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LT GOVERNOR VISITS KULGAM

Today J&K is setting benchmarks in many sectors of development: LG

■ HT News Network

KULGAM, AUG 22: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha today visited Kulgam and chaired a high level meeting to review the sector-wise progress of beneficiary-oriented and flagship schemes of the Central and UT Government and major developmental projects in the District.

The Lt Governor also inaugurated and dedicated 100-bedded Girls Guijar and Bakerwal Hostel, Amnoo Aadpora Kulgam and Ashmuji Kilam Gund Bridge to the people.

"Today J&K is setting benchmarks in many sectors of development for other states and UTs to follow. The District Administration and PRIs must work together to ensure benefits of development are shared equitably," the Lt Governor said.



ernor said.

We should take concerted action for more effective delivery of public services, benefits of welfare schemes, extending the benefits of self-employment schemes to youth and women and be adequately sensitive to their needs and aspirations, he said.

It should also be ensured that there is no delay in extending revenue services like registration of property, he added.

The Lt Governor also sought the active participation of PRI members and other stakeholders in improving the literacy rate in the district.

Our efforts for rapid progress in education sector and increase in literacy rate can have its full impact only if PRIs, public and administration work together. This is the right time to move

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144 dengue cases reported in J&K this year so far

Doctors issue advisory to prevent mosquito bites

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUG 22: Dengue cases are on the rise in Jammu & Kashmir with 144 cases reported this year so far in the Union Territory.

The State Surveillance Officer, Dr Harjeet Rai told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that this year, 144 cases of dengue have been reported in J&K.

He said dengue cases are projected to surge post-monsoon and advised people to take "preemptive" measures to combat the painful mosquito-borne disease in the absence of any vaccine.

The said dengue caused by viruses carried by infected mosquitoes has always been a health concern and people need to take precautions to protect themselves from falling prey to the virus, he said.

Meanwhile, the doctors have advised the people to use mosquito repellents and wear full sleeves shirts so

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NEWS BRIEF

Driver arrested for raping a minor girl in Baramulla

SRINAGAR, AUG 22: Police on Tuesday arrested a driver in Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district on charges of raping a minor girl.

The accused Mohammad Umar Parray of Parray Mohalla Sangri was arrested after a written complaint from the girl.

Police Station Baramulla received written complaint from one minor girl stating therein that she was abducted by Mohammad Umar Parray, a venture driver and raped her at secluded place in Sangri locality.

"On this written complaint, a case FIR was registered in Police Station Baramulla under relevant sections of law.

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11 drug peddlers detained under PSA in Kupwara so far

KUPWARA, AUG 22: Jammu and Kashmir Police in north Kashmir's Kupwara district have so far detained 11 individuals involved in drug peddling under Public Safety Act (PSA).

Pertinently, Kupwara district in recent years has seen a gradual increase in illegal drug peddling cases.

In this regard, Police and Army have tightened the noose against the drug peddlers and smugglers.

Sharing details, Kupwara police as per news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) informed that 11 individuals belonging to different places of the district have been booked

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NIA Court declared six members of a narco-module as proclaimed offenders in SIA case

SRINAGAR, AUG 22: In a significant development, the Special designated NIA Court, Srinagar has declared six members of a Narco- module as proclaimed offenders. This action comes in wake of their involvement in cross-border smuggling of narcotics in collaboration with LeT/HM operatives from across the border. The illicit drugs were subsequently distributed among the youth, while the proceeds were used to fuel terror activities by financing and strengthening the activities of the LeT and HM militant

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Visitors freely throw trash in the open meadows of Sonamarg

■ HT News Network

GANDERBAL, AUG 22: At a time when

tourists are finding the experience at Sonamarg quite soothing, there is the majority of irresponsible visitors who are throwing trash in the meadows and roads leaving no stone unturned to deface the beautiful face of this beautiful place.

The hopes of any responsible visitor get crashed after visiting Sonamarg. The proliferation of hutments and hotels clearly signifies that Sonamarg has been turned into a money-making centre. The pony-wallas have been roaming around without any purpose, trash being thrown by every-

one on the road and in the meadows leading to further pollution.

"It was a disappointing experience for me and I do lament for visiting Sonamarg. Despite a ban on polythene and single-use plastic, these products continue to be sold and used extensively at this place. Visitors throw waste in the open. Nobody bothers to empty filled garbage bins. A pile of garbage can be found everywhere in the meadows," one of the local visitors Showkat Ahmed told news agency Kashmir News Trust.

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Sarore Toll Plaza:

Won't pay 'illegal Jaziya', say protesters in Samba

■ HT News Network

SAMBA, AUG 22: Locals from the Samba district of Jammu region continued to stage protests for the consecutive second day against the toll tax levied by authorities at Sarore Toll Plaza.

The call for the protest was given by a local outfit 'Yuva Rajput Sabha' that has been demanding the removal of the Sarore Toll Plaza.

Protesters alleged that at least 40 protesters have been detained by police for staging a peaceful protest. "Democracy is in danger. We are even not being allowed to express ourselves peacefully," they said.

Pradhan Bar Association, who was part of the protest said that people have a legal demand and that is to charge toll tax only when you provide better roads.

"Our brothers who have been

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US high-level delegation calls on Mayor of Srinagar

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUG 22: A high level delegation of US called on the Mayor of Srinagar Junaid Azim Mattu on Tuesday and discussed opportunities and prospectus for investment.

US Minister Counselor for Political Affairs Graham D. Mayer, First Secretary Political Affairs Gary B. Applegarth and Political Specialist Abhiram Ghadyal patil called on the Mayor of Srinagar, a statement said.

The US high-level delegation discussed various pertinent issues with the Mayor including Srinagar's infrastructural and



urban revival and transformation.

The Mayor of Srinagar briefed the delegation about the significant growth

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Efforts on to regain Sopore's past glory: ADC

■ HT News Network

SOPORE, AUG 22: Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Sopore, SA Raina on Tuesday said the administration is committed to the overall development of the town once known as

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Former MS Among 3 Officials Suspended For Embezzlement Of Funds At District Hospital Kulgam

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUG 22: The Health and Medical Education (H&ME) department on Tuesday suspended three officials including the former Medical Superintendent of District Hospital Kulgam in connection with an embezzlement of Hospital Development Funds.

A two-member committee has been constituted to enquire the matter and submit a report within period of 15 days.



"Pending enquiry into the conduct

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Price Pressure In Food Items To Be Transitory; Global Uncertainty, Domestic Disruption To Keep Inflation Elevated: FinMin

■ HT News Network

NEW DELHI, AUG 22: The finance ministry of Tuesday said the inflation in food items is likely to be transitory as preemptive measures by the government and arrival of fresh crops will cool prices, even though global uncertainty and domestic disruptions may keep inflationary pressures elevated for the coming months.

In its Monthly Economic Review for July, the ministry said going forward, while domestic consumption and investment demand are expected to continue driving growth, enhanced provision for capital expenditure by

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LG Mishra Holds Meeting To Discuss Possible Administrative Support And Aid To SHGs

■ HT News Network

LEH, AUG 21: The Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier (Dr) BD Mishra (Retd) held a meeting to discuss possible administrative support to the women Self Help Groups across Ladakh. The meeting discussed various aspects of empowering the SHGs, which play a vital role in providing economic self-sufficiency at the grassroots level. During the meeting, issues related to capacity building, skill development and handholding to avail GoI schemes for the SHGs were discussed.

The HLG directed the Secretary, RDD, Ladakh to identify and prepare a detailed report on the Self-Help Groups

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CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

Today J&K.....

decisively in this direction, he said.

The Lt Governor took a detailed review of various infrastructure projects including construction of Transit Accommodations for Kashmiri Migrant Employees and directed the concerned departments to expedite the implementation at the earliest.

He directed the District Administration and all the line departments for saturation of old age, widow pensions, scholarships, marriage assistance schemes to eligible beneficiaries by organising special camps during Block Diwas.

Effective implementation of development programmes for deprived section of society, women, children and Specially-Abled is our top priority, he said.

Reviewing the progress of the Agriculture and allied sectors, the Lt Governor said, Holistic Agriculture Development Program (HADP) will bring new Agriculture revolution that is broad based and inclusive. The successful implementation of HADP is the responsibility of everyone associated with the sector, he said.

The Lt Governor further suggested for constitution of Cooperative Societies in every possible sector of rural areas to explore the possibilities for economic growth of the region.

He directed the District Agriculture Officer for increasing the registration of farmers on Daksh Portal.

The Lt Governor also reviewed the measures taken to promote tourism and industry sectors in the district.

He directed the officials to improve connectivity to tourist destinations of the district and effective measures to facilitate the tourists coming to Kulgam.

District Administration was directed to set up a help desk to facilitate establishment of Industrial units in the district.

The Lt Governor asked the officials to hold regular meetings with banks and financial institutions for timely provision of credit under different government schemes.

He further emphasized on promoting self-employment and extending support to aspiring youth of the district under the dedicated schemes of Mission Youth.

The meeting also discussed the utilisation of vacant Government buildings and encouraging youth to join NCC and Red Cross initiatives.

Later, the Lt Governor interacted with various public delegations including ULB, PRI representatives, Fruits Growers association, traders, transporters, Youth Club members, Bar Association, Gujjar Bakerwal and Pahari Community and assured speedy redressal of issues and specific grievances.

Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; Sh Vijay Kumar, ADGP Kashmir; Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor; Sh Vijay Kumar Bidhuri, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; Dr. Syed Abid Rasheed Shah, Secretary Tourism Department; Dr. Bilal Mohi-ud-din Bhat, DC Kulgam and other senior officers attended the meeting.

144 dengue.....

as to save themselves from mosquito bites, which they said choose to breed in stagnant water accumulated by water logging mainly during monsoon.

They said the mosquitoes that spread dengue are active during the day. "Cover as much of your body as possible and use mosquito nets if sleeping during the day and spray the nets with insect repellents," they said.

The most common symptoms, as per doctors, are fever and headache, eye pain (typically behind the eyes), muscle, joint or bone pain, rash, nausea and vomiting.

If anyone has stomach or belly pain, tenderness, vomiting (at least 3 times in 24 hours), bleeding from the nose or gums, vomiting blood, or blood in the stool and feeling tired, restless, or irritable, you must consult a doctor, the advisory mentions.

The mosquito remains active mostly at dusk and dawn and people must wear clothes that minimise skin exposure to these mosquitoes, they said.

Meanwhile, the officials said that 8,269 dengue cases (the highest number) and 18 deaths were reported in J&K last year.

They said two cases were in 2009, none in 2010, three in 2011, and 16 in 2012. However, 1,837 cases were reported in 2013.

In 2014, four cases were reported, 153 in 2015, 79 in 2016, 488 in 2017, 214 in 2018, 439 in 2019, 53 in 2020, and 1,709 in 2021, they said.

Visitors freely.....

He said besides waste being thrown in the open there is horse manure everywhere. "In the absence of a pony track, the horse dung is everywhere especially the road leading to the Thajwas Glacier."

In the absence of a proper mechanism plastic bottles and polythene end up in limpid water bodies and forest areas.

Another visitor Bilal Ahmed questioned the authorities asking why no serious measures are being taken to add to the beauty of Sonamarg. He alleged that the work on some hutments which had come up illegally in the past has been going on. "It's an irony that this natural wealth has been tampered with" he added.

An official from Sonamarg Development Authority said that visitors must act as responsible fellows. "We have installed the dust bins and yet some visitors pollute the environment. We don't want to be strict with tourists," he said adding that a pony track will come up at the

tourist destination.

2 convicts.....

Amin Wani alias Sunny, a resident of Wazirbagh, Srinagar and Mohammed Umar Noor, a resident of Bemina who were found guilty for the offences punishable under Section 326-A (voluntarily causing grievous hurt by use of acid, etc.), Section 120-B (Punishment for criminal conspiracy) and Section 201 (causing disappearance of evidence of offence, or giving false evidence to screen offender) of the Ranbir Penal Code.

The two were convicted of throwing acid on an eighth-semester law student in Srinagar on December 11, 2014, just outside the Kashmir Law College in Srinagar.

Principal Sessions Judge at Srinagar, Jawad Ahmed on Tuesday observed the convicts do not deserve leniency and no other punishment except the maximum punishment of life imprisonment prescribed under law for their act can do the real and complete justice to the victim.

"The convicts are hereby sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment and fine of Rs 25,000 each for the offence punishable under Section 120-B RPC, in default of payment of fine they shall undergo further imprisonment for one year.

The convicts are sentenced to suffer imprisonment for life and fine of Rs 5 lakhs each for commission of offence punishable under Section 326-A RPC read with Section 120-B RPC," the court order said.

"The fine, when recovered, shall be paid to the victim in terms of proviso 1 and 2 of Section 326-A RPC. In default of payment of fine, the convicts shall undergo rigorous imprisonment for three years.

The convicts are also sentenced to imprisonment for 3 years for offence punishable under Section 201 RPC read with 120-B RPC with fine of Rs 10,000 each and in default of such fine they shall undergo further imprisonment for six months.

The sentence awarded to the convicts for different offences shall run concurrently," the order said.

The court also recommended the case of the victim to the Member Secretary, J&K Legal Service Authority for compensation to the victim.

"In view of the huge amount, the victim has incurred on her treatment and the amount which is required for her further treatment, I deem it appropriate to recommend the case of the victim to the Member Secretary, J&K Legal Service Authority to award the maximum compensation to the victim in terms of the J&K Victim Compensation Scheme, 2019, of course subject to the adjustment of the interim compensation already paid to her under the scheme," the court said.

The quantum of punishment was announced after Principal Sessions Judge Srinagar, heard special Public Prosecutor and the counsels for both the convicts.

At the time of arguments on the quantum of punishment, the victim, with permission of the court, narrated the struggles and hardships of the trauma which she has undergone ever since the convicts had thrown acid on her.

She stated that she was a bright student, topper in the class and had chosen her career in the field of law but the horrific act of the convicts shattered all her hopes and dreams. She said this lifelong trauma is not only for her but, even for her parents.

She stated that she has undergone 28 surgeries and the duration of every surgery was ranging between 9 hours to 72 hours.

The victim said as on date her father has spent Rs 37,16,508 on her treatment and does not know how much they need for her further treatment.

She stated before the court that though, nothing can bring the glory of her physique back but, if the convicts, responsible for making her life a living hell, are given the maximum punishment prescribed under law, she would feel that justice has been done with her, otherwise apart from living the life with the miseries, she would feel that even the court has not done the complete justice with her.

US high-level.....

in the tourism sector over the past few years marked by a high tourist inflow which had a remarkable and transformational impact on the local economy.

Deliberations on investment opportunities in the field of education, healthcare, infrastructure, industry and tourism were also discussed with the visiting delegates.

Mayor Srinagar sought the cooperation of the delegation in ensuring a new era of financial, technological and cultural initiatives and exchanges takes place between the US and the city of Srinagar.

Mattu also discussed prospects for future student exchange programs between educational institutions of the US and Srinagar to encourage community interactions, knowledge sharing and cultural understanding.

The Mayor said this would also provide an impetus to employment creation and job growth.

He, while highlighting the sustained atmosphere of peace and good governance over the past few years, also sought the faith and efforts of the delegation in the removal of adverse travel advisories by some countries with regard to Jammu and Kashmir.

Won't pay.....

locked up by police have gone on hunger strike inside the police station and this protest will continue till Toll Plaza won't be removed from Samba," he added.

A lady protester told news agency Kashmir News Trust that the people of Jammu are being suppressed and it's time for people to get their rights restored.

"Yuva Rajput Sabha has taken a good initiative. People are joining this protest. We are being forced to pay 'illegal Jaziya', she said.

Protesters said that the administration has imposed restrictions on the movement of people near Sarore toll plaza and is charging toll tax from the people.

The protestors said the toll plaza has been set up in violation of the rules.

Efforts on.....

'Chhota London' and the efforts are on to regain its past glory.

The ADC, according to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), made these remarks while chairing a public grievance camp at the Krankshivan Colony of the historic town. He assured of early redressal of public issues and sought people's cooperation.

