Labroo at Chararipora, Pakherpora of Charar-i-Sharif, Budgam. The works include upgradation of 8 kms long Road length projects including Shuru Karpura-Shankerpora Road, Dalwan Shankerpora-Chararipora road, and Karpura-Qamrazipora Road projects. The road projects have been allotted at the cost of Rs 3.97 crores. The DC also unveiled the work regarding the Additional Classroom complex at the High School. He laid the foundation stone for construction of a playground at Pakherpora to facilitate better sports related arrangements for the local youth. Similarly, work on the Chararipora-Kadipora WSS project was also started. The gravity scheme



shall have 10000 gallon Capacity SR and shall benefit as many as 100 households of the village. During the follow up Block Diwas, PRIs, elders and local youth delegations from villages Chararipora,

Mehndipora, Shankerpora, Dalwan and other adjacent villages who participated, expressed their gratitude to the District Administration for taking note of their demands and addressing them within a month's

time period. The DC said that all other genuine demands raised during last Block Diwas program have been taken up and discussed with all the concerned departments and

speedy disposal will be ensured for those demands too. He reiterated that the District Administration is committed to ensure robust development and better facility creation in all rural as well as urban areas of the district. The DC said that projects on which work has been started today after their completion shall ensure better education, connectivity and adequate potable water supply in the area and people would be benefited largely in the area. He emphasised that work on all these projects be completed in a stipulated time frame. He called for prompt redressal of public issues to ensure better service delivery to people. Among others, ADDC Budgam, Dr. Akramullah Tak, SDM Chadoora, Executive Engineers of all wings, Tehsildar, BDO and all District and sectoral officers, officials were present on the occasion.

J&K to surrender 600 works of school education Department '800 civil works completed in 2022-23'

SRINAGAR, MAY 31: The Jammu & Kashmir government is surrendering more than 600 works approved under different schemes in the school education sector. Documents in possession of news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) lay bare that government of J&K has proposed to surrender more than 600 civil works approved by the Government of India in 2018-19 and 2019-20, but couldn't be taken up for execution due to a host of reasons. "J&KUT is also proposing to surrender more than 600 different types of not taken up works of 2018-19 & 2019-20 during current PAB amounting to Rs 67 crore," reads minutes of the meeting of project approval Board (PAB) for the Jammu & Kashmir under Samagra

Shiksha scheme for the financial year 2023-2024. The meeting of the project approval board (PAB) for considering the annual work plan & budget (AWP&B) under Samagra Shiksha for Jammu & Kashmir was held on May 03, 2023 under the chairpersonship of secretary (School Education & Literacy), Union Ministry of Education. In 2021, the Centre had asked the J & K government to submit a proposal for surrendering civil works which were approved under the SSA and RMSA schemes, but couldn't be taken up for execution till 2019-20. In the PAB meeting held this year, the J&K government submitted that about 800 civil works including girls

hostels, KGBVs, school buildings have been completed in 2022-23 and construction of about 3300 works are at different stages and shall be completed in the next six months. "2538 works have been completed out of sanctioned works. The expenditure under the civil work component for the current year remained Rs 160 crore (including spill-over works), which is quite high as compared to previous years," a record note of the PAB meeting reveals. The Samagra Shiksha scheme was unveiled by the Centre after subsuming Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) and Teacher Education (TE) schemes

Rare vascular tumor surgery performed at GMC Anantnag

ANANTNAG, MAY 31: A very rare vascular tumor surgery involving the region deep inside the nose and arising from skull base was operated at Government Medical College Anantnag. A doctor who was part of the surgery team told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), that a 12-year-old boy was operated on for about five hours without causing any complications. "Operating this kind of tumor is a big leap in the achievements and evolution of ENT Department of GMC Anantnag," he said, adding that the surgery took 4 to 5 hours and the procedure was done without any complications. This tumor is also known as Juvenile Nasopharyngeal Angiofibroma (JNA). "This particular case was operated by a combined endoscopic and lateral Rhinotomy approaches," he said. Notably, vascular tumor also known as Juvenile nasopharyngeal angiofibroma (JNA) is a rare benign tumor arising predominantly in the nasopharynx of adolescent males. It is an aggressive neoplasm and shows a propensity for destructive local spread often extending to the base of the skull and into the cranium. Clinically, however, it is obscure with painless, progressive unilateral nasal obstruction being the common presenting symptom with or without epistaxis and rhinorrhea. The LENT Surgical team was headed by Prof (Dr) Sajad Majid Qazi besides Dr Salman Khurshed (Consultant), Dr Amir Yousuf (Assos Prof) and Dr Ehsan (Registrar). The Anaesthesia team was headed by Prof (Dr) Imtiaz Naqash besides Dr Zaffar Malik (Ass Prof) Dr Omer (Registrar) and Dr Mehraj. The patient is doing well in the postoperative period. Principal GMC and Medical Superintendent congratulated the whole team for performing this challenging procedure.

In 3 months, students suffer loss of 71 school hours in Sgr due to curtailment in timing
WE ARE ASSESSING ITS IMPACT: ALOK KUMAR

SRINAGAR, MAY 31: In the past three months, students in J&K's summer capital district, Srinagar, have suffered loss of 71 school hours due to curtailment in school timing. Following the reopening of schools after winter vacations in February, the School Education Department announced school timing across Kashmir division from March-01 wherein it has shortened one hour for those

institutions falling within the municipality limits of Srinagar. According to news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), from March 01 to May 31, the School timing within the limits of Srinagar Municipal Corporation was 9:00 am to 2:00 pm, a departure from normal school timing in the city. The normal school timing in the city is 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. The shortening of school timing meant a loss of one hour daily for

thousands of children studying in private as well as government institutions in the city. There were a total 71 working days from March 01 to May 31. This means students in Srinagar suffered an academic loss of 71 hours due to revision of school timing on Feb 28. Principal Secretary, School Education Department, Alok Kumar told KNO that the department would look into the matter. "We are assessing it," he said

DC presides over Mega Block Diwas at Kulgam Redresses scores of issues of immediate nature

■ HT News Network

KULGAM, MAY 31: As part of public outreach programme and in order to take first hand appraisal of the issues of general people at their door steps, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat today chaired a grievances redressal camp at Kulgam and listened various issues and demands of people meant for the overall welfare and development of the area.

The programme witnessed participation of PRIs and people from Akhal, Laisoo, Nandimarg, Sonigam, K.B. Pora and other adjoining areas.

During the grievance redressal camp, various public delegations and scores of individuals projected various developmental issues before the Deputy Commissioner and sought timely resolution of



their grievances and demands.

After giving a patient hearing to the grievances and demands of the public, the DC assured them that all their issues and demands shall be taken with the concerned authorities for their timely redressal and some of the issues and griev-

ances of immediate nature were resolved on spot by the DC.

Officers from various departments who were present in the grievance redressal camp also responded to the grievances and issues of people raised during the block diwas function.

Among others, the Public Grievance redressal camp was attended by ADC Viqar Ahmed Giri; ACR, Mir Imtiyaz-ul-Aziz; GMDIC Bashir Ahmad, CEO, CAO, CHO, Executive Engineers besides other district and sectoral officers from various departments.

Similarly, grievances redressal camps were also organised at Manzgam and Devsar blocks where officers listened to the issues and grievances of people for timely redressal. Officers from various departments who were present in the grievance redressal camp also responded to the grievances and issues of people raised during the block diwas function.

Among others, the Public Grievance redressal camp was attended by ADC Viqar Ahmed Giri; ACR, Mir Imtiyaz-ul-Aziz; GMDIC Bashir Ahmad, CEO, CAO, CHO, Executive Engineers.

District Administration conducts Block Diwas at Gagren, Shopian

ADC listens to developmental, welfare issues & grievances, demands of people

■ HT News Network

SHOPIAN, MAY 31: In order to listen to developmental and welfare issues, and redress the grievances of people at their doorsteps, the District Administration Shopian today held a weekly Block Diwas programme at Gagren, Shopian. The Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Shopian, Yar Ali Khan presided over the outreach programme. The event witnessed enthusiastic participation of people from various spheres of life belonging to areas including Devpora, Saidpora, Reshinagri, etc. During the programme, various issues of developmental and welfare nature were put forth by PRI members, public representatives and people for redressal.

Issues of public impor-



tance including renovation of water bodies, macadamisation/ construction of roads, better provision of electricity and water supply and various other issues were put across by people for resolution.

ADC gave a patient hearing to demands raised by people and directed the concerned officers to ensure prompt and speedy redressal of issues and demands of people.

Officers present on the spot also responded to

various queries and issues raised by the people.

While interacting with the people, the ADC sought feedback from people on various issues especially sanction of Animal/ Sheep husbandry units and provision of farm machinery/ equipment from agriculture/ horticulture.

He also sought feedback from people on the functioning of AWCs, pension schemes and other welfare and agro-based, employment generation schemes.

Various officers on the occasion sensitised people on benefits, eligibility criteria of different schemes available with them and asked people to avail benefits under different schemes especially pension, Insurance schemes and employment generation schemes including bee-keeping, mushroom, dairying, sheep, employment department schemes etc.

The ADC sought replies from officers and representatives of the line department on queries and grievances flagged off by the people and assured people that all the demands shall be taken up as per norms.

Among others, the programme was attended by district officers including CHO, CAHO, DIO, DSWO, BDO and representatives of line departments.

PHDCCI delegation calls on Lt Governor

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 31: A delegation of PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry called on Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha at Raj Bhawan, today.

The delegation, comprising of Sh. Alok B. Shriram, former President PHDCCI; Col Saurabh Sanyal, Secretary General & CEO PHDCCI; Sh. A.P. Vicky Shaw, Chair PHDCCI-Kashmir and Sh. Iqbal Fayaz Jan, Deputy Director PHDCCI J&K, apprised the Lt Governor on a range of issues relating to industry, trade, commerce and MSMEs in the region and lauded the Lt Governor-led UT Government for successful conduct of G20 Meeting in Srinagar.

The Lt Governor while interacting with the members of the delegation assured them that all their issues and demands would be addressed on merit.

JKTPO organized ONDC onboarding drive in Srinagar

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 31: Jammu and Kashmir Trade Promotion Organisation (JKTPO) under the guidance of Commissioner Secretary, Industries & Commerce and under the supervision of Managing Director JKTPO today organized a successful onboarding drive on Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) Network at JKEDI, Pamore. This initiative, in collaboration with ONDC Seller Partner MyStore, aims to facilitate the onboarding of local sellers, artisans, retailers, small merchants, and traders onto the ONDC platform to gain access to a vast digital marketplace.

More than 75 local entrepreneurs participated in the drive and 30 were registered on-spot from various sectors viz Handloom & Handicrafts, Agro and Food, manufacturing sector, etc. JKTPO is continuously organising such activities including onboarding on e-commerce platforms to enable local entrepreneurs to showcase and sell their products across world. The onboarding drive is a significant milestone in the continued efforts of JKTPO and ONDC to foster economic growth and promote digital commerce in Jammu and Kashmir. It builds upon the success of the ONDC awareness workshops that have been conducted since September 2022 in both divisions of Jammu and Kashmir. These workshops have helped create awareness about the benefits of leveraging the power of democratisation of e-commerce through ONDC and expand their reach beyond traditional boundaries. Managing Director, JKTPO expressed his optimism about the initiative "We have collaborated with ONDC to empower local entrepreneurs by providing them the platform to thrive in the digital era and unlocking their full potential."

