

Srinagar

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disabled friendly' by 2024

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TCS To Replace Aptech For JKSSB Exams, Says LG Manoj Sinha

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUG 17: The Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Thursday announced a significant change for the Jammu Kashmir Service Selection Board (JKSSB) exams.

The contract previously held by Aptech services, which is facing fraud accusations, will now be handed over to Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), confirmed the LG Manoj Sinha in an interview with a digital news house.

The transition to TCS as the exam-conducting

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Our highest priority is to provide employment opportunities to each job seeker: CS

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUG 17: Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, today remarked that the next goal of the UT after ensuring basic amenities to all of its population is to provide employment to all the job seekers.

Dr Mehta was speaking in a meeting called to review the overall implementation of Employment Generation Schemes

by different government departments in association with financial institutions in the UT.

Besides the Commissioner Secretary, Labour & Employment, the meeting was attended by Principal Secretary, Agriculture; Principal Secretary, Industries & Commerce; Commissioner Secretary, RDD; Secretary, PD&MD; Secretary, Tribal Affairs; Mission Director, JKRLM; DG Planning besides other officers of the

concerned departments.

During the meeting the Chief Secretary maintained that J&K has been successful in providing basic amenities like roads, drinking water and electricity to most of its population besides access to important services such as health and education. He said that the focus now is to providing employment to all those who are desirous to avail such opportunities.

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NEWS BRIEF

New Covid-19 variant Eris no cause for concern: DAK

SRINAGAR, AUG 17: Doctors Association Kashmir (DAK) on Thursday said the new variant of Covid-19 Eris is not a cause of concern and there is no need to worry about it.

Amid reported cases of new Covid-19 variant Eris in some states in India, DAK President Dr Nisar ul Hassan said, "there is no evidence to suggest that the new variant causes more severe illness."

Dr Hassan said the EG.5, dubbed as Eris, is a sub-variant of the Omicron variant of Covid-19. It is rapidly spreading across the UK and US and has

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J&K domicile offer, govt extends deadline once again

SRINAGAR, AUG 17: The deadline for the Jammu and Kashmir administration's offer of domicile certificates to former residents who, or their ancestors, moved out of the erstwhile state years ago has been extended for the fourth time today.

In 2021, the Government in its order had said that no further extension will be granted, however, today for the fourth time, announcing the extension, an order by the J&K Government's Department of Disaster Management, Relief, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction, with regard to registration of bonafide Migrants or displaced

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11 injured in Kalakote road accident

RAJOURI, AUG 17: At least 11 persons were injured after a vehicle they were travelling in met with an accident at Dayala on Kalakote Rajouri road on Thursday.

Police told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that an accident took place on Thursday evening when an Ecco vehicle bearing registration number JK12B-5276 on its way to Kalakote from Rajouri collided with a roadside crash barrier at Dayala.

In the accident, officials said, 11 people were injured who all were taken to Community Health Center (CHC) Kalakote from wherefrom two of the injured were taken to GMC Associated Hospital Rajouri.

The injured have been identified

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Charri Mubarak taken to 'Sharika Bhawani' temple in Srinagar to pay obeisance

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUG 17: Charri Mubarak, the silver mace, of Swami Amarnath on Thursday was taken to Ancient 'Sharika-Bhawani' Temple in Srinagar to pay obeisance on the occasion of "Shravan Shukla Paksha Pratipada".

Led by Mahant Deependra Giri ji, the custodian of Charri Mubarak, was

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AI based voice cloning new cyber crime threat, stay alert: Jammu Cyber Police Stn

HT News Network

JAMMU, AUG 17: Terming Artificial Intelligence based voice cloning as new cyber crime threat the Jammu Cyber Police Station have asked people to stay alert and be cautious.

"The Artificial Intelligence based voice cloning is the new cyber crime in news. Apple iOS7 and various apps and sites like Heyge, Murf and Resemble AI etc. are being used for voice cloning," Jammu Cyber Police Station spokesman said.

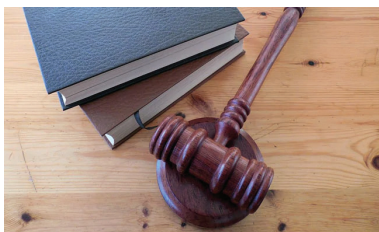
He said that the criminals are using computer generated voice sound to act as friends and relatives and in the process, money can be lost.

Sharing the modus operandi, the spokesman said that the AI-ml (artificial intelligence/ machine learning) model learns the patterns and characteristics from the person's voice recordings. (speech patterns, accents, voice inflection and even breathing).

He stated that learning includes pronunciation of words, tone of the voice and emotions, adding he said, "now criminals

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J&K HC Dismisses Ladakh Admin Plea Against NC Candidates Contesting LAHDC Poll On Party Symbol



HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUG 17: The Jammu

and Kashmir High Court has dismissed the Ladakh administration's plea against a single bench order of allowing National Conference candidates to contest the upcoming LAHDC polls, Kargil, on the party symbol.

The Union Territory of Ladakh had approached a division bench of the court against the single bench

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2014 Nowshera Acid Attack On Law Student: Court Convicts 2 Accused Persons

Likely To Pronounce Quantum Of Sentence On Weekend

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUG 17: Describing it as "horrific case of vitriolage", a court here on Thursday convicted two persons for throwing acid on a 20-year-old law student at Nowshera Srinagar on 11 December 2014.

The Principal District and Sessions Court Srinagar Jawad Ahmed held the accused duo—Irshad Ahmad Wani alias Sunny Wazirbagh Srinagar and Muhammad Umar Noor of Bemina Srinagar— guilty of the offence under RPC's Sections of 326-A (Voluntarily causing grievous hurt by use

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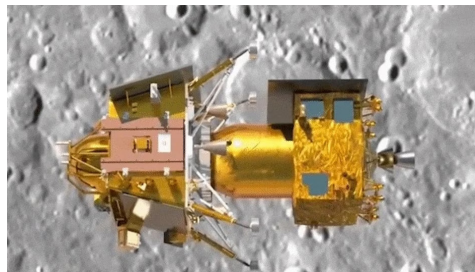


Chandryaan-3: Lander Module successfully separated from Propulsion Module

HT News Network

CHENNAI, AUG 17: Marking yet another milestone, the Lander Module (LM) was on Thursday successfully separated from the Propulsion Module (M) in the Chandrayaan-3 spacecraft and it will be deboosted for descend to a slightly lower Orbit tomorrow ahead of soft landing on the South Polar region of the moon on August 23.

ISRO tweeted "Thanks for the ride, matel said the Lander Module (LM)." "LM is successfully separated from the Propulsion Module (PM)...LM is set to descend to a slightly lower orbit upon a deboosting planned for tomorrow around 1600 Hrs., IST", it said. Meanwhile, the Propulsion Module continues its journey in the



current orbit for months/years.

The SHAPE payload onboard in PM would perform spectroscopic study of the Earth's atmosphere and measure the variations in polarization from the clouds on Earth – to accumulate signatures of Exoplanets that

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Roll Observer reviews progress made in updation of Municipal Electoral rolls

■ **Farooq Rather**

KULGAM, AUGUST 17: In order to review progress made in updation of Municipal Electoral rolls under the special Summary Revision, a meeting of officers was held under the chairmanship of Municipal Electoral Roll Observer (Additional District Development Commissioner) Kulgam, Showkat Ahmad Rather at mini-secretariat here.

During the meeting the Observer reviewed progress made in updation of Municipal Electoral rolls.

Focus was laid to increase the number of inclusions in



the ongoing revision w.r.t 01-07-2023 qualifying date, so that no voter is left behind. Chair impressed upon the officers to maintain the Electoral Popula-

tion Ratio so that voter from each age group shall be enlisted in the Municipal Electoral Roll. The Polling Station Level Officers were directed to visit each house-

hold, and rectify the errors if any of a voter, so that the electoral roll shall be free from all errors. The meeting was attended by Electoral Registration Officer (Additional Deputy Commissioner Kulgam) for Municipal Committee Devsar/ Frisal, Electoral Registration Officer (Assistant Commissioner Revenue Kulgam) for Municipal Council Kulgam and Municipal Committee Yaripora, Assistant Electoral Registration Officers (Executive Officers) of Municipal Committees of Kulgam, Devsar, Yaripora, Frisal and all Polling Station Level Officers (PSLOS).

PD&MD organizes three day ideas workshop at Srinagar

■ **HT News Network**

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 17: Planning Development and Monitoring Department today organized three days Ideas workshop on employees empowerment at Civil Secretariat here.

The workshop, being held from 17th to 19th August, will feature discussions on Employees Empowerment, Agile Organization, Future Ready Governance, "Pilot Project in Agriculture Department (including Dairy etc) and University of the Future.

On the first day of the workshop, former Secretary Ministry of Corporate Affairs Gol, Anurag Goel had an introduction with the core team members. He



gave a brief about the workshop structure, its process and complimented the Jammu and Kashmir administration for achieving remarkable milestones during the last few years.

Goel threw light on different kinds of advancements made world over in the fields of Science and Technology. He exhorted upon all to foresee the future to prepare for it.

He shared his ideas and expertise with the officers

to sensitize them about the future challenges to be faced by the Government. He asked him to help J&K transforming through Future Ready Governance in light of its strengths and opportunities.

In his address, Goel called SDG plus, a leading edge for Future-Ready Governance vehicle for attaining future-ready governance and the strategy for this is three way approach which is future-ready, technology assisted

and human centric.

In his remarks, Administrative Secretary, PD&MD, Dr Raghav Langer remarked that building institutional capacity should be focus of the administration. He observed that SDG Plus will add a new dimension to the implementation of SDGs, without disrupting the existing system, and will lead to quantum jump in performance to the next orbit. DG (E&S), Satvir Kour Sudan; DG, PFD, Shahzada Bilal; DG, PMCE, Parvaiz Ahmad Kakroo; Director Agriculture Kashmir, Chowdhury Mohammad Iqbal and other officers were present on the occasion while as Jammu based attended the workshop through video conferencing.

ALC Gbl presents cheque worth Rs.1.2 crore to DDC for disbursement under assistance scheme

HT News Network

GANDERBAL, AUGUST: The Assistant Labour Commissioner (ALC) Ganderbal today presented a cheque to the tune of Rs.1,02,67,500 on account of Educational, Death, Chronic Assistance

scheme to the District Development Commissioner Ganderbal, Shyambir for the disbursement among the registered construction workers of the district.

The DDC recognizing the importance of labour force for the progress of district expressed his satisfaction at the successful disbursement of

funds.

He reiterated his commitment to cultivating an inclusive and prosperous environment, ensuring the welfare of workers remains a top priority.

Shyambir extended his appreciation to the ALC for his relentless efforts in driving positive change within the labour sector.

Illegal extraction of minerals: Police arrest 4 persons, seize 5 vehicles in Baramulla

■ **Dr Abdul Qayoom**

Baramulla, Aug 17, KNT: Police in North Kashmir's Baramulla district arrested 4 persons and seized 5 vehicles that were being used to extract and transport the minerals in an illegal manner. A police spokesperson said that a police party led by SHO Police Station Tangmarg under the supervision of SDPO Tangmarg Intiaz Ahmed seized 3 vehicles (2 tractors, 1 Tipper) and arrested two divers at Shrai Kulhama Tangmarg involved in the illegal extraction and transportation of minerals. The accused have been identified as Faisal Ahmad Lone, a resident of Khonci.

THE JAMMU & KASHMIR BOARD OF SCHOOL EDUCATION NEW CAMPUS, BEMINA SRINAGAR PUBLIC NOTICE

I have passed/appeared in SSE/ HSE - I / HSE - II (Class 10th/11th/12th) under Roll No. 133019003 Session: 2023 Year: Annual Regular 2023 through The Jammu & Kashmir Board of School Education. The error committed by the School/Parent/Board against my MOTHER'S NAME as ZAMROODA BANO instead of NUSRAT BANO.

Now I have applied for correction/rectification of error in the Jammu & Kashmir Board of School Education, New Campus Bemina, Srinagar. If any person has any objection in this regard may file the same in the office of the Deputy Secretary, Certificates-KD within seven days from the date of publication of this notice, after the expiry of said period, no objection will be entertained. This is published for the information of the general public. The correct particulars be recorded as under: -



Name: MUZAMIL FAYAZ.
Father's Name: FAYAZ AHMAD BHAT
Mother's Name: NUSRAT BANO
Date of Birth: -16/09/2007
Residence: CHEDIBUGH, PULWAMA TRAL, JAMMU & KASHMIR

Geology and Mining department Kupwara conducted night raids Seized 17 vehicles.