During the public darbar-cum-grievance camp, Raina listened to various issues and demands of the people meant for the overall welfare and development of the area. The people across the locality, which comprises at least 10 mohallas including Nigeen Bagh, Alamdar, Baghe-Islam, etc showed their enthusiastic participation in the programme.

On the occasion, the coordination committee demanded the availability of potable drinking water, uninterrupted power supply, road connectivity, transport and other matters of vital public significance. They also highlighted the issues like health, education and other important necessities.

The ADC, who was accompanied by other officials from the line departments including Roads and Buildings (R&B), listened to the grievances and demands put forth by the committee and assured that all the issues shall be taken with the concerned authorities for timely redressal.

Talking to KNO, Raina said the administration is committed to the overall development of Sopore town. He, however, said that achieving this goal requires cooperation from all sections of society.

The ADC urged everyone to join hands and contribute towards making Sopore a better town and a green and clean place. "The grievances put forth by the concerned stakeholders will be seriously looked into and redressed within the shortest possible time," he said.

Former MS.....

relating to embezzlement of Hospital Development funds in District Hospital, Kulgam, the Officials are, hereby, placed under suspension with immediate effect," read the order.

The officials, who have been placed under suspension are Dr. Afsana Banoo, the then Medical Superintendent, District Hospital, Kulgam, Mohammad Ashraf, the then Senior Assistant, District Hospital, Kulgam, Mohammad Shafi, Senior Assistant, District Hospital, Kulgam.

"It is further ordered that during the period of suspension, they shall remain attached in the Directorate of Health Services, Kashmir and he shall submit their bio-metric attendance to the Health and Medical Education Department on monthly basis," the order read.

Besides, Mudasir DEIC Manager (on contractual basis), District Hospital, Kulgam is, hereby, attached in the office of the Mission Director, National Health Mission, J&K with immediate effect, the order reads.

"Sanction is, hereby, accorded to the constitution of two-member enquiry committee, comprising of the following Officers to enquire into the embezzlement of hospital Development funds of District Hospital, Kulgam while taking into account, the preliminary enquiry as conducted by the Directorate of Health Services, Kashmir as well as all other connected documents/evidence," reads a separate order.

The members of the committee as per order are Dr. Yash Pal Sharma, Director Coordination, New Government Medical Colleges, J&K and Muzaffar Ahmad Rather, Chief Account Officer, Government Medical College, Anantnag.

"The inquiry committee shall submit its report along with explicit recommendations to the Health and Medical Education Department within a period of fifteen (15) days from the date of issuance of this order," the order reads.

Notably, a few days ago, a private security guard of district hospital Kulgam was arrested on the charges of withdrawing Rs 33 lakhs from the official account of the Medical Superintendent district hospital Kulgam.

He was arrested, besides the money was recovered while further investigation is going on.

Price Pressure.....

the government in the current fiscal is now leading to crowding in of private investment.

The consumer price index based retail inflation spiked to a 15-month high of 7.44 per cent in July 2023, with specific food commodities mainly driving the increase. Core inflation, however, stayed at a 39-month low of 4.9 per cent.

Cereals, pulses and vegetables exhibited double-digit growth in July compared to the corresponding period last year. Disruption in domestic production also aggravated the inflationary pressures. Interruption in the supply chain of tomatoes due to white fly disease in Kolar district, Karnataka and the swift arrival of monsoon in northern India caused a surge in tomato prices. Tur dal price also inflated due to

deficient production in kharif season 2022-23, the ministry said.

"The government has already taken pre-emptive measures to restrain food inflation which, along with the arrival of fresh stock, is likely to subside price pressure in the market soon... The price pressure in food items is expected to be transitory," the report said, adding, global uncertainty and domestic disruptions may keep inflationary pressures elevated for the coming months, warranting greater vigilance by the government and the RBI.

Though food inflation in July is perhaps the third highest since the new CPI series began in 2014, only 48 per cent of food items have inflation of above 6 per cent, and this includes 14 food items with inflation in double digits.

Items like tomato, green chilli, ginger and garlic witnessed inflation of more than 50 per cent. Hence, the abnormal increase in prices of certain specific items led to high food inflation in July 2023.

"Tomato prices are likely to decline with the arrival of fresh stocks by the end of August or early September. Further, enhanced imports of tur dal are expected to moderate pulses inflation. These factors, along with the recent government efforts, can soon materialise moderation in food inflation in the coming months," the Ministry said.

Russia's decision to terminate the Black Sea Grain deal, along with dry conditions in major wheat-growing areas, caused the price spike in cereals. While domestic factors like white fly disease and uneven monsoon distribution exerted pressure on vegetable prices in India, it added.

The RBI's interest rates setting committee had earlier this month decided to keep policy rates unchanged and remained focused on the withdrawal of accommodation to ensure that inflation progressively aligns with the target while supporting growth.

The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) expected vegetable prices to correct in the coming months, but flagged the presence of uncertainties on the domestic food price outlook due to sudden weather events, possible El Nino conditions in August and beyond, and the firming up of global food prices. In this context, the MPC revised its inflation projection for current fiscal from 5.1 per cent to 5.4 per cent.

Cumulative rainfall during this year's southwest monsoon season till August 18, 2023 has been deficient by about 6 per cent compared to long period average. As on August 18, 2023, farmers have sown 102.3 million hectares, which is similar to the corresponding period last year's level and 1.1 per cent higher than the average of the last five years.

The monthly report from the finance ministry's Department of Economic Affairs further said that the agricultural sector is picking up momentum with significant advancement in monsoon and kharif sowing. The procurement of wheat and rice has been progressing well, increasing the buffer stock levels of food grains to ensure food security in the country.

With regard to investment, the report said the government's continued emphasis on capital expenditure is expected to drive growth in the coming years. The Union government in FY24 budget increased the capital outlay by 33.3 per cent, raising the share of capital expenditure in total expenditure from 12.3 per cent in 2017-18 to 22.4 per cent in 2023-24 (BE).

Measures implemented by the Union government have also incentivised states to increase their capex spending. States capital expenditure increased by 74.3 per cent YoY in Q1 of FY24 to complement Centre's capex increase of 59.1 per cent in the same quarter.

"Enhanced provision for capital expenditure by the government is now leading to crowding in of private investment, as evident in the performance of various high-frequency indicators and industry reports which highlight the emergence of the green shoots of a private capex up cycle," the report said.

The monthly review further said that the external sector requires monitoring for further strengthening the prospects in the face of active pursuit of industrial policies globally. Services exports continue to do well and are likely to continue doing so as the preference for remote working remains unabated, typically manifested in the proliferation of global capability centres.

At the same time, from a medium-term perspective, it is important to monitor the impact of new technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence, on the external demand for Indian services exports and the consequent impact on employment, it added. (Agencies)

LG Mishra.....

(SHGs) which are actively working in the region. He also stated that more women in the villages need to be encouraged to form such SHGs and stressed on the need for all concerned departments to provide the require assistance and handholding support.

The HLG directed Principal Secretary, Industries, Ladakh for expediting works on completion of the Brand Ladakh Emporium at New Delhi and keep its inauguration on 2nd October, 2023. The Brand Ladakh Emporium will display Ladakhi handloom, handicraft and processed food items produced by the SHGs, entrepreneurs and other small scale industries of Ladakh in the National Capital.

Stating that Pashmina is the most crucial raw material for most of the SHGs working in the handloom sector, the HLG directed Secretary, Animal and Sheep Husbandry Department, Ladakh to work out effective means to provide necessary shelter and other items to the shepherds of pashmina goats to aim for zero mortality rate amongst the Pashmina goat kids.

The HLG also directed Secretary, PDD, Ladakh to look into providing solar power lamps (diyas) for Diwali in collaboration with Kargil Renewable Energy Development Agency (KREDA).

Advisor to HLG, Dr Pawan Kotwal, IAS; Principal Secretary, Sanjeev Khirwar, IAS; Commissioner Secretary, Smt Padma Angmo, IIS, Secretary, RDD, Amit Sharma, IAS; Secretary to HLG, Ravinder Kumar, IAS; Director, RDD, Ladakh, Tahir Hussain Zubdavi; Director Tourism, Ladakh, Smt Kunzes Angmo besides other concerned officers were present in the meeting.

Driver arrested.....

Police Station Baramulla utilizing all technical and human sources and with strenuous efforts traced the accused and arrested him in the instant case," a police statement said.

Police said further medico legal formalities were conducted on the girl and further investigation of the case is in progress.

11 drug.....

under PSA (NDPS-PIT) so far.

Police said that following their unrelenting and incorrigible involvement in drugs trafficking in the district, they were booked under PSA.

11 individuals include Syed Azhar Ul Haq a resident of Kachama Kralpora, Mohd Rafiq Hajam a resident of Keran Payeen, Asif Ahmad Khan a resident of Gudsana Hyhama, Mumtaz Ahmad Khan a resident of Halmatpora Kupwara, Talib Ahmad Shah a resident of Hakarpora Awoora, Ahmad Hayat Mir a resident of Darpora Lalpora, Bilal Ahmad Ganaie a resident of Gugloosa, Nisar Ahmad Khan a resident of Hyhama Kupwara, Bazil Ahmad Mir a resident of Khurhama Kupwara, Abdul Majeed Kumar a resident of Drugmulla and Aftab Hussain Shah a resident of Bhadarkote Karnah.

Police also said that these 11 drug peddlers were detained and lodged under PSA (NDPS-PIT).

Police further informed that dossiers in respect of some more identified drug peddlers are being prepared for their detention under PSA.

NIA Court.....

organizations.

SIA in a statement to news agency Kashmir Dot Com said "During the investigation of the case FIR No. 19/2022, the State Investigation Agency Kashmir successfully dismantled a Narco Terror module and apprehended several of its members. Notable among these were Rubeena Nazir from Sopore and central jail detainee Ishfaq Ahmad Mir. These individuals were found to be operating the narco terror module in collusion with terror handlers located across the border. While six members of the module have already been apprehended, several others have been identified and are currently under active pursuit."

State Investigating Agency has been diligently tracking down the accused who remain at large, they said adding that multiple locations across the Union Territory have been subject to raids as part of these ongoing operations.

SIA further said among the absconding individuals, the six members of the narco terror module have been declared as proclaimed offenders by the Special Designated NIA Court after SIA apprised the court about the investigation conducted so far and were identified as Abdul Rashid Bhat, Son of Ghulam Mohammad Bhat, Resident of Lakripora Padgampora, Awantipora, Abdul Rashid Mir, Son of Mohammad Sultan Mir, Resident of Amarghar Sopore, Sageer Ahmad Poswal, Son of Nazir Ahmad Poswal, Resident of Amrohi, Tangdhar, Karnah, Kupwara, Iftikhar Ahmad Sheikh, Son of Abdul Lateef Sheikh, Resident of Amrohi, Tangdhar, Karnah, Kupwara, Basharat Ahmad Poswal, Son of Mohammad Sadiq, Resident of Parda Karnah, Kupwara and Javid Ahmad Thakkar, also known as Raja Thakkar, Son of Tasaduq Hussain Thakkar, Resident of Barhon Thanamandi Rajouri.

The State Investigation Agency is leaving no stone unturned in its quest to apprehend the absconding offenders. SIA Kashmir stands firm in its commitment to ensure that these individuals are brought to justice at the earliest possible time, reads the statement.



ADG PIB inaugurates free health check-up camp for media fraternity

SRINAGAR, AUG 22: Additional Director General (Region), Press Information Bureau (PIB) Srinagar, Rajinder Chaudhry on Tuesday inaugurated a free health check-up camp for media fraternity.

The camp was organized by PARAS Health, Srinagar in coordination with PIB Srinagar, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, Government of India at Press Enclave, Srinagar in presence of Joint Director, PIB Srinagar, Qazi Salman and Deputy Director, PIB Srinagar, Tariq Ahmad Rather.

This is first of its kind free health check-up camp at Srinagar providing high quality healthcare services to the media fraternity involving one of the reputed and specialized tertiary care hospital based in Srinagar, an official spokesman said.

While inaugurating the camp, Chaudhry said that since media



sometimes works in a stressful environment under difficult situations, they must focus on

their overall health and must follow the universal mantra 'prevention is better than cure'.

Chaudhary also expressed hope that media will take forward this message of the importance

of preventive healthcare check-ups up to the common man.

Senior Journalist, Fayaz Bukhari appreciated this initiative of PIB Srinagar and said that these kind of health check-up camps must be organized regularly for media as their stressful work environment is sometimes contributing to different health problems which must be taken care of at an early stage.

More than 150 journalists belonging to different media organizations were examined by a team of specialists including Dr. Afshan Shabir, Senior Consultant, Internal Medicine, Dr. Shabeer Ahmad Paul, Consultant Neurology and Dr. Fayaz Ahmad Rather, Consultant, Interventional Cardiologist at PARAS Health, Srinagar.

Free healthcare services like ECG, BMI, BSR etc. were provided in the health check-up camp on the spot.

Baramulla: Nowpora residents protest against Jal Shakhti Dept over water crisis

BARAMULLA, AUG 22: Amid scorching heat, Nowpora Jagir village in north Kashmir's Baramulla district continues to grapple with a severe water crisis, with locals accusing the Jal Shakhti Department of negligence, saying the situation is worsening with each passing day.

The aggrieved residents while protesting over the issue told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that they are without drinking water supply for more than a month and alleged that the department hardly bothered to redress their genuine demands despite taking the matter several times into their consideration.

"There is not a single day we approach the Jal Shakhti Department. We are oftentimes assured of early redressal but nothing is being done," they said, adding that the most affected areas are Bedenhar, Mirangund and others.

Mohammad Rafiq, a protester, said, "We are facing an acute shortage of drinking water supply. The authorities have turned a deaf ear to our repeated pleas. They are making no effort to ease our difficulties."

The authorities are facilitating water supply to Sopore town and have forgotten the villages which are nearer to the plant, he said.

The residents also accused the Jal Shakhti Department of providing them with "raw water". We have been left with no other option but to block roads, they said.

Court Rejects Bail Of Person Allegedly Involved In Killing Of Six In 1996 For Voting For A Party

SRINAGAR, AUG 22: A court in Jammu and Kashmir's Bandipora district on Tuesday rejected the bail plea of a man accused of killing seven persons in 1996 for casting their votes in favour of a particular political party.

The accused, Muhammad Ayoub Dar, was absconding since the commission of the offence and was arrested in 2021. He also served in the Territorial Army before he was dismissed.

The court of principal sessions judge, Bandipora, rejected the bail application of Dar, a resident of the Hakabara area of Hajin in the north Kashmir district, citing the gravity of the charges against him.

Dar is accused of involvement in the killing of seven persons at the Saderkoot Bala area of Bandipora in the year 1996 when he along with others opened indiscriminate firing on a truck.

The court said that from the mate-



rial evidence on record, it is crystal clear that the accused was very much present on the date of occurrence in Saderkoot Bala.

"That due to this indiscriminate firing by these accused persons, seven persons were killed for only a single fault that they had cast their votes in the favour of National Confer-

ence," it added.

The court said it has arrived at the conclusion that in the given facts and circumstances, the personal liberty of the accused can be curtailed in the interest of society at large as well as taking into consideration the gravity of the charge against him.

"In view of the aforesaid discussion as well as the evidence produced during the trial before this court, the grounds stated by the learned counsel of the applicants are having no significance in the consideration of the bail application of the accused within the contours of Section 439 of CrPC," the court said.

"Hence, the bail application moved by the accused person is rejected and be made part of the main file. The case law submitted by the learned counsel of the applicant is not applicable in the given facts and circumstances of the case," it said. (Agencies)

Supreme Court Terms As "Unacceptable" Contention That Article 370 Ceased To Operate After 1957

NEW DELHI, AUG 22: The Supreme Court Tuesday termed as "unacceptable" the submission that Article 370 of the Constitution ceased to operate once the term of the constituent assembly of Jammu and Kashmir ended in 1957 after drafting the state's Constitution. The remark by a five-judge bench headed by Chief Justice DY Chandrachud came when senior advocate Dinesh Dwivedi, appearing for intervenor Prem Shankar Jha, argued that nothing of Article 370, which accorded special status to the erstwhile state, survived once the Constitution of J-K was enacted on January 26, 1957 and the term of the state's constituent assembly ended.