PUBLIC NOTICE

I informed general public that I am permanent resident of Jammu and Kashmir and my date of birth (DOB) is 05/09/1979....Now I am applying for date of birth (DOB) certificate if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may contact with (BDO) office WAGOORA within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained
Name...NAZIR AHMAD LONE
S/O...ABDUL AZIZ LONE
R/O ...KACHWAMUQAM
Block...WAGOORA
Distt...BARAMULLA

PUBLIC NOTICE

I have applied for the issuance of DEE Class Contract card from Block office wagoora . if anybody having any objection in this regard He / She may contact with (BDO) office WAGOORA within aperiod of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Name: MANZOOR AHMAD BHAT
S/o: ABDUL REHMAN BHAT
R/o: ...KALANTARA PAYEEN
BLOCK..... WAGOORA
TehsilWAGOORA
Distt ...BARAMULLA

JK Horticulture Planning & Marketing organizes day long meet on CA Storage Logistics

‘Holistic measures to be taken to establish CA Storage capacity commensurate with production’

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 31: Jammu and Kashmir Horticulture Planning and Marketing department today organized a one day meet on CA Storage Logistics here at SKICC.

The meet was attended by all stakeholders from government departments, banks and financial institutions, industry representative bodies, fruit associa-

tions and potential investors in this sector from within and outside J&K.

The aim of the day long event was to strengthen coordination among all stakeholders and efficiently move forward in bridging gap in the infrastructural requirements for CA storage in J&K.

Secretary in Agriculture Production Department, Shabnam Kamili, who was also chief guest on the occasion, said that the government is keen to promote



private investments in setting up logistics facilities by providing incentives and simplifying the regulatory environment.

She said that it will enable

the development of high-class logistics infrastructure in J&K and create new business opportunities and in the long run enable the farmer to reap maximum

benefits out of his produce.

She informed that the Meet was organized to bring all stakeholders at one platform and to devise a roadmap which shall result in expeditious, hassle-free and conducive environment for establishing the CA storage logistics at suitable locations in the entire J&K.

Vikas Sharma, Director Horticulture Planning and Marketing, J&K, informed that J&K is the leading producer of apples in the country with large varietal spec-

trum and harvest ranging from July till November, besides having a unique position in the global market.

"To ensure availability of quality apples throughout the year and provide best returns to producers, we endeavour to augment our CA storage capacity in a big way", he maintained.

He further shared that, currently, we have around two lakh MT of installed CA storage capacity in J&K and to meet the requirements.

DLSA Budgam observed Anti Tobacco Day at Govt. Sheikh-ul-Alam Memorial Degree College Budgam

■ Reyaz Badana

On the occasion of Anti-Tobacco Day, the District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Budgam, in collaboration with Government Sheikh-ul-Alam Memorial Degree College Budgam, organised legal awareness event held on May 31, 2023, at the Government Degree College Budgam campus aimed at raising awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco and ignite a collective commitment towards building a healthier and tobacco-free society. The event brought together legal experts, faculty members, educators, and students to highlight the dangers of tobacco use.

Anti-Tobacco Day is an annual global initiative that highlights the dangers of tobacco use and encourages individuals and communities to lead tobacco-free lives. DLSA Budgam having mandate and commitment to promoting justice and public welfare, has partnered with Govern-



ment Sheikh-ul-Alam Memorial Degree College Budgam, an esteemed educational institution, to emphasize the significance of this critical public health issue.

Under the visionary leadership of the Hon'ble Mr. Justice N. Kotiswar Singh Chief Justice of High Court of J&K and Ladakh, Patron in Chief and the Executive Chairman's Hon'ble Mr. Justice Tashi Rabstan JKLSA, the District Legal Services Authority Budgam has been at the forefront of empowering individuals with knowledge and resources

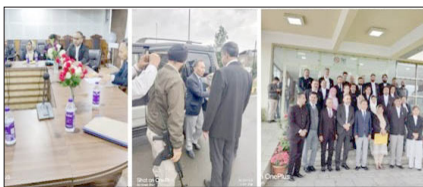
to make informed decisions regarding their well-being.

Under the able guidance of its Chairman (PDJ) Budgam, Mr. Khalil Ahmad Choudhary, District Legal Services Authority has consistently championed the cause of "Justice for All". The awareness program commenced with an insightful address by resource persons of DLSA, Budgam faculty members of Government Degree College, Budgam and students, who emphasized on multifaceted aspects of tobacco consumption.

Justice Tashi Rabstan visits District Court Complex Moominabad

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 31: Justice Tashi Rabstan, Judge of High Court of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, who is also the Administrative Judge for the district Srinagar, visited the District Court Complex Moominabad Srinagar and reviewed functioning there. Justice Tashi Rabstan had a detailed interaction with the Judicial officers posted at Srinagar in the Conference Hall of District Court Srinagar. Jawad Ahmad, Principal District and Sessions Judge, Srinagar, apprised Justice Tashi Rabstan of working of courts with relevant statistics and also highlighted the various issues faced by the Judicial officers. Justice Tashi Rabstan addressed the Judges and took stock of



functioning of the courts. After giving a patient hearing to the Judges, he assured them of resolving the issues within a short span of time. He sensitized the Judges about their role in the society and urged upon them to give their best to the society and at the same time uphold the dignity and honour of the institution. He emphasised upon the need of speedy disposal of cases with focus on old cases. He also engaged in discussions with the judicial officers to understand their challenges.

DLSA Ganderbal observes Anti Tobacco Day; organizes series of Legal Awareness programmes

■ HT News Network

GANDERBAL, MAY 31: The District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Ganderbal today observed 'Anti Tobacco Day' and organized series of Legal Awareness programmes regarding the NALSA (Legal Services to the Victims of Drug Abuse and Eradication of Drug Menace), Scheme 2015 at different locations in district. The programme was held under the supervision of Chairman

DLSA Ganderbal, Ritesh Kumar Dubey and under the guidance of Secretary DLSA Ganderbal, Nusrat Ali Hakak. The programmes were conducted to spread awareness about the harmful effects of tobacco and the legal services available to victims of drug abuse and the eradication of drug menace. The first programme was held at Government Boys High School, Sherpathri Ganderbal and was spearheaded by Advocate Hilal Ahmad Ganie, panel lawyer of DLSA Ganderbal.

HIGH COURT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR AND LADAKH (Office of the Registrar Recruitment at Srinagar)

e-mail: (non-gazettedsectionmainwing@gmail.com)

NOTIFICATION

No. 972 of 2023/R R/NG dated 31-05-2023

It is for the information of all those candidates who have applied for the post of Lift Operator in the pay Level- 4 (25500-81100) in the High Court of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh pursuant to Advertisement Notice No. 02 of 2022/RG/NG dated 25-05-2022, that their written examination is scheduled to be held as per the below mentioned

| S. No. | Province | Date | Time | Venue |
|--------|----------|------------|----------|------------------------------------|
| 1 | Jammu | 17-06-2023 | 10:30 AM | High Court Complex, Janipur, Jammu |
| 2 | Kashmir | 17-06-2023 | 10:30 AM | High Court Complex, Srinagar |

schedule:

The selection for the post shall be made on the basis of merit obtained in written examination only.

Instructions for the written examination:

I) The written examination shall start at 10:30 AM, however, the candidates shall report at the venue one hour before the scheduled time of the examination.

II) The candidates shall bring all the original documents along with their self attested photocopies.

III) Test will be conducted of only those candidates whose documents are found valid.

IV) For identification purpose, the candidates shall also produce either of the following testimonials;

a) Aadhar Card

b) Election Card

c) Passport

V) No TA/DA shall be paid to the candidates.

VI) Mobile phone and other Electronic Gadgets are not allowed inside the Examination Hall.

VII) Mere appearance in the test shall not confer any right to seek appointment against the post.

VIII) The candidates belonging to Jammu Province who have applied for the said post shall appear for the prescribed written examination on the scheduled date and time at the venue shown at Sr. No. 1 in the Notification i.e., High Court Complex, Janipur, Jammu and the candidates belonging to Kashmir Province shall appear for the prescribed written examination on the scheduled date and time at the venue shown at Sr. No. 2 in the Notification i.e., High Court Complex, Srinagar.

DIPK-2566/23
Dated 31 May 23

By order. /
(S. Satinder Singh)
Registrar Recruitment

Weekly Block Diwas: DC Rajouri Listens to People's Issues at Fatehpur Gurrian

■ HT News Network

RAJOURI, MAY 31: Deputy Commissioner, Vikas Kundal, conducted a productive public grievance redressal camp at Fatehpur Gurrian of Rajouri block under the Weekly Block Diwas, today. The DC was accompanied by a team of officials from various departments to address the issues faced by the local residents.

During the camp, the proactive involvement of the locals was evident as they raised several pertinent issues and demands, including the pressing need for macadamization of roads, urgent up-gradation of schools, resolution of staff shortage in government institutions,

and augmentation of the health-care infrastructure, among others.

The Deputy Commissioner displayed exceptional patience and attentiveness as he listened to the grievances put forth by the public and their representatives. He assured them that their concerns would be expeditiously taken up with the concerned departments, ensuring their prompt resolution.

Addressing the event, Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Vikas Kundal, emphasized that the primary objective of such public outreach camps is to establish a strong connection with the public and ensure that their concerns are heard and resolved in a timely manner. He further reiterated the administration's



commitment to hold similar public grievance redressal camps in different areas of the district.

Notably, the Deputy Commissioner, in his address, highlighted various government schemes and programs, urging stake-

holder departments to synergize their efforts for achieving 100 percent saturation of these initiatives. He emphasized the importance of effective delivery of government services, ensuring they reach the doorsteps of the general public.

Responding to the issue of water scarcity, the DC promptly directed the concerned officer from the Jal Shakti Department to implement effective measures to alleviate the sufferings of the public. Furthermore, he emphasized the need for maintaining a proper water supply schedule to avoid any inconvenience faced by the residents.

In response to the other issues and demands raised during the public outreach camp, the DC reiterated that the timely and quality disposal of public concerns remains the top priority of the district administration. He urged the officers to work with renewed vigor and dedication to alleviate the sufferings of the general public.

The Deputy Commissioner

reaffirmed the administration's unwavering commitment to providing all basic amenities to the public at their doorsteps. He emphasized the dedicated efforts being made to ensure the necessary infrastructure and services are provided promptly.

Additionally, the Deputy Commissioner called upon all stakeholders to collaborate in achieving the desired objectives under different government initiatives, thereby enhancing the quality of life for the citizens of the district. He assured the public that the administration would continue its relentless pursuit of development, sparing no effort in providing necessary infrastructure and services.

Moreover, the DC issued on-the-spot directives to the con-

cerned departments, emphasizing the priority and time-bound resolution of the issues highlighted by the public.