■ **DR.AB QAYOOM**

Kupwara, Aug, 17: Geology and Mining Department has seized 16 vehicles and one JCB used in illegal mining and transportation of raw materials from different areas of district Kupwara. A team of officials from Geology and Mining Department Kupwara led by District Mineral Officer (DMO) Burhanuddin laid a major crack-down at different hotspots of illegal mining in different areas of district Kupwara. While talking to HEADLINES TODAY DMO Kupwara Burhanuddin said, I constituted special squads for day and night, Yesterday after heavy efforts of



night team at around 11:30pm to 5:00am we conducted raids on different hotspots of illegal mining, during which we seized 07 dumpers, 04 Tractors, 04 Tippers and One JCB involved in transportation and other illegal mining activities. He said, all the hotspots have been identified and the violators will not be spared. General public is requested to help the department in controlling this menace of illegal extraction. District administration and DMO had already issued strict directions for zero tolerance policy towards illegal extraction, transportation and stocking.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

OFFICE OF THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER POSHAN PROJECT BUDGAM

Subject:- Re- Advertisement for Recruitment of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) Anganwadi Centres of Poshan Project Budgam.
Reference: 1. Government order No 222-JK (SWD) of 2022 Dated: 30.11.2022
2. Government Order No.103-JK (SWD) of 2023 dated: 28.04.2023
3. MD/Poshan/Estt/13247-53 Dated:- 08-05-2023

Approval has been accorded, vide letter No-103-JK (SWD) of 2023 Dated: 28.04.2023 for filling up of various vacancies of Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers) in Anganwadi Centres of POSHAN PROJECT BUDGAM as per the details given below.

Sr. No.	Name of Project	Name of Post (Anganwadi Helpers)	No. of Post
01	Poshan Project Budgam	Sahayikas (Anganwadi Helpers)	01 (One)
Total			01 (One)

Applications are invited in the Prescribed Performa in Annexure "A" from the eligible candidates for engagement as Anganwadi Helpers on Honorarium basis for aforementioned posts of Anganwadi Centers. The important dates/details with regard to the posts are as under:-

- Date of commencement for submission of application: **18-08-2023**
- Last date for submission of applications is: **25-08-2023**
- Annexure B- Name of the Post, Location/Ward, Qualification and Criteria for selection
- Annexure C- Affidavit

ANNEXURE 'A'

S. No.

Format of Application

- Name of POSHAN Project BUDGAM
- Name of Anganwadi Centre
- Post applied for
- Name of the Candidate
- Father's Name
- Husband's Name
- Residence
- Ward No.
- Address for correspondence
- Contact No.
- Date of Birth
- Age as on 01.01.2023
- Academic Qualification:

S. No.	Examination passed	Board /University	Year of Passing	Marks Obtained	Total Marks	Percentage

- Do the candidate belong to Retiring AWH (YES/NO) _____
- Document Attached:

Signature of the Candidate _____

Dated: - _____

ANNEXURE 'B'

Detail of Vacant Posts (AWW/AWH) along with name and location of AWC.

S. No.	NAME OF ANGANWADI CENTRE	WARD NO.	NAME OF POST	No. of Posts
1	Galwanpora A (Hyderpora)	15	Anganwadi Helper	1

Eligibility:-

- Anganwadi Helpers
- The selection of Helper shall be restricted to the electoral ward where Anganwadi Centre is located.
- Women candidates in the age group of 18-37 years shall be eligible.
- The candidate must be domicile of the UT of J&K.
- Minimum qualification for Anganwadi Helper shall be matriculation.
- In case no matriculate candidate available in the ward, candidates with qualification not less than 8th standard shall be considered.
- The committee shall select the most destitute/needy married woman of the ward as helper from amongst those who fulfil the qualification criteria. In case no married candidate is available, unmarried candidate may be considered.
- In case eligible candidate is available within the family of retiring AWHs, the said candidate shall qualify for additional two percent points.

Document Verification

1) The candidate who is shortlisted for Document verification will be required to appear for Document Verification along-with the original documents as well as self-fattested Photostat copy of each document as per the Advertisement Notification. The candidate must be in possession of the prescribed academic qualification and other document like Domicile Certificate, on or before the last date of submission of application form.

a) Marks sheet(s)/Diploma/Degree of the qualification prescribed for the post as per Advertisement Notification.

b) Date of Birth/Matriculate Certificate.

c) Domicile Certificate.

d) Unmarried Certificate (where required)

2) Candidates have to bring two passport size recent color photographs and one original Photo ID proof. Photo ID Proof can be:

i) Aadhaar Card

ii) Voter ID card.

3) The candidate who are supposed to furnish various certificate issued by or before the prescribed cut-off date, shall be required to produce them at the time of Document Verification or as may be sought by the Committee; in case of failure, the committee shall take necessary decision which shall be final.

4) ANNEXURE C

All applicants to submit affidavit stating following facts:

- All Documents submitted are correct, without any mismatch, scanning, duplicate or fallacious in nature. If found incorrect or in any of the above stated situation the candidature of deponent may be cancelled and liable to action under law.
- Maximum qualification is Class X and this is as per facts and onus of proving it to be true lies with the deponent.
- The deponent has read the HR policy no. 222-JK (SWD) of 2022 dated: 30.11.2022 and is well versed with all salient features of the policy and shall be applicable to the deponent in case of selection as Anganwadi Helper.

Date: Aug 17 2023
DIPK-7156/23

CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROJECT OFFICER
POSHAN PROJECT BUDGAM

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE GENERAL MANAGAER DISTRICT INDUSTRIES CENTRE SRINAGAR Email: srinagardic@gmail.com/ gmdic-srinagarjk.gov.in Tel. No: 0194-2427478 Public Notice

M/S R. J. Industries /E Khunmoh, Srinagar stands formally registered with this office under No.01/003/09464/PMT/MSME dated.30.06.2022 for the activity of "Profiling of pre-painted colour coated GI/PPGI/PPGL sheets" as proprietorship concern of Raja Zahoor Ahmad S/O Raja Buland Khan R/o Sanat Nagar Housing Colony, Srinagar. In this regard, it is to inform that the promoter of the unit has inducted partnerto the unit namely Sheikh Jamsheed S/o Sheikh Mohammad Ashraf R/o Gulshan Nagar Bye Pass, Srinagar dully registered in the office of the SubRegistrar on 26-04-2023.

Any person having any objection, for change of constitution by way of induction of a partner Sheikh Jamsheed S/o Sheikh Mohammad Ashraf R/o Gulshan Nagar Bye Pass, may contact the office of General-Manager DIC Srinagar within 07 days from the date of publication of this notice.

DIPK-7151/23
Date: Aug 17 2023

General Manager
District Industries Centre
Srinagar

9 Years: Seva, Sushasan, Garib Kalyan Central Bureau of Communication organises outreach program in Nubra valley

■ HT News Network

Diskit (Nubra) August 17, 2023 The Central Bureau of Communication (CBC), Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India on Thursday organised a one day outreach program at Govt Higher Secondary School, Diskit in Nubra valley.

The program was organised on the theme of 9 Years: Seva, Sushasan aur Garib Kalyan by CBC's Field Office, Leh to showcase India's matchless achievements in different fields dur-

ing the last nine years. Information about various public welfare schemes of the government especially those launched for the upliftment of the tribal and other vulnerable sections of population was shared with the people through informative standees, expert lectures and printed awareness material. Sh. Tsering Angchuk, Deputy Chairman, Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), Leh was the chief guest on the occasion. In his presidential address, Sh. Angchuk appreciated the CBC for taking the message of development to remote areas such as Nubra.



Addressing a gathering of officers from sub divisional administration, teachers and students, he said that welfare schemes like PMGKAY, PM Ujjwala Yojana, Jal Jeevan Mission, Mudra Yojana and Ayushman Bharat have changed the lives of people across India including Ladakh. He said that awareness about these public welfare schemes is of key importance for upliftment of poor and marginalised communities. Sh. Angchuk also highlighted the achievements of the Government of India as well as LAHDC, Leh during the last nine years. Sh. Shahid Mohammad Lone, Field Pub-

licity Officer, CBC in his welcome address gave a detailed overview about the mandate and activities of CBC and briefed the audience about the programme. He said that mass awareness about various welfare schemes is important to ensure their successful implementation. He thanked the sub-divisional administration Nubra and district administration Leh for the support and coordination in organising the program. Earlier an open quiz competition was organised for the students of Government Degree College, Nubra and Government Higher Secondary.

Sheep Husbandry Department Shopian Facilitates Selection of Beneficiaries for Income-Generating Units under Different Schemes

■ FAROOQ RATHER

Shopian, August 17, 2023*- The Sheep Husbandry Department Shopian successfully conducted the selection of beneficiaries for the establishment of income-generating units under various schemes. The selection was made through the draw of lots process, which enabled the unbiased selection of beneficiaries.

The event unfolded seamlessly amidst a massive public gathering and under the vigi-



lant supervision of the Joint Director Farms, Sheep Husbandry Department, Kashmir.

The programme was smoothly executed by the designated selection committee, comprising the District Sheep Husbandry Officer Shopian, the Sheep and Wool Development Officer, as well as a representative from the District Administration, Shopian.

During the selection process, a total of 88 beneficiaries were selected for the establishment of income-

generating units under various schemes as per the guidelines in vogue, with the following details.

- A) 10 ewe units under participatory mode=27
- B) 20 ewe unit on 50% subsidy mode=46
- C) Shearing unit=05
- D) Mini sheep farms under Infrastructure for the welfare of tribals=10.

Due share was given to women folk and the ST community, since 13 women beneficiaries and 24 ST beneficiaries were selected.

Food store, Nayabat building inaugurated at Karnah

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, AUGUST 17: Tehsildar Karnah and BDO Teetwal today inaugurated the newly constructed buildings of Food Store Khawarpora-A and Nayabat Tadd.

The Nayabat building at Tadd has been constructed at Rs.18.79 lakh, while the Food Store at Khawarpora-A has incurred a cost of Rs.18.95 lakh. Both the buildings have been constructed under Area Development Fund.

S.P College Srinagar organizes 'Mehfil-e-Mushaira'

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 17: In connection with Independence Day Celebrations, 2023 as part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' and under the banners of 'Meri Maati Mera Desh', the Cultural and Extension Activities Committee of Sri Pratap College Srinagar today organized a day-long 'Mehfil-e-Mushaira' in collaboration with the Department of Urdu. The event was attended by Principal of the College, Prof (Dr) Ghulam Jeelani Qureshi along with faculty members and students of various teaching departments.

In his inaugural address, the Principal of the College reiterated the importance of advocating the cause of Urdu language and impressed upon all the attendees to make significant contributions to keep the language growing and flourishing.

Prof M Farooq assumes charge as Principal, Govt College for Women Nawakadal

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 17: Prof. (Dr.) Mohammad Farooq Mir today joined as Principal, Govt College for Women Nawakadal. He took over the charge from the former Principal, Dr. Neelofar Bhat.

In his formal address, Dr. Mohammad Farooq assured that the entire College will work as a family in a very cordial atmosphere. He further emphasized the importance of hard work and dedication especially in the area of Research and Development.

The incumbent Principal has a distinguished career as a reputed and dedicated researcher in the subject of Zoology, besides he also possesses a great wealth of experience.

Two-Day National Workshop on 'Capacity Building for Managers in Higher Education' held

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 17: The two-day National Workshop on 'Capacity Building for Managers in Higher Education' organized by the Department of Higher Education, Govt. of J&K in collaboration with Govt. College of Education (IASE) Srinagar commenced today, here.

Dr. Darkshan Andrabi, Chairperson JK Waqf Board was the chief guest on the occasion. She deliberated upon women as administrators and emphasized that both men and women are equal, and if given proper direction women can prove quite substantial in various leadership roles.

Prof (Dr.) Neelofar Khan, Vice Chancellor, University of Kashmir talked about Capacity Building for Managers towards sustainable inclusive and equitable growth.

She highlighted the implementation of NEP 2020 with particular reference towards women development. She also discussed the role of women in different capacities for holistic development of women, focus was to bring the change within the system by developing sensitivity, awareness and motivation as well as management skills to women academicians and administrators.

Prof (Dr.) Yasmeen Ashai, Director Colleges Department of Higher Education discussed "Gender Equality: Reality Check on SDG-5". She deliberated upon various issues of women like violence against women, Murder of Shradha Walker, Perils of Patriarchy and the "Me Too" movement etc. She also discussed 16 days of activism against gender based violence campaigns. She concluded her address by the quote "don't hope for change make the change you hope for."

Prof (Dr.) Pam Rajput, Professor Emeritus Former Director Women's Studies Centre, Punjab University highlighted the objectives of the capacity building workshop. Also she deliberated upon progressive growth of women in India.

DSW holds lecture on 'relevance of Gandhi's ideology in present scenario'

■ HT News Network

Ganderbal, Aug 17: The Department of Students Welfare (DSW), Central University of Kashmir (CUK) organised a special lecture on "Relevance of Mahatma Gandhi's Ideology in Present Scenario" by Padma Shri, Dr. S.P. Verma, President Gandhi Global Family, J&K, at varsity's Tulmulla campus here Thursday.

Dean Academic Affairs, Prof. Shahid Rasool, Dean DSW and Finance Officer, Dr. Mehraj ud Din Shah, writer Mr. Bashir Budgami, coordinators of the departments, faculty members, research scholars and students were present on the occasion.

Addressing the participants, Dr. S.P. Verma, said the ideology, philosophy and teachings of Mahatma Gandhi are still relevant during contemporary times. "While the world has changed significantly and drastically since Gandhi's time, many of his principles and ideas still hold valuable insights that can address contemporary challenges," Dr. Verma said.

"Gandhi's principle of non-violence remains a powerful tool for addressing conflicts and promoting social change. In a world marked by political tensions, social unrest, and environmental concerns, the practice of non-violence can help foster dialogue, understanding, and peaceful resolutions," he further said. Dr. Verma said that 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, adopted by the United Nations as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure peace and prosperity in the world, revolve around Gandhian philosophy and ideology.