Jha, who has challenged the August 5, 2019 decision of the Centre to abrogate Article 370, raised the legal question about whether Article 370 ceased to operate or exist after the enactment of the Constitution of J&K and the dissolution of the constituent assembly.

This led the bench to raise queries on the legality of the submissions.

The bench, also comprising Justices Sanjay Kishan Kaul, Sanjiv Khanna, BR Gavai and Surya Kant told Dwivedi that the court has to

look at the Indian constituent assembly debates and the intent of the makers of the Indian Constitution in a manner in which the Article 370 was framed.

"I am arguing somewhat differently from what my friends have argued. They want some part of Article 370 to survive. My argument is that nothing survives. All the powers conferred under Article 370, I would show, cease to operate once the Constitution of Jammu and Kashmir was enacted," Dwivedi said.

The CJ said the consequence of the argument will be that the Constitution of India and its application to Jammu and Kashmir would "stand frozen as of January 26, 1957".

"Therefore, no further development in Indian constitutional law can at all apply, according to you, to the state of Jammu and Kashmir after 1957. How can that be acceptable?" he said.

The bench told Dwivedi, "You are asking us to read what is not there in Article 370. Your submission is that it will be frozen after the constituent assembly of J-K frames the Constitution but that does not appear to be following. We have to look at the constituent assembly debates in a manner in

which Article 370 was framed."

Dwivedi said when the Article was framed, Jammu and Kashmir was in turmoil and the only legal entity was the state government and, therefore, the provision said there should be "consultation and concurrence" on the matters related to Union and concurrent list and those which do not fall under the Instrument of Accession.

"The constituent assembly was about to be set up. Hence, all the decisions which were taken in consultation and concurrence with the state government were to be placed before the constituent assembly of J-K. Therefore, Article 370 was a temporary provision," he contended.

The senior lawyer said looking at the provision and the constituent assembly debates, it can be clearly inferred that Article 370 was temporary and ceased to exist after January, 1957.

The bench said what was being submitted was contrary to arguments advanced by others opposed to the abrogation as they said that the provision had acquired permanent status after the term of the state's constituent assembly ended.

"This is what is creating a problem. Perhaps our thinking in the manner which we have been used

to think for the past 70 years is that there should be One Nation-One Constitution. But where is that prescribed? It should be prescribed in the Constitution which does not say so," the senior lawyer said.

CJ Chandrachud then asked can the court say that a speech made by a member of the constituent assembly, however weighty, represented the commitment of India to Jammu and Kashmir.

"This will have a bearing on the interpretation of the Constitution," the CJ said.

Justice Kaul also questioned Dwivedi on his line of argument and said according to him, Article 370 was a defunct provision and no purpose was served having it.

"Yet the provision continued to be there in the Indian Constitution. Constitution Orders (orders applying provisions of Indian Constitution to J-K) have been issued pre-1957 and post 1957. Yet nobody thought about removing it. The association of people with Article 370 was negatory and hence nothing survives. This is your argument?" Justice Kaul summed up Dwivedi's contentions.

Dwivedi told the bench that past practices would not justify the invalidity of a provision and this is a settled law.

VCs of Agri Universities to brainstorm issues in agri-education system at SKUAST-K from Aug 24

SRINAGAR, AUG 22: Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology of Kashmir (SKUAST-K) is hosting vice-chancellors of the country's all agricultural universities to brainstorm the current issues in the Indian agri-education system in a two-day conference beginning from Thursday.

Jammu and Kashmir Lt Governor, Manoj Sinha will be the chief guest at the "12th Brainstorming Conference of the Indian Agricultural Universities Association (IAUA) hosted at SKUAST-K on August 24-25, 2023."

The IAUA is organising its annual conference in collaboration with SKUAST-K, a spokesman of the University said.



More than 40 Vice Chancellors from various agricultural universities of the country are gathering at Srinagar to discuss strengthening the education and research infrastructure and sharing of

national resources through collaborative research and sandwich academic programmes.

During the conference, the VCs will also sign the multi-institution MoU for instituting postgraduate degree programs in sandwich mode to share national resources, which will be released as the 'Srinagar Declaration' by the Lt Governor on the occasion.

The aim of the brainstorming sessions is to redefine agricultural education towards the creation of leadership, entrepreneurship, employment and the discovery of new-age technologies.

The broader themes of discussion would be the Future of Agriculture Education; Aligning with the National Education Policy 2020; Bridging the Gap: Closing the Skill Divide in Agriculture and Related Sectors; From Idea to Impact: Fostering Entrepreneurship through Incubation; Innovation and Start-ups in Agriculture Universities; and Maximizing the Potential of Agri4 Technologies (AI, ML, IoT, & Automation); For Modernization of Agriculture Farms.

Besides the Vice Chancellors, agri-education experts, policymakers, related government officers and industry leaders will also attend the conference to discuss innovative approaches to curriculum design, teaching methodologies, and student assessment that can produce skilled & employable graduates in agriculture.

India To Be 150 Billion Bio-Economy By 2025: Dr Jitendra

NEW DELHI, AUG 22: Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science & Technology; MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh today said, India is set to achieve \$150 billion Bio-Economy by 2025, which stood at over \$100 billion in 2022.

The Minister was speaking, while overseeing the signing up of the 'Implementation Arrangement' between the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) and the United States-National Science Foundation (US-NSF) today in New Delhi. This was a follow-up of the discussion meeting held between Dr. Rajesh S. Gokhale, Secretary, DBT and Dr Sethuraman Panchanathan, Director, NSF in June, 2023 to discuss opportunities for developing 'Strategic Partnership' between DBT and US-NSF.

Dr Jitendra Singh recalled that during the recent visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the US in June 2023, the leaderships of the both the countries called on their administrations to extend the existing partnerships to advanced biotechnology and biomanufacturing, and enhance biosafety and biosecurity innovation, practices, and norms.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, India's ever-growing Bio-Economy graph is going to contribute significantly to India's Overall Economy. He said, India has a 3-5% market share in the global biotechnology industry and it ranks 12th in the world in biotech and 3rd in Asia-Pacific.

The Minister said, India has the 3rd largest Startups ecosystem globally; and the largest vaccine manufacturer. Moreover, India's ranking in global science and technology indices continues to rise and India has been ranked 40th among the innovative economies as per Global Innovation Index, 2022.

Dr Jitendra Singh pointed out that the Department of Biotechnology has created and nurtured a strong foundation in biotechnology innovation, research and manufacturing across segments such as bio-pharma, bio-services, agri biotech, industrial biotech, and bioinformatics through public-private partnership, Make-in-India and Atma Nirbhar Bharat initiatives of the Government.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, Indian Government has always supported technology-driven innovation towards the creation of a 'future-ready' technology platform in line with the Prime Minister Modi's vision of Aatmanirbharta and he congratulated DBT and NSF for building on the bilateral collaborations between India and USA through this Implementation Arrangement.

Dr Jitendra Singh said, the climate change, inadequate resource utilization, an unsustainable pattern of material consumption and waste generation are global threats and require concerted sustainable interventions and therefore called for futuristic research and innovation strategies for accelerating Biomanufacturing are essential to address global sustainable goals.

DC Kupwara Chairs DLC meeting of Fisheries Department

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, AUGUST 22: The Department of Fisheries, Kupwara today organized a District level Committee (DLC) meeting which was chaired by Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Ms. Ayushi Sudan (IAS).

The committee members of the Holistic Agriculture Development Plan (HADP) and Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojna (PMMSY) were present in the meeting.

Assistant Director, Fisheries Department Kupwara, briefed the Chair that a total of 26 eligible candidates were shortlisted for selection of 16 beneficiaries under HADP and PMMSY schemes for establishment



of 12 Trout units, 3 Carp Units and 1 registered fisherman for providing assistance for purchase of Motorcycle with ice box for the year 2023-24 on the basis of eligibility criteria.

To select the 16 Candidates out of total 26 shortlisted candidates for establishment of fisheries units and other infrastructure, draw of lots were held in

presence of DLC Members and candidates.

As many as 16 candidates were selected through a draw of lots out of total 26 shortlisted candidates (Fishermen) from various areas of the district for establishment of units under HADP and PMMSY schemes for the year 2023-24.

These Fisheries units are

being established with a cumulative cost of Rs. 71.55 Lacs. The establishment of these units will not provide employment opportunities but also increase fish production to meet up the demand of fish.

Meeting was attended by Superintendent Engineer, Jal Shakti Department, Chief Agriculture officer Kupwara, District head of KVK, Deputy Registrar Cooperative Department Kupwara, Assistant Director Fisheries, District Lead Bank Manager, District Manager NABARD, Chief Animal Husbandry officer, Horticulture Planning & Marketing officer, Chief Horticulture officer Kupwara, District Sheep Husbandry officer Kupwara besides progressive farmers and beneficiaries also participated in the meeting.

DC Jammu calls for speedy land transfer for vital projects

■ HT News Network

JAMMU, AUGUST 22: Deputy Commissioner Sachin Kumar Vaishya today reviewed the progress on land acquisition for various developmental projects in the district here at a meeting of stakeholder departments. The projects include the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway, Jammu Ring Road, Jammu-Akhnor and Jammu-Poonch roads, Expansion of Jammu Airport and other projects of importance to the defence viz Border Outposts and Border Fencing.

The meeting was attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Harvinder Singh; Assistant Commissioner Revenue, Piyush Dhotra, as well as all Sub Divisional Magistrates, Teh-



sildar Headquarter and other senior officials.

The DC set deadlines for removing bottlenecks and resolving long-pending and contentious issues related to these projects. He also directed the respective officers to ensure timely distribution of compensation amounts among the rightful owners. Additionally, the officers were instructed to stay vigilant against

corrupt practices and take a strict stance against such practices in their subordinate offices.

The meeting also addressed delineations/demarcations of land that are not part of any water course/source but have been recorded as Gair Mumkin Khad, Gair Mumkin Darya, Gair Mumkin Nallah, etc., in revenue records. The projects

include the Delhi-Amritsar-Katra Expressway, Jammu Ring Road, Jammu-Akhnor and Jammu-Poonch roads, Expansion of Jammu Airport and other projects of importance to the defence viz Border Outposts and Border Fencing.

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DC Ganderbal reviews measures to curb drug abuse, narcotic trafficking in district

■ HT News Network

GANDERBAL, AUGUST 22: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Shyambir who is also District Magistrate today chaired a 14th meeting of District-level NARCO Coordination Committee (NCORD) meeting to review the measures taken by the enforcement agencies to curb the drug abuse and narcotic trafficking in the district.

During the meeting, threadbare discussion was held on various issues pertaining to incidence of drug addiction, areas of concern and hotspots of drug use and action taken by the concerned departments with regard to curbing the menace of drugs.

The DC sought realistic data from all stakeholders



regarding the status of drug addiction and cultivation of restricted crops.

While reviewing the status of cultivation of cannabis in the district, the Tehsildars informed that many awareness camps, road shows and participation in parent teacher meets were held in different areas of their jurisdictions regarding misuse of cannabis, poppy and other

psychotropic substances.

They were directed to intensify the destruction of such restricted crops involving masjid and mohalla committees besides realistic data shall be collected of drug addicts and drug suppliers in their jurisdiction so that appropriate action is initiated accordingly.

The meeting also reviewed the status of

installation of CCTV cameras and computerized billing by retail medical shops in the district.

Assistant Drug Controller informed that about 75 percent of shops have CCTV cameras installed besides all shops have switched to computerized billing in the Municipal jurisdiction.

The meeting also reviewed the parameters for achieving the Nasha Mukti Panchayat campaign in the district and concerned departments were directed to share the monthly progress report and the activities undertaken during the campaign.

The meeting was attended by SSP Ganderbal, Nikhil Borkar; DFO Sindh Forest Division Gbl, CMO, Tehsildars, CAO, Assistant Drug Controller Ganderbal and other concerned officials.

DC Bandipora discusses land & other developmental issues related to Banyari Gabri Village

HT News Network

BANDIPORA, AUGUST 22: In order to discuss the issues of residential land of the inhabitants of Banyari Gabri Village, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Dr Owais Ahmad Tuesday convened a meeting of the concerned authorities, here.

The meeting discussed threadbare the issues related to the residential land of the inhabitants of Banyari Gabri Village.

Assistant Commissioner Revenue, on the occasion, informed the DC



regarding several problems faced by the people. Moreover, issues related

to fishing, illegal fishing activities, infrastructure, healthcare, and education were also discussed during the meeting.

During the meeting, a framework was established to streamline the process of resolving these issues. The plan includes a thorough land survey to ascertain accurate land ownership records and a strategic approach to land development that ensures the growth of the community while preserving the environment.

Meanwhile, a delegation from Banyari Gabri also met the DC and flagged-off related issues.

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER RURAL ENGINEERING WING BARAMULLA.

E-NOTICE INVITING TENDER

E-NIT No: - 183/Xen/Rew/BlA/2023-2024 Dated.21/08/2023

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor, J&K UT e-tenders (In Single Cover System) are invited on percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors Regd. With J&K State Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for each of the following work:-

S. No	Name of Work	Est. Cost (in Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rs.)	EMD AMOUNT	Time of completion	Class of Contractor	Major Head of Account	Position of AAA/TS
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Beautification Of Amrit Sarovar Khushipora S1 under:CD & Panchayat for the year 2023-24 Block Rohama	4.50	200	9000	30days	DEE	CD PYT	AAA Accorded
2	Beautification Of Amrit Sarovar Khushipora S9 under CD Panchayat for the year 2023-24 Block Rohama	8.96	600	17920	30days	CEE DEE	CD PYT	AAA Accorded

1. The Bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/ downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per the scheduled date given below.

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	21-08-2023
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 21-08-2023 to 30-08-2023 up to 6:00 PM
3	Bid submission Start date	21-08-2023
4	Bid Submission End Date	30-08-2023 up to 6:00 PM
5	Date and time of Opening of Bids (Online)	Technical Bids will be opened on 31-08-2023 at 11:00 AM in the office of the Executive Engineer REW Baramulla and Financial Bid opening will be declared online.

The G.O No.238-F OF 2021 DATED:07.09.2021 issued by the Govt(Finance deptt)that the participation in the tendering process of works upto an amount of Rs 3.00 lacs is restricted to the resident of concerned panchayat.In the event of inadequate response to a tender ,participation from adjoining panchayat shall be permitted & participant to upload Panchayat certificate necessary.

If the Bidder quotes his Bid exceeding the tendering Cost, his bid will be automatically rejected.

In case of dilemma/confusion, the rate and the unit against any item shown in Boq , the SOR rate along with its unit will be applicable.

1.Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of treasury challan/receipt under HEAD 0515 mentioning therein Name of work and NIT No. in favour of the Executive Engineer, REW Division Baramulla (Tender inviting Authority).

2.The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site at the office of the Executive Engineer, REW Division Baramulla.

3.All The Bidders has to deposit Earnest Money (2% of Advertised cost) in shape of CDR/FDR at the time of tendering as per the Circular of Finance Department.

4. The 1ST Lowest Bidder has to produce an amount equal to 3 % of allotted cost of Contract as performance security in shape of CDR/FDR/BG within 02 Days after opening of financial bid and shall be released after successful completion of DLP as per norms. The EMD of 2% of successful bidders shall be released after receipt of 3% performance security.

5.Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.

5.1.Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website www.jktenders.gov.in to acquaint bid submission process.

5.2.To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get 'Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)' as per Information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved vendors.

5.3.The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No financial bid will be accepted in physical form.

5.4.Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1.

5.5.Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with bid. Besides, original documents related to bid be submitted physically by the bidder who is declared as L1 immediately after opening of financial bid.

5.6.Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of necessary documents in terms of soft copies with the technical bid & no documents in terms of hard copies shall be entertained. However, in case of any clarification, the bidders shall have to produce original documents in support of soft copies if need arises.