In conclusion, the public outreach camp at Fatehpur Gurrian, as part of the weekly Block Diwas program, provided an effective platform for the public to express their grievances and demands, while enabling government officials to attentively listen and take necessary actions to address them.

The people of Fatehpur Gurrian expressed their deep appreciation for the District Administration's proactive efforts in organising the public outreach camp and providing them with an invaluable platform to voice their concerns.

District Admin Doda moves 439 teachers to rationalize staff in Govt Schools

■ HT News Network

DODA, MAY 31: Setting in motion the process of rationalization of teaching staff, District Administration Doda has identified 439 teachers across the district, whose services can have more usage at some teacher scarce government schools.

The teachers will be transferred to schools where they are fewer in number based on the public feedback received during Block Diwas and other public outreach programmes of the administration.

The teacher-pupil ratio and availability of subject specific teachers was worked out by the department before the rationalisation of the teaching staff to provide quality education in the government schools across the district.

A special Committee headed by Additional District Development Commissioner Doda Pran Singh has put in extraordinary efforts to rationalise the staff as per the educational needs of the students in every Government School of the district.

It is pertinent to mention here that the administration has already made subject experts and best study material available on the ADHBUT Doda portal (Online Classes and Study material) for the convenience of the students. The administration is striving to make the educational standard of the students of this District at par with other parts of the country and make them able to compete and succeed in every field, said the DDC while briefing on the rationalisation process.

Sr Malaria Inspector accorded warm farewell at Doda

■ HT News Network

DODA, May 31: Chief Medical Officer's Office Doda today accorded a warm farewell to Sr Malaria Inspector, Om Parkash Shan on his retirement at a grand function.

Chief Medical Officer, Dr A H Zargar besides staff of CMO, Dy CMO Office and Planning Section were present on the occasion.

The CMO hailed the retiring official as a dedicated, hardworking and reliable employee of the Health Department who always remained available at the beck and call of his seniors and colleagues for which he would be remembered for his utmost services.

The official was presented gifts as a token of respect for his tireless services in the department.

Shan thanked the staff of the Health Department for the warm farewell and assured to be available for every possible help to the department after his retirement. Chief Medical Officer, Dr A H Zargar besides staff of CMO, Dy CMO Office and Planning Section were present on the occasion. The CMO hailed the retiring official as a dedicated, hardworking and reliable employee of the Health Department who always remained available at the beck and call of his seniors and colleagues for which he would be remembered for his utmost services.

GDC Kishtwar organises awareness Seminar on "World No Tobacco Day"

■ HT News Network

KISHTWAR, MAY 31: An awareness seminar on "No Tobacco Day" was organized today in the Botany Department of Government Degree College Kishtwar on the direction of the College Principal, Dr. Jyoti Parihar. As many as 60 students participated in the seminar to raise awareness about the harmful and deadly effect of tobacco on human health.

The theme of this year's World No Tobacco Day, as declared by WHO, is "We need Food, not Tobacco." The HoD of the Botany Department, Prof. Faisal Mushtaq also spoke about the ill effects and long-term consequences of this deadly product on health, society, environment and family.

Several students from the second semester spoke in great detail on the topic. Prof. Sushil Kumar explained various symptoms caused by long-term use of tobacco on the body.

A question/answer session was held at the end, during which the faculty provided detailed explanations to all the queries related to tobacco raised by the students. It was also pledged that everyone would strive hard to spread the message of the No Tobacco Campaign among the masses in general and other students in particular. The other staff members who participated in the event were Talat Samreen (Lab Assistant) and Daleep Kumar (Lab Bearer). The theme of this year's World No Tobacco Day, as declared by WHO, is "We need Food,

CS stresses on online issuance of 'Life Certificate' & bringing eligible services under Auto-appeal till June 15

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 31: Chief Secretary, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta today stressed on making the issuance of 'Life Certificate' online and bringing all other eligible services under the Auto-appeal system by 15th of June.

Dr Mehta made these remarks while launching new online services of H&UDD pertaining to applying for obtaining license by Architects and Draftsmen in Municipal Corporations of Jammu/ Srinagar and all the Municipalities across J&K.

On the occasion Principal Secretary, H&UDD; Commissioner Secretary, GAD; Commissioner Secretary, IT, Commissioner, JMC; CEO, JaKeGA; Scientists from NIC besides other concerned



officers were present either physically or virtually through video conferencing from Jammu.

The Chief Secretary lauded the efforts of the IT Department and local chapter of NIC for development of all these services in-house with their own expertise and resources. He said that the performance of the Department is excellent with more to be done in the days ahead.

He advised the concerned to further expedite

the auto appeal feature on the national platform of Serviceplus. He asked them to onboard at least 100 services on this portal by next week and all the eligible services under the Auto-appeal system by 15th of next month.

He also directed for all incorporating of all required improvement relating to the departmental websites by upgrading their content and utility besides making them compliant with the standards set under Nation-

al e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment (NeS-DA). He asked them to improve their ratings by bringing all the services and portals at par with their guidelines so that our score reaches the optimum range of 1 within this time period.

The Commissioner Secretary, IT, Prerna Puri informed the meeting that by launching these 6 services of H&UDD today the number of online services offered by the UT reached to 480 today. She apprised that all these services have been linked with payment and SMS gateways for ease of applicants.

She further added that soon more services would be made online as these have been identified for development and in coming weeks the number of such services is going to touch 500 mark here.

Sixth phase of Kissan Sampark Abhiyan concludes in Reasi

■ HT News Network

REASI, MAY 31: the sixth Phase of Kissan Sampark Abhiyan was successfully completed in 9 blocks of the Reasi district under the guidance of Director Agriculture Jammu, K.K Sharma, Chairman HADP ADDC, Jyoti Slathia and under close monitoring of Harbans Singh, Chief Agriculture Officer (DNO HADP).

The resources persons of agriculture and allied sectors along with PRIs of concerned Panchayats participated in the farmers' orientation programmes.

Training was imparted through audio visual aids at all the venues identified in 9 blocks of the District.

Farmers were also made aware about Daksh Kissan (online learning portal) and KISSAN SATHI (IT Dashboard) for digitization of various schemes and services.

Informative booklets in three languages regarding Schemes under HADP were also distributed among farmers. ADDC Reasi,



Director SBI RSETI, Visiting Officer, Sanchi Sharma, SMSSDL Kewal Krishan attended the training programme in Panchayat Kotli Manotrian-A where marigold and other seasonal vegetable seedlings were also distributed.

Chief Agriculture Officer along with Sub Division Agriculture Officer attended the programme in Panchayat Kothian in Pouni block. District Agriculture Officer Extension, Dharmari, ASCO Dharmari and SMS SDL attended the programme in Panchayat Thuroo- B.

On world no tobacco day, DAK seeks blanket ban on tobacco products in Kashmir

■ HT News Network

Srinagar, May 31: On world no tobacco day, Doctors Association Kashmir (DAK) on Wednesday has sought blanket ban on all tobacco products in Kashmir.

"Ban on tobacco products would prevent cancer that has reached to epidemic proportions in the valley," said DAK President Dr Nisar ul Hassan.

Dr Hassan said according to union health ministry figures, Jammu and Kashmir has reported an estimated 51,577 cancer cases in last four years with lung cancer most prominent due to high rates of smoking.

"Research has shown that smoking is linked to about 90 percent of lung cancer cases," he said adding that after lung cancer, foodpipe, stomach and colon are the other types of cancer that have been found to have high prevalence in Kashmir and smoking is a big factor.

The DAK President said not only does smoking cause cancer, but it also increases the risk of dying from heart attack and



stroke, the two leading causes of death and disability in the valley.

"Smoking is a gateway for drug abuse which has reached to unprecedented levels in Kashmir," he added.

Dr Nisar said JK is emerging as the smoking capital of North India as JK's cigarette consumption is almost double the nationwide prevalence.

According to Global Tobacco Survey 20.8 percent of JK people smoke, against the national average of 10.7 percent.

"The prime reason for increased use of tobacco in Kashmir is its availability," he said adding that "cigarettes and other tobacco products are freely available in Kashmir and can be purchased by anyone, whatever the age."

CBC's programmes act as communication channel between Government and Masses: President MC Rajouri

■ HT News Network

RAJOURI, MAY 31: President Municipal Council Rajouri, Mohammad Arif Jatt today highlighted the importance of a two way communication channel between the Public and Government for effective governance and optimum development.

Mohammad Arif Jatt was speaking as the Chief Guest on the Day-2 of Multi-Media Exhibition on Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, G-20, Mission LIFE, Yuva Utsav and other allied themes organized by Central Bureau of Communication, Rajouri (J&K), Ministry of



Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India here in Baba Ghulam Shah Badshah University. Dr. Ali Asghar Shah Dean Academic Affairs, BGSBU was Guest of Honour and Ghulam Abbas Chaudhary, Joint Director CBC and PIB J&K presided over the function

along with faculty BGSBU, Staff of CBC J&K and representatives of Health, Jal Shakti, Agriculture, Social Welfare and Wild Life Protection departments Rajouri. The MC President appreciated the Central Bureau of Communication, J&K for organizing the event

in Rajouri. He said that CBC's programmes serve as a bridge of communication between Government and Common Masses. He said the valuable information disseminated through displays and Expert Lectures will encourage the locals to avail the benefits of various Centrally sponsored schemes and become entrepreneurs. He highlighted the role of teachers in students' life, Unity in diversity and role of responsible and aware citizens. Ghulam Abbas, JD, CBC & PIB, J&K, in his address, said that CBC has the mandate of disseminating information and awareness among common.

DC Udhampur holds public grievances redressal camp at Block Majalta

■ HT News Network

UDHAMPUR, MAY 31: Deputy Commissioner, Udhampur Sachin Kumar Vaishya today visited block Majalta and listened to public issues and demands at a public outreach programme held at Kesar Resort under the weekly Block Diwas Program.

BDC Chairman, DDC Councillor and District Officers of various departments, besides PRIs members participated in the outreach camp.

BDC, Dina Nath, DDC Majalta, Amit Sharma, Sar-



panches, Panches and the general public of the area projected several demands and problems being faced by them. They sought effective implementation of JJM, establishment of Dispensary, new electric poles,

steps to ease traffic congestion at Battal and Mansar Morh, blacktopping of roads, restoration of damaged street lights, release of pending payment under 14th FC, posting of Urdu Teacher in schools of the

area, installation of transformer and Handpumps, filling up of vacant post in health and education department, organising awareness camps, construction of bridge over Nallah at Majalta, improvement of conditions of various PMGSY and PWD roads etc. Responding to the issues and demands raised by PRI members as well as the general public of the area, the DC passed on-spot directions for redressal of their grievances. He asked the officers to take first hand appraisal of all the grievances of PRIs and redress on priority.