Director Agriculture kick-starts 6th phase of Vegetable Seedling distribution

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 17: Director Agriculture Kashmir, Chowdhury Mohammad Iqbal today kick started the 6th phase of vegetable seedling distribution (including one lakh seedlings of knol-khol, Saag GM Dari, Red Cabbage, Broccoli and Cauliflower) at Kitchen Garden Premises Lalmandi, Srinagar.

Speaking on the occasion, Director Agriculture appreciated the efforts of the concerned officers/officials of Kitchen Garden, Hi-tech Poly House Installations and said that the department is vigorously pursuing the ambitious target of providing sufficient quantities of seedlings of different vegetable crops to the farming community of the region.

The Department has introduced many initiatives to ensure round the year availability of vegetable seedlings to the farmers, he added.



Director Agriculture marked the importance of diverse vegetable cultivation for the region. He said the strengthening of vegetable cultivation in the region could play a vital role in achieving economic security to the farming community.

Our climatic conditions are one of the most suitable in the country for the cultivation of vegetables (traditional, exotic) and to

channelize this potential a collaborative approach is needed wherein the both farming community and the department has to come forward and work shoulder to shoulder, he further said.

Earlier, Director Agriculture visited vegetable growing areas of Chadoora Budgam and took stock of the vegetable crops cultivated on latest scientific lines in the area.

He reiterated the

department's commitment to the promotion of entrepreneurship in agriculture and allied sectors. He said the department is working on an ambitious plan to attract more and more educated youth towards agriculture and allied activities. He assured the concerned farmers of every possible technical support from the department during their endeavors.

TB co-morbidity meeting held at Anantnag

■ HT News Network

ANANTNAG, AUGUST 17: A significant meeting focusing on Tuberculosis (TB) co-morbidity was today convened under the chairmanship Additional District Development Commissioner (ADDC) Anantnag, Bashir Ahmad Wani at DC office, here.

The meeting discusses key aspects of the National Tuberculosis Elimination Program (NTEP).

District Tuberculosis Officer Anantnag and Kulgam, Dr. Syed Faheem through a PowerPoint presentation provided insights into the program's performance and various ongoing initiatives related to the NTEP.

The ADDC interacted with the patients and rep-



representatives from civil societies and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) present at the meeting. Commending the efforts of the District Tuberculosis Officer and the NTEP staff, the ADDC underscored the valuable work they have been contributing to the program.

During the proceedings, constructive directions were passed to all stakeholders present, outlining strategic measures to bolster the effectiveness of the NTEP.

The collaborative spirit exhibited during the meeting underlines the

commitment of the local healthcare community, NGO's, media representatives, and patients to combat TB co-morbidity.

The event concluded on a positive note, reflecting a shared dedication to overcoming the challenges posed by TB co-morbidity through collaborative efforts and strategic action.

The meeting was attended by CMO Anantnag, MY Zagoo; Medical Superintendents and Block Medical officers of both Districts Anantnag and Kulgam including GMC Anantnag.

VC DDC Kupwara inaugurates macadamization work on Kuligam-Kandhar road

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, AUGUST 17: Vice Chairman DDC Kupwara, Haji Farooq Ahmad Mir today visited various areas of block Wavoor during which he inaugurated macadamization work on newly constructed Kuligam-Kandhar road and took stock of the ongoing developmental works.

The Vice Chairman inaugurated the macadamization work on VKH Kuligam to Ziyarat Khoja Bagh Kandhar road, during which he monitored the work along with the concerned engineers. The road was recently constructed by R&B department under NABARD scheme and involves a Project Cost of



Rs.688.94 lakh.

He also paid an inspection to Higher Secondary School Maidanpora and got feedback about the Sports activities and Curriculum from the School Principal. DYS&S Officer, Zahoor Ahmad was also present at the occasion.

Haji Farooq inspected Upper Primary School Wani Mohallah Cheepora

and took up matter for upgradation of its building with the concerned department. During the visit, VC took stock of drinking water supply of the people and assured them for getting uninterrupted drinking water facility in coming days under JJM. XEN I&FC, Er. Kirmani along with AEE and JEs were accompanying him.

President launches 'My Bengal, Addiction Free Bengal' Campaign

■ HT News Network

Kolkata, Aug 17 (UNI) President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday said drug abuse is a matter of concern for the society and the country, which is very worrying and stressed the need for working on all fronts in this matter.

She said this while launching the 'Nasha Mukti Bharat Abhiyan', organized by Brahma Kumaris at Raj Bhavan in presence of Governor CB Ananda Bose and state minister Shashi Panja.

She President said, "Drug abuse is a matter of concern for society and the country. Due to these addictions, youth are not able to choose the right direction in their lives. This is very worrying and there is a need to work on all fronts in this matter."

She stated that this situation can be improved through spiritual awakening, medication, social solidarity and political will.

She also appreciated organizations like Brahma Kumaris for discussing such issues and working to solve them. The President said that any kind of addiction



develops due to mental stress and peer pressure. "Addiction is harmful to health."

Many other disorders also arise from addiction. Family and friends of drug addicts also suffer a lot of trouble. "She urged all youth to bring into the notice of the family of any addicted friend about the addiction."

The President urged the people who consume drugs to not ruin their life. She said that "if they are under any kind of stress, they should talk to their friends, family or any social organization."

"There is no problem that they cannot face with their willpower." She said that anti-social elements take

advantage of drug usage and addiction. The money spent in buying drugs was also used in criminal activities.

She expressed confidence that addicted people would come out of this bad habit for their own good and in the interest of the society and the country.

"Youth are our most important asset. The time and energy that they should spend on strengthening the foundation of their future, is being wasted because of addiction," the president said.

"Educational institutions should find out whether the students are going in the

wrong direction. If something comes to the fore, action should be taken immediately," President Murmu reiterated.

) President Droupadi Murmu on Thursday graced the launch ceremony of Vindhyagiri - the sixth ship of project 17A of Indian Navy at Garden Reach Shipbuilders Engineers Limited, here.

Speaking on the occasion, the President said, "The launch of Vindhyagiri marks a move forward in enhancing India's maritime capabilities. It is also a step towards achieving the goal of Atmanirbhar Bharat through indigenous shipbuilding."

Will Take A Year To Rebuild, Says Himachal Chief Minister On Rain Damage

■ HT News Network

Shimla: At least 71 people have died in the past three days and 13 are still missing in Himachal Pradesh after devastating rains pounded the state, with Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu terming the work of rebuilding infrastructure a "mountain-like challenge".

The death count from landslides and flash floods jumped on Wednesday as rescuers pulled out more bodies from the rubble of collapsed buildings, officials said.

Heavy rains have battered the hill state since Sunday, triggering landslides in several districts including Shimla where three areas -- Summer Hill, Fagli and Krishna Nagar -- are badly hit by landslips.

"At least 71 people have died in the past three days and 13 are still missing. As many as 57 bodies have been recovered since Sunday night," Principal Secretary (Revenue) Onkar Chand Sharma said.

Earlier, Chief Minister Sukhu said that about 60 people have died since Sunday night.

In an interview with PTI,



Mr Sukhu said his state will take a year to rebuild the infrastructure wrecked by the heavy rains this monsoon and claimed that the estimated loss in the two devastating spells of heavy rains - this week and in July - is about 10,000 crore.

The chief minister said it takes time to rebuild roads and water projects. But the government is speeding up the process. "We have to get the infrastructure fully restored within a year. I am working with this in mind." "It's a big challenge, a mountain-like challenge," he said.

According to the state emergency operation centre, in total 214 people have died in the rain-related incidents in the state since the onset of monsoon on June 24 while 38 are still

missing. "Rescue operations are going on in Summer Hill and Krishna Nagar areas... one body was recovered from Summer Hill site," Shimla Deputy Commissioner Aditya Negi told PTI. He said so far 13 bodies have been recovered from Summer Hill, five from Fagli and two from Krishna Nagar. Some bodies are still feared buried in the debris of the Shiva temple at Summer Hill that collapsed on Monday. About 15 houses in Krishna Nagar have been vacated and the families shifted to safer places. Several others have vacated their homes themselves fearing slides due to incessant rains.

The Education department had ordered closure of all schools and colleges in the state on Wednesday

due to inclement weather and the Himachal Pradesh University has suspended teaching activities till August 19.

About 800 roads are blocked in the state and the losses suffered by the state since the onset of monsoon on June 24 have crossed 7,480 crore, officials said, adding as many as 10,714 houses have been completely or partially damaged so far.

Deputy Chief Minister Mukesh Agnihotri has urged the Centre to declare national calamity in Himachal Pradesh and release

2,000 crore for restoration works. Meanwhile, 1,731 people have been rescued from flood-affected areas of Indora and Fatehpur sub-divisions of Kangra district in the last 24 hours, said Deputy Commissioner Nipun Jindal on Wednesday.

Specifically, 1,344 people were rescued from Indora and 387 from Fatehpur.

The operation to evacuate people from flood-affected areas is going on with the assistance of Air Force helicopters, Army personnel, and NDRF, Mr Jindal said.

Two Indian Pilots Die In 2 Days, 1 At Airport, Another On Flight

■ HT News Network

New Delhi: India has seen the deaths of two pilots in two days. While an IndiGo captain fell unconscious at a boarding gate in Nagpur today, a Qatar Airways pilot suffered a heart attack onboard a flight yesterday.

The IndiGo captain was supposed to operate a flight from Nagpur to Pune and had reached the boarding gate when he lost consciousness. He was taken to a hospital where he was declared dead.

Sources said the pilot had operated two sectors, from Trivandrum to Nagpur via Pune, between 3 am and 7 am yesterday. He had 27 hours of rest and was supposed to fly four sectors today. He had reported for his first departure of the day, which was scheduled for 1 pm, when he fell unconscious.

Be sensitive towards people, redress their grievances promptly: Yogi

■ HT News Network

Lucknow, Aug 17 (UNI) Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday heard the grievances of 220 people at the Janata Darshan and directed officers to address their grievances with utmost sensitivity, ensuring prompt resolution of their complaints.

The CM listened to the problems of people from different districts of the state and referred their prayer letters to the concerned authorities for quick and satisfactory disposal of grievances and assured people that the government is determined to resolve the problems of every victim. He directed the officials to take strict action against those occupying lands and properties illegally and not to spare anyone who oppresses under any circumstances. "It should be ensured that no goons, mafia, or criminals can occupy the land illegally. In criminal cases, the accused should be arrested by registering an FIR," he said. Yogi assured to provide full help in the treatment to all those seeking financial help from the government. Handing over their applications to the officials, he directed that the process of cost estimation related to treatment should be made available to the government as soon as possible.

HP Jal Shakti Dept suffers Rs 2,000cr loss due to rains: Mukesh Agnihotri

■ HT News Network

Una (HP), Aug 17 (UNI) HP Deputy Chief Minister Mukesh Agnihotri said Jal Shakti Department in Himachal Pradesh has suffered a loss of 2,000 crore rupees due to rains in the last month, during a state level review meeting of the department here last night. The meeting, held through video conference, was presided over by Deputy Chief Minister, Himachal Pradesh, Mukesh Agnihotri. He called for efforts to restore services and address the situation. Chief Engineers, Chief Engineers, Superintending Engineers, and many other officers of the Jal Shakti Department also participated in the meeting and gave detailed information to the Deputy Chief Minister about the damaged and affected drinking water schemes in their respective areas due to rains in the second phase.

PM Doesn't Understand the Pain of Manipur Women: Sharad Pawar

■ HT News Network

Beed: Prime Minister Narendra Modi did not go to Manipur and spoke about it only for the briefest time, veteran opposition leader Sharad Pawar said today, slamming the Central government and the BJP and Eknath Shinde's alliance government in Maharashtra.

"In Manipur, there's a division among society, villages, people are attacking each other, houses are being burned, women are being paraded naked but despite that the BJP government doesn't do anything," Mr Pawar said today, pointing out that the job of maintaining law and order belongs to state. Manipur has a "double-engine" government -- the BJP rules the state as well.

"The Prime Minister of India should have gone to Manipur but he didn't do that. He spoke about Manipur for 3 minutes before the session and only for 5 minutes during No-Confidence Motion," he said, speaking at a rally in Maharashtra's Beed.

"The Prime Minister didn't understand the pain of the women in Manipur," added Mr Pawar, whose faction of Nationalist Congress Party was among those which



moved a No-Confidence Motion against the Narendra Modi government. The idea was to compel the Prime Minister to speak to Manipur -- a key Opposition demand that the government refused to meet.

PM Modi had spoken of Manipur only twice since ethnic violence broke out in the northeastern state on May 3.

During his response to the No-Confidence Motion in Lok Sabha last week, he referred to the issue after nearly 90 minutes, once the opposition members walked out.

Holding the Congress responsible for "being the origin of all problems in the northeast", PM Modi said the country was with the people of Manipur and the "sun of peace" would rise in the state again.