5.7.DOCUMENTS TO BE UPLOADED IN SOFT:

Scanned copy of valid registration card along with Latest Renewal , EMD/TR as per NIT, GST, Latest clearance, PAN.

5.8.The earnest money in favour of un-successful/ non-responsive bidders shall be released only after ensuring submission of tender document fee in original, irrespective of Hard copies, failure of submission of tender document fee by the bidder using site shall entail him for blacklisting.

6.In case of CRF & any other specified project the relevant guidelines/ standard bidding documents shall be followed

7.Instructions to Bidder (ITB)

NO: -JKFRI/R/S/2023-24/472-79

DIPK-7591/23

Date: Aug 22, 2023

Sd/-
Executive Engineer.
REW Baramulla

Government of Union territory of Jammu & Kashmir Office of the Financial Commissioner (Revenue)

Subject: Appointment to the post of Junior Scale Stenographer (Revenue Department) District Cadre Pulwama in pursuance to Advertisement Notification No. 02 of 2021 dated 26.03.2021 under Item No 456 issued by the J&K SSB.

Ref: 1. Letter No. Rev-NG/13/2023(7152177) dated 28.06.2023 from Administrative Department, J&K.

2. Letter No. JKSSB/23/2023-03(E-7164134) dated 13.06.2023 from J&K Service Selection Board.

ORDER No: 438 FC (REV) of 2023

DATED: 21/08/2023.

On the recommendations of the J&K Service Selection Board, and endorsed by the Administrative Department vide their letters referred above, sanction is hereby accorded to the temporary appointment of the below mentioned candidate(s) as Junior Scale Stenographer in the Revenue Department, District Cadre Pulwama, in the pay level-6B (Rs 35600-112800).

S. No.	District Cadre	Name of the candidate (Mr./Ms)	Parentage (Mr.)	Address	Category	CID Character verification form no
1.	Pulwama	Irm Mohi U Din Dar	Gh Mohi U Din Dar	Near Food Godown, College Road, Tral, Pulwama	OM	68930 dated 14.08.2023
2.	Pulwama	Aafaq Hameed Bhat	Ab Hameed Bhat	H.No.61, Nagbal, Deegam, Shopian	RBA	68931 dated 10.08.2023

The appointee(s) shall report to the office of Deputy Commissioner, Pulwama within a period of twenty one (21) days from the date of issuance of this order and shall be allowed to join after the production of following documents/certificates (in original) to be verified subsequently:-

(i) Academic/ qualification Certificates.

(ii) Matriculation /Date of Birth Certificates.

(iii) Health Certificate from the concerned Chief Medical Officer of the District. (iv) Domicile Certificate issued by the competent authority.

(v) If the candidate has taken loan for self employment from DIC/ Employment Department, to be ascertained from the District Industries Centre (DIC) and District Employment & Counseling Centre of the domicile District, he/she shall relinquish the proprietorship of unit/enterprise and also stakes, if any, in such self employment unit/enterprise before joining the Government service. He/she shall be required to repay the entire loan liability in suitable EMIS to be worked out by the DDO concerned from his/her salary. DDO concerned shall obtain an affidavit from the concerned appointee regarding both relinquishment of proprietorship and stakes if any, in such a self-employment unit/enterprise and recovery to be made and also personally monitor its recovery.

(vi) Valid relevant Category Certificate, if any, applicable.

21/08/2023

The above appointment shall further be subject to the following conditions:-

(a) The clearance received from the Criminal Investigation Department, J&K is provisional and it shall be mandatory for the appointee to fill in the Verification Rolls (V-Rolls), as available through the online mode under the Electronic Employment Verification System (EVS). Any false information provided by the appointee, or an adverse finding subsequent to the V-Roll submitted electronically shall result in cancellation of appointment ab-initio, without any further notice.

(b) The appointee(s) shall give an undertaking in the shape of an affidavit to the effect that if, on verification, genuineness of the qualification /category certificate from the concerned issuing authority are found fake/forged, the appointment shall be treated to have been cancelled ab-initio.

(c) The salary of the appointee(s) shall not be drawn and disbursed to him/her unless a satisfactory report in respect of (a) above is received in his/her favour.

(d) The appointee(s) shall be initially on probation for a period of two years. (e) The appointment of the candidate(s) shall be governed by the "New Pension Scheme" as per SRO 400 of 2009 dated 24.12.2009.

(f) The inter-se-seniority of the appointee(s) shall be strictly as per their merit in the select list.

(g) The cadre allocated by appointing authority/SSB shall not be changed under any circumstances.

(h) This appointment order is issued subject to outcome of any petition(s) pending in any competent Court/Tribunal, etc.

(i) If the appointee(s) fail to join within a period of 21 days (twenty one) days from the date of issuance of this order they shall forego their right to appointment which shall be deemed to have been cancelled ab-initio without any further notice. By order of the Financial Commissioner (Revenue) J&K.

DIPK-7603/23
Date: Aug 22 2023

Sd/-
(Shaleen Kabra) IAS Financial Commissioner, (Revenue)

G20 University Connect Program held at SKUAST-Jammu

HT News Network

JAMMU, AUGUST 22: SKUAST Jammu organised G-20 Lecture series for engaging Young minds. The agenda for lecture series was on G-20 India's Presidency, Agriculture issues in G-20 and sustainable agriculture for resilient Agri Food System with Climate Smart Approach, Prize distribution of Pre event activities.

The event marked a significant gathering of dignitaries, experts, and students, fostering a dynamic exchange of ideas aimed at advancing global understanding in areas crucial to sustainable development.

The event was honored to have Dr. Trilochan Mohapatra as a distinguished figure in the field, as the chief guest. Dr. Mohapatra delivered a captivating lecture on the theme of "Sustainable Agriculture and Resilient food systems." His insights

shed light on the importance of climate-smart approaches in ensuring the future of agriculture and food security.

Dr. B N Tripathi, Vice-Chancellor of SKUAST Jammu and Chairman of G 20 University Connect Programme at SKUAST Jammu, concluded the series of eminent speakers by reflecting on the occasion. Dr. Tripathi expressed pride in the university's pioneering role in hosting this significant event. He underscored the need for sustainable agriculture and tapped into the region's potential as a top producer of walnuts, apples, and saffron. His speech resonated with the audience, emphasizing the importance of a collaborative approach.

Sanjay Bhattacharya, the former Secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs, India, gave a special lecture on G20 Indian presidency. Mr. Bhattacharya delved into the transformative era India is undergoing, position-



ing the country as a key player in the global economy. He provided intricate details about the G20's evolution from addressing economic crises to shaping a multitude of global initiatives. Bhattacharya's insights underscored the significance of G20, which represents 2/3rd of the world's population, 85% of the GDP, and 75% of trade. He

emphasized the G20's pillars, including energy transition, digital transformation, climate funds, and accelerating Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Dr. Smita Sirohi, Joint Secretary (G-20) in the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India, contributed to the discourse by discussing the moral obligations

that accompany G20 commitments. She highlighted India's vital food programs like the POSHAN scheme and advocated for fortification, reducing food losses, and a comprehensive "one health" approach.

Dr. RC Agarwal, Deputy Director General (Education) ICAR, in his address, lauded the significance of youth in shaping the

future and acknowledged the increasing engagement of girls in the agricultural sector.

Prof Rajinder Peshin, the coordinator of the G20 programme, welcome and presented a report on Pre event student activities during the G 20 University connect Programme by SKUAST Jammu. An awards function recognized student achievements in various pre-event activities, including poster-making, essay writing, quiz, ideation, and rangoli competitions.

The winners showcased their creativity and dedication across these diverse categories. In the poster-making competition, Yashvi Sharma, a student from the Faculty of Agriculture, SKUAST-Jammu secured the first position; while in the essay writing competition Gurner Kaur a student from GDCRS Pura claimed the top spot. GDC for Women Bhagwati nagar emerged as the quiz champion,

and in the Ideathon, a veterinary student from SKUAST Jammu secured the first prize. Faculty of Agriculture, SKUAST-Jammu triumphed in the rangoli competition.

Following the lectures, Dr. Rohit Saini Fellow Research and Information System for developing countries, initiated a dynamic question-and-answer session, providing students an opportunity to interact directly with the esteemed guests and deepen their understanding of the discussed topics.

The event drew to a close with a heartfelt vote of thanks, extended by Dr. SK Gupta, Registrar, SKUAST-Jammu expressing gratitude to all participants, dignitaries, and contributors who made the event a resounding success. The closing note was marked by a spirited rendition of the national anthem, symbolizing unity and shared aspirations.

Khumani Chowk residents protest, seek macadamization of road

HT News Network

Srinagar, Aug 22 (KNO): The residents of Khumani Chowk, Bemina here on Tuesday staged a protest against the dilapidated condition of the roads in their area.

The aggrieved protests blocked the road and raised slogans against the administration.

"We have been suffering a lot for a long time, and yet the administration has done nothing to resolve our issue, and today we are here to protest against the pathetic condition of the road," said the residents while speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO).

"Our area has been neglected for a long time, we have contacted the authorities many times, but till now nothing has been done," said the aggrieved residents.

They later appealed the higher-ups to look into the matter and macadamize their roads in the area—(KNO)

Malabagh Hazratbal residents demand macadamization of road

HT News Network

Srinagar, Aug 22 (KNO): The residents of Malabagh, Lal Nagar area of Hazratbal, on Tuesday demanded the macadamization of roads.

Speaking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the residents said they are facing severe problems as the link road in their area has not been properly macadamized for a long time.

"A drainage pipeline was installed inside the road here in Malibagh Hazratbal, Srinagar, in the year 2022, and since then our road has not been properly macadamized. We have been requesting the government since then to macadamize the road," said Irshad Ahmad Sofi, a local resident.

"We are requesting the authorities to look into the matter," they added—(KNO)

AAC condoles demise of Peer Ali Muhammad Makhdoomi

HT News Network

Srinagar, Aug 22 (KNO): Awami Action Committee (AAC) Tuesday expressed deep grief and sorrow over the sad demise of Peer Ali Muhammad Makhdoomi, Imam of Ziyarat Shareef Hazrat Makhdoom Sahab (RA).

As per a statement issued to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the AAC on behalf of the organisation and its incarcerated Chairman Mirwaize-Kashmir Dr Moulvi Muhammad Umar Farooq, who continues to be under illegal and arbitrary house arrest for the last more than four years.

Reasi: Students imparted awareness about Road Safety rules



HT News Network

REASI, AUGUST 22: Motor Vehicle Department Reasi today organised a Road Safety Awareness programme at Trikuta High School.

Assistant Regional Transport Officer, Tara Mani Sharma delivered a detailed lecture on road safety rules and asked the students to cooperate with traffic regulation agencies by following the same.

He advised them to avoid driving before getting a driving licence and avoid over-

loading in School van/buses and if required approach the School Chairman for getting the extra school bus.

The ARTO asked the students to drive their vehicles by strictly following safety rules to minimize the casualties.

He briefed the procedure for applying and getting the driving license with eligibility and also cautioned them against drug abuse and to help those under the influence of drugs by making aware their parents, teachers and other nears and dears.

Kathua admin holds District Level Pani Samiti Convention to aware stakeholders

HT News Network

KATHUA, AUGUST 22: District Administration Kathua today organized District Level Pani Samiti Convention in the Auditorium Hall of Government Degree College for Women (GDCW) Kathua which was presided over by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Ranjit Singh. The event was organized to mark successful culmination of JJM fortnight which was held from 1 August to 15 August 2023 across the district where multifarious activities were held to sensitize masses about proper care of water assets and conservation efforts required from all stakeholders. The event started with the water testing demonstration performed by the members of the Implementing Support Agency (ISA) team with Field Test Kits (FTKs). ISA Expert JJM, Sajjan Srivastava informed the participants about the mandate of Paani Samitis who have a key role in implementation of JJM besides ensuring management and upkeep of the



assets at the grassroot level. He also emphasized on adopting grey water management and rain water harvesting mechanism so as to ensure judicious and optimum use of water resources besides facilitating replenishment of water table. While speaking on the occasion, Superintending Engineer, JJM Ramkrishan Gupta informed that under JJM fortnight program, designated Prabhari Officers visited panchayats to oversee the execution of the works being undertaken under JJM followed by submission of data report for further analysis to ascertain the progress besides taking feedback from the grassroot level.

Dr. Rashmi Singh felicitates officers, officials of STD for achieving revenue targets

HT News Network

JAMMU, AUGUST 22: Commissioner, State Taxes department (STD), Dr. Rashmi Singh today remarked that the department has significantly contributed in the overall growth and development of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Commissioner made these remarks while speaking at a function organised by the department to felicitate officers and officials of department who have shown outstanding contribution in achieving the revenue targets as well as in their respective fields here today as part of the celebrations under "Meri Matti Mera Desh" at State Taxes complex Rail Head here.

Addressing the gather-



ing, Dr. Rashmi called upon all the officers and officials of the department to work with greater zeal and dedication to achieve the revenue targets. She lauded the enthusiasm displayed by the State Taxes team in upholding the values laid down by our heroes, adding that each person who does his duty with honesty and dedication is also a hero because he is contributing to making this country a

progressive and developed nation. Speaking on the occasion, Additional Commissioner State Taxes, Jammu, Namrita Dogra highlighted about 15 day long activities carried out by the Department under 'Meri Matti Mera Desh' campaign as part of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'. She said that while on one hand the department organised programmes to connect with our Matti and culture

through Rangoli making, kite festival and selfie with Tiranga, on the other hand every effort was laid on highlighting the role of taxpayers in the development of nation by organising awareness drives. She remarked that a GST awareness was conducted for budding entrepreneurs and startups which was appreciated by all the stakeholders. A book of the activities undertaken by the department captured was also unveiled by Commissioner State Taxes on the occasion. Pertinently, under AKAM fortnight celebrations, State Taxes department organised various events like plantation drives, GST awareness drives through various means, kite flying, rangoli and poetry competition, exhibition etc.

Election Management Plan discussed in Kishtwar

HT News Network

KISHTWAR, AUGUST 22: District Election Officer, Dr. Devansh Yadav today presided over a significant meeting attended by Nodal officers and officials from Election and concerned departments to discuss the District-level Election Management Plan for future elections.

During the meeting, detailed deliberations were held on key aspects including formation of new zones and sectors within the three assembly constituencies. The strategic dialogue aimed at optimizing electoral processes for enhanced representation and efficient administration.



The meeting also engaged in a meticulous analysis of the district-level election management plan, encompassing special provisions for differently-abled voters, security arrangements, transport management, expenditure monitoring, training initiatives and the Media Monitoring Committee, among other critical considerations.

Discussions extended to encompass a range of stra-

tegic focus areas, including the status of the employees database designated for deployment during the Municipal Elections, training plans for Returning Officers/Assistant Returning Officers and Polling Staff, procurement status of election materials at the district level, plans for First Level Checking (FLC) of Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) for Urban Local Bodies, identification of EVM strong rooms for ULBs.

Justice Tashi visits Child Care institutions “Palaash”, “Pareesha” at Nishat, Srinagar

HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 22: Justice Tashi Rabstan, Judge, High Court of J&K and Lada-kh and Chairperson, Juvenile Justice Committee accompanied by Ms. Rajni Rabstan, Amit Kumar Gupta, Member Secretary, J&K Legal Services Authority, who is also holding the charge of Member Secretary, Juvenile Justice Committee and Jahangir Bakhshi, Secretary, DLSA Srinagar, today visited "Palaash" (Children Home

for Boys) and "Pareesha" (Children Home for Girls) at Nishat, Srinagar, to take stock of the facilities being provided in the said institutions besides enquiring about the well-being of the inmates and also had an interaction with them.

On his arrival at Pareesha (Children Home for Girls), Justice Tashi was accorded warm welcome by Mukhtar, District Social Welfare Officer, Srinagar along with Sander Kour and Abdul Bari, Superintendent's Pareesha and Palaash respectively.