COL SATISH SINGH LALOTRA

Living beings, be it humans or animals or even plants draw sustenance from each other's presence driven by the need to feel secure, intermingling amongst themselves or their own ilk or even compete for a higher position in the hierarchy of their being. The ecosystem is made in such a way that both biotic and abiotic parts of this system either sustain themselves or wither away wrought by the time and tide of events respectively. In the animal kingdom within this planet of ours, there are very few large sized animals which go solo (alone) in all their endeavours from 'womb to tomb' excepting in their formative years. Tiger is one such large sized carnivore which holds the pride of place in our ecosystem that epitomizes power in its entirety, since it goes all alone in his hunting, living, procreating and finally marking of his territorial limits of his hunting efforts. The magnificent 'Panthera Tigris', a striped carnivore with thick yellow coat of fur with dark stripes is a combination of grace, power, strength, agility, and enormous power to have earned the pride of place as the national animal of India. For many readers of this article, it may be news that as late as March 1973, Asiatic Lion used to be national animal of India.

But then seeing its very limited spread in a remote western corner of Gujarat at Gir forest, and not in entire India a more magnificent carnivore with an evenly spread from Himachal Pradesh to Arunachal Pradesh to Kerala upped the ante and fitted in the bill for being nominated as the national animal of India. In order to conserve the Tiger population in the country, GOI launched 'Project Tiger' on 01st April 1973 exactly half a century ago, the largest conservation effort anywhere in the world in co-operation with WWF (World wild life). 'Project Tiger' was set up under the PM ship of Mrs Indira Gandhi as its chairman with Dr Karan Singh as vice - chairman and Rajasthan forest officer K.S Shankhla as the first project director. Since this magnificent beast is always on the radar of poachers, freelance hunters, as also dwindling catchment areas for their prey the NTCA (National tiger conservation authority) was formed in December 2005 following the recommendations of 'TIGER TASK FORCE' constituted by the PM of India for reorganized management of 'Project Tiger' and the many tiger sanctuaries in India.

The stated recommendations of the said task force were as follows:

- **Reinvigorating the constitution of governance.**
- **Strengthening efforts towards protection of tiger, checking poaching, convicting wildlife criminals, and breaking the international trade network in wild life body parts and derivatives of tiger.**
- **Expanding the undisturbed areas for tiger by reducing human presence.**
- **Repair the relationships with the local people who share the tiger habitats by investing in forest, by fielding strategies for co-existence.**
- **Regenerate the forest habitats in the fringe areas of the tigers by forming protective enclaves by investing in forest, water and grassland economies of the people.**

Be that as it may the aim of my write up is to put under the scanner the above mentioned recommendations in the right perspective to watch if they have yielded desired results or not and also see which way the project is headed? India has seen an extensive

50 yrs of 'project tiger'—is it on rails?

'Being alone is a power few can handle'—Anonymous

expansion of protected areas, tiger reserves and now, a push for tiger corridors all driven by colonial exclusionary conservation practices. As per the data from the 'National wildlife database cell', India has a network 990 protected areas which cover approximately 5.27% of the total geographical area of country. This includes 106 national parks, 565 wild life sanctuaries, 100 conservation reserves, and 219 community reserves. Adding to this is India's network of 55 tiger reserves (TRs). Notification of PAs (protected areas) in India is overseen by central legislation called as 'Wild life protection act' (WLPa) whereas the NTCA (National tiger conservation authority) a body constituted under the same law oversees TRs.

The year 2021-22 saw some states in the country going on a PA declaration spree, with Maharashtra state board for wild life alone notifying three (3) new wild life sanctuaries and almost 30 new conservation reserves in various stages of approval. As stated above since the launch of 'Project Tiger' in 1973, the tiger has been made the center of focus of conservation of governance in India. That brings me to my first point of contention in direct contravention to the recommendations of the 'Tiger task force' i.e governance rules of 'tiger Conservation by eliminating human presence' which is a flawed concept of animal conservation. The latest tiger census reports indicate the last recorded tiger population of India standing at 2967, which is 70% of the world tiger population. What an impressive data. The 55 tiger reserves in India cover a total area of about more than 74,000 sq km out of which, 41500 sq km forms the critical tiger habitat whereas the remainder is the so called 'Buffer zone'. The idea of corridor-based conservation has off late caught the fancy of Indian conservationists. The NTCA in its 2014 report 'Connecting tiger populations for long term conservation' cited how the Indian sub-continent alone holds 6 global priority tiger conservation landscapes of long term significance and 32 tiger corridors as also ensuring connecting these with one another. The (NWP) 2017-31, National wildlife action plans also stressed upon identification of wildlife corridors outside PAs (protected areas).

That is where the whole rub lies. Even for a layman

on casting a glance at any of the maps of any tiger conservation corridor will reveal how the tiger reserves and corridors are being imposed on a raft of forest lands, human habitations, agricultural fields, pasture lands and

scarce water sources. The first recommendation of Tiger task force has to be clubbed with the third recommendation which in so many words say—to expand the tiger corridors by reducing human presence compelling us all to see the lopsided aspect of governance. These landscapes are actually living, breathing human-inhabited places, home to adivasis like the Korkus, Gonds and Baigas in the central province of India and even in the neighbouring 'Melghat tiger reserve and Pench tiger reserve spanning over both states of Maharashtra and MP. I have myself witnessed the majority of Korku tribesmen evicted from the STR (Satpura tiger reserve) at Madhai near Hoshangabad for making way for the tiger corridors when I visited STR in 2011. Now using the imagery of these corridors, the state can acquire any land and convert it into a protected area which will sound a death knell to these tribal people. Although conservation corridors are an old concept it has given a new fillip to coercive control of lands thus exacerbating societal tensions in the country as such. This is self-evident in the way abrupt and break neck speed with which certain states are going about this concept with relocations speeding up in other protected areas. As per the data shared by the MoEFCC (Ministry of environment forest and conservation) in the lok sabha as late as 2019, out of 57386 families living inside the critical tiger habitat (CTH) of 52 tiger reserves around 14,441 families had been shifted. NTCA in 2020 was altogether on a different plane with their assertions that 63,916 families in 761 villages living inside the CTH (Critical tiger habitat) of tiger reserves and 18,493 families of 215 villages had been relocated from the notified CTH since the inception of Project tiger. Ground report tells us the number of people impacted is far more and will only grow with more tiger corridors in the offing, thereby pooh-poohing one of the stated recommendations of 'Tiger task force' that



lays stress on expanding the tiger corridors by reducing human presence.

As if the above stated facts don't nail the inflated conservation efforts of GOI, the center for financial accountability (CFA) in a recent report cited a spurt in the infrastructure projects in and around the protected areas. As per CFAs analysis, MoEFCC received around 2592 proposals for environment clearance between July 2014 and April 2020, of which 2256 proposals were approved marking a 87% clearance rate. What a stupendous achievement. But at what cost? More importantly 270 projects were located in and around these protected areas, thus deflating the very purpose of creating these protected areas. Is the minister of forest, environment and conservation taken on board for these anomalies? Further 680 projects were given wildlife clearances between 2015-2020 by national board for wildlife (NBWL) as revealed in the Rajya sabha by the MoEFCC in September 2020. The majority of oil and gas deposits are located in these landscapes with corporate extraction instead of being monitored is being facilitated through ease given by these clearances. Is this facet not interference in the tiger conservation? If not, then why not? What will it take the GOI to apply due diligence in according clearance to these corporate interests?

The 'Convention of biological diversity since its inception in 1992 recognised the role of indigenous people (tribals in our context) through articles 8(i) & 10(c). Yet these indigenous people have been excluded at both state level and the national level in India from these discussions and decisions about the land usage, their inhabitants and natural resources they depend upon. In the Indian context the FRA (Forest rights act) passed in 2006 envisions and ensures the same by legally recognizing the role of these adivasis and other forest dependent communities in the protection, conservation and management of the ecosystems. But does it happen in our context? While posted at Itarsi in MP way back from 2010 till 2012 I was witness to scores of Korku tribal people living on the margins with their families trudging miles on the Betul-Hoshangabad highway with small wicker baskets perched on their heads in search of Tendu leaves. Why couldn't these people be ensured a proper captive area in their near vicinity for tendu leaves collection and their marketing by the state government? It shows that they have been disregarded by the authorities in their welfare. The FRA empowers these tribals to stop any activity which is detrimental to their growth. But then all boils down to its implementation, which is a big NO in India. This brings me to the last recommendation as enshrined by the Tiger task force—"Regenerate the forest habitats in the fringe areas of the tigers by forming protective enclaves through investing in forest, water and grasslands economies of the people". But having gone through the details as appended by me in this write up as also diluting the FRA by the authorities is there a remote chance of these targets being met? As if the above dichotomies are not enough, few months back the union state minister of MoEFCC, Ashwini Kumar Choubey came up with a most preposterous idea of renaming the Jim Corbett tiger reserve on the name of 'Ram Ganga' tiger reserve which incidentally flows in the midst of this tiger reserve. With the 'Project tiger well with in crossing half a century of its inception I am of the considered opinion that a major and thorough course correction of this project is the need of the hour so as to meet the lofty aspirations of conservation of this magnificent carnivore as set forth by our former PM Mrs Indira Gandhi and the erstwhile vice chairman Dr Karan Singh of PROJECT TIGER.

The writer is a retired army officer

JK economy: Setting the record straight



VISHAL SHARMA

J&K's economic growth story over the last three years has been remarkable. The story's been remarkable in that even at the peak of covid pandemic, the economic growth never slipped into the negative territory. J&K has seen many upheavals during the last 30 years and every time it has come out stronger. However, it was never expected to hold out on the economic front in the midst of what was a perfect economic storm. But it did!

If GSDP numbers (at current prices) from the fiscal year 2018-19 (Rs 159859 cr) to 2022-23 (209752 cr) are anything to go by, then J&K's economy is not only resilient, but also one that can bounce back and progress in difficult times quicker than that of most other State/UT economies, because, as the cliché goes its fundamentals are strong. GSDP during this period grew phenomenally at around 23%.

In fact, during the past decade, GSDP has grown substantially. From Rs 98367 cr in the fiscal year 2014-2015, GSDP at current prices in the year 2022-23 (IR) is expected to be Rs 209752 cr. This represents an increase of 53%. GSDP is projected to grow at more than 10% in the next fiscal year and is projected in absolute terms to be Rs. 230727 cr.

Although, there may be an argument that GSDP at current prices may not reflect the true economic growth in the J&K as it is not inflation adjusted, the gross capital formation,

which represents outlays on addition to fixed assets and net changes in the levels of inventories has shot up from Rs 8251 cr in the year 2018-19 to Rs 9739 cr in 2020-21.

GSDP growth is a function of growth in public and private expenditure. This is, therefore, best captured by higher than normal public and private sector spends over the same period. While capex in public sector from 2018-19 (Rs 11114 cr) to 2021-22 (Rs 35208 cr) has registered an increase of 68%, which is the highest increase in the last 10 years, private sector spending has also moved toe to toe with the public sector capex.

This is borne out by the private sector contribution to gross value added (GVA), which is tentatively expected to be 75% (assumed figure) in the year 2020-21. This figure was 63% in the year 2019-20.

Consistent GSDP growth has expectedly made J&K richer. Today the per capita income of J&K is Rs 165755, which is roughly equivalent to 2072 USD. Per capita income in 2018-19 was Rs 118828 which roughly equals 1747 USD at the conversion rate in vogue then. Increase in per capita income has made average resident of the UT richer and today he has on an average 300 USD more to spend.