BJP Names Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh Candidates, A First Before Poll Dates

■ HT News Network

New Delhi: The BJP today announced first lists of candidates for Assembly polls in Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh due later this year. This is the first time the BJP has announced names of candidates even before the Election Commission of India announces the poll dates. The party has announced 21 candidates for the 90-member Chhattisgarh Assembly and 39 for the 230-member Madhya Pradesh House. The announcement comes a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired a meeting of the BJP's central election committee, the party's decision-making body for selection of candidates and preparation of poll strategies. The BJP leadership's unprecedented decision to announce candidates' names well in advance appears to be aimed at identifying friction within the ranks so that issues can be resolved well in advance. Following the poll setback in Karnataka earlier this year, the party is in no mood for another debacle. Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh are among five states going to polls later this year, along with Rajasthan, Telangana and Mizoram. Out of these, Chhattisgarh, Rajasthan and Telangana are ruled by Opposition forces. In Mizoram,



BJP's ties with ally and ruling party Mizo National Front are strained in the wake of the Manipur unrest. And in Madhya Pradesh, a neck-to-neck fight is expected between the BJP and the Congress.

One highlight in Chhattisgarh list is the name of Vijay Baghel, Lok Sabha MP from Durg. A former MLA from Patan, he has been fielded from the same seat this time. The names of former Chief Minister Raman Singh and other senior party leaders are missing from the first list. In Madhya Pradesh, the names of Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and prominent ministers are not on the first list of candidates. The BJP's Chhattisgarh list comprises five women, 10 candidates from Scheduled Tribes and one from the Scheduled Castes category. For Madhya Pradesh.

Climate Change May Turn Thar Desert Green By Century's End: Study

■ HT News Network

New Delhi: India's Thar Desert, known for its arid expanse, could undergo a transformative shift due to the effects of climate change, a study suggests.

While many deserts across the globe are predicted to expand with rising temperatures, the Thar Desert might defy this trend and actually turn green within the next century, the researchers said.

The Thar Desert is located partly in Rajasthan, and partly in the Punjab and Sindh provinces of Pakistan, covering over 200,000 square kilometres of territory. It is the world's 20th-largest desert and the world's 9th-largest hot subtropical desert.

Several studies have projected the growth of Earth's deserts under the influence of global warming. For instance, experts have estimated that the Sahara Desert could increase in size by over 6,000 square kilometres annually by 2050.

However, the newly published study, published recently in the journal Earth's Future, offers an unexpected perspective on the Thar Desert.

By employing a combination of observations and climate model simulations, the research team found that the mean rainfall over the semi-arid northwest regions of India and Pakistan witnessed an increase



of 10-50 percent between 1901 and 2015. Under moderate greenhouse gas scenarios, this rainfall is anticipated to surge by 50-200 percent, they said.

Remarkably, the study indicates that an eastward shift of the Indian monsoon has been a pivotal factor contributing to the arid conditions in the west and northwest regions of India. Historically, these areas were thriving during the monsoon season, supporting the Indus Valley civilizations.

The researchers propose that a reversal

of this trend, coupled with a westward expansion of the present-day Indian monsoon, could radically transform the west and northwest regions of India into a humid "monsoonal" climate.

This transformation, in turn, might enhance food security for the nation's burgeoning population.

According to the study's corresponding author, B. N. Goswami, from the Department of Physics at Cotton University in Guwahati, understanding the dynamics

of the Indian summer monsoon is key to comprehending how the climate could green the Thar Desert. "This happens due to the seasonal migration of the rainband or the active Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) from south of the equator over the Indian Ocean in winter to about 25 degrees North in summer over the Indian continent," Goswami told PTI.

The expansion of the warm water pool in the equatorial Indian Ocean, brought about by climate change, has led to a westward shift of the ITCZ. This, in turn, drives rain further westward over the land during the summer months.

Goswami notes that this phenomenon is unique to the Indian monsoon and is crucial for the potential greening of semi-arid regions in northwest India.

The study emphasizes that this trend could lead to significant agricultural and socio-economic changes in the region.

The research team, including P. V. Rajesh from the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology in Pune, compiled weather data from South Asia over the past 50 years.

By analysing changes in monsoon duration and concentration, they fed historical weather and sea surface temperature data into a climate model to predict future changes under various greenhouse gas scenarios.

EDITORIAL

Shifting the Focus:
Prioritizing Mental Health
Awareness in Kashmir

In the breathtaking valleys of Kashmir, where natural beauty often takes center stage, another pressing issue quietly simmers beneath the surface: mental health. As the world grapples with the increasing significance of mental well-being, it's high time that Kashmir too directs its attention towards addressing the mental health challenges that have long remained in the shadows.

The region's tumultuous history and ongoing socio-political tensions have left an indelible mark on the mental health of its residents. The constant stress of living in an environment marked by uncertainty, turmoil, and restricted movement takes a toll that often goes unnoticed. It's essential to recognize that the picturesque landscapes don't necessarily translate to inner peace and emotional well-being.

To truly address mental health in Kashmir, a multi-pronged approach is necessary. First, fostering awareness is paramount. By openly discussing mental health issues, we can break the stigma that still surrounds them. Community leaders, educators, and healthcare professionals can play a pivotal role in initiating these conversations and creating safe spaces for individuals to share their experiences.

Second, integrating mental health education into the school curriculum can have far-reaching effects. Children and adolescents can learn about emotional regulation, stress management, and seeking help when needed. This proactive approach can empower the next generation to navigate their emotions and challenges with resilience.

Moreover, investing in mental health infrastructure is crucial. The availability of trained therapists, counselors, and psychiatric services should be a priority. This is not just for those who have been directly affected by conflict but also for the general population, as the aftermath of long-standing stress can impact anyone.

Kashmiri society has shown remarkable resilience in the face of adversity, and addressing mental health is a continuation of that spirit. It's about acknowledging that emotional well-being is an intrinsic part of human dignity. By taking concrete steps towards mental health awareness, education, and accessible support systems, Kashmir can pave the way for a brighter, more resilient future for its people.

Lastly, as the world recognizes the importance of mental health, Kashmir must not remain immune to this global shift. By focusing on mental health awareness, education, and infrastructure, the region can heal from within, nurturing a population that thrives emotionally and mentally amidst the breathtaking beauty of its surroundings.

Tourism, the sunrising industry



■ [Mohammad Ashraf Bhat](#)

Kashmir being a geographical wonder is blessed with immense natural beauty and is known for its breathtaking landscapes, snowy mountains, meadows, gardens, orchards, lakes, high mountain passes, Hill stations and religious sites. There is too much of diversity that Kashmir offers in culture, nature and climate. Apart from this Kashmir valley offers various categories of tourism, like water sports, rafting, skiing, tracking, Shikara ride and iconic house boats. There is an immense potential of winter games, snow parking, spiritual tourism and border tourism. Tourism has become a very fast growing industry in the current period and is considered an economic bonanza for union territory, since industrial development is very limited and youth unemployment is one of the major challenges faced by union territory of J&K. Tourism has contributed much to the local economy over the years. Tourists provide direct and indirect income to innumerable locals by spending money on taxi, hotel, shopping, travel agency etc. Tourism industry has the potential to uplift the local economy of Kashmir and create job opportunities for the unemployed youth. Tourism sector is the main driver of the economy. This sector has a capacity to create large scale employment and has given jobs to a large number of people especially in tertiary sector. Its impact is visible in services rendered by people directly or indirectly, including hotel staff, tour operators, taxi drivers, tour guides, souvenir vendors etc. The industry provides employment to around 70,000 people. It is holding strategic importance in the development and expansion of other industries, such as agriculture, horticulture, handicrafts, sports, construction, banking, insurance and transportation. People get engaged in related services for several socio-economic benefits which in turn get good quality of life, high standard of living and increase in the wealth. Tourism is a game changer for this ailing economy. Today over 70 percent of J&K's population is estimated to be around 35 years. If this huge demographic potential is properly canalized, it could prove a great source of human asset. This human asset could be utilized in the unique type of highly labour-intensive industry and which does not require vast patches of land like in agriculture and horticulture. Presently both skilled and unskilled youth render services to earn money spent by tourists in the places they visit. Tourism sector starts paying off immediately as it has no gestation period like other sectors. According to tourism department the region witnessed increasing foot fall of domestic and foreign visitors. Kashmir is scaling new heights in tourist count. Tourism in Jammu and Kashmir has seen a remarkable boom after the turmoil, violence and unrest the region



has witnessed over the years. The record breaking arrival of tourists thronging the valley has been bringing smiles on the otherwise gloomy faces of educated youth. The surge in tourism is evident among foreign visitors with a staggering 1.27 crore tourists visiting upto July 2023. The target is much more as the union territory is set to break last years record of 1.89 crore tourist arrivals, more than 15,000 foreigners visiting upto June 2023 a significant increase compared to the first half of 2022 when only 4028 foreign tourists arrived. It is predicted that the total number of tourist arrivals will surpass 2 crores. Tourism industry in the state of J&K generates around ₹8000 crores contributing to nearly 7% of the UT's GDP. The GDP figure would have been different if the violence had not hit hard the tourism sector. The usual shutdown in valley due to the armed conflict and resurgence that erupted in the valley in early 1990s compelled tourists to switchover to other places, causing the loss of tourist appetite for this particular destination.

In 1987, the last big season before the conflict started, tourism accounted for approximately 10% of state's income. During the next 23 years of unrest, tourism contributed virtually nothing to state's economy. As a result of the unfavourable circumstances, the negative travel advisories to visit Kashmir were issued by various foreign countries. This negative approach adversely affected the tourist revenue generated by foreign visitors. The impact of conflict in the valley that its main city Srinagar was once declared as the most threatened site in India by the World Monument Fund (WMF), placing it on the 2008 list of Most Endangered sites (Winter and Punjab, 2010). Now again this tourism industry healing the wounds of unemployed youth who have miseries and nothing else to invest in capital based ventures.

Agrarian sector particularly horticulture and agri-culture mostly plays a vital role in shaping J&K's economy but it is still lacking the marketing concept due to which false representation that the produce is of a particular standard quality, quantity or grade-composition. Our horticulture industry needs professional consultants and only then it would be the real backbone of J&K's economy. The increased tourist numbers are exposing local industries to the world and creates new business opportunities.

The spiritual tourism is another allied source of income over 58 lakh pilgrims visiting the famous Vaishno Devi shrine in Jammu region until July. Jammu is famous for its temples, palaces, forts and forests. The Amarnath Yatra has also seen a tremendous response with over 4 lakh pilgrims in the first 32 days of Yatra, both Vaishno Devi shrine and Amarnath Yatra surpassing the pilgrimage percentage from the previous year.

The border tourism has a huge potential to provide diverse opportunities to the youth of J&K. Social media is exploring the tourist visiting sites, like Bangus valley, Keran, Lolab valley, Machil, Teetwal, Tangdhar, Reshwari, Gurez etc which bear the potential to provide jobs to the unemployed youth of entire North Kashmir. Economic growth has been of late and heavily demands reformation and renovation. The lower middle class and lower class of people are still at the back end. These people have fewer opportunities to get educated, enhance their skills and to stand as entrepreneur. These classes consume higher fraction of their earning than the rich with the result they fail to survive in any business. If more money flows to these segments then the lower middle class and lower classes are key engines of growth but with inequality on rise these engines are stalling. The tourism policy of 2020 should be fully implemented. All it needs are the serious steps to provide the required reformation. Another challenge for Government is that the Tourist land is shrinking and authorities should ensure sustainable utilization of natural resources. The lakes, wetlands, rivers and streams of J&K have become garbage-dumping sites and huge influx of tourists is adding fuel to the fire. The need of the hour is setting up modern sanitary landfill sites.

The key to unlock the potential of this sector is through government support, infrastructure development, skill enhancement, quality of service, safety, good travel facilities, proper tour guide and hospitality. These services should refrain from any unfair trade practices for purpose of promoting sale and supply and consumption or adopt any unfair or deceptive trade practices. The tourism industry could have been converted into a big income earning industry but it stands neglected despite the provision of funds in 2023-24 Amritkaal Budget. This industry should be developed as per the vision of sustainable development goals and the new preparations should be made to promote eco-friendly tourism so that it will be a new ray of hope for the people of the region.

Mohammad Ashraf Bhat, teacher in
Department of Education

Public Relation Officer - How to
become a Public Relation Officer



■ [Vijay GarG](#)

Public Relation Officer commonly known as PRO has become a common term in every organization whether it is commercial or non-commercial, government or private formal or informal and that too in a very short span of time from its inception. Although this particular job is being performed from time immemorial i.e from the times of Raja's and Maharajas or even before that from the time's of Lord Rama's and Lord Krishna's when they used to send their Duta's to the other kingdoms like Angad was sent to Ravana by Rama to bring peace by releasing Sita without any fight etc.

With the time and materialization of everything and anything, the role of Duta's and PRO's of the present day has changed to a greater extent. PROs ensure internal cohesion in the company by maintaining a clear communications network between the management and employees. Its first objective is to improve channels of communication and to establish new ways of setting up a two-way flow of information and understanding.

Public relations as a career option has come into existence when lots of private or government companies and institu-

tions felt the need to market their product, service and facilities. In the times of cut-throat competition and similar products and services to sell, it is the Public image that has become important to all organisations and prominent personalities. The role of public relation specialist becomes pertinent in crisis situations when the correct and timely transmission of information can help save the face of the organisation.

In terms of career opportunities, Public relations is broadly practised for product publicity, corporate publicity, to have better relations with the government, to publish corporate publications like a newsletter, bulletins, magazines for employees etc.