Justice Tashi inspected the two-Stored building having a capacity of 25 inmates where presently 13 girls were staying. Various facilities available at Pareesha

like Reading cum Computer room, dormitories, kitchen, dining area, open gym, indoor sport facilities were inspected by Justice Tashi. It was informed by the

Superintendent that a tutor for imparting computer training visits every day in the evening and recently the department has also approved engagement of an instructor on outsource basis for extracurricular activities like painting, performing arts etc.

Adjoining to the said Home, the Home for Boys "Palash" was situated having a capacity of 50 children where currently 22 inmates were present. Similar facilities were available in the said Home. During an interaction

with the children both at "Palaash" and "Pareesha", Justice Tashi expressed satisfaction about the facilities and amenities being provided to the inmates. However, he expressed that the visit of doctor instead of fortnightly should be on the weekly basis. On the occasion, the children of both the Homes showcased their talent by singing solo as well as group songs and also displayed the prizes won by them in different competitions held in recent past.

Baramulla: Nowpora residents protest against Jal Shakhti Dept over water crisis

HT News Network

Baramulla, Aug 22 (KNO): Amid scorching heat, Nowpora Jagir village in north Kashmir's Baramulla district continues to grapple with a severe water crisis, with locals accusing the Jal Shakhti Department of negligence, saying the situation is worsening with each passing day. The aggrieved residents while protesting over the issue told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that they are without drinking water supply for more than a month and alleged that the department hardly bothered to redress their genuine demands despite taking the matter several times into their consideration. "There is not a single day we approach the Jal Shakti Department. We are oftentimes assured of early redressal but nothing is being done," they said, adding that the most affected areas are Bedenhar, Mirangund and others. Mohammad Rafiq, a protester, said, "We are facing an acute shortage of drinking water supply

EDITORIAL

Nurturing Minds: The Imperative of Education Reforms in Kashmir

Education is the cornerstone of progress and development in any society. In the picturesque region of Kashmir, where natural beauty often overshadows its systemic challenges, the need for comprehensive education reforms has never been more evident. Kashmir has long grappled with political instability but it's time to shift the focus to unlocking the potential of its youth through meaningful education reforms.

One of the most pressing issues facing education in Kashmir is the disruption caused by frequent curfews, shutdowns, and unrest. These disruptions have resulted in countless missed school days, leading to an adverse impact on the learning curve of students. Education reforms should prioritize stability and create an environment where students can learn without fear.

Another key area of concern is the quality of education. Kashmir has talented teachers and students, but the curriculum and teaching methods need modernization. Introducing technology-driven learning, vocational training, and skill development programs will prepare students for the demands of the 21st-century job market. These reforms would not only empower the youth but also contribute to economic growth and stability in the region.

Furthermore, addressing gender disparity in education is vital. Encouraging the enrollment and retention of girls in schools is a significant step towards achieving gender equality. It's essential to create a safe and inclusive environment where every child, regardless of gender, can access quality education.

Education reforms should also promote cultural and social inclusivity. Kashmir's rich cultural heritage should be integrated into the curriculum, fostering a sense of pride and identity among students. This, in turn, can contribute to greater social cohesion and harmony.

Reforms should also focus on teacher training and professional development. Empowering teachers with modern teaching techniques and tools will enhance the quality of education and motivate them to deliver their best.

Conclusively, Education reforms in Kashmir are not just a necessity, they are an investment in the future of the region. By prioritizing stability, quality, inclusivity, and professional development, Kashmir can unlock the potential of its youth, enabling them to be active contributors to their community and the nation at large. It's time to transform Kashmir's education system into a beacon of hope and progress for generations to come.

EctoLife

A glimpse on World's First Artificial Womb Facility powered entirely by Renewable Energy: Childs Can be designed in a Pod



■ [Punoo Saleem](#)

Synopsis:

EctoLife, the brainchild of Hashem Al-Ghaili will help to infertile parents to prepare a child Artificially and parents can be true biological parents of Artificial child.

Description:

Computer Science not only became advanced in Communication, programming, graphic designing or act only as storage devices but it also played vital role in day-to-day life like solving complex problems and hard tasks that reduces human effort and time.

What would be your reaction if I say 30,000 human babies are "produced" per day in a factory? Yes, In computer Science, Artificial Intelligence like some technologies made it possible to produce a human baby using advanced technologies. "EctoLife" The world's first artificial womb facility is just a concept for now which offer a way for parents to produce a customized baby. This concept was given by a producer, filmmaker and a science communicator and a "molecular biologist" by trade.

Have a look why EctoLife needed and what are its features?

EctoLife increases the growth population where parent who are not biologically fit to give birth to child can have a normal and desired baby. It has been said that it is the perfect solution for those mothers who have surgically removed their uterus due to cancer or other complication diseases. It protects a mother from Caesar, Stress during pregnancy, load burden and hindrances that a mother feels during movement. EctoLife helps population growth to those countries which face population decline like: Japan, Bulgaria, South Korea etc... In this pod a baby can grow smoothly. The process is smooth, convenient, and can be done with just Push button (i.e, press the button and get your baby). The facilities which has been said will run on renewable energy—plant to 75 labs where it has been said that each lab is equipped with up to 400 growth pods or Artificial wombs—this statement was cited by UK's newspaper Metro. This technology is so advanced that we can order a desired baby like, desired level of intelligence, height, hair, eye color, physical strength and even though skin tone. Thinking about technology, how a baby satisfy its requirements in that pod? Yes, well question, actually EctoLife fixes a sensor to the head of infant that normalize its temperature, blood pressure, heartbeat, breathing rate and oxygen saturation, so a baby grows in an infection free environment. It also monitors the physical features of baby and reports if there are any genetic abnormalities. The Pods are equipped with a screen that monitors the real-time development process of your baby. All these information you can access through your smart phone using an app that will be provided to you, so think about the technology!!!! where you can view the babies growth and development with your naked eyes by



What would be your reaction if I say 30,000 human babies are "produced" per day in a factory? Yes, In computer Science, Artificial Intelligence like some technologies made it

possible to produce a human baby using advanced technologies. "EctoLife" The world's first artificial womb facility is just a concept for now which offer a way for parents to produce a customized baby. This concept was given by a producer, filmmaker and a science communicator and a "molecular biologist" by trade.

high resolution live camera.

Babies learning process:

EctoLife provides a best way where a baby can hear any sound through sensors. You can choose any music from your playlist (from smart phone) and baby reviewers, the matter is not disclosed here but you can sing your own song or any other recitations that communicates to baby directly. So with the help of 360-degree camera you can watch every action and reactions of baby in this pod.

What about the nutrition:

When it comes to the part of nutrition of baby EctoLife has centralized bioreactors that provide the nutrition and oxygen to infants through the Artificial Umbilical cord. The same bioreactor also includes a fluid called amniotic fluid that surrounds the baby like it is surrounded in mother's womb.

Feedback:

It is big achievement of Hashem's on behalf of great endeavor using the concept of Artificial Intelligence. So being a computer Science Students I congratulate to Hashem sir.

Cause and Effect:

Firstly I can say that there is only omnipotent Who not only created man "from clinging substances" but He created the whole Universe, there is no deity except Him. He has the knowledge of abstract things and emotions. There is an ingenuity behind developing a baby in mother's womb, preparing the baby in separate pod might end-all parent-child relation. So it may have negative impact on society. Children forget then parent's value as this is the only relation which is yet to stand.

Secondly as it needs bioreactors that costs enough and is by-the-way human made can be defective.

HUMAN LIFE IS INCOMPLETE WITHOUT MORAL EDUCATION

■ [Vijay Garg](#)

Today, many efforts are being made by the government to improve the education system. Although there have been some improvements due to these, but despite this, many problems still remain a problem for educationists. Day by day falling moral level of students is also one of the main problems. Ethical education enables Disruption of discipline by students, disobedience of teacher, lack of good behavior has become a common thing.

With this where they teach Teachers are facing problems, further these students are also causing various social problems. Moral education not only makes the student a good personality but also enables him to understand and fulfill his responsibilities towards the society. Society needs good people There is no doubt that today the country needs good doctors, engineers, professors, leaders, teachers and writers but we should not forget that first of all the society needs good people.

A good person means a person who understands his duties and responsibilities



ilities towards family, society and country, who has compassion for all, who is willing to help others, who has a spirit of sacrifice, who is connected to heritage

and culture can be called a good person because Only such a person can give proper guidance to the society. Suffering bad consequences If we

look at the history, religious education, military education and social education as well as moral education were given full priority to the students but nowadays technology With progress, we have become so busy in technical education and book education that we are losing sight of the importance of moral education. So we are facing serious consequences and the youth is falling victim to bad association.

A big step towards creating a good society The reason for many problems of today's society is the lack of moral education because the need for moral education is not being realized in the current education system. We associate education only with occupation and earnings whereas the purpose of education is to get a job or earn money Not only that, but the purpose of education is to improve the personality of a person. Making students realize their importance can be a big step towards creating a good society.

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

What Role Can Learning Outcomes Play in Realizing the Objectives Envisioned in NEP 2020



■ Dr. Gh Hassan Wani

Education is the cornerstone of a nation's progress and development. With the ever-evolving global landscape and rapid advancements in technology, it is imperative that educational systems keep pace with these changes to prepare students for the challenges of the modern world. The National Education Policy, NEP-2020, introduced by the Government of India, aims to revolutionize the country's education system to align with contemporary needs and challenges. One of the key tools proposed by NEP 2020 to achieve its objectives is the implementation of learning outcome statements. This article explores how learning outcome statements can assist in realizing the objectives envisioned in NEP 2020.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is a transformative document that aims to revolutionize the education system in India. With its comprehensive vision, the policy emphasizes the importance of learning outcomes as a crucial component to ensure quality education. Learning outcome statements have the potential to play a pivotal role in realizing the objectives envisioned in NEP 2020. These statements provide clarity, focus, and accountability in the educational process, aligning it with the broader goals of holistic development and global competitiveness.

Learning outcome statements define what students are expected to know, understand, and be able to demonstrate after completing a particular educational level, course, or a module. They are precise, measurable, and student-centered, shifting the focus from mere content delivery to the application of knowledge and skills in real-world contexts. The NEP 2020 recognizes the significance of learning outcomes as a means to assess the effectiveness of education and promote critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

Need to align learning outcomes with NEP 2020:

To realize the envisioned objectives in true sense we need to align the learning outcomes



with NEP 2020

- Holistic Development:** The NEP 2020 aims to nurture well-rounded individuals by promoting their cognitive, affective, psychomotor, social, and ethical development. Learning outcome statements contribute to this objective by emphasizing not only subject-specific knowledge but also skills and competencies such as communication, teamwork, leadership qualities, ethical values and decision-making power. These statements encourage educators to design learning experiences that foster comprehensive growth.
- Flexibility and Choice:** The policy underscores the importance of providing students with flexibility and choices in their educational journey. Learning outcome statements, when crafted thoughtfully, enable educators to design diverse learning paths that cater to individual interests, strengths, and learning preferences. This customization aligns with NEP's vision of a student-centric and flexible education system.
- Multidisciplinary Learning:** NEP 2020 advocates for the integration of subjects

and multidisciplinary approaches. Learning outcome statements can facilitate this integration by outlining interdisciplinary connections and encouraging educators to design activities that bridge traditional subject boundaries. As a result, students develop a more holistic understanding of complex situations and real-world issues.

- Global Competitiveness:** The policy emphasizes on the need to prepare students for a rapidly evolving global landscape. Learning outcome statements can be designed to include skills such as critical thinking, creativity, digital literacy, and problem-solving – all essential for thriving in the modern world. By ensuring that learning outcomes reflect these competencies, NEP 2020's objective of global competitiveness can be met effectively.
- Accountability and Quality Assurance:** One of the challenges in the Indian education system has been the lack of robust assessment mechanisms. Learning outcome statements provide a tangible framework for assessment, enabling educators to gauge student progress more accurately. Additionally,

these statements promote transparency by clearly communicating what students are expected to achieve. This accountability fosters continuous improvement in teaching methods and curriculum design, ultimately enhancing the quality of education.

- Vocational and Practical Education:** NEP 2020 stresses the need for practical, experiential, and vocational education. Learning outcome statements guide educators in designing practical assessments and activities that reflect real-world scenarios. These assessments not only measure theoretical knowledge but also gauge the application of that knowledge in practical situations, thus aligning with the policy's vocational education goals.
- Assessment Reforms:** The policy emphasizes moving away from traditional exam-centric assessment methods. Learning outcome statements promote the use of continuous and comprehensive assessment techniques. Educators can assess students' progress through projects, presentations, group discussions, and other forms of evaluations that gauge their ability to meet the specified learning outcomes.

- Teacher Empowerment:** NEP 2020 recognizes the crucial role of teachers in shaping the education landscape. Learning outcome statements provide teachers with a clear roadmap for curriculum design, teaching methods, and assessment strategies. This empowers educators to create engaging lessons that are aligned with the intended learning outcomes, enhancing the overall quality of education.
- Quality Education:** The policy underlines the importance of quality education accessible to all. Learning outcome statements help standardize learning expectations across different schools and regions. By defining what constitutes successful achievement of learning outcomes, the policy aids in maintaining consistent educational standards and promoting equity in education.
- Challenges and Considerations:** While learning outcome statements hold great promise, their successful implementation requires careful planning and consideration. Some challenges include ensuring the relevance of outcomes in a rapidly changing world, providing adequate teacher training for effective implementation, and maintaining a balance between standardized outcomes and individual learning needs.

Conclusion:

The National Education Policy 2020 envisions a holistic, flexible, and globally competitive education system for India. Learning outcome statements offer a powerful tool to realize these objectives by guiding educators towards designing student-centered learning experiences that foster comprehensive development. The alignment of learning outcomes with the policy's core principles facilitates accountability, quality assurance, and adaptability, ensuring that education in India is not just about acquiring knowledge but about developing skills and competencies essential for success in the 21st century. As the implementation of NEP 2020 progresses, the strategic integration of learning outcome statements will prove instrumental in shaping the future of education in India.

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Where have all the 'smart' cities gone?

AS MANY AS 1,100 SMART MOBILITY PROJECTS WORTH RS 22,785 CRORE HAVE BEEN COMPLETED, AND 984 PUBLIC SPACES DEVELOPED AT A COST OF RS 5,861 CRORE.

■ Gurbir Singh

Remember the scramble 7-8 years ago after Prime Minister Modi announced the Smart Cities Mission (SCM) in June 2015. More than 18 months were spent in selecting the 100 cities that would make it to the list. City bureaucrats competed with pitches and ministers pulled strings in the Ministry of Urban Affairs. It seemed transformation of the blighted urban landscape was around the corner.

Eight years down the line, the Smart Cities euphoria has waned. It is absent from election promises and in the bragging of ministers. The project was supposed to be completed by June 2021. After two extensions – the last one made in May this year – most of the 'smart' cities look much the same.

The report card submitted to Parliament in February this year however shows a pretty picture. As many as 7,804 projects worth over Rs 1.8 lakh crore have been sanctioned in 100 cities. Of these, 72 per cent of the projects worth Rs 1,07,000 crore were to be completed by April 30, 2023.

Around 232 projects worth Rs 15,000 crore relate to infrastructure development such as multi-modal transport hubs, multi-level car parking, and bike sharing. As many as 1,100 smart mobility projects worth Rs 22,785 crore have been completed, and 984 public spaces developed at a cost of Rs 5,861 crore.

Tardy completion

On the other hand, Parliament's Standing Committee on Housing and Urban Affairs by April this year conceded as many as 68 'smart cities' had failed to achieve their targets by January 2023. The figures put out by the ministry are also misleading as 32 of the cities had completed more than their original quota of projects; and if one takes those away, the actual performance is even more dismal, the Committee noted.

So while Varanasi, Agra, and Udaipur had touched near 90% completion, many like Silvassa, Gangtok, Faridabad, and Shillong were struggling at less than 10% completion. "There have been astute attempts to manufacture a high project completion rate by completing small/less-valued projects, which take lesser time," the parliamentary committee noted.