Wherever GSDP grows, people end up having more money in their pockets, thus, improving their living standards. Nowhere is it more evident than in the growth of more eateries, more malls, and stores of merchandise in J&K over the last few years.

These places of shoppers and consumers would not have come up or conversely the existing ones wouldn't have stayed in business, if they did not have consumers. And there would not be any consumers, if the



extra money generated by the recent economic growth had not found its way into the pockets of the consumers.

This assertion is further corroborated by the headcount ratio (people below poverty line) in J&K. Today amongst 36 states and UTs in the country, J&K is the 16th best performing UT. Although it's not something to gloat over and there is a fair bit of ground to cover, the situation is not as bad as it is generally thought to be.

On the top of it is of course the GST growth story, which has even belied our wildest imagination! GST growth in J&K from 2017-18 to 2021-22 has followed an upward trajectory except in the year 2019-20 when it slightly dipped.

In terms of the actual achievement vis-a-vis the annual targets, GST collections in UT have

gone from 57.14% in 2017-18 to 93.47% in 2018-19 while they have soared to a high of 98.29% in 2020-21 and to 106.78% in 2021-22.

Higher GST collections are reflective of higher than normal growth of businesses and businesses grow only when they have consumers to serve! No business grows to create idle capacities or inventories, which are not routinely getting replaced.

The naysayers though would have us believe otherwise. Those with a little or no knowledge of fiscal numbers and the intricacies of the GSDP, headcount ratio, tax rises etc, would say that these numbers tell half the story or no story at all. They say that J&K's economy has shrunk and that people have become poorer! Where are the stats to support that argument?

There is another argument that is made by

these people about unemployment rate in J&K being the highest it's ever been. This can't be far from truth!

MOSPI data on unemployment in J&K reveals a declining trend from January-September, 2022. While unemployment rate in J&K has decreased from January 2022 onwards, the national unemployment rate painfully has gone in other direction, albeit not linearly, over the corresponding period. This is as per the CMIE data, which is often used by some people to clobber the government.

As far employment initiatives undertaken by the government, around 21000 youth have been absorbed in the public sector in the last two years. In addition, 202749 self employment opportunities have been created so far during the current financial year and this number is expected to rise by the time the current fiscal year draws to a close. In fact, there has been a steady increase in the creation of self employment opportunities in J&K from 2017-18 (40723) to 2021-22 (217864).

How would an increase in employment on sustained basis be even possible if J&K was not growing? And to those who are saying that there has been no employment created in J&K, well, they only need to look at numbers. Pythagoras reminds us that numbers rule the universe. He also has a word for those who don't rely numbers to make their case: "Be silent or let thy words be worth more than silence." There's a message in this for all, but for this though they will have to look beyond rhetoric!

The writer is a Milken IFC fellow on capital markets

Amit Shah Visits Manipur Border Town In Bid To Restore Normalcy

■ HT News Network

New Delhi: Union minister Amit Shah held a review meeting in this border town on Wednesday to take stock of the security situation in the northeastern state which has been witnessing sporadic violence for nearly a month.

Amit Shah, on the third day of his visit to the state, also met a delegation of the Kuki community and a team representing others communities, and they expressed strong support for the government's initiatives to restore normalcy.

"Took stock of the security situation with senior officials in Moreh (Manipur)," he tweeted.

A home ministry spokesperson said Mr Shah held a security review meeting in the Moreh town, bordering Myanmar.

"Held a meeting with the delegations of Kuki and other communities at Moreh. They expressed strong support for the government's initiatives to restore normalcy in Manipur," Mr Shah said in another tweet.



The home minister is on a four-day visit to Manipur and making efforts to restore peace to the state.

On Tuesday, the Meitei and Kuki groups expressed commitment to peace and assured that they would work for restoring normalcy in the trouble-torn state.

Mr Shah had also held a security review meeting with senior officials of the Manipur Police, Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and Army in Imphal on Tuesday. He had said peace and prosperity of Manipur are the government's top priority and instructed them to strictly deal with

any activities that disturb peace.

This is the first time the home minister is visiting the northeastern state since the ethnic clashes began in Manipur on May 3. The state witnessed a sudden spurt in clashes and firing between militants and security forces on Sunday, after a relative lull for over a fortnight. The death toll from clashes has gone up to 80, officials said.

The ethnic violence first broke out after a 'Tribal Solidarity March' was organised in the hill districts on May 3 to protest the Meitei community's

demand for Scheduled Tribe (ST) status.

The violence was preceded by tension over the eviction of Kuki villagers from reserve forest land, which had led to a series of smaller agitations. This is the first time the home minister is visiting the northeastern state since the ethnic clashes began in Manipur on May 3. The state witnessed a sudden spurt in clashes and firing between militants and security forces on Sunday, after a relative lull for over a fortnight. The death toll from clashes has gone up to 80, officials said.

This was the government's first comment on the issue since the champions were manhandled by

"Wait For Probe To End": Minister To Wrestlers As Protests Intensify

■ HT News Network

New Delhi: Union sports minister Anurag Thakur today accused the protesting wrestlers of "changing goalposts" and in the government's first comment on the issue in recent days, reiterated that they should not take any step that "hurts the sport or other athletes".

"The athletes themselves had said that the platform is not for doing politics. But later political parties came and went and shared this platform," the minister told reporters today, referring to the visits by opposition leaders to the wrestlers' protest site in Delhi's Jantar Mantar.

Declaring he would not comment on it, the minister added, "I'll ask the athletes to wait for the conclusion of Delhi Police's investigation. The Delhi Police has informed the Supreme Court and filed an FIR (First Information Report). Until the investigation is complete, do not take any step which will harm the sport and the players".

This was the government's first comment on the issue since the champions were manhandled by



the Delhi Police on Sunday, when they tried to hold a protest near the new parliament which was inaugurated that day by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Visuals of Vinesh Phogat, Olympian Sakshi Malik and others being pushed and pulled and pinned to the ground by Delhi Police personnel, had shocked the nation. The police later filed a case against the wrestlers and closed the Jantar Mantar protest site to them.

In absence of any intervention or comments from the government, the wrestlers had gone to Haridwar yesterday to consign their medals to the river Ganga. But they postponed their decision after requests from farmer leader Rakesh Tikait.

Mr Tikait and farm and khap leaders have sought five days to resolve the issue.

Mr Thakur today said the government had accepted the wrestlers' demand for a committee to probe the issue and removed the federation chief against whom they were protesting.

The government, he added, has spent crores on training of the athletes and the improvement of sports infrastructure. Even now, the Wrestling Federation of India is working on the directions of the Indian Olympics Association, he said. The wrestlers have been on the warpath since January, demanding action against WFI chief Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh,

whom they accused of sexually harassing seven athletes, including a minor.

Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, a BJP MP who has denied any wrongdoing, today asserted that would accept any punishment if the allegations against him were proven.

"If a single allegation against me is proven, I will hang myself. If you (wrestlers) have any evidence, present it to the Court, and I am ready to accept any punishment," he said. Declaring he would not comment on it, the minister added, "I'll ask the athletes to wait for the conclusion of Delhi Police's investigation. The Delhi Police has informed the Supreme Court and filed an FIR (First Information Report). Until the investigation is complete, do not take any step which will harm the sport and the players".

This was the government's first comment on the issue since the champions were manhandled by the Delhi Police on Sunday, when they tried to hold a protest near the new parliament which was inaugurated that day by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

PM Modi To Visit Bihar In June Ahead Of Opposition Leaders' Meeting

■ HT News Network

Patna: Ahead of the opposition leaders' meeting, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Bihar in June and is likely to address a public meeting, Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP)'s Bihar unit president Samrat Choudhary confirmed.

"BJP is doing 'Jan Sampark Abhiyan' from May 30 to June 30 across Bihar to add more people to the party, and for that, we have invited PM Narendra Modi to visit the state. We got a positive response from PM, and are looking forward to his visit," Samrat Choudhary said on Wednesday.

"The date and venue will be finalised later but we have received a confirmation regarding PM Modi's visit to the state," he added.

Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, who has taken upon himself the task of uniting Opposition forces against the BJP-led government at the Centre ahead of the 2024 Lok Sabha election, will chair a meeting of Opposition parties in Patna on June 12.

EAM to visit South Africa to attend BRICS meet, and Namibia

■ HT News Network

New Delhi, May 31 (UNI) External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar will be on an official visit to South Africa from June 1-3 to attend the BRICS Foreign Ministers meeting, and to Namibia from June 4-6, in the first visit by an Indian External Affairs Minister to the southern African nation. In South Africa, besides participating in the BRICS Foreign Ministers meeting in Cape Town, EAM will also hold a bilateral meeting with his South African counterpart Naledi Pandor.

He will call on President Cyril Ramaphosa and is expected to hold bilateral meetings with other BRICS Foreign Ministers and participating 'Friends of BRICS' Ministers from other countries. He will also have an interaction with the Indian Diaspora in Cape Town, a statement said. EAM Jaishankar will then visit Namibia in the first visit by an External Affairs Minister of India to Namibia. During the visit EAM will call on the top leadership of the country and also meet with other Ministers of the Government.

India, Bahrain hold Foreign Office Consultations

■ HT News Network

New Delhi, May 31 (UNI) India and Bahrain held the Sixth Round of Foreign Office Consultations in Bahrain, during which the two sides reviewed the bilateral cooperation in the spheres of political, security, space, trade, renewable energy, fintech among other things.

The FOC were co-chaired by Dr. Ausaf Sayeed, Secretary (CPV & OIA) on the Indian side, and Dr. Shaikh Abdullah bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Undersecretary (Political Affairs) of the Bahrain Foreign Ministry. The Indian Embassy in Bahrain said in tweets:

"6th round of India-Bahrain Foreign Office Consultations were held in Bahrain, co-chaired by H.E. Dr. Ausaf Sayeed, Secretary (CPV & OIA) @MEAIndia, and H.E. Dr. Shaikh Abdullah bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, Undersecretary (Political Affairs)

Gyanvapi Case To Continue In Court, Mosque Committee's Challenge Rejected

■ HT News Network

Varanasi: In a setback for the mosque committee in one of the main cases involving Varanasi's Gyanvapi Mosque, the Allahabad High Court on Wednesday dismissed a plea that requested it to scrap a civil suit being heard in a local court.

The lawsuit filed by a group of Hindu women worshippers seeking the right to pray in the Gyanvapi mosque complex in Varanasi was valid, the court ruled, allowing the case to continue in the Varanasi District Court.

The litigants in the case - Lakshmi Devi, Rekha Pathak, Sita Sahu and Manju Vyas - had filed the case in August 2021 seeking the right to regularly worship goddess Shringar Gauri and other deities whose idols they claimed were located in the mosque's complex.