To discharge his duties with utmost efficiency a PRO must be up-to-date on current information to be imparted to the public. One must have excellent communication skills, both spoken and written so has to express thoughts clearly and simply. An effective personality and the ability to get along with a wide range of people both inside and outside an organization is necessary. A PRO must be polite always as he has to work under pressure or provocation. An organizing ability is required too, as one may have to organize conferences, lectures, exhibitions and public events. He must have self-confidence and far-sightedness. He must be able to understand human psychology and take decisions apt to the situation.

Young people with desire and capacity for hard work can get both money and satisfaction and rise to top positions very quickly in this profession. But to

reach such high positions one should have to work hard and should have the requisite basic knowledge concerned with this field. For this, there are the specific short term and long term courses available which one has to undergo.

To become a PRO one has to undergo one or more of the following Courses.

Public Relation Officer Eligibility
Educational Qualification

Bachelors degree in any discipline preferably with social sciences, liberal arts and humanities are required to take up a course in this field of PRO.

How to become a PRO?

Aspiring candidates have to follow below given steps to become a Public Relations Officer.

Step 1

Interested candidate has to appear in an entrance test conducted by the various institutions providing diploma as well as postgraduate diploma courses in Public relations. Duration of most the courses is of one year. Apart from this, there are also short-term certificate courses. However, some colleges also give admission on the basis of % of marks obtained in the qualifying class

Step 2

After completing this 1-2 years of course in which one has to go through all the major aspects like public relations principles and techniques, public relations management and administration, including organizational development, writing, emphasizing news releases, proposals, annual reports, scripts, speeches, and related items, visual communications, including desktop publishing and computer graphics, and research,

emphasizing social science research and survey design and implementation.

Public Relation Officer Job Description

Public Relation Officer's main job is to make a good image of the organisation he is working in. He is responsible to present a good picture of the organisation to the public and other government and non-government organisation through his communication skill and influencing power.

Public Relation Officer Career Prospects and Job Opportunities

Enormous employment opportunities are available for PRO in private as well as public sector organisations. Career opportunities in this field would depend on an individual's area of specialization. Public relation officers can find employment in the corporate sector, public sector, government agencies, tourist agencies, hotels, banks and other financial institutions, private consultancy firms etc. Nowadays they can find work even with individuals like political figures, models and film stars who want their pictures, profiles and interviews published in magazines and need agents who can do the work for them so as to have an image in front of general public.

Public Relation Officer Salary

Public Relation Officer can expect to get nearly Rs.25,000 to Rs.30,000 as far as a starter is concerned. After gaining some on job experience one can earn as good as Rs.50,000 per month and more.

Vijay GarG Retired Principal
Educational Columnist Malout
Punjab

A refreshing old view of husbands and wives

The tension between Uttama and Vahula grew and grew without a single conversation about it.

■ [Renuka Narayanan](#)

As a legatee of Indian reform, I am grateful to the laws of the land and to the enlightened Indian fathers who let their girls out of the box over the last 100 years, to study, work, travel, and marry—or not marry—as they chose. However, it is still a heavily patriarchal society with sky-high expectations of a wife. In Tulsidas' Ramcharitmanas from the 16th century, Aranya Kand, Verse Four, Rishi Atri's wife Anasuya gives this advice to Sita: "Devotion of body, speech and mind to the feet of her lord, the husband, is the only duty, sacred vow and penance for a woman."

This job description was detailed in South India in the 13th century in a popular verse by Telugu poet Bhadra Bhupala or 'Baddena':

"Karyeshu dasi, karaneshu mantri, bhojeshu mata, shayaneshu Rambha, roopeshu Lakshmi, kshamayeshu Dharitri, shath dharma yukta kuladharmapatni."

It means, "Like a servant doing the chores, like a minister giving her husband intelligent advice, serving him food as a mother feeds her child, like the apsara Rambha in bed, as beautiful as Lakshmi, and as forbearing as Mother Earth: the woman who has these six qualities is the ideal wife."

However, a well-known Sanskrit scholar in Kumbakonam could not tell me of any corresponding scriptural virtues and qualities required of a husband,

when I asked him back in 2008. To his credit, he admitted it with unsparing honesty after spending a sleepless night trying to find an instance.

So, I was intrigued some years later to discover a forgotten story in the Markandeya Purana, said to date back to around 250 CE. The purana is a collection of stories—in a story comprising 9,000 verses. It is best-known for the section called 'Devi Mahatmyaham', recited every year at Durga Puja. But in this story that I would like to retell, Rishi Markandeya acquaints his disciple Kraustuki with the complex give-and-take between husbands and wives.

There was once a king called Uttama who was happily married to a beautiful queen named Vahula. Though shy by nature, she was a practical person. She knew she had a public role to play and took part with composure in all her queenly duties, be it in court or at the sacrificial fires. She ran the women's quarters with utmost sense, discouraged petty behavior, and gave her household a good tone. The maids adored her and the public respected her.

But a star-crossed phase befell Vahula. She felt neglected by her husband and no longer found him interesting or attractive. She began to withdraw subtly from him and soon, more openly. The three pains according to Samkhya philosophy are Adhyatmika, born of the mind and body; Adhidaivika or supernatural; and Adhibhoutika,



because of an incident or calamity. All three were to fall on the royal couple's heads.

The tension between Uttama and Vahula grew and grew without a single conversation about it. One evening at a public dinner with rich merchants and foreign diplomats present, Uttama had a bit too much wine. He thrust his goblet at Vahula, who pointedly turned away. Uttama lost his temper and ordered the guards to take Vahula to the forest and abandon her there. Vahula swept off silently with a proud smile.

Soon after this catastrophe, a poor priest appeared in court to demand the king's help. Someone had stolen his wife from their hut in the middle of the night.

"Describe her, we'll send out search parties," said Uttama.

"She's not very pretty and she has a foul temper," disclosed the priest.

"What?" exclaimed Uttama. "It would be easier to find you a new wife, you know."

"King," said the priest reproachfully, "My wife is my wife. It is my duty to protect her from the rest of the world, from my own family, and even from myself."

"But where can we look without more information?" countered Uttama.

"Lord of the Earth, you take a sixth of our produce as your due. Your subjects are supposed to sleep peacefully because you uphold the law," said the priest

unyieldingly.

Abashed, Uttama assembled a hunting party and soon found the priest's wife unharmed in the forest, placidly eating plums. It was the neighbourhood rakshasa who had kidnapped her just to disturb the priest's pujas, which required his wife's presence. The priest and his wife then cheerfully went their way while the rebuked rakshasa, already berated soundly by the hot-tempered lady, promised to behave itself in future.

This incident left Uttama deeply ashamed of the way he had treated Vahula, making no attempt to understand her but treating her like a well-oiled machine at his beck and call. Further, he discovered through a rishi with a supernatural

sight that Vahula had been kidnapped by the serpent king Karpotaka and was hidden away in a cave by the serpent princess Nanda. Uttama made his way with great difficulty to the serpent kingdom and challenged Karpotaka to single combat. It was a close, fierce fight but the determined king had the best of it. When he found his wife, led by the serpent princess, he gathered Vahula lovingly to him with concerned, affectionate words, and manfully asked her to forgive him. At this, the queen found herself unable to hold a grudge and spoke to him with renewed love.

Nanda could not speak because she had been cursed by her angry father for hiding Vahula, and the queen wanted to perform a Saraswati Puja to beg the Goddess of Knowledge to restore Nanda's speech.

"We can do that better at home, let's take Nanda back with us," urged Uttama, and all was made well for the principled and upright serpent princess. In due course, she was even able to go back home to her now-repentant father.

As for Uttama and Vahula, they lived in great harmony after these harrowing events brought them back together, and the king never took his queen for granted again... "Know therefore, Kraustuki," said Rishi Markandeya, "A husband has many duties, but chiefly, moral gallantry."

(shebaba09@gmail.com)
Courtesy New Indian Express

China's Consumer Demand Decline Helping India In Getting More Foreign Investment

It Is Now Certain India Will Be Third Largest Economy In The World In 2027

■ [Subrata Majumder](#)

Consumer demand in China plunged into deflation, reflecting onslaught on consumer price. Its consumer price index fell by 0.3 percent in July, 2023, year-on-year basis, demonstrating failure of Xi Jinping's new policy to retrieve the economy, which was dented by zero-COVID policy and domestic oriented demand.

Global analysts asserted that Chinese recession is akin to Japanese style stagnation, which let it deepen in the "Lost decade" – 1991-2000. A new term churned out for Chinese recession, renaming "Japanification". It equated to Japanese style asset price bubble burst, low demand and downsizing of population, threatening an aging society similar on the line of Japan. According to latest estimates by the Chinese Government, more than 30 percent of the population in China would be over 60 years, by around 2035. Global Times, a Chinese media, acknowledged that there were certain similarities between Japan of 1980 and 1990's and China today.

Expectation for growth in the Chinese economy declined significantly. It faltered twice in its target of growth. In 2021, the target was 5.5 percent. But it fell to 3 percent. In 2022, the target was set at around 5 percent. It was lower than 3 percent.

In contrast, India pitched for a strong macroeconomic stability in the post COVID. It poses a big challenge to Chinese hegemony in the growth. Trajectory of growth ensures Prime Minister Narendra Modi to predict India to be the 3rd biggest economy. This means India will surpass Germany and Japan in growth. Currently, India is the 5th largest economy, according to Forbes.

According to State Bank of India research report, India was forecasted to be the 3rd biggest economy by 2030. Global S&P was upbeat to project India's annual growth by over 6 percent annually till 2030. Morgan Stanley, in its last November report, projected India to be 3rd biggest economy by 2027.

Demographic and digital dividends are the key factors, attributed to India shining in growth amidst the slower growth in the world. It is supported by nearly 900 million working age population, with 759 million "active internet users" and 650 million smartphone users in 2022, the second biggest after China. India ranked 2nd biggest manufacturer of mobile phones and



3rd biggest in the world for start-ups and Unicorn.

In 2022-23, India's GDP soared by 7.2 percent – one of the fastest growth in economy – in the world. Inflation hovered in the comfortable zone at 6.7 percent and robust growth was achieved in capital expenditure by 39 percent, reflecting a strong platform for investment. Export boomed nearly by 7 percent in 2022-23. It was over a strong base of 45 percent growth in 2021-22, reflecting a combined impact of nearly 50 percent growth in export during the past two years.

India's reinvigorate Make in India – the flagship of Indian manufacturing policy lost the steam. Manufacturing made a stupendous growth, after deceleration consecutively for 2 years in post COVID period. It surged by 11.8 percent in 2021-22, in contrast to fall by 9.6 percent and 1.4 percent in 2020-21 and 2019-20 respectively.

A series of policy measures were introduced to reboot the growth. It introduced "Atmanirbhar Package (self-reliant)", which included PLI scheme (Productivity Linked Incentive), investment opportunities under National Infrastructure Pipeline (NIP), Indian Industrial Land Bank (IILB), National Single Window system and others

PLI Scheme has been a big success for attracting FDI in the country. While the world FDI inflow registered a downtrend, India pinned a marked growth. In 2022, Global FDI inflow declined by 12.5 percent, in contrast to spurring growth in India, by 10.3 percent.

With the outbreak of COVID 19, supply chain disruption jolted global growth and eventually FDI inflow. Ironically, global supply chain disruption turned boon to India instead. It gave a new lease of life to "Make in India", which was losing stream.

Arguments were made and doubts were raised against India's potential for the ambitious vision for a new hub for global supply chain. According to Hu Shisheng, Director, South Asia Institute, China – Institute for Contemporary Industrial Relations, expressed concerns on India emerging as substitute for the China supply chain. There are three major challenges of Modi government policy, according to him. First, introduction of PLI scheme (Production Linked Incentive), second, the global search for China alternatives and third, enhancing free trade agreement routes to topple the burgeoning imports from China. "The decision of Apple of USA, decoupling from China and shifting to India, is a case in point.

Vietnam has emerged a potential challenge to India in supply chain. As a result, it became a big bet for the foreign investors. But, what goes in favour of India is its big domestic demand, in contrast to Vietnam, engulfed by low domestic demand. FDI flow in India was three times more than Vietnam in 2022.

The recent visit of Indian Prime Minister to USA made a major turnaround in the inter-dependency of the two nations. Global viewers hyped India, saying "USA needs India more than India needs". USA has been the biggest foreign investor in India.

US tilt to India for supply chain was reflected, with USA acknowledging India's leadership in Indo-Pacific region. In 2nd IPEF (Indo-Pacific Economic Framework) for Prosperity Ministerial Meeting at Detroit in May 2023, agreement was signed for supply chain resilience. It provides several benefits to India, including potential shift of production centres, from the 14 member nations.

In summing up, Modi's chanting of India to be the 3rd biggest economy by 2030 is likely to pitch a potential destination for doing business.

(IPA Service)

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Militia fighting leaves 55 dead, 146 wounded in Libya

■ HT News Network

TRIPOLI: Tripoli's worst armed clashes in a year have killed 55 people and wounded 146, Libyan media reported on Wednesday, before a truce took hold in the capital and air traffic was restored.

Fighting between the influential 444 Brigade and the Al-Radaa, or Special Deterrence Force, two of the myriad of militias that have vied for power since the 2011 overthrow of Muammar Qadhafi, erupted on Monday night and raged through Tuesday.