The revised report card in April 2023, as per the Parliamentary Standing Committee is: Against an allocation of a little over Rs 2 lakh crore to develop smart cities, as many as 5,343 projects worth over Rs 1 lakh crore have not yet been completed.

The Smart Cities Mission was doomed from the start as none of our astute planners ever chose to define what a 'smart city' is. The projects chosen were a mish-mash of technology upgradation, mass, rapid transportation and building infrastructure. There were as many definitions



of a 'smart city' as there were planners.

A 'Smart City' in international parlance is all about improving cities through technology. It was initially coined by Scandinavian and West European city planners to refer to a new level of tech modernization – from well-synchronized traffic lights and intelligent homes to driverless transportation, all aimed at making cities more livable and efficient.

'Smart' technology

The best 'smart cities' of the world chosen by Earth.org this year include Singapore – which has excelled in evolving a digital health care system including video conferencing for the aged. Another city Zurich was selected for among other things its streetlights that adapted to traffic levels, and which increased brightness or dimmed using sensors. The project enabled an energy saving of up to 70%.

But India's Smart Cities Mission has been firing in a different direction – it includes technology but it also supports a full-spectrum city modernization programme. That is why it falters. It is neither strictly a tech ramp-up; nor is it focused on building basic civic infrastructure. India's erratic and unplanned growth of cities need holistic goals that include providing affordable housing, efficient public transportation and civic infrastructure. Building technology to create smart cities is only an adjunct

to these more basic civic goals.

An old McKinsey & Company report on India's urban landscape predicts that 40% of the country's population or 590 million people will be residing in cities by 2030. Moreover, with the shift from agriculture to services, 70% of the new jobs being created would be in urban areas.

To make cities livable, McKinsey had estimated a massive \$ 1.2 trillion by 2030 in capital expenditure. The outlay of Rs 2 lakh crore or approximately \$25 billion on the Smart cities Mission is a small speck of what is required. At the micro level, sample this: Chandigarh in the first phase was allocated Rs 196 crore to fund smart water meters, a Wi-Fi zone and modern solid waste management. And it was all ploughed into one pocket – Sector 43.

"Today, in per capita terms, India's annual capital spending of \$17 is only 14% of China's \$116 and less than 6% of New York's \$292," reminds the McKinsey report. Indian cities today are hell-holes crushing the poor in hovel-like housing and long commutes that suck the life out of the bread earner. To transform these cities multiple and focused agencies have to work in tandem tackling infrastructure, education, housing and so on. The Smart Cities Mission in its present avatar is at best tinkering around.

Courtesy Indian Express

PM In South Africa For BRICS Summit, Buzz Over Possible Xi Jinping Meet

■ HT News Network

New Delhi: Prime Minister Narendra Modi landed in South Africa on Tuesday evening to take part in the three-day BRICS summit that begins from today. The visit comes amid buzz over a possible bilateral meet with China's Xi Jinping, which has yet to be confirmed.

Prime Minister Modi - who was warmly welcomed at the airport by Deputy President Paul Shipokosa Mashatile - will join China, Russia and hosts South Africa for the first in-person BRICS summit since 2019; the last three were held online because of the COVID pandemic.

Asked about a possible meeting with President Jinping on the summit's sidelines, India said yesterday the Prime Minister's schedule is 'still being developed'. "We have a positive intent and an open mind when it comes to BRICS expansion," Foreign Secretary Vinay Kwatra said.

PM Modi's first official engagement will be at 4 pm local time (7:30 pm IST) - the BRICS Business Forum Leaders' Dialogue. The Prime Minister is slated to address the gathering for 10 minutes at 4:30 pm; President Jinping's 10-minute address is slated for immediately afterwards. He will then attend the BRICS Leaders Retreat that will see Russian President Vladimir Putin participate via a video link. Possible topics for discussion at this event will be global developments and the BRICS membership expansion



issue.

Last month a senior South African diplomat said over 40 nations had expressed interest in joining the BRICS grouping, which represents around 40 per cent of the world's population. Argentina, Iran, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Cuba, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Comoros, Gabon, and Kazakhstan have all expressed interest, officials said.

As PM Modi left for the summit, he said he hoped the meeting would provide a useful opportunity for all members to 'identify future areas of cooperation'. "... BRICS has become a platform for discussing and deliberating on issues of concern for the Global South."

Buzz about a possible Modi-Jinping bilateral meeting Xi Jinping on the summit's sidelines come as Indian and Chinese troops remain locked in

confrontation in parts of eastern Ladakh despite disengagement at some others following extensive diplomatic and military talks.

Last month, National Security Advisor Ajit Doval met Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi on the sidelines of a meeting of BRICS nations in Johannesburg and emphasised the importance of continuing efforts to fully resolve the situation and restore peace in the border areas.

India-China ties deteriorated following a fierce clash in Ladakh's Galwan Valley in June 2020 that marked the most serious military conflict between the two countries in decades.

After a series of military and diplomatic-level talks, the two sides completed the disengagement process in 2021. However, India maintains that ties with China cannot be normal unless there is peace in the border areas.

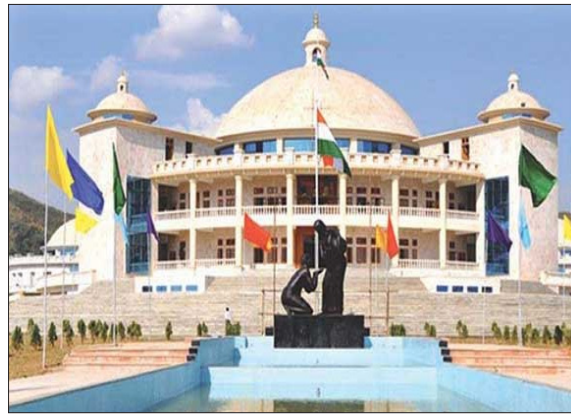
Manipur Governor Ends Suspense, Summons Assembly Session On August 29

■ HT News Network

Guwahati: Manipur Governor Anusuya Uikey has summoned the long-pending session of the state assembly on August 29. The assembly had last convened for the budget session from February 21 to March 3. The ethnic violence in May automatically pushed back the monsoon session. Last month, the government recommended a session by August 21, and when there was no green signal from the Raj Bhavan, revised the date to August 28.

Article 174 of the Constitution maintains that "six months shall not intervene between its [state legislature] last sitting in one Session and the date appointed for its first sitting in the next Session".

The Article 174 of the Constitution maintains that "six months shall not intervene between its [state legislature] last sitting in one Session and the date appointed for its first sitting in the next Session". Over the last month, Opposition parties and Meitei civil society groups have been repeatedly asking for reconvention of the assembly. The government's initial



requests too, got no response. This morning, the Chief Minister's Office posted its decision to reconvene the assembly from August 29 on social media.

"The State Cabinet chaired by Hon'ble CM N Biren Singh on Monday 21/08/2023 took a decision to convene the 4th Session of the 12th Manipur Legislative Assembly (Monsoon Session) on August 29, 2023," read its post on X, formerly Twitter. The Congress said not convening the assembly for monsoon session despite repeated requests by the state government is further evidence of the "breakdown" of constitutional machinery in the violence-hit state. The Governor is meant to

convene the assembly on the advice of the state government. Senior Congress leader and the party's communication in-charge Jairam Ramesh posted on X: "On July 27th, the state government requests the Governor of Manipur to convene a special session of the Assembly in the third week of August. On August 4th, Governor is requested once again to convene a special session, but this time on a specific date, namely August 21st. Today is August 21st and the special session has not been called. There has been no Monsoon session of the Assembly either. This is further evidence that the Constitutional machinery has simply broken down in

Manipur".

Sources said 10 Kuki MLAs might skip the session and the tribe's civil society might oppose it. The MLAs have refused to attend the session as the assembly is located in the Meitei-dominated Imphal Valley. MLAs from the Naga tribe, however, will attend the session, sources said. Article 174 of the Constitution maintains that "six months shall not intervene between its [state legislature] last sitting in one Session and the date appointed for its first sitting in the next Session".

The Article 174 of the Constitution maintains that "six months shall not intervene between its [state legislature] last sitting in one Session and the date appointed for its first sitting in the next Session". Over the last month, Opposition parties and Meitei civil society groups have been repeatedly asking for reconvention of the assembly. The government's initial requests too, got no response. This morning, the Chief Minister's Office posted its decision to reconvene the assembly from August 29 on social media.

Lok Sabha MP Receives Death Threat On Phone: Maharashtra Police

■ HT News Network

Amravati, Maharashtra: Lok Sabha MP Naveet Rana allegedly received death threat on phone, said police. Maharashtra police have registered a case against the accused. The accused has been identified as Vitthal Ra.

Police said that a case has been registered under multiple sections of IPC.

"A case has been registered under sections 504, 506 (b) of the IPC for threatening to kill Amravati MP Naveet Rana. The accused used the mobile phone to threaten the MP," police said.

Vinod Guhe who is the Private secretary of Lok Sabha MP Naveet Rana, lodged a police complaint in this regard.

DCW Chief writes letter to Amit Shah over alleged minor girl's rape case

■ HT News Network

New Delhi, Aug 22 (UNI) The Delhi Commission for Women on Tuesday wrote a letter to Union Home Minister Amit Shah with regard to alleged rape of a minor girl by a Women and Child Development officer of the Delhi Government. The Commission has ordered an enquiry into the matter and issued a notice to both the Delhi Police and Delhi Government.

On August 21, DCW Chairperson Swati Maliwal visited the private hospital where the girl is presently being treated. She wanted to meet the survivor and her family members to ensure proper assistance, medical treatment, compensation, and legal aid.

However, when she reached the hospital at 11 am yesterday, she was stopped by the authorities from entering the premises, DCW said in a statement.

After several hours of waiting, the hospital authorities brought out a paper which they claimed was written by the mother of the survivor. The said letter was not addressed to anyone and had two lines written which stated that the mother does not wish to interact with anyone, claimed DCW.

Three shooters arrested for BJP leader's murder

■ HT News Network

Moradabad (UP), Aug 22 (UNI) Three shooters involved in the murder of a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader were arrested during separate encounters with the police in which two personnel were also injured in different areas of Moradabad district in Uttar Pradesh on Tuesday, a senior police officer said.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Hemraj Meena said that three shooters were arrested in separate encounters with Majhola and Civil Lines police in the morning.

"Two policemen were injured in the firing by the shooters. The criminals also sustained injuries in the retaliatory firing. The injured have been admitted to the district hospital," he said.

It may be noted that on August 10, BJP leader Anuj Chaudhary, a resident of Sambhal district, was shot dead by three motorcycle-borne miscreants while he was taking a stroll near Parshvanath Pratibha apartment in New Moradabad.

"Our Endeavour Is To Hoist Tiranga On Moon As Well": Jyotiraditya Scindia

■ HT News Network

Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh: Union Civil Aviation Minister Jyotiraditya Scindia has said that the success of Chandrayaan-3 will be a great history created by Indian scientists and experts. Jyotiraditya Scindia made the remark while speaking to reporters in Gwalior on Tuesday. "The success of Chandrayaan-3 will be a great history created by the experts and scientists of India. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India was achieving new heights, the Indian flag was hoisting not only inside the country but also on the world platforms, but now it is our endeavour that the tricolour of India should be hoisted on the moon as well," Jyotiraditya Scindia said.

Meanwhile, Jyotiraditya Scindia also extended congratulations to all the experts, scientists and PM Modi ahead of the Chandrayaan-3 to land on the moon. According to the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), the Chandrayaan-3 is set to land on the moon on August 23, around 18:04 hours IST. Earlier, on Monday, ISRO chairman and secretary of the Department of Space, Somanath called on Union Minister Jitendra Singh in the national capital, apprising



him of the status and readiness of 'Chandrayaan-3' for the moon landing. The ISRO chairman briefed the minister on the health status of Chandrayaan-3 saying all systems are working perfectly and no contingencies were anticipated on Wednesday, the scheduled date for landing on the lunar surface.

The health of Chandrayaan-3 will be monitored continuously, he said, adding that the final sequence of landing will be fully tested out. During the meeting, Union Minister Singh expressed confidence in 'Chandrayaan-3' making a soft landing this time, adding that he hoped that it would script a new history of planetary exploration under the guidance of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Live action will be available on the ISRO website, its YouTube channel, Facebook, and public broadcaster DD National TV from 17:27 IST on Aug 23, 2023.

India's "Biggest Asset" In Pakistan Is Congress's Mani Shankar Aiyar

■ HT News Network

New Delhi: Batting for resumption of dialogue with Pakistan, diplomat-turned-politician Mani Shankar Aiyar says India won't be able to take its due place in the world as long as its western neighbour is an "albatross around our necks".

The Congress leader, who served as India's consul general in Karachi from December 1978-January 1982, has dedicated a full chapter to his Pakistan stint in his autobiography "Memoirs of a Maverick -- The First Fifty Years (1941-1991)" that hit the stands on Monday.

In an interview with Press Trust of India on his new book, published by Jugernaut Books, Mr Aiyar said the high point of his bureaucratic career was undoubtedly his stint as consul general in Pakistan and he has dwelt at very great length on his three



years in Karachi in the first volume out now.

India's "biggest asset" in Pakistan were the people there who did not consider it an enemy country, he said.

"We were coming back from a dinner one day, within the first two-three weeks of the posting, when my wife Suneet asked me a question that reverberated in my mind in my stay in Karachi - 'This is an enemy country, right?'" Mr Aiyar said he asked himself the question through his three years there and for the last 40 years since he came back from Pakistan.

"I have come to the conclusion that whatever may be the view of the sections of the army, or sections of polity, as far as the people of Pakistan are concerned, they are neither an enemy country nor do they regard India as an enemy country," he claimed in his interview to Press Trust of India.

"Every time we want to display our disapproval of the (Pakistan) government, visas are stopped, films are stopped, TV exchanges are stopped, books are stopped, travel is stopped, so I don't see why we do not know how to leverage the good-

will of the people of Pakistan as an integral part of our diplomatic approach," Mr Aiyar added.

For the last nine years all dialogue between India and Pakistan has been frozen, he noted.

"Until Mr (Narendra) Modi became prime minister of India, almost every prime minister, if he had the time, was attempting some kind of a dialogue with the Pakistanis but now we are in a freeze and the victims of this freeze are not the army of Pakistan which is still swigging its scotch, it is the people of Pakistan whose relatives in large numbers live in India and many of whom have a desire to visit our country," he said. Mr Aiyar said that during his diplomatic stint in Karachi, he issued three lakh visas and did not get a single complaint of misuse.

"So why are we targeting the Pakistani people? You can target the Pakistani establishment if you want to, but as far as the people.

Delhi Officer Drugged Friend's Teen Daughter, Raped Her: Police Sources

■ HT News Network

New Delhi: The teen girl raped multiple times by suspended senior Delhi government official Premoday Khakha was drugged before each act of sexual abuse and, on one instance, woke up to injuries on her body, police sources said Tuesday as more details emerge of this shocking crime. Police sources also said the young girl - then 14 years old - was depressed after her father died in 2020. The father died at the height of the pandemic but not due to Covid, the sources added.

According to the police, the first rape occurred on October 31, 2020. This was likely just days after the young girl - traumatised by her father's death - was packed off to Khakha's home in Burari in northeast Delhi by her mother - less than two weeks later. The mother said the official had convinced her she would be safe in his care.

Police sources have said the teen was raped at least once more during her five-month stay in Burari - in February 2021. A month later she went to Jharkhand for a family function and did not return to Khakha's home.

In her statement to the police, the girl said Khakha used to molest her in church as well as his home.

The police say the teen girl - now a Class XII student - suffered frequent panic attacks after her father died, forcing her to drop out of school after Class IX and enroll in an open learning institution. It is likely, police sources say, the twin trauma - the father's death and the rapes - left her unable to alert authorities to the sexual abuse inflicted by Premoday Khakha.

The attacks on the young girl were only revealed this month after she spoke to a counsellor at a Delhi hospital, where she was being treated for another round of panic attacks. She had been rushed to the hospital by her mother.