The maintainability of this case was upheld by the Varanasi district judge in September 2022. The Anjuman Intezamia Masjid (AIM) Committee and the Uttar Pradesh Sunni Waqf Board had petitioned the high court to overturn the September 2022 ruling, arguing that it is not maintainable under the Places of Worship Act of



1991 and the Central Waqf Act of 1995. The Allahabad High Court, after hearing the arguments, had reserved its decision on December 23, 2022. The case was one of the several spawned from a ruling in April 2021, when the Varanasi court directed the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to conduct a comprehensive survey of the mosque complex following a petition by Hindu groups. A pre-existing legal order has allowed hundreds of Hindu women to symbolically worship the goddess Shringar Gauri once a year in the complex. A pre-existing legal order has allowed hundreds of Hindu women to symbolically worship the goddess Shringar Gauri once a year in the complex.

Karnataka turning into crucial chessboard in runup to 2024 election

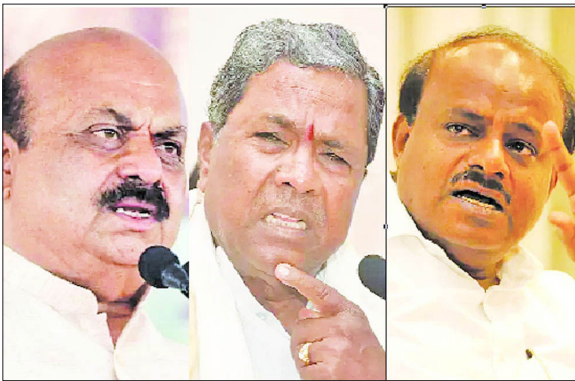
■ By BD Narayaannkar

Bengaluru, May 31 (UNI) With the internecine wranglings in Karnataka Congress and JDS levelling allegations of electoral malpractice against the ruling party, Karnataka is fast becoming a crucial chessboard in the runup to the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

An intense power struggle is ensuing between Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar, which casts a shadow of uncertainty over the party's future prospects in Karnataka.

A distinct factional divide is apparent, and it is reflected in CM Siddaramaiah's consistent attempts to validate his authority, amidst the intermittent raking up of power-sharing formula by Shivakumar's camp.

These constant attempts to assert his authority through his outspoken opposition to moral policing and the heft to revoke hijab



ban raises doubts about Congress government's stability in Karnataka and efficacy of Siddaramaiah's leadership.

In a striking contrast, Shivakumar appears to have been marginalised within the party's rank, despite bringing Congress back to power in the state with strategic acumen. He finds himself overshadowed by senior Congress leaders, which is resulting in internal discontentment and erosion of support.

This also reflects the party's inability to utilise the full potential of its talented members like Shivakumar, who is known for his

organisational skills and political maneuverings.

Adding salt to the wounds is Priyank Kharge's rise, who is strategically positioning himself as an alarming force in the state politics, which is reflected in his strong statements against RSS and Bajrang Dal, threatening them of strict action if they "tried" to disturb peace in the state.

There are also media reports of his tussle with MB Patil to get the IT-BT portfolio by arguing that he had held it in the previous Congress government and did a good job. Patil, on the flipside, argued that the ministry should be given to

him as the IT sector comes under the industries sector. Ultimately CM Siddaramaiah allotted the portfolio to himself, ending the stalemate.

Priyank Kharge's assertion is no surprise, given the hierarchical system that the Congress party practises since its beginning. After all, he is the son of Mallikarjun Kharge, the incumbent All India Congress President.

As the Congress is gripped with internal fighting, Deve Gowda and HD Kumaraswamy led JDS have adopted a two-pronged strategy to fight the grand old party after being ripped apart in the recent assembly election. Firstly, the JDS supremo Deve Gowda sent a strong message of supporting the NDA government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi by attending the inauguration of the New Parliament Complex. Secondly, it actively is exposing the electoral malpractices of the Congress party in the just-concluded state election.

'PM Modi thinks he knows more than ...': Rahul Gandhi

■ HT News Network

New Delhi, May 31 (UNI) Stepping up its attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has said there is a group of people who think they know more than "God", and the PM is one such "specimen".

"We have a group of people in India who are absolutely convinced that they know everything. They think, maybe, they know more than God. Our Prime Minister is one such specimen," he said while addressing a gathering of the Indian diaspora in San Francisco in United States, on Tuesday.

Attacking the PM, Rahul further said, "I think if you sat Modi ji down next to God, Modi ji will start explaining to God, how the 'universe' works. These are all ... But, this is what is going on."

"We have a group of people who think they understand everything. They can speak to scientist and explain science to them, they can speak to historians and explain history. They can explain 'warfare' to the Army. At the heart of it, is the 'mediocrity'. They actually don't understand anything," he added. Citing what necessitated him to do the 'Bharat Jodo Yatra',



Rahul said, "All the instruments that were needed to do politics in India, they were controlled by the BJP-RSS. People are threatened, cases are put upon people, agencies are used. In some way it had become difficult to act politically. Therefore, we decided to walk from Kashmir to Kanyakumari."

The Yatra-led by the former party president which had started from Tamil Nadu's Kanyakumari in September last year, traversed through several states including Karnataka and concluded in Jammu and Kashmir in January. The party had said that was its "most decisive mass contact programme". "Government tried everything to stop 'Bharat Jodo Yatra'. They used all its strength to stop the Yatra. They used police, but nothing worked and impact of the Yatra had increased," he said.

"Some MLAs From E Shinde Faction In Touch With Team Uddhav": Sanjay Raut

■ HT News Network

Mumbai: Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Sanjay Raut today claimed some lawmakers from the Shiv Sena headed by Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde were in touch with the Uddhav Thackeray-led party.

His remarks came a day after an editorial in the Shiv Sena (UBT) mouthpiece 'Saamana' claimed 22 MLAs and nine MPs from rival Shiv Sena were feeling suffocated due to "step-motherly treatment" by the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) and could quit the group led by CM Shinde.

Asked whether lawmakers from the rival Sena camp are in touch with the Shiv Sena (UBT), Mr Raut, who is the party's spokesperson, told reporters here, "Communication is always there. They (those from the Shinde camp) ventilate their grievance, but it is not right to tell this publicly. They have made a mistake (to leave Uddhav Thackeray) and they have to handle it."

"Those in the Shinde group will have to contest on the BJP symbol. This is the stand of the BJP. We have this information," the Rajya Sabha member further said.

Latching on to Shiv Sena MP Gajanan Kirtikar's remark that his party was getting step-motherly treatment, the editorial in 'Saamana' on Tuesday dubbed the Shinde group MLAs and MPs as "hens and cocks" imprisoned in the BJP's coop and added that it cannot be said when they could be slaughtered. The Thackeray-headed Shiv Sena (then undivided) exited the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in 2019 and joined hands with the Congress and the Nationalist Congress Party to form a government in Maharashtra. Last year, Mr Shinde and 39 other MLAs revolted against the Shiv Sena leadership, leading to a split in the party and collapse of the Thackeray government. Mr Shinde subsequently joined hands with the BJP to form government.

JKEDI to act as bridge between Industry & students: Director JKEDI

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 31: The Director, Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI) today presided over an interaction program organized by Government Polytechnic for Women, Srinagar. The event aimed to foster a strong connection between the industry and students, with JKEDI playing a pivotal role as the bridge. The interaction program witnessed an active participation of students and faculty members. It provided

a platform for students to engage directly with experts, enabling them to gain valuable insights into the professional world and its requirements. The event also served as an opportunity for JKEDI to understand the aspirations and potential of the talented youth in J&K. Speaking at the program, Ajaz Ahmad Bhat, Director, JKEDI emphasized the Institute's commitment to nurturing entrepreneurship and fostering employability skills among the youth of the region. "JKEDI is playing a crucial role in bridging the gap between the indus-



try and students. We will guide you and inform you about various Government Initiatives of Startup policy, incubation facilities and

various entrepreneurship related initiatives", he said. "Our Institute has been actively working towards fostering an entre-

preneurial ecosystem in J&K. By connecting students with industry professionals, the Institute seeks to inspire and support budding entrepreneurs, encouraging them to explore innovative business ideas and venture into new domains," he added. The Director expressed gratitude to the Government Polytechnic for Women, Srinagar, for hosting the interactive program and providing a platform for this fruitful engagement. He also extended his appreciation to all the Faculty members and student participants for their active involvement in the event.

"Such programs promote the discovery of new synergies and provide a platform and access to relevant knowledge which leads to competitive advantage. This will help the students to develop higher-level thinking, oral communication, self-management, and leadership skills," said Mohammad Shafi Bhat, Principal, Government Polytechnic for Women, Srinagar. Hakim Mohammad Ilyas, In-charge Incubation and Entrepreneurship Cell, Faculty members Sabina Nazir and Masrat Farooq among others were present on the occasion.

Kishtwar: 3200 Metric Ton illegally extracted Sand seized in Atholi

HT News Network

KISHTWAR, MAY 31: A joint team of Officers of different enforcement departments today carried out a successful operation against the illegal mining here under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner, Dr Devansh Yadav. The team comprising District Mineral Officer, Dr. Brijesh Manhas, Tehsildar Satish Rana and S.I Amrinder Singh seized a whopping 3200 metric ton illegally extracted sand found dumped on the roadside in Tehsil Atholi of the Paddar Sub division of District Kishtwar.

To curb the rampant illegal extraction of minor minerals and safeguard the environment, the enforcement authorities have launched a major crackdown in the District. Upon inspection, it was established that the perpetrators had violated the law, prompting the Enforcement team to take decisive action. As a consequence, the offenders have been directed to present themselves at the District Mineral Office on Monday, 5th June 2023, for the compounding of the offense. The DMO Kishtwar has issued a stern warning to all potential wrongdoers, making it abundantly clear that any future involvement in illegal extraction activities will not be tolerated. Meanwhile, the district administration has stepped up surveillance in the areas prone to illegal mining and transportation of construction material. The mule track leading from the Main road to the riverbanks of Chenab at Navnatnoo area in Tehsil Nagseni has been identified as a potential site for illegal activities. The District Administration is actively monitoring the situation and has taken necessary measures to ensure strict adherence to the law. The enforcement actions carried out by the district administration exemplify its commitment towards maintaining ecological balance in the district.

Training/ Interactive session on e-Office held at Kulgam

HT News Network

KULGAM, MAY 31: On the directions of the Deputy Commissioner Kulgam Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat, a training cum interactive session of ministerial staff of various departments on e-Office was today held at the mini-secretariat Kulgam.

The training cum interactive session was presided over by the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Kulgam, Viqar Ahmed Giri.

The technical experts from NIC Kulgam gave a detailed presentation on the steps involved in operation/usage of e-Office, dos and don'ts of the process and troubleshooting tips to ensure on-spot resolution of any technical glitches and errors. Among others, ACR Mir Imtiyaz-ul-Aziz and other officers were present at the event.

DLSA Srinagar conducts Door to Door Campaign Raises awareness about the harmful effects of Tobacco consumption

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 31: On the eve of Anti Tobacco Day, District Legal Services Authority (DLSA) Srinagar today conducted a door to door campaign aimed at raising awareness about the harmful effects of Tobacco consumption and

educating citizens about the health hazards of smoking and other forms of Tobacco use. The door to door campaign was conducted by PLV's of DLSA Srinagar under the guidance of Chairman DLSA Srinagar, Jawad Ahmad. The Chairman DLSA emphasized the need for more awareness campaigns to

combat the growing problem of Tobacco consumption in the society. He further stated that Tobacco consumption is a serious health hazard that needs to be addressed at all levels. With these campaigns we are trying to reach out to as many people as possible with the message of quitting Tobacco and lead-

ing a healthy lifestyle, he added. Secretary DLSA Srinagar, Jahangir Bakshi expressed his hope that these small though effective initiatives will serve as a wakeup call for all Tobacco users to quit Tobacco and join hands with us against the use of Tobacco by working together.