The clashes with rocket launchers and machine-guns followed the detention of the 444 Brigade head, Colonel Mahmud Hamza, by the rival Al-Radaa Force on Monday, an interior ministry official said.

Al-Ahrar TV updated the death toll to 55, citing Malek Mersit, spokesman for the emergency medical centre that handles emergency response in the country's west. In August last year, 32 people were killed and 159 wounded in Tripoli during battles between divided Libya's two rival administrations. The country has seen more than a decade of stop-start conflict since the Nato-backed revolt that toppled Qadhafi.

Truce takes hold after deal for release of 444 Brigade chief to a 'neutral party'

A period of relative stability had led the United Nations to express hope for delayed



elections to take place this year, and the latest fighting triggered international calls for calm.

The social council in the southeastern suburb of Soug el-Joumaa, a stronghold of Al-Radaa, announced that an agreement had been reached with Prime Minister Abdelhamid Dbeibah, head of the UN-recognised government in Tripoli, for Hamza to be handed over to a "neutral party".

In a televised announcement, the council said a ceasefire would follow the transfer of the force's commander, and late on Tuesday the fighting abated.

Both armed groups are aligned with Dbeibah's government.

A total of 234 families were evacuated from frontline areas in the capital's southern suburbs, along with dozens of doctors and paramedics trapped by the fighting while caring for the wounded, the Emergency Medical Centre said.

Overnight Tuesday-Wednesday, Dbeibah visited the southeastern suburb of Ain Zara, which saw some of the heaviest fighting on Tuesday, accompanied by Interior Minister Imed Trabelsi.

Dbeibah "saw for himself the severity of the damage" as he toured the densely

populated neighbourhood's unlit streets, his government's press office said on its Facebook page. He gave instructions for a survey of the damage to be carried out so that residents could be compensated, it added.

The interior ministry put in place a security plan to deploy officers to battleground districts to oversee the truce announced between the two sides.

Airport reopens

The Libyan capital's only civilian airport, Mitiga, in an area under Al-Radaa's control, reopened to commercial flights on Wednesday, officials said. Flights had been diverted to Misrata about 180 kilometres to the east.

In May, the same armed groups had clashed for hours in Tripoli, also after the arrest of a 444 Brigade member, but only minor injuries resulted. The 444 Brigade affiliated with Libya's defence ministry controls the southern suburbs of Tripoli and other areas.

The Al-Radaa force is a powerful ultra-conservative militia that acts as the capital's police force and controls central and eastern Tripoli, Mitiga air base, the civilian airport and a prison.

Libya is split between Dbeibah's UN-backed government in the west and another in the east backed by military strongman Khalifa Haftar.

Iran FM in Riyadh for first Saudi visit since ties restored

■ HT News Network

Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian arrived on Thursday in Riyadh, his first official Saudi trip since a landmark rapprochement in March, state media reported.

A Chinese-brokered deal saw the long-time rivals agreeing to restore diplomatic relations and reopen their respective embassies.

Iran and Saudi Arabia had severed ties in 2016 after Saudi diplomatic missions in the Islamic republic were attacked during protests over Riyadh's execution of Shia cleric Nimr al-Nimr.

Amir-Abdollahian "arrived at Riyadh Airport a few minutes ago for a one-day trip, and was welcomed by the deputy foreign minister of Saudi Arabia," official news agency IRNA said.

The visit "is focusing on bilateral ties, regional and international issues", according to IRIB state broadcaster.

IRNA said Amir-Abdollahian was due to meet with his Saudi counterpart and other officials in the kingdom.

The minister was accompanied by the new Iranian ambassador to Saudi Arabia, the report added.

State media reported in May Tehran had named Alireza Enayati, a former ambassador to Kuwait, as the Islamic Republic's Saudi envoy.

In June, Prince Faisal bin Farhan became the first Saudi foreign minister to travel to Iran since 2006. Earlier that month Iran had reopened its embassy in Riyadh with a



flag-raising ceremony.

On Wednesday, Iranian state media said military officials from both countries met in Moscow on the sidelines of a security conference.

Amir-Abdollahian has said this week that the new ambassador to Riyadh is accompanying him during Thursday's visit to "officially start his mission".

On August 9, Iran said the Saudi embassy in Tehran had begun operations but Riyadh has yet to confirm.

Iran and Saudi Arabia have backed opposing sides in conflicts across the Middle East for years.

Iran has in recent months been at odds with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait over a disputed gas field. Saudi Arabia and Kuwait claim "sole ownership" to the field — known as Arash in Iran and Dorra in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia — with Tehran warning it would "pursue its right" to the offshore zone if negotiations fail. Iran has intensified its diplomatic activity in recent months and pushed for closer ties with other Arab countries in a bid to reduce its isolation and improve its economy.

Imran Khan Interrogated In Attock Jail Over Missing Cipher Copy: Report

■ HT News Network

Islamabad: A joint investigation team (JIT) of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) interrogated former Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan inside the Attock jail, in a case related to the cable gate saga, ARY News reported on Wednesday.

The matter pertains to March last year when the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman brandished a letter claiming that it was evidence of an "international conspiracy" backed by the US to topple his government. Last month, the probe agency had grilled the deposed prime minister — who was removed from office via a no-confidence motion in April last year — for nearly two hours in the case after the Lahore High Court (LHC) withdrew a stay order against the call-up notice to Khan by the FIA into the audio leak involving the US diplomatic cable, ARY News reported.

The FIA launched investigations against the ex-prime minister for allegedly making public a confidential diplomatic cable and keeping it in his possession.

Earlier today, FIA's Counter-Terrorism Wing registered a case in connection with the "missing cipher" from the official record of the Prime Minister's Office and indicted Khan in the case, ARY News reported citing well-placed sources said.

They also confirmed that the JIT grilled Khan in Attock jail on Tuesday (yesterday). "The JIT met Khan in the office of the deputy superintendent jail," according to FIA sources. Last week, reports emerged that the JIT probing the cipher issue was near-



ing the conclusion of its findings but the latest publication of alleged content of the secret cable document in an online American news organisation has forced it to expand its investigation to cover the aspect of the leak to the media.

ARY News reported citing sources said the JIT was keen to see how and who had leaked the document's content to the media and whether the content of the cipher, as shared by The Intercept, is original or exaggerated. Last month, the cipher case took a new turn when PTI Chairman's then-principal secretary Azam Khan "recorded" a statement, terming the US cipher a "conspiracy" used by the ex-PM to "manipulate for creating a narrative against establishment and opposition. Azam, who had been "missing" since June this year, recorded his statement under CrPC 164 before a magistrate, ARY News reported citing sources. Imran, while making the claims did not reveal the contents of the letter nor mention the name of the nation that had sent it. But a few days later, he named the United States and said that "Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asia Affairs Donald Lu had sought his removal".

"Playing With Fire On Taiwan Question": China Warns US

■ HT News Network

Beijing: Days after Beijing condemned Taiwan's Vice President William Lai for making stopovers in the United States calling him a "troublemaker", China's Defence Minister Li Shangfu on Tuesday cautioned against "playing with fire" when it comes to Taiwan, Chinese Defence Ministry reported.

In an apparent attack at the US, Li cautioned any attempts to "use Taiwan to contain China," and said it would "surely end in failure," China's defence Ministry said in a statement and Xinhua news Agency quoted.

Speaking at the Moscow Conference on International



Security, Li Shangfu has said reunification of Taiwan with the mainland was "inevitable."

"Li mentioned that the Taiwan question is China's internal affair that brooks no external interference. "The reunification of China is an inevitable historical trend," The Chinese Defence Ministry said in an official statement.

"Playing with fire on the Taiwan question and attempting to 'contain China with Taiwan' will undoubtedly end in failure," The statement quoted Li as saying. Li's comments echoed previous statements by Chinese officials but the location of his speech was significant and symbolic given Moscow's ongoing invasion of Ukraine,

as per CNN.

Meanwhile, Li's comments on Taiwan come on the heels of a backlash from Beijing as Taiwan's Vice President William Lai, a front-runner in the island's upcoming presidential race, made planned stopovers in the United States during travel for an official visit to Paraguay. China's foreign ministry condemned the stopover on Sunday, calling Lai a "troublemaker through and through." In a speech to supporters at a lunch banquet in New York, Lai portrayed Taiwan's long-term survival as something the international community should take an interest in. "When Taiwan is safe, the world is safe, and when there is peace on the Taiwan Strait.

US beefs up Gulf deployment over Iran oil tanker threat

■ HT News Network

MANAMA: As Iranian seizures threaten oil tankers plying the Gulf, the United States is raising its military presence — a move long demanded by Gulf Arab states who accused Washington of retreating from the region.

Three thousand additional US personnel on troop-landing warships have already passed through the Red Sea, and US-led maritime forces are warning ships against approaching Iranian waters.

The moves follow a spate of capture and attempted capture of ships in and around the Strait of Hormuz, the U-shaped gateway to the Gulf of Oman and Arabian Sea that carries a fifth of world oil output.

"There is a heightened threat, a heightened risk to regional mariners in terms of seizures" by Iran in the strait, said Commander Tim Hawkins, spokesman for the US Navy's Fifth Fleet.

"Right now, our focus is on... increasing our presence in and near the Strait of Hormuz to ensure security and stability in a very critical waterway," Hawkins said at the US Naval base in Bahrain.

The attacks on tankers came at a time of troubled relations between Washington and its wealthy Gulf allies, who have long relied on US protection for their oil assets and chafed at a perceived military drawdown.

17 soldiers killed in Niger border attack

■ HT News Network

NIAMEY: At least 17 troops were killed in an ambush in Niger in a reminder of the nation's deep security crisis as its military rulers face off against neighbours determined to reverse last month's coup.

An army detachment was "the victim of a terrorist ambush near the town of Koutougou" in the Tillaberi region near Burkina Faso on Tuesday, said a defence ministry statement published later that day. It added that another 20 soldiers had been wounded, six seriously, with all the casualties evacuated to the capital Niamey. More than 100 assailants, who were travelling on motorbikes, were "neutralised" during their retreat, the army said. An insurgency has plagued Africa's Sahel region for more than a decade, breaking out in northern Mali in 2012 before spreading to neighbouring Niger and Burkina Faso in 2015. The so-called "three borders" area between the three countries is regularly the scene of attacks by rebels affiliated with the Islamic State group and Al-Qaeda. The unrest across the region has killed thousands of troops, police officers and civilians and forced millions to flee their homes. Anger at the bloodshed has fuelled military coups in all three countries since 2020. Alarmed by the cascade of takeovers, the West African bloc ECOWAS has warned of possible military intervention to reinstall Bazoum, who is being detained in the presidential compound in Niamey.

Taliban 'ban' political parties in Afghanistan

■ HT News Network

PESHAWAR: The Afghan Taliban on Wednesday said there was a complete ban on activities of political parties in Afghanistan.

"Political parties' activities have been completely stopped in the country because neither do these parties have any standing in Sharia, any place in Sharia nor are any national interests attached to these parties or the nation liked them," Interim Minister for Justice, Shaikh Maulavi Abdul Hakeem Sharaf said while presenting annual report of his ministry in Kabul, according to a statement issued by the Afghan Taliban's media outlet.

The statement demonstrates that the Afghan Taliban may continue to monopolise power as a movement and have no intention of allowing political plurality in the country.

It wasn't clear when the ban was imposed, but the Afghan Taliban have been resisting international pressure to form a more inclusive government, saying their 'interim government' had representatives from all ethnicities and tribes and was broad-based.

The Afghan Taliban have been opposed to including what they call "discredited and puppet politicians" from the previous dispensation, saying their participation would be a betrayal of their long struggle against foreign occupation forces and their "puppets" and "stooges."

While the Taliban government has generally disallowed political activities from the get-go, this is widely being seen as the first official statement in this regard.

Around 45,000 Muscovites fight in Ukraine: mayor

■ HT News Network

MOSCOW: Tens of thousands of Muscovites are taking part in combat operations in Ukraine, the Russian capital's mayor Sergei Sobyanin said on Wednesday, giving a rare estimate of the forces deployed.

Russia and Ukraine rarely communicate on the total number of troops involved in the conflict, or on their respective losses.

"Forty-five thousand Muscovites are fighting in the area of the special military operation," Sobyanin was cited as saying by Russian news agency Interfax.

The mayor added they represented a "considerable part" of the fighters there. Among them, "at least 5,000 people are professional soldiers," he also said.

Beginning in August, Deputy Security Council Chairman Dmitry Medvedev said Russia had enlisted over 230,000 additional personnel into the army since the start of the year.

Last September, President Vladimir Putin announced a "partial" military mobilisation of 300,000 men to replenish the troops.

The announcement — Russia's first such mobilisation since World War II — sent a shock through the country as thousands of men were drafted into the army.

Hawaii officials say 'no regrets' about lack of wildfire sirens

■ HT News Network

Embattled officials in Hawaii who have been criticised for the lack of warnings as a deadly wildfire ripped through a town insisted on Wednesday that sounding emergency sirens would not have saved lives. At least 110 people died when the inferno levelled Lahaina last week on the island of Maui, with some residents not aware their town was at risk until they saw flames for themselves. But the head of Maui's Emergency Management Agency, which operates a network of 80 sirens, on Wednesday defended the decision not to sound them as fire bore down on Lahaina's more than 12,000 people. "The sirens are used primarily for tsunamis. The public is trained to seek higher ground in the event.