Russian strikes kill eight ‘fighters’ in Syria

■ HT News Network

BEIRUT: Eight fighters died on Monday in Russian air strikes targeting a rebel base in Syria's northwest, the last major bastion of armed opposition to President Bashar al Assad's rule, a war monitor said.

Moscow's intervention since 2015 has helped Damascus claw back much of the territory it had lost to rebel forces early in the 12-year civil war, and Russian forces have repeatedly struck the Idlib area.

Early on Monday, "Russian warplanes carried out air strikes on the western outskirts of Idlib city, targeting a military base belonging to Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS)... killing at least eight fighters," said Rami Abdel Rahman, head of the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.

Several other fighters were wounded in the strikes, with some in critical condition, said the Britain-based monitor which relies on a wide network of sources inside Syria.

Demonstrators take to the streets again over living conditions

Militant group HTS, led by Syria's former Al Qaeda affiliate, controls swathes of Idlib province, as well as parts of the adjacent Latakia, Hama, and Aleppo provinces.

A correspondent said the militant group cordoned off the area after the strikes, which came shortly after midnight (2100



GMT on Sunday).

HTS regularly carries out deadly attacks on soldiers and pro-government forces.

On Monday, the Syrian defence ministry said its forces had downed "three drones laden with explosives" operated by "terrorist organisations".

The Observatory said the army shot down three reconnaissance drones in Idlib and Hama provinces.

Days of rare protests

Hundreds of demonstrators took to the streets again on Monday in Syria's southern

city of Sweida, local media and an activist reported, as dire living conditions stoke discontent in regime-held areas.

Days of rare protests have erupted in the south after the government lifted fuel subsidies last week, dealing a blow to Syrians already struggling with the heavy toll that 12 years of war have exacted on the economy.

Local news outlet Suwayda24 posted videos showing hundreds of people gathered in the city on Monday, holding banners and chanting anti-government slogans

including "freedom" and "long live Syria, down with Assad".

"We've had enough, the Syrian people are suffocating," one activist in Sweida said on condition of anonymity for security reasons, adding that hundreds had gathered to protest in the city.

Soaring inflation, the rising cost of living, instability and poverty have plagued the country, pushing desperate Syrians to take to the streets, the activist said.

Security forces have not cracked down on demonstrators so far, he noted.

"My only hope is that this movement will spread to other provinces and that our voices will be heard," he said.

Syria's war has killed more than half a million people and displaced millions since it broke out in 2011 following Assad's repression of peaceful pro-democracy protests.

It spiralled into a deadly conflict that pulled in foreign powers and global militants.

Sunday saw a strike over deteriorating living conditions and price hikes across Sweida province — the heartland of the country's Druze minority — which has been mostly spared the worst of the civil conflict.

One senior Druze religious leader has expressed support for demonstrators and chastised the government. Footage on Monday showed protesters carrying local Druze sheikhs on their shoulders.

Erdogan blames UN peacekeepers after Cyprus assault

■ HT News Network

ANKARA: Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on Monday accused United Nations peacekeepers of instigating violence in which several members of the agency's mission were assaulted on Cyprus.

The United Nations said Turkish Cypriot forces on Friday attacked peacekeepers who were attempting to block construction of a road in the buffer zone separating the divided east Mediterranean island.

The confrontation occurred in an ethnically mixed village in the UN-patrolled area between the internationally recognised Republic of Cyprus in the south and the breakaway Turkish Cypriot statelet in the north.

The breakaway government is recognised internationally only by Türkiye. Erdogan accused the UN force of illegally moving into Turkish Cypriot territory to halt the construction of the road. "The physical intervention of the UN forces on the territory of [northern Cyprus] last Friday is unacceptable," Erdogan said in his first public remarks about one of the most serious incidents of its kind on the island in years.

Palestinian woman opens Gaza's first cat café

■ HT News Network

GAZA: Inspired by her passion for the furry animal, Naeema Mea'bed opened the "MEOW Cat Cafe" in the Gaza Strip this week, hoping to bring cat lovers some joy, while boosting awareness over pet raising, which has become increasingly popular in the region.

The cafe, the first of its kind in Gaza, is entirely cat-themed, with mirrors and flower vases, as well as posters of the 14 resident cats that are available for guests, adults or children, to play with.

On Sunday, a long queue of hopeful customers formed, spurring Mea'bed to set up more tables and seats for families who had brought their children along for the feline experience, costing \$1.30 per half hour.

Parents are able to sit and observe their children play with the cats through a glass partition as they sip their coffee. "The idea came from my childhood passion for cats since and I wanted to pass it on to people," said Mea'bed.

Cats, she said, are a "natural anti-depressant." "Many people like cats but they don't know where to keep them or where to play with them, so I made this place for them, where they can come, be happy and relieve their stresses, even for just five minutes and then leave happily," she said. The cafe is home mainly to Persian cats, but also Turkish angora and hybrid felines.

For Hala Abu Maghaseeb, 14, who has so far not convinced her parents to get her a pet cat, the cafe was a pleasant and welcome surprise during her summer school break.

Firefighters in Greece battle blazes fanned by gale force winds

■ HT News Network

ATHENS: Hundreds of firefighters struggled to contain wildfires fanned by gale force winds in several parts of Greece on Monday as authorities warned most regions faced a high risk of new blazes.

More than 200 firefighters backed by 17 aircraft were battling a wildfire burning for the third day near the northern port city of Alexandroupolis, where 13 communities were evacuated as a precaution since the fire broke out on Saturday, the fire brigade said.

Cyprus said it was sending two firefighting aircraft. "We are in a state of alert, as we will be tomorrow, due to very high temperatures and gale force winds," fire brigade spokesperson Yannis Artopoulos said.

"We are facing extreme phenomena," he said.

A man was found dead in a wildfire raging north of the Greek capital Athens on Monday, firefighters said. "An old shepherd ran to his sheepfold to save the animals and was retrieved dead," a spokesman from the fire brigade said in Boeotia, about 100 kilometres north of Athens.

China lodges complaint over US-Japan-S. Korea statement

■ HT News Network

BEIJING: China said on Monday it had lodged complaints over a statement released at a first-of-its-kind summit of the leaders of the United States, South Korea and Japan in which they criticised Beijing's "aggressive behaviour".

US President Joe Biden hosted the summit — described as launching a "new chapter" of close, three-way security cooperation — at the Camp David presidential retreat.

The three leaders said in a joint statement on Friday they opposed the "dangerous and aggressive behaviour" of China in maritime disputes in the East and South China Sea. Beijing hit back on Monday, saying the leaders had "smeared and attacked China on Taiwan-related and maritime issues, grossly interfered in China's internal affairs and deliberately sowed discord between China and its neighbours". Beijing says leaders interfered in internal affairs and deliberately sowed discord between its neighbours.

It also expressed "strong dissatisfaction and firm opposition and has lodged solemn representations with relevant parties", foreign ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said at a regular news briefing.

West Africa bloc rejects Niger's three-year transition plan

■ HT News Network

NIAMEY: West African nations have rejected a call by Niger's coup leaders for a three-year transition back to democracy, as the crisis-hit country's neighbours weigh whether to take military action.

General Abdourahmane Tiani has declared he will hold off a return to civilian rule after army officers toppled President Mohamed Bazoum last month.

His announcement came after a delegation from the West African regional bloc ECOWAS, which has threatened to use force to reinstate Bazoum, visited Niger in a final diplomatic push.

"The three-year transition is unacceptable," Abdel-Fatau Musah, ECOWAS commissioner for politics and security, told Al Jazeera in an interview broadcast on Monday. "We want constitutional order to be restored as soon as possible."

In a televised address on Saturday, Tiani accused ECOWAS of preparing to



attack Niger by setting up an occupying force in collaboration with a foreign army, without referencing which country.

"If an attack were to be undertaken against us, it will not be the walk in the park some people seem to think," he said.

ECOWAS leaders say they have to act now that Niger has become the fourth West African nation since 2020 to suffer a coup, following Burkina Faso, Guinea, and Mali.

The bloc has agreed to activate a "standby force" as a last resort to restore democracy in Niger.

It has said it is ready to act, although it is still pur-

suing diplomacy and has given no date or details about any intervention.

Unlike a previous ECOWAS mission in early August, this time the delegation held talks with Tiani and also met Bazoum, who is being held with his family at the presidential palace and could be facing treason charges.

Images on Niger television showed Bazoum smiling and shaking hands with members of the delegation.

The crisis in Niger is amplifying risks for millions of vulnerable children, the UN's children's fund has said, adding "a heavy burden to an already dire humanitarian landscape."

Trump will skip Republican presidential debates

■ HT News Network

WASHINGTON: Donald Trump said on Sunday he will skip this week's first Republican presidential debate, arguing that Americans know him well so there's no need for a public showdown with his rivals for the White House.

In a message on his platform Truth Social, Trump touted what he called a hugely successful record as president and what he described as his popularity among the American people.

"I will therefore not be doing the debates!" he said. The first debate in the race for the 2024 Republican presidential nomination is scheduled for Wednesday in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

In his post, Trump noted the latest in a wave of polls showing him far, far out ahead of the Republican field, this one by CBS News published on Sunday.

It said 62 per cent of those polled for the survey would vote for him even though he has been indicted four times this year, including on charges he tried to subvert US democracy by scheming to overturn the 2020 election and stay in power despite his loss to Joe Biden.

Trump's closest contender in the CBS poll was Florida Governor Ron DeSantis at 16pc. The rest of those in the field are polling in the single digits. Trump wrote that DeSantis is "crashing like an ailing bird."

"The public knows who I am & what a successful Presidency I had," Trump said, citing issues including energy, border security and the military, and the economy. The 77-year-old



former president, who is rarely out of the headlines, had been vocal about possibly skipping the debate in the midwestern city of Milwaukee, wary of sharing the limelight with lower-polling rivals.

The New York Times reported on Friday that Trump had told aides he was planning to upstage his rivals by skipping the event, organised by Fox News, and instead sit for an online interview with one of Fox's former hosts, Tucker Carlson.

Even in his absence, Trump will be ripe for broadsides from opponents over the four criminal and three civil trials he faces involving allegations before, during, and after his scandal-plagued presidency.

"Obviously, his legal issues are affecting this race," Fox News host Bret Baier, who will be moderating the debate, told the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel.

"All these candidates have been asked non-stop about what's happening in courtrooms around the country. So he'll be a part of this debate whether he's there or not." Seven other candidates have qualified for the debate, including state governors DeSantis and Doug Burgum, former vice president Mike Pence.

Hitler's birth house to be redesigned

■ HT News Network

VIENNA: The redesign of Adolf Hitler's birth house will go ahead as planned, starting on October 2, Austria's interior ministry said on Monday, after a documentary aired new claims about the late Nazi dictator's wishes for it. Following years of legal wrangling, the government decided to turn the house in the northern Austrian town of Braunau, where Hitler was born in 1889, into a police station with a human rights training centre.

In a bid to prevent the building on the border with Germany from becoming a neo-Nazi shrine, the government took control of the dilapidated building in 2016.

The expropriation ended a bitter saga between the state and the former owner.

"The construction (to convert the house) is scheduled to start on 2 October 2023," an interior ministry spokesman confirmed.

"Everything will go ahead as planned," he added.

But Austrian director Guenter Schwaiger, who is due to release a documentary about the house in late August, said the ministry's plans for the house's future use will "always be suspected" of being "in line with the dictator's wishes".

As evidence Schwaiger cited the discovery of a local newspaper article from 10 May 1939, which states that it was Hitler's wish to have his birth house converted into offices for the district authorities.

High heat can serve up food insecurity within days, says study

■ HT News Network

PARIS: Amid record-high temperatures globally, a study on Monday reveals that a few days of searing heat can be enough to prevent billions of people already living hand-to-mouth on daily wages from putting food on the table.

A week of extreme temperatures in India, for example, means an additional eight million people will likely experience serious food insecurity, according to findings published in the journal Nature Human Behaviour.

Spread across 150 countries examined — especially in tropical and subtropical zones — that same heatwave translates into millions of men, women and



children at risk of hunger, even if overall food precarity is increased by less than one per cent, they found.

The World Bank estimates that nearly 30pc of the global population suffered moderate or severe food insecurity in 2022.

World Bank estimated last year nearly 30pc of people globally suffered food insecurity. Analysis of heat impact on food availability is usually limited to

decreases in crop yields, with the effects felt over months or years. The new study, however, reveals that the impact can be immediate when it is tied to income. "If it gets hot today, there might be food insecurity within just a few days because people can't work, which means they can't earn income and afford to buy food," lead author Caroline Kroeger of Oxford University. Such outcomes are

typically greatest in jobs where pay is closely tied to productivity, such as for agricultural harvests or piece-rate work.

Female brick carriers in West Bengal, for example, are paid by the number of bricks they carry a day. When the hot weather forces them to carry fewer bricks, they experience income losses as high as 50pc. Syrian blacksmith Murad Haddad wakes up early and takes turns at the anvil with his five brothers to avoid the torching temperatures. "The heat is killing us. I have six kids, and I can hardly look after them," he said. "But if I don't work, I can't make ends meet." Records broken

"You see stronger effects in countries with lower incomes, more agricultural,

DC Bandipora reviews progress of Works under JJM

■ HT News Network

BANDIPORA, AUGUST 22: In order to take an appraisal of the progress of effective implementation of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) scheme in the district, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Dr Owais Ahmad Tuesday convened a meeting of concerned officers at DC Office Complex here. During the meeting, the DC in his remarks asserted that the implementation of JJM scheme is being monitored by District Administration Bandipora on daily basis and every effort is being made to ensure that 100% saturation is achieved in all the works undertaken under JJM scheme. During the meeting, the

DC reviewed in detail the physical and financial progress of the works being executed under the JJM.

Asserting that JJM is a major flagship program to cover all households, Dr Owais directed all the officers to work in coordination and ensure smooth execution of JJM works in their areas.

He directed officers of all concerned departments that all households are connected through tap water, besides all pending schools, anganwadi centres, health centres and panchayat ghars be also provided with tap water connections under JJM scheme across the district.

Meanwhile, various issues and bottlenecks were comprehensively discussed wherein DC



reviewed the status of road cut permission and exhorted upon the officers to carry on the works with minimum inconvenience to the public. He also directed the executing agencies to redouble their efforts so that cent percent saturation and desired target is achieved within the stipulated time frame. JD Planning, Superintending Engineers of Jal Shakti and R&B Departments, Chief Education Officer Bandipora, Chief Medical officer, Executive Engineers of Jal Shakti and R&B Department were present in the meeting. Asserting that JJM is a major flagship program to cover all households, Dr Owais directed all the officers to work in coordination and ensure smooth execution of JJM works in their areas.

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Director Employment inaugurates 03 Months Skill Training Course at Wyath Service Pvt Ltd Kupwara

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, AUGUST 22: To fill the potential skill gap among the unemployed youth of district Kupwara, Director Employment J&K, Nisar Ahmad Wani today inaugurated a three-month skill training course "Domestic IT Helpdesk Attendant".

The batch will consist of 25 trainees selected through a proper interview/selection process. The skill

training aims to impart necessary skills in IT-ITES-enabled service to unemployed youth/ jobseekers to get them ready to absorb in the private sector.

"Imparting market-relevant skill training courses is going to be a regular feature of the Employment Department and all districts in the UT of J&K will undergo market-relevant and district-specific skill training courses", said the Director Employment in his address to the



participants.

Director Employ-

ment also sensitized the enrolled trainees about opportunities available in the self-employment sector and the opportunities available with State Level Employment Portal and National Career Service portal for the job seekers/unemployed youth.

Speaking on the occasion, Principal ITI Kupwara, Ajaz Ahmad stressed the need for skilled manpower in the country and the importance of skill certification from NSDC and

updating of records on Skill India Portal. Saleem Lone, Director of Wyath Service also spoke about his organization and highlighted the contribution of Wyath Service Pvt. Ltd. in the skill enhancement of unemployed youth in district Kupwara.