Forest Department organizes one-day Training workshop on 'Continuous Forest Inventory'

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, MAY 31: A one day Training cum Capacity workshop was today organized by J&K Forest Department on Continuous Forest Inventory for Forest Officers at Dak Bungalow, Anantnag.

The program was organized in collaboration with Forest Demarcation Division, Kashmir Region and Photo Interpretation Division in which about 40 Officers and officials participated.

During the inaugural session, Conservator of Forests, South Forest Circle, Irfan Ali Shah informed that Forests covers about 48 percent of total land area in the J&K, so inventory based assessment of the forest resources is of utmost importance in the present scenario.

He stressed that data and information are required to manage a renewable natural resource such as forest sustainability and this information is largely obtained through forest inventories which provides the data for planning, monitoring, evaluation,



research, growth and yield, biodiversity, and timber sale.

Shah informed that traditionally, the Forest Officers along with Revenue Officers demarcated the forests using traditional equipment's but with the advent of modern technology, our Foresters need to adopt themselves with the advanced technologies like GPS, GIS, PDA, formation of KMZ and KML files and even drone technology. He informed that these training programs are a step in this direction.

The CoF directed all forest officers to ensure Inventorization of Forest vegetation at specified grid points strictly in accordance with Forest Records and scientific data.

He informed that under the deliverable theme "Kabza Mukht Janglat" or encroachment free forests, this year till now 208 Kanals of forest land has been evicted out in South Kashmir. Further 201 numbers of Forests have been surveyed under deliverable, "Digitize, Fence, Secure" last year. The Demarcation Division itself is going to install hundreds of BPs including Main Line and Check Line BPs.

He informed that different survey teams of forest officials constituted to ascertain the existence of already installed BPs across South Kashmir have completed this exercise last week and a report has been submitted in this regard already with the headquar-

ters. He said with this pace, we will be able to achieve the complete consolidation and settlement of forest boundaries in South Kashmir in the next 2-3 years.

He also envisioned use of differential Global Positioning System technology for ascertaining location of grid or survey points more accurately with greater precision.

The Technical session was taken by Shabir Ahmad Dar I/c ICT Lab PI Division and briefed about Technology advancement in vegetation surveys.

In the afternoon, the trainees were given exposure to various field exercises and skills viz Forest vegetal analysis in Mattan Forests of Lidder Forest Division.

The programme was also attended by Divisional Forest officers of South Forest Circle including Dr. Mehraj Ahmad Sheikh, DFO Lidder Forest Division and Mohammad Ramzan Mir, DFO Anantnag who spoke on different aspects of Forest management planning.

Range officers, Rejs, media fraternity and other forest officials.

ICDS Doda bids adieu to retiring DPO

HT News Network

DODA, MAY 31: Staff of Integrated Child Development Projects (ICDS) of all the 8 projects of Doda and the staff of District Programme Office ICDS Doda bade farewell to Shahida Parveen, DPO ICDS Doda on her superannuation from government services after rendering 40 years of unblemished and exemplary services.

Among other postings, she served as Supervisor and CDPO- ICDS in various projects across the UT, Deputy Director Employment Doda, GM DIC Doda, and DPO ICDS Doda.

Many officers and staff members spoke about her achievements and services she rendered in the ICDS Department and her people friendly approach during her tenure in other departments.

In her speech, the retiring Officer urged the colleagues to take it as an opportunity to serve the people, especially children, adolescent girls, and pregnant women.

World No Tobacco Day observed across District Doda

HT News Network

DODA, MAY 31: A series of awareness programmes were held today under the aegis of District Health Society Doda to observe World No Tobacco Day.

The programme was organized on the theme, "We need food, not tobacco" as a part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebration. Two major events were held at ANMT School Doda, SDH Bhaderwah, besides in other medical blocks of the District. At Bhaderwah, the programme was chaired by CMO, Dr Abdul Hamid Zargar, in presence of BMO. The CMO highlighted the importance of the day and said that tobacco has been clinically proven as the main cause of cancer which affects millions across the world. He further said tobacco is considered as one of the major threats to public health in the 21st century. The CMO Doda also called for creating mass awareness about the hazards of smoking and its other forms. He stressed upon the voluntary organizations to organize programmes and help in sensitizing the society about the effects of smoking on public health.

The participants pledged to spread the message in the society in a big way and save the human lives from the dreaded diseases like cancer, tuberculosis caused due to smoking. At ANMT School Doda, the programme was chaired by Principal Anusuya Bhan.

The speakers said that the students and youth are the best ambassadors to circulate the message and create awareness to develop drug and tobacco free society. Awareness rallies were also organized by the health department, with the active participation of school students.

Anti Tobacco Day DLSA Samba holds awareness program for students of GHS Badhori

HT News Network

SAMBA, MAY 31: Under able aegis of JKLSA and as per the Action plan for the month of May, 2023 issued by Jammu & Kashmir Legal Services Authority (JKLSA) and also under the radiant guidance of Yesh Paul Kotwal, Chairman District Legal Services Authority, Samba (Pr. Distt. & Sessions Judge Samba), District Legal Services Authority, Samba today organised an awareness program in the Government High School, Badhori, Raya, to mark the observance of "Anti Tobacco Day" (2023) under the theme "We need Food not Tobacco." Dr. Geetanjali Rajput, MLHP, Block Purmundal was the resource person. She highlighted the hazards of smoking and other tobacco products and said quitting this habit is best for the health of an individual addicted to it. She also educated the student participants about the health risks associated with tobacco use, including smoking and smokeless tobacco products. Rekha Kapoor Nischal, Secretary, DLSA Samba also spoke as to how a balanced diet is essential for students in order to maintain their physical and mental well being and how education plays an important role in eradicating the evils like drug abuse and use of Tobacco. The objective of organizing the awareness camp was to raise the awareness among the students on the risks posed by tobacco smoking and magnitude.

DIO Kupwara Mohammad Yousuf Mir accorded warm send-Off DC Kupwara appreciates services of outgoing officer.

HT News Network

KUPWARA, MAY 31 : Mohammad Yousuf Mir, District Information Officer (DIO), Kupwara, who attained retirement today after serving for more than 40 years in department was accorded a warm farewell at District Information & Public Relations Office, Kupwara in an impressive and well attended function.

The function was presided over by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kupwara, Dr. Doifode Sagar Dattatray; besides Assistant Director Information, Kashmir, Mohammad Aslam Khan ; Senior functionaries of the department, Officials of District Information Centre Kupwara and Tehsil Information Centres of Karnah and Handwara participated in farewell function. The Deputy Commissioner commended the role of the outgoing DIO and said that the officer showed his best performance and worked professionally in the district. Wish-



ing him a prosperous post retirement life DC said that "I have found outgoing officer cool, calm, soft spoken but very professional and dedicated". DC said that outgoing DIO has dedicated the prime period of his life for the Government and department in service delivery". The Assistant Director Information, Mohamad Aslam Khan in his speech said that other staff of information department should replicate the professionalism and dedication of outgoing District Information officer.

Inspiring Banker Mohammad Abdullah Qureshi Welcomed Home After Retirement.

Zubair Qureshi

The retirement of Mohammad Abdullah Qureshi, a highly esteemed Senior Manager of J&K Bank's Sogam Kupwara Branch, was celebrated with great enthusiasm and heartfelt joy in his native village of Baghbella Karnah, a border tehsil of Kupwara district. Having dedicated years of service to the banking sector, Qureshi's contribution and commitment were honored by his family, friends, and community members. Mohammad Abdullah Qureshi, known for his professionalism and diligence, held various positions within the esteemed J&K Bank during his illustrious career. His expertise and leadership in the banking sector have been instrumental in driving growth and facilitating financial services for the local community.

As news spread of Qureshi's retirement, Baghbella reverberated with excitement and anticipation. The village, nestled in the picturesque landscape of Karnah Border Tehsil, eagerly awaited his return to cele-



brate this significant milestone in his life. The homecoming event was marked by a warm reception, as community members and well-wishers gathered to express their gratitude and appreciation for Qureshi's dedicated service. The air was filled with joyous chants, heartfelt applause, and expressions of admiration for his achievements. While talking to Zubair Qureshi, he stated, "I am deeply humbled and overwhelmed by the warm welcome I have received from my village. It is a moment of great joy to be back among my family, friends, and the people who have always supported me throughout my career. I am grateful for their love and encouragement."

How do kidney stones happen? Its risk factors, and more

Each year, more than half a million people go to emergency rooms for kidney stone problems. It is estimated that one in ten people will have a kidney stone at some time in their lives.

The prevalence of kidney stones in the United States increased from 3.8% in the late 1970s to 8.8% in the late 2000s. The prevalence of kidney stones was 10% during 2013–2014. The risk of kidney stones is about 11% in men and 9% in women. Other diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and obesity may increase the risk for kidney stones.

What is a kidney stone?

A kidney stone is a hard object that is made from chemicals in the urine. There are four types of kidney stones: calcium oxalate, uric acid, struvite, and cystine. A kidney stone may be treated with shock-wave lithotripsy, uteroscopy, percutaneous nephrolithotomy or nephrolithotripsy. Common symptoms include severe pain in lower back, blood in your urine, nausea, vomiting, fever and chills, or urine that smells bad or looks cloudy.

Urine has various wastes dissolved in it. When there is too much waste in too little liquid, crystals begin to form. The crystals attract other elements and join together to form a solid that will get larger unless it is passed out of the body with the urine. Usually, these chemicals are eliminated in the urine by the body's master chemist: the kidney. In most people, having enough liquid washes them out or other chemicals in urine stop a stone from forming. The stone-forming chemicals are calcium, oxalate, urate, cystine, xanthine, and phosphate. After it is formed, the stone may stay in the kidney or travel down the urinary tract into the ureter. Sometimes, tiny stones move out of the body in the urine without causing too much pain. But stones that don't move may cause a back-up of urine in the kidney, ureter, the bladder, or the urethra. This is what causes the pain.

Symptoms

Some kidney stones are as small as a grain of sand. Others are as large as a pebble. A few are as large as a golf ball! As a general rule, the larger the stone, the more noticeable are the symptoms.

The symptoms could be one or more of the following:

severe pain on either side of your lower back
more vague pain or stomach ache that doesn't go away
blood in the urine
nausea or vomiting
fever and chills
urine that smells bad or looks cloudy

The kidney stone starts to hurt when it causes irritation or blockage. This builds rapidly to extreme pain. In most cases, kidney stones pass without causing dam-



age—but usually not without causing a lot of pain. Pain relievers may be the only treatment needed for small stones. Other treatment may be needed, especially for those stones that cause lasting symptoms or other complications. In severe cases, however, surgery may be required.