UGC To Grant Foreign Degree Equivalence; Restricts Online, Distance Mode And Franchise Agreement Degrees

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, Aug 17: The University Grants Commission (UGC) has drafted guidelines for granting equivalence and for recognition of degrees obtained from foreign universities, restricting degrees obtained through distance and online mode as well as through any franchise agreement. The commission has also drafted norms for recognising qualifications obtained from schools affiliated to foreign boards as well as from offshore campuses of a foreign higher educational institution.

The norms come at a time foreign universities are in the advanced stages of setting up campuses in India's GIFT city and Indian universities are collaborating with institutions

abroad to offer dual or joint degrees.

The higher education regulator in its draft Recognition and Grant of Equivalence to Qualifications obtained from Foreign Educational Institutions) Regulations, 2023, has covered inter-nationally relevant curricula, academic and research collaboration with foreign universities and credit recognition under twinning arrangements.

"Qualification obtained from a foreign higher educational institution shall be recognized and granted equivalence provided the qualification has been awarded by a foreign higher education institution that is duly recognized in its home country.

"The student should have pursued the programme through regular, in-person instruction (and not through



online or distance learning). The entry-level requirements for admission to the programme should be similar to that of a corresponding programme in India," it said.

The commission has noted that "similarity" of entry criteria will be determined through due process by the Standing Committee set up for the pur-

pose based on similarity of minimum duration of the programme in India and the foreign country; minimum credit requirements and evaluation processes.

"Credits in different categories of courses may be examined and similarity established (such as basic background courses, disciplinary core courses, disci-

plinary elective courses, cross-disciplinary courses, laboratory courses etc), so that the equivalence also reflects the similarity in 'flavour' of the offerings in India and abroad," it said.

While the guidelines state that the minimum duration of the programme should be similar to that of a corresponding programme in India, in case the duration varies, the UGC will consider minimum credit requirements that should be the same in both institutions.

"In considering this, the commission will examine and grant equivalence to the definition of credit (number of contact hours per week, number of self-study hours, the quantum of experiential learning, etc) first, before the equivalence between the programmes is established. Up to 10 per cent variation of total

normalised credit requirements may be given equivalence," the guidelines said.

In order to facilitate the mobility of students in a seamless manner, the UGC will maintain a dedicated online portal to receive applications to grant equivalence to qualifications obtained from foreign educational institutions.

This equivalence certificate will certify the "parity of a qualification" between a foreign qualification and the qualification awarded by an Indian Board or university at the same level.

According to the UGC Regulations, the equivalence certificate will also be accepted by the universities in India for the purposes of admission or employment. Currently, the evaluation division of the All India Universities (AIU) — an apex inter-

university organisation — issues an "equivalence certificate" to students with foreign qualifications to facilitate their admission in Indian Universities. With the guidelines coming into effect, the UGC will also assume the responsibility of granting equivalence to foreign degrees.

Qualification obtained from off-shore campuses, according to the UGC, under dual degree or joint degree programmes will only be recognised if the academic programmes satisfy the accreditation requirements in the country where the offshore campus is located and in the country of origin. "Qualification obtained in the offshore campus of a foreign higher educational institution shall be recognised provided the campus is duly approved by the competent authorities in India as well.

Meri Maati Mera Dosh: JKAP-14th Bn organizes Tiranga rally at Manasbal

■ HT News Network

GANDERBAL, AUGUST 17: Under the banner of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav and as part of 'Meri Maati Mera Dosh' campaign DySP Adjutant JKAP-14th Bn today flagged-off the 'Tiranga rally' from JKAP-14th Bn APC Manasbal.

The rally saw an overwhelming participation of Police Personnel of JKAP-14th Bn, students from Sainik School Manasbal and general public.

The rally passed through Chak, Chak Yungoor, Malpora and other adjoining areas in the vicinity and culminated at JKAP 14th Bn. Headquarters APC Manasbal peacefully.

The DySP in his address highlighted the significance of the National Flag as unifying force in India as we proudly hoist our National Flag.

Sadhotra pays obeisance at Bhagwan Shiv Mandir Karwanda, prays for universal peace

■ HT News Network

JAMMU AUGUST 17: Senior National Conference leader and Former Minister Mr Ajay Kumar Sadhotra today paid obeisance at Bhagwan Shiv Mandir Karwanda and prayed for universal peace, brotherhood and amity, the core of Sanatan Dharma.

Speaking to devotees, who had assembled in large number to offer special Pujas during the ongoing Shravan Month, Mr Sadhotra said devotion to Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati brings peace and leads society to highest pinnacles of spiritual bliss. Mr Sadhotra exhorted people to imbibe the spirit of humanism, which is core of every religion, saying this will guide society to overcome hate, animosity and bitterness that is pivotal for making this world a better place to live in.

He said the glorious heritage and legacy of inclusiveness of our Country has to be sustained, strengthened and bequeathed to the posterity by spreading the divine message of love, compassion and righteousness. He also urged the devotees, present in the congregation, to spread the message of love, peace and compassion, which, he said is imperative for national integration and promoting inclusiveness across the country and in Jammu and Kashmir. He hoped that everyone will play a role towards growth of classless society based on social justice. He also called for promoting and sustaining the spirit of togetherness, saying the need for this has never been so important ever before than now when the society is gripped by hate, anger and tension. To overcome all these negative energies, one should submit before the Almighty and work for promoting the spirit of brotherhood.

ISI operative arrested by UPSTF from Shamli district

■ HT News Network

Lucknow, Aug 17 (UNI) A man having links with Pakistani intelligence agency Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) was arrested by the Special Task Force (STF) of Uttar Pradesh Police from Shamli district, an official spokesman said here on Thursday. The spokesman said that the Meerut unit of the STF was receiving information through its associate intelligence agency that Kaleem, a resident of Mominpura in Shamli, his brother Tehseem alias Taseem and their associates were having affiliation with a terrorist organisation. He said that information was received that the accused were planning to carry out some major strike in an attempt to disintegrate the unity, integrity, sovereignty

and social harmony of the country and to damage the internal and external security of India. "During investigation it was revealed that the accused were sending photographs and messages related to security places in India to ISI and other terrorist organisations through WhatsApp," he said. The spokesman said that acting on the information the STF team arrested Kaleem from Shamli district on Wednesday. "When quizzed Kaleem revealed that some of his relatives live in Pakistan and he used to visit the country. During his Pakistan visit, Kaleem came into contact with some persons of ISI and handlers," he said. He said that the arrested accused took a mobile number on a fake ID on which he activated WhatsApp on the mobile.

J&K HC Dismisses Ladakh Admin Plea Against NC Candidates Contesting LAHDC Poll On Party Symbol

■ HT News Network

DODA, AUGUST 17: Marking a joyous celebration of Indian independence, the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Language, Sub Office Doda, orchestrated a captivating musical extravaganza in the town hall. The event, organised under the guidance of Cultural Officer Slah-Ud-Din Tahir, showcased a variety of talents from across the district, painting a vibrant tapestry of melodious performances.

Deputy Commissioner, Vishesh Mahajan, SSP, Abdul Qayoom and other functionaries along with a huge audience of locals attended the program anchored by Master Om Prakash Bhagat. The audi-



ence was left spellbound by the mesmerizing voices of the artists who took the stage with renowned performers like Naseem Ul Haq, Farooq Khokar and Pawan Gupta. The town hall was packed to the brim, buzzing with enthusiastic attendees from all walks of life, including officers and officials from the District Administration of Doda. Their resounding applause and

unwavering support amplified the success of the musical gala. Rashid Jahangir, Assistant Cultural Officer, JKAACL Sub Office Doda, was in charge of the programme and managed the event. At the culmination of the program, the Deputy Commissioner delivered an impactful speech, lauding the efforts of the JK Academy of Art, Culture, and Language in preserving and

promoting local culture and traditions. He emphasized the significance of continuing such captivating initiatives and affirmed the district administration's commitment to nurturing and advancing the local heritage. The event was attended by esteemed dignitaries including ADC Doda, ADDC Doda, President Municipal Council Doda, ACD Doda, ACP Doda, Deputy Director Employment, Account Officer Doda, District Information Officer Doda, Tehsildar Doda, and BDO Headquarter Doda. Deputy Commissioner, Vishesh Mahajan, SSP, Abdul Qayoom and other functionaries along with a huge audience of locals attended the program anchored by Master Om Prakash Bhagat. The audience was left spellbound.

Wild animals on prowl in Tarach area of Handwara, injured Two cattle.

■ DR.AB QAYOOM

Handwara, Aug. 17: The residents of Tarach and surrounding areas in North Kashmir's Kupwara district are having sleepless nights for the last few months due to the presence of wild animals in the area. As per inhabitants, two cattle belonging to Shah mohalla of Tarch village were injured by a wild bear during night hours. This incident of bear attack has sent shock waves around the adjacent Nabours of Shah Mohalla. As it has been reported that the bears and leopards are frequently seen roaming around these areas who come down from the nearest forests of Kandi belt. The residents said they are living in extreme fear due to the presence of wild animals including leopards and bears in their area. They said they do not venture out of their homes after dusk due to the fear of getting attacked by animals. Local sarpanch Nazir Ahmad said, the local Mouazin of masjid in Shah



Mohalla is scared to call the Azaan because of the threat of the wild animals, he said. Another residents also echoes same concerns and has appealed the Wild life department to do all possible for protecting the life and livestock of people in this area. Locals said that wild animals on the prowl have become a serious threat to humans and livestock. They urged the Wildlife Department to take more steps to ensure their safety. The locals have appealed the Government to rescue them from this insecurity and unsafe environment on priority basis. While talking to HEADLINES TODAY Concern wildlife officer said

Don't play politics over natural calamity: Anurag Thakur tells Sukhu

■ HT News Network

New Delhi, Aug 17 (UNI) Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur on Thursday slammed Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu for blaming "Bihari architects" for the house collapse incidents in his state and said it was not the right time to play politics amidst a natural calamity.

Thakur's remarks came after Sukhu, in an interview appeared to blame architects from Bihar for the house collapse incidents in Shimla and other parts of the state.

"The migrant architects (masons), whom I call 'Bihari architects', come here and construct a floor on the floor. We do not have local masons," the Chief Minister said.

"As of now let's first focus on working together to save the lives, livelihood and infrastructure of Himachal Pradesh. There is enough time for politics" Thakur countered. "The Congress has a history of disparaging those who have helped our nation. And the people of Bihar have dem-



onstrated it by their contribution to the country" he added. Meanwhile, the death toll in this week's heavy rains in Himachal Pradesh rose to 71 with more bodies being recovered, according to the state government. Thirteen people are still missing. A total of 57 bodies have been recovered since Sunday night. Thakur also criticised the state ministers who are blaming "mining and highway constructions" for this disaster and said: "Ministers are speaking in different voices, so rather than making these kinds of comments the government should focus on rescue and relief operations and to provide all sought of facilities to the people of Himachal Pradesh.

SC asks Centre, Gujarat govt why selective remission only to Bilkis Bano convicts

■ HT News Network

New Delhi, Aug 17 (UNI) The Supreme Court on Thursday questioned the policy of the Gujarat and Union governments about selective application for remission (pre-mature release) of Bilkis Bano's 11 convicts serving jail sentence for gang-rape and murder. The Apex Court was hearing a batch of pleas, including certain pleas filed by third parties, challenging the decision of the Gujarat

government to grant remission to 11 convicts who had gang-raped Bilkis Bano and murdered her family members during the 2002 Gujarat riots.

The Top Court today asked some uncomfortable questions to the state government when the senior lawyer of Gujarat govt, Additional Solicitor General (ASG) S V Raju, tried to justify the remission as per law and rules framed on the remission of convicts.

Raju was unable to give any reply. To this, the Apex



Court said, "the opportunity to reform must be given to all. And not just a few." The state government

granted remission and released from jail 11 convicts, who were found guilty and convicted for the gang

rape of Bilkis Bano during the 2002 communal riots in Gujarat. A two-judge bench of the Supreme Court, headed by Justice BV Nagarathna and also comprising Justice Ujjal Bhuyan observed that the opportunity to reform and reintegrate into society should be given to every eligible convict. "Why is the policy of remission being applied selectively? The opportunity to reintegrate and reform should be given to every convict, not a few. Question is, not en masse, but where eligible, are all life

sentence convicts after 14 years being given the benefit of remission?" Justice Nagarathna asked. The Gujarat government had granted remission to the 11 convicts based on a May 2022 judgment of the Supreme Court.

ASG Raju said that the State government was bound by the effective order of a May 2022 Supreme Court ruling, that had said the State's remission policy would apply in the case and it should consider such applications for remission based on the Gujarat government's.

MC Sopore stages protest against fund lapses, lack of cooperation by line depts

■ HT News Network

Sopore, Aug 17: The Municipal Council Sopore on Thursday staged a protest demonstration against the line departments including R&B, Jal Shakhti, PDD accusing them of not utilizing developmental funds and lack of coordination. The protest led by the Municipal head, Musarat Kar along with the councilors was staged in the premises of Additional Deputy Commissioner's office in Sopore. She told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the claims of the government's three-tier setup are seen nowhere in Sopore as the executing agencies Roads and Buildings (R&B), Jal Shakhti or Power Development Department are not cooperating with them. Musarat held the authorities responsible for lapsing developmental funds and said that slow pace of work by the executing agencies is causing inconvenience to people. "Not a single project was inaugurated besides not a single foundation stone was laid on Independence Day despite clear directions.