Among others, Assistant Director Employment Kupwara, Superintendent ITI Kupwara, Officials from DE&CC Kupwara and Wyath Service Pvt. Ltd. participated in the programme.

National Senior Citizens Day celebrated at Shopian

■ FAROOQ RATHER.

SHOPIAN, AUGUST 22: In order to promote the inclusiveness of the elderly people in society, the Department of Social Welfare Shopian today organised a one day programme marking the celebration of National Senior Citizens Day.

On this occasion, free health check-ups and medicines were made available to the elderly people at different locations.

The elderly people were made aware about the facilities available at Old Age Home, located at Alyapora Shopian and about their rights and duties along with the various welfare schemes run by the department for their benefit. A picnic was also organised by the department wherein the senior citizens engaged in various activities and interactions with each other.

A similar function was also held at Old Age Home, Shopian with a series of thoughtful and engaging activities aimed at celebrating and honoring the elderly residents. The event encompassed medical check-ups, thought-provoking discussions and recognition of the valuable contributions made by senior citizens.

Their resilience, wisdom, and lifetime of experiences were acknowledged as valuable assets that continue to enrich the community. A similar function was also held at Old Age Home, Shopian with a series of thoughtful and engaging activities aimed at celebrating and honoring the elderly residents.

The event encompassed medical check-ups, thought-provoking discussions and recognition of the valuable contributions made by senior citizens. Their resilience, wisdom, and lifetime of experiences were acknowledged as valuable assets that continue to enrich the community.

Director Agriculture visits various areas of Anantnag & Kulgam

■ Farooq Rather

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 22: The Director Agriculture Kashmir, Chowdhury Mohammad Iqbal today visited various fields of Anantnag, Kulgam districts and took stock of the agriculture scenario in these areas.

During the visit, Director Agriculture held interactions with the concerned farmers and took feedback from them regarding various interventions by the department.

Speaking to the farmers at different places, Director Agriculture reiterated department's commitment to provide every possible technical guidance to the farming community during their crop cultivation operations.

He impressed upon the farmers to go for the diversification of crop cultivation. He asked them to take full advantage of the different schemes and programmes implemented by



the department for the development of the agriculture sector in the region.

Director Agriculture expressed satisfaction over the crop conditions of paddy, vegetable crops and other agriculture crops in the area.

Iqbal exhorted upon the concerned officers to work shoulder to shoulder with the farming community so that the said targets

under various projects of HADP could be met.

Later, the Director Agriculture inspected some innovative interventions by the department including maize trail (SATYA-92), Urd zero tilled land successfully, in the area.

He also inspected the Bio-phonetic Muskudhji rice trail grown on a roof top in district Kulgam. Speaking to the farmers at

different places, Director Agriculture reiterated department's commitment to provide every possible technical guidance to the farming community during their crop cultivation operations. He impressed upon the farmers to go for the diversification of crop cultivation. He asked them to take full advantage of the different schemes and programmes implemented.

DC Ganderbal interacts with Volunteers of Sakhi Club

■ HT News Network

GANDERBAL, AUGUST 22: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Ganderbal, Shyambir today interacted with working ladies and volunteers of Sakhi Club to discuss the challenges that women face here at the Conference Hall of Mini Secretariat Ganderbal.

The DC in his address spoke about the importance of women's empowerment. He said that women play a vital role in society and that it is important to support their efforts to succeed.

He suggested that from each Panchayat, two members should form a part of the club and members should meet twice a week. He also asked for conducting events to raise awareness about gender equality and reduction in violence against women.

While discussing the issues, the DC said it is important to work to create a society where women are safe and respected. He maintained that District Administration is committed to create a violence-free environment for working women so that they can work with dignity.

Earlier, the Executive Director of She Hope Society for Women Entrepreneurs, Sami Wani in his welcome address spoke about the challenges that women face and the importance of providing them with support.

The meeting was also attended by District Programme Officer, District Social Welfare Officer, and Chief Medical Officer.

Article 370 abrogation a visionary step by PM Modi led govt: Tarun Chugh

■ HT News Network

Srinagar: BJP National general secretary and incharge Jammu and Kashmir Tarun Chugh on Tuesday said that abrogation of Article 370 is a visionary step by PM Modi led government.

Reacting sharply to a statement by CPI(M) leader MY Tarigami that article 370 abrogation was an assault on foundations of India, Chugh said that anybody taking any other view point on this is playing in the hands of anti-national forces.

According to KNS correspondent, he said that it has integrated J&K with rest of the country and has opened new vistas of development and growth for the people.

Earlier, MY Tarigami had stated that the abrogation of Article 370 was not only an "assault" on the rights of people of Jammu and Kashmir, but also on the foundations of India.

He also said that if the Supreme Court does not stop the Centre's "unconstitutional move", it will have profound implications.

Police organises Free Medical cum Drug Addiction Awareness camp in Handwara

■ HT News Network

Handwara August 22: Police in Handwara in collaboration with GMC Handwara, organised a free medical cum drug addiction awareness camp at Govt Primary School Falmarg, Vilgam under the 'Civic Action Programme' of J&K Police. A team of doctors from different specialties including Orthopaedics, General Medicine and Psychiatry offered consultation to around 306 persons. The main aim of the medical camp was to provide access to medical check-up and medicines and to generate awareness about medical treatment for drug de-addiction. The attending patients availed free medical consultation from the visiting team of specialist doctors. The team of doctors also briefed the patients and their attendants about signs & symptoms of drug addiction.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I am applying for upgrade my C Class Contractor card to D Class if anybody have any objection in this regard He/She may contract R&B Division within seven days from the publication of this notice after that no objection will be entertained.

SAJAD AHMAD DAR
S/O GH MOHI UD DIN DAR
R/O DOLIPORA KREERI BARAMULLA

J&K Bank commissions Cash Recycler Machine in Kathua

■ HT News Network

KATHUA, AUGUST 21: Carrying forward its ease-of-banking mission, J&K Bank dedicated a Cash Recycler Machine (CRM) to the public at its Chidwal branch in District Kathua.

The Bank's Zonal Head (Kathua) Sanjeev Kumar inaugurated the CRM in presence of Cluster Head Vinay Gupta, Credit Head and Branch Manager amid a good gathering of valuable customers, senior citizens, local businessmen of the area and staff members of the Bank.

Speaking on the occasion, Zonal Head said, "We feel happy to dedicate a new CRM to the people along



with existing onsite ATM, which has been a long pending demand of the local businessmen and residents. Now the customers can deposit or withdraw cash at any time even after the banking hours and on holidays."

He instructed the branch staff to sensitize the locals about various beneficiary schemes and educate locals about digital delivery

channels rolled out by the bank. Assuring the customers, he said, "Assure our full support to the businessmen, unemployed youth and local entrepreneurs who want to start their ventures under various schemes of the bank."

After the inauguration, he had a detailed interaction with the esteemed customers, including senior citizens.

06 Panchayats declared "Nasha Muk" under set parameters at Pulwama: DC

■ HT News Network

PULWAMA, AUGUST 22: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Pulwama, Dr Basharat Qayoom today chaired a meeting of members of District Level Committee of Narcotics Coordination (NCORD) at circuit House, Pulwama to review the progress and initiatives to curb the Drug Menace in the district.

At the outset, the DC instructed the officers to ensure monthly reports and action taken regarding drug abuse, illicit cultivation of poppy and cannabis and details of drug peddlers are submitted at all levels in a confidential manner for further action by law enforcement agencies.

He further conveyed that Annual performance appraisals of officers shall be linked to performance of each officer in curbing the drug menace as mandated for the concerned departments.

In phase Ist, six panchayats have been endorsed by respective gram Sabhas,



PRI as Nasha Muk on set parameters in the district. The same has been reiterated jointly by the officers comprising BDO/ Tehsildar/ BMO/ ZEO/ SHO/ Forest Range officers/CDPO and other relevant departments.

The remaining panchayats have also been taken up in a phased manner to achieve Nasha Muk status.

Health benefits of dates: It's apowerhouse of antioxidant, anti-tumour, anti-inflammatory properties

Health benefits of date fruits: A hidden treasure of antioxidants, anti-tumor agents, and anti-inflammatory wonders, recent studies reveal that the unassuming date fruit, scientifically known as Phoenix dactylifera, holds a wealth of benefits for diabetes and heart patients.

If you are someone who leans towards natural remedies, it's time to make a "date" with a truly remarkable fruit – the date itself! Why? Because beneath its sweet exterior lies a powerhouse of antioxidant, anti-tumour, and anti-inflammatory properties. Date fruits, scientifically known as Phoenix dactylifera, have been used to prevent diseases. Studies have found that the elements inside dates have strong antioxidant, anti-tumour, and anti-inflammatory properties. These properties can help prevent damage in the body, fight against tumours, and reduce swelling.

Imparts anti-inflammatory effects:

Inflammation within the body plays a vital role in the progression of chronic conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and specific types of cancers. Dates contain compounds with anti-inflammatory properties, such as flavonoids and phenolic acids that help reduce inflammation in the body.

Offers anti-oxidant properties:

Antioxidants work to counteract harmful free radicals in the body, which can lead to cell damage and contribute to the advancement of conditions like neurodegenerative diseases and age-related health issues. Consuming dates can help prevent



these conditions as these fruits are rich in antioxidants, including vitamin C, vitamin E, and various phytochemicals.

Fosters cardiovascular health:

You know that ensuring a healthy heart is important. Along with other things, introducing date fruits into your diet helps foster better cardiovascular well-being. Eating dates helps in the reduction of cholesterol levels, lowering blood pressure, and improving blood vessel function. The anti-inflammatory and antioxidant prop-

erties of date fruits work in harmony to shield the heart and reduce the likelihood of heart disease.

Improves digestive health:

Fibre plays a critical role in keeping your bowel movements regular, preventing constipation, and maintaining a balanced gut microbiome. These reasons alone make consuming dates a wise choice, as they are packed with dietary fibre. What's more, dates also have prebiotic qualities that encourage the growth of helpful gut bac-

teria.

Regulates blood sugar:

In addition to enhancing gut health, the fibre and nutrients found in dates work to slow down the absorption of sugar, aiding in the regulation of blood sugar levels. This effect is achieved due to the relatively low glycemic index (GI) of these fruits compared to other sugary foods. Studies suggest that consuming two to three servings daily benefits diabetes patients. So, if you have diabetes or are at risk of developing diabetes, including dates may be a good option.

Supports immune system:

Maintaining a robust immune system is essential to fend off infections and illnesses. Date fruits contain immune-supporting vitamins and minerals like vitamin C and zinc that help in supporting the immune system.

Moderation is the key

Dates are tasty and can be paired with cookies, muffins, almonds, nut butter, and other foods. But remember, dates have calories and their sweetness can lead to overeating. So, it's a good idea to enjoy them in small portions to savour their flavour without going overboard.

NEWS

Diabetes & Eyes: Everything You Need To Know About Diabetic Retinopathy



Diabetic retinopathy is a potentially sight-threatening complication of diabetes that affects the eyes. It occurs when high blood sugar levels damage the blood vessels in the retina, the light-sensitive tissue at the back of the eye. Below we list the causes, signs, and treatments for diabetic retinopathy. We also discuss tips to help prevent diabetic retinopathy.

Causes

Prolonged exposure to high blood sugar levels is the primary cause of diabetic retinopathy. This damages the small blood vessels in the retina, leading to their leakage or abnormal growth. Other risk factors include long duration of diabetes, uncontrolled blood sugar levels, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol levels.

Signs

In the early stages, there may be no noticeable symptoms. As the condition progresses, common signs include blurred or fluctuating vision, dark or empty areas in the field of vision, difficulty seeing at night, and the presence of floaters or spots in the field of vision. In severe cases, diabetic retinopathy can result in complete vision loss.

Treatment

The primary goal of treating diabetic retinopathy is to slow down or halt the progression of the disease to preserve vision. The treatment options include:

- Blood sugar management
- Blood pressure control
- Medication
- Laser treatment
- Vitrectomy (removing the gel-like fluid within the eye to clear the vision and repair the retina)

Prevention tips

1. Keep your blood sugar levels under control
Consistently monitoring and maintaining your blood sugar levels is crucial for preventing diabetic retinopathy. High blood sugar levels can damage the blood vessels in the retina, leading to the development of this condition.
2. Control your blood pressure
High blood pressure can worsen the damage to blood vessels in the eyes caused by diabetes. Regularly check your blood pressure and take steps to keep it under control.
3. Maintain a healthy diet
Eating a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins can help in managing diabetes and overall eye health.

Eating a Small Amount of Nuts Daily May Help Lower Your Depression Risk

New research found an association between a daily serving of nuts and reduced depression risk.

The researchers say they aren't sure why the connection exists.

Experts speculate that nuts contain specific nutrients that may support mental health.

A serving of nuts a day could help keep depression at bay.

According to new research, a serving of nuts (30 grams) per day is associated with a 17% reduced risk of depression.

A small handful of nuts, or 30 grams of nuts, equals about:

The findings of the study were published July 26 in the journal Clinical Nutrition.

How does nut consumption affect mental health?

For the study, researchers examined data from the UK Biobank cohort, an online database of medical and lifestyle records.

From this database, over 13,500 Britons without self-reported depression or antidepressant use aged 37-73 between 2007 to 2020 were included in a comparison



analysis.

People in the study who consumed a serving of nuts daily were less likely at follow-up roughly five years later to have developed depression.

The findings do not clearly indicate why nuts were associated with this reduced risk.

However, researchers and experts speculate protective nutrients in nuts play a role.

Their results also suggest the likelihood of developing depression is also lower among adults in the United Kingdom with healthy weight, healthy lifestyle, and overall general health.

Nut consumption linked to healthy lifestyle behaviors

"Emerging research is uncovering the profound influence of our dietary habits on our mental health, particularly pointing to a strong gut-brain connection," said Kelsey Costa, a registered dietitian and nutrition consultant for the National Coalition on Healthcare.

"These findings underscore the potential of our dietary choices in steering our mental health, highlighting nutrition's pivotal role in our psychological well-being," she tells Healthline.

However, it is important to

highlight that this is a prospective study that watches for outcomes over a certain period of time.

"As such, results can only establish a correlation (not causation) between factor and outcome," said Dr. Gabrielle Lyon, a functional medicine practitioner, founder of Muscle Centric Medicine, and author of the forthcoming book, "Forever Strong: A New, Science-Based Strategy for Aging Well." "The cause or etiology of mood disorders is multifactorial and can rarely be reduced to a single factor," she adds.

For example, Dr. Lyon says those individuals who eat more nuts may also engage in other health-promoting behaviors like exercise and good sleep hygiene, which will also decrease their risk for mood disorders.

Which types of nuts help reduce depression risk?

"While the study does not explore the reasons for the correlation between nut consumption and lower risk for depression, nuts' anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties may contribute to the observed benefits,"

Costa said.

"The substances in nuts can help our body better manage stress, improve our gut health, and promote brain health," she explained. "Hence, eating nuts could be a helpful dietary strategy for preventing and managing depression." "Walnuts are known for their high omega-3 content and are of notable interest when studying depression.

"Omega-3s, integral to brain function and development, exert anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects, potentially alleviating depression risk," Costa said.

"By influencing the creation and performance of mood-regulating neurotransmitters, such as serotonin and dopamine, regular consumption of omega-3-rich walnuts may aid in mood improvement and decrease depression symptoms," she added. One observational 2023 study by the Trusted Source found that omega-3 supplementation was associated with significant improvement in symptoms of depression in people with mild to moderate depression.

How Getting the Right Treatment Helped Danielle Jonas Manage Painful Eczema

While pregnant with her second child with musician Kevin Jonas of the acclaimed Jonas Brothers, Danielle Jonas started experiencing symptoms of eczema.

"I started feeling things and thought it was just pregnancy...and had the baby and then [the symptoms] never stopped," she told Healthline.

When Danielle's itchiness, redness, and discomfort didn't go away, she decided to seek out help from her doctor, who diagnosed her with moderate eczema, a chronic skin condition characterized by intense, persistent itching and burning, itchy