Causes

Possible causes include drinking too little water, exercise (too much or too little), obesity, weight loss surgery, or eating food with too much salt or sugar. Infections and family history might be important in some people. Eating too much fructose correlates with increasing risk of developing a kidney stone. Fructose can be found in table sugar and high fructose corn syrup.

Types

There are four main types of stones: Calcium oxalate: The most common type of kidney stone which is created when calcium combines with oxalate in the urine. Inadequate calcium and fluid intake, as well as other conditions, may contribute to their formation.

Uric acid: This is another common type of kidney stone. Foods such as organ meats and shellfish have high concentrations of a natural chemical compound known as purines. High purine intake leads to a higher production of monosodium urate, which, under the right conditions, may form stones in the kidneys. The formation of these types of stones tends to run in families.

Struvite: These stones are less common and are caused by infections in the upper urinary tract.

Cystine: These stones are rare and tend to run in families. What are Cystine Stones?

Diagnosis

Diagnosis of a kidney stone starts with a medical history, physical examination, and imaging tests. Your doctors will want to know the exact size and shape of the kidney stones. This can be done with a high resolution CT scan from the kidneys down to the bladder or an x-ray called a "KUB

x-ray" (kidney-ureter-bladder x-ray) which will show the size of the stone and its position. The KUB x-ray is often obtained by the surgeons to determine if the stone is suitable for shockwave treatment. The KUB test may be used to monitor your stone before and after treatment, but the CT scan is usually preferred for diagnosis. In some people, doctors will also order an intravenous pyelogram or IVP, a special type of X-ray of the urinary system that is taken after injecting a dye.

Second, your doctors will decide how to treat your stone. The health of your kidneys will be evaluated by blood tests and urine tests. Your overall health, and the size and location of your stone will be considered.

Later, your doctor will want to find the cause of the stone. The stone will be analyzed after it comes out of your body, and your doctor will test your blood for calcium, phosphorus and uric acid. The doctor may also ask that you collect your urine for 24 hours to test for calcium and uric acid.

Treatment

The treatment for kidney stones is similar in children and adults. You may be asked to drink a lot of water. Doctors try to let the stone pass without surgery. You may also get medication to help make your urine less acid. But if it is too large, or if it blocks the flow of urine, or if there is a sign of infection, it is removed with surgery.

Shock-wave lithotripsy is a noninvasive procedure that uses high-energy sound waves to blast the stones into fragments that are then more easily passed out in the urine. In ureteroscopy, an endoscope is inserted through the ureter to retrieve or obliterate the stone. Rarely, for very large or complicated stones, doctors will use percutaneous nephrolithotomy/nephrolithotripsy.

I think I have a stone. What do I do?

See a doctor as soon as possible. You may be asked to drink extra fluid in an attempt to flush out the stone out in the urine. If you strain your urine and can save a piece of the stone that has passed, bring it to your

doctor. Or, the stone may need to be removed with surgery.

Why do doctors examine the contents of the stone?

There are four types of stones. Studying the stone can help understand why you have it and how to reduce the risk of further stones. The most common type of stone contains calcium. Calcium is a normal part of a healthy diet. The kidney usually removes extra calcium that the body doesn't need. Often people with stones keep too much calcium. This calcium combines with waste products like oxalate to form a stone. The most common combination is called calcium oxalate.

Less common types of stones are: Infection-related stones, containing magnesium and ammonia called struvite stones and stones formed from monosodium urate crystals, called uric acid stones, which might be related to obesity and dietary factors. The rarest type of stone is a cystine stone that tends to run in families.

Consequences

Kidney stones increase the risk of developing chronic kidney disease. If you have had one stone, you are at increased risk of having another stone. Those who have developed one stone are at approximately 50% risk for developing another within 5 to 7 years.

Prevention

Drinking enough fluid will help keep your urine less concentrated with waste products. Darker urine is more concentrated, so your urine should appear very light yellow to clear if you are well hydrated. Most of the fluid you drink should be water. Most people should drink more than 12 glasses of water a day. Speak with a healthcare professional about the right amount of water that's best for you. Water is better than soda, sports drinks or coffee/tea. If you exercise or if it is hot outside, you should drink more. Sugar and high-fructose corn syrup should be limited to small quantities.

Eat more fruits and vegetables, which make the urine less acid. When the urine is less acid, then stones may be less able to form. Animal protein produces urine that has more acid, which can then increase your risk for kidney stones.

You can reduce excess salt in your diet. What foods are high in salt? Everyone thinks of salty potato chips and French fries. Those should be rarely eaten. There are other products that are salty: sandwich meats, canned soups, packaged meals, and even sports drinks. You want to try to get to a normal weight if you are overweight. But, high-protein weight loss diets that include high amounts of animal-based protein, as well as crash diets can add to the risk of stone formation. You need adequate protein, but it needs to be part of a balanced diet. Seek guidance from a registered dietitian when embarking on a weight loss diet or any dietary interventions.

NEWS

Boost Your Thyroid Health With These 6 Nutritionist-Approved Herbs



The thyroid gland, often overlooked yet crucial, plays a vital role in our body. Shaped like a butterfly, this gland secretes hormones that regulate essential functions such as food metabolism, weight management, sleep patterns, mood stability, and mental well-being, including anxiety and depression. Giving attention to specific foods and nutrients like iodine, protein, and healthy fats promotes optimal thyroid function. Lovneet Batra suggests that incorporating certain herbs into one's diet can support thyroid health. Adding a touch of fresh or dried herbs to a dish not only enhances its flavors but also provides added health benefits. Here are some herbs that have the potential to improve thyroid function:

1. Ashwagandha

This nutritional herb contains alkaloids, steroidal, and saponin chemicals, which are essential for active hormonal pathways in the system. It involves increasing the production of the T4 hormone with the help of the conversion of T4 to T3.

2. Ginger Root

Ginger has numerous health benefits. And it can even help relieve persistent hypothyroid symptoms. Ginger also has other beneficial effects in terms of weight reduction and regulation of the FBS and lipid profiles in hypothyroid patients.

3. Moringa Moringa

Oleifera also regulates the production of thyroxine and triiodothyronine due to the "presence of polyphenols in addition to thiocyanate and also promotes good metabolism."

4. Black Cumin Seeds (Nigella)

Black cumin seeds are a great way to boost thyroid health. "It decreases inflammation, helps to reduce TSH and anti-TPO antibodies, and raises T3," Lovneet Batra adds.

5. Sage

Sage contains rosmarinic acid, which inhibits immunoglobulin effects on the thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH) receptor and also decreases the peripheral conversion of T3.

6. Licorice

Licorice, as per the nutritionist, assists in protecting the thyroid gland from oxidative damage and helps to lower levels of cortisol (which inhibits the secretion of TSH, the thyroid-stimulating hormone, from the pituitary gland).

Know the Right Way to Consume Almonds, Especially in Summer Season

How to consume almonds in summer: Almonds are a tasty, nutritious food that everyone knows.

Although a bit costly, for the health benefits it contains, most people are not reluctant to spend to buy almonds.

However, there are differences in the way each person eat almonds. Some people like to eat soaked almonds at night, some people like to eat them raw or roasted.

The fiber, protein, vitamins and omega 3 fatty acids in almonds helps to keep the body healthy and fit. Although almonds are good for the body, consuming too much green almonds in the summer can be harmful instead of good for the body. Green almonds produce body heat and consuming them in summer can lead to bile duct condition. Therefore, it is better to eat soaked almonds at night instead of eating raw.

Soaked almonds help the body absorb nutrients easily. Due to the high in body temperature, you may face problems like blisters and acne.

Eating raw whole almonds is even more risky because digestive problems also increase in the summer.

Amazing soaked almonds are not only easy to digest but also



regulates the body heat. Soaked almonds removes bile and protects against many digestive problems.

Almonds are good to take without skin: Peeling soaked almonds at night and eating them in the morning is said to be more beneficial for health.

Almond skin contains a chemical called tannin, which prevents the body from absorbing nutrients. So it is the best to peel it and eat soaked almonds.

Needless to say, they are rich in vitamin E, which is good for hair and skin health too. It also helps to create new cells.

Almonds are high in fiber and

protein, and when eaten on an empty stomach they do not make you feel hungry throughout the day.

1. Blood sugar control

They are rich in protein, fiber, vitamins and fats. It is useful for diabetics to take almonds. It also helps control blood sugar.

2. Resists aging

Almonds are rich in anti-oxidants and vitamin E. Regular consumption of soaked almonds helps to reduce fine lines on the body and reduce aging.

The article above is for informa-

tional purposes only and is not a substitute for professional medical advice.

Always seek the guidance of your doctor or other qualified healthcare professional if you have any questions regarding your health or medical condition.

How Many Almonds Should You Eat In A Day?.

Health experts suggest that around four to five almonds in a day are enough for an average man. However, the amount may differ from person to person, as per their tolerance. Hence, it is always better to consult an expert before deciding on including soaked almonds in your daily diet. Eat healthy, stay fit!

What Is The Right Way To Include Almonds In Summer Diet?

We understand almond generates excess heat in the body, hence, experts suggest avoiding raw almonds during the summers. According to nutritionist Gargi Sharma, one must soak almonds over-night, peel the skin and then consume. She further explains that the peel of almonds contain tannin, which makes the food hard to digest, creating excess body heat.

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Djokovic must abstain from political messages at French Open, says French sports minister

PARIS: French sports minister Amelie Oudea-Castera said Wednesday that Novak Djokovic's political message about Kosovo was "not appropriate" and warned the former top-ranked Serb player that he should not do it again.

Speaking on TV station France 2, Oudea-Castera said French Open director Amelie Mauresmo spoke with Djokovic and his entourage to insist on the principle of "neutrality" on the field of play. "When it comes to defending human rights and bringing people together around universal values, a sportsperson is free to do so," she said. But Oudea-Castera added that Djokovic's message was "militant, very political" and "must not be repeated."

Djokovic has drawn criticism from Kosovo's tennis federation after offering his thoughts on clashes in northern Kosovo between ethnic Serbs and police and NATO peacekeepers.

After a first-round victory in Paris on Monday, Djokovic wrote in Serbian on the lens of a court-side TV camera: "Kosovo is the heart of Serbia. Stop the violence."

Kosovo's tennis federation said Tuesday that Djokovic's comments were "deplorable" because he was stoking tensions between Serbia and Kosovo.

A former province of Serbia, Kosovo's 2008 declaration of independence is not recognized by Belgrade. Ethnic Albanians make up most of the population, but Kosovo has a restive Serb minority in the north of the country bordering Serbia.

Djokovic, who has won 22 Grand Slam titles, is scheduled to play in the second round at Roland Garros on Wednesday.

Speaking to reporters in Serbian, Djokovic said Monday that he thought what he wrote on the TV camera was "the least I could do. I feel responsibility as a public figure ... as well as a son of a man who was born in Kosovo."

Without mentioning Djokovic by name, French Open organizers indicated in a statement issued Tuesday that no rules had been broken, saying: "Occasionally, discussions about international news events enter the realm of the tournament, which is understandable."



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