Skin Pigmentation and its Home Remedies



Shahnaz Husain

It is commonly believed that moisture in rainy weather will protect the skin, but that's not true. Our skin often pays the price for the moisture-laden environment. The increased humidity, dampness, and fluctuating temperatures during the monsoon can lead to various skin issues.

Hyperpigmentation is a common problem in monsoons, which causes the darkening of an area of the skin. Hyperpigmentation is a condition that can be caused due to an abnormally high concentration of melanocytes due to the sun exposure.

Skin pigmentation is a common issue faced by most of us in form of sun spots, age spots, freckles, sun damage, or melasma making skin look dull, lifeless uneven and ruins its texture completely. It also starts drying out the skin making it darker and patchy.

It is caused by overproduction of melanin, the pigment that gives you your natural skin tone. When this pigment forms a deposit in the skin, it causes brown or tan spots on the skin which is called pigmentation.

In nutshell any discoloration of the skin is known as pigmentation which is completely harmless and faced by both men and women. Pigmentation can occur to anyone on face, hands or any other body part regardless of one's gender, race, age or geographical locations.

In order to get rid of those stubborn pigmentation spots, we often resort to various BB creams, concealers and many

other artificial creams. However, these chemical-based creams can do more harm than good to your skin.

While such skin isn't easy to be repaired to a point where it starts glowing in a short span of time, when dealt with on your own. But experts opinion actually work wonders for such skin types. It is always better to go for natural ways while treating such skin conditions.



The first aspect of the treatment is protection from the sun. Actually, as part of the treatment, one should try to avoid sun-exposure as far as possible. Physical protection is the only answer by applying a sunscreen before going out in the sun. Select a sunscreen with SPF of at least 20. The sunscreen should be applied 20 minutes before sun-exposure, to allow it time to be absorbed by the skin. It should be reapplied if you are in the sun for longer than an hour. The effects of the sun increase near water bodies and snow, as they reflect the sun's radiation. Therefore, it becomes all the more important to protect the skin and re-apply the sun screen after 20 to 30 minutes.

If the skin is dry, it should be kept moisturized at all times. At night, after cleansing, apply a nourishing cream and massage it on the skin with a few drops of water.

This helps to improve the skin's ability to retain moisture.

The use of scrubs and masks also help to remove dead skin cells and their contained pigment. This helps the dark patches to gradually become lighter. External care, itself, can remove pigmentation permanently, provided protective care is followed afterwards. Even when the pigmented patches disappear, one should

continue to use a sunscreen. In fact, the use of a sunscreen has become an important part of modern cosmetic-care, to protect the skin from problems and premature ageing.

Give the skin some nourishment. As a home remedy, you can try applying a little sesame seed (til) oil and pat the skin with a hot moist towel. Or, apply a little milk, with a few drops of honey, leave it on for 10 to 15 minutes and wash off with water. If you wish to make a cleanser at home, add 5 drops of oil to one tablespoon cold milk. Mix it well. Using cotton wool, use this mixture to wipe the skin. You will find that milk is very soothing to dry skin.

Here are some home remedies for pigmentation (dark patches):

Mix one part honey with two parts lemon juice and apply. Wash off after 20 minutes.

Mix ground almonds with curd and apply. Rub the mixture gently over the skin. Leave on for 5-10 minutes and wash off with water.

Mix rose water and lemon juice in equal quantities and apply on the dark areas. Wash off after 10 minutes, or once it dries.

Mix besan (gram flour) and curd, with a little turmeric and apply on the dark areas.

Take some rice flour, add a little curd and use it as a scrub on pigmented skin.

Scrub: Mix 3 tablespoons almond meal (ground almonds) with half cup yogurt (curd). Apply on the face and neck. Rub gently, especially on the dark patches and wash off. It also helps to remove tan. Scrubs should not be applied on dry or sensitive skin. For dry skin, add half teaspoon til oil to a little milk and apply on the face. Wipe off with moist cotton wool after 15 minutes.

For sunburn: Actually, cold milk applied daily, using cotton wool, not only helps to soothe the skin, but also keeps it soft. It also makes the skin colour lighter over a period of time, if used daily.

For dark patches: Mix together a big pinch of coarse salt with a cream. Apply only on the areas with the dark patches or spots and rub gently. Wash off. Then apply cold milk and wash off after 15 minutes. Do this twice a week.

For dark spots: Add a pinch of turmeric (haldi) to curd and apply daily on the entire face. Wash it off after 20 to 30 minutes.

Mask: Mix 3 teaspoons oatmeal with ripe papaya pulp and one teaspoon curd into a thick paste. Apply and wash off after 20 minutes. This mask suits both dry and oily skin.

The author is an international fame beauty expert and is called the herbal queen of India.

NEWS

Health and financial influencers now need to disclose qualifications under new ASCI guidelines



The Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) said medical practitioners, health and fitness, and finance experts holding certifications from recognised institutions are required to "disclose" that they are certified experts and practitioners while sharing information or promoting products or services or making any health-related claims. All advertisements published by social media influencers "must carry a disclosure label that clearly identifies it as an advertisement", the ASCI said in its issued fresh guidelines on August 17. "Influencers providing advice and/or promoting and/or commenting on merits or demerits on aspects related to commercial goods and services, in the fields of Banking, financial services and insurance (BFSI) and Health & Nutrition, must have the necessary qualifications and certifications in order to provide such information and advice to consumers," ASCI said in a press release.

Qualifications mandatory

Under the new guidelines, finance influencers also known as 'finfluencers', if advising about stock or investments, must have been registered with SEBI and their SEBI registration number should be stated with their name and qualifications. For other financial advice, the influencer must have suitable qualifications such as an IRDAI insurance license, CA, CS etc. "In addition, they must abide by all disclosure requirements as mandated by financial sector regulators from time to time," the regulatory body said. Meanwhile, for posts related to health and nutrition, the influencer must have relevant qualifications such as a medical degree, or be a certified nurse, nutritionist, dietician, physiotherapist, or psychologist depending on the specific advice being given. The ASCI said influencers must disclose their qualifications and registration or certification details prominently and in the case of promotional content, advised them to review and satisfy themselves that the advertiser is in a position to substantiate the claims made in the advertisement. These additional guidelines for celebrities, influencers, and virtual influencers in the field of health and wellness were earlier released by the nodal Consumer Affairs Ministry. The Department of Consumer Affairs will actively monitor and enforce these guidelines. Violations may lead to penalties under the Consumer Protection Act 2019 and other relevant provisions of the law.

The guidelines, introduced initially in May 2021, aim to help consumers identify promotional content and make informed decisions on products or services. The guidelines have been amended in keeping with the rapidly evolving nature and extensive impact of digital platforms, ASCI said.

Constipation Remedies: Eat Soaked Dates For Quick Relief

Constipation is a common health issue. This can occur due to various reasons, such as not drinking enough water, not eating enough fruits and vegetables or not being physically active. Sometimes, certain medications or medical conditions can also lead to constipation. To prevent constipation, many people suggest staying hydrated, eating a balanced diet with plenty of fibre and doing exercise regularly. However, nutritionist Lovneet Batra suggests a food item in her Instagram Stories that can easily show positive results for people suffering from constipation. Wondering, what is it? None other than dates. As per her post, soaked dates are the solution to this health issue. Dates for constipation: Know the benefits Nutritionist Batra writes,



"Dates are also well known for treating constipation. Dates are high in fibre and soaked dates provide the laxative effect and relieve us from digestion problems."

To ensure the well-being of her Instagram community, Lovneet Batra consistently shares valuable health tips. She also

shares tips about food items that can potentially disturb gut health.

Below are the food items that she enlisted:

1. Sugar's Impact: Sugar can reduce healthy gut bacteria, potentially causing inflammation in the body.

2. Artificial Sweeteners: Artificial sweeteners, due to their unnatural nature, might trigger an immune response, leading to inflammation.

3. Fried Foods and Saturated Fat: Fried foods, rich in saturated fats, can be harsh on the gut and pose digestion challenges.

4. Ultra-Processed Foods (UPFs): UPFs with excess salt, fat, sugar, and additives can alter gut bacteria and contribute to inflammation.

5. Vegetable Oils: Oils with a high omega-6 to omega-3 ratio might cause bloating, and inflammation, and harm the gut lining.

6. Excessive Alcohol: Consuming too much alcohol can harm the gut lining, increase endotoxin production, and potentially lead to issues like acid reflux, poor.

Global Initiative on Digital Health to be launched under India's G-20 presidency

India in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) will launch the Global Initiative on Digital Health on August 19 as part of the ongoing G-20 summit in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

The first-of-its-kind global initiative is aimed at data converge, interface of health platforms and investments in the digital health space around the globe.

The summit is also working on bringing in the crucial interim Medical Countermeasure (MCM) — "which is a 'network of networks approach' before the next health emergency hits us and India in collaboration with WHO is leading the advocacy," said Lav Agarwal, additional secretary, Health Ministry on Wednesday.

He added that the global digital platform will include an investment tracker, an ask tracker (to understand who needs what kind of products and services) and a library of existing digital health platforms.

He further explained that digital health innovations and solutions will aid universal health convergence and improve healthcare service delivery. The initiative has also found funding from global partners.

Speaking about data security associated with the initiative, Mr. Agarwal said that India has always followed the policy of having data owned by the citizens.



"This is not the practice that we find across the world. India has spoken to its partners about the India format which has been endorsed by partners," he explained.

The global platform for data sharing will offer no data about its users but will share analyses and work at inter operational ability of data.

The summit is also working at garnering support for setting up a Climate and Health Initiative (CHI) in India, in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank and the launch of patient and healthcare workforce mobility portal.

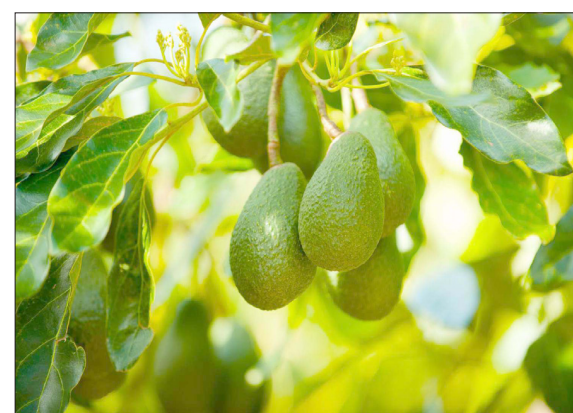
Meanwhile at the summit, WHO is also convening the traditional medicine global summit on August

17 and 18 which is co-hosted by the Ministry of Ayush. It will explore the role of traditional complementary and integrative medicine in addressing pressing health challenges and driving progress in global health and sustainable development.

The first-of-its-kind global initiative is aimed at data converge, interface of health platforms and investments in the digital health space around the globe

How avocado is now a proven super food for the heart: Study says it lowers bad cholesterol, helps in weight loss

While the avocado has always been a delicious, creamy fruit and an ideal option for a healthy breakfast, a new review and meta-analysis of multiple studies has once again proven its positive effects on cardiovascular health. The findings showed that individuals who followed an avocado diet experienced reduced total cholesterol level, lower levels of low-density lipoprotein (LDL) or bad cholesterol and higher levels of high-density lipoprotein (HDL) or good cholesterol compared to those who followed a habitual diet or a low-fat diet. According to the study, "Avocados are rich in monounsaturated fatty acids (MUFAs), fibre and plant sterols, which have cholesterol-lowering effects. Incorporating avocados into a low-fat diet can be beneficial." However, they were not able to significantly impact triglyceride levels or fasting glucose levels. "It is that one superfood that ticks off all the



boxes of heart health," says Dr Priyanka Rohatgi, Chief Nutritionist, Apollo Hospitals.

Why are avocados being considered a heart-friendly superfood?

What works for avocados is that they are rich in monounsaturated fats, which are known to be heart-healthy fats that can improve blood vessel function and reduce inflammation. Their high potassium content also aids in maintaining healthy blood pressure levels. They provide vitamin E, an antioxidant that helps protect cells from

damage and inflammation, supporting overall cardiovascular function. Avocados contain B vitamins, including folate, which aid in lowering homocysteine levels, reducing the risk of heart disease. However, it's essential to remember that while avocados can be beneficial for heart health, an overall balanced diet, exercise and other lifestyle factors play crucial roles in maintaining cardiovascular well-being.

How do avocados help lower cholesterol levels?

Avocados are rich in

monounsaturated fats, specifically oleic acid, which is known to help reduce LDL cholesterol levels. These healthy fats can replace saturated fats in the diet, leading to improved cholesterol profiles. Additionally, avocados are a good source of dietary fibre, both soluble and insoluble. The soluble fibre binds to cholesterol molecules in the digestive system, preventing their absorption into the bloodstream. This process aids in lowering LDL cholesterol levels. Furthermore, avocados contain phytosterols, plant compounds that compete with cholesterol for absorption, resulting in reduced cholesterol uptake. The combination of monounsaturated fats, dietary fibre and phytosterols in avocados contributes to their cholesterol-lowering effects. However, it's important to consume avocados in moderation as part of a balanced diet to fully benefit from their heart-healthy properties. Always consult a healthcare profes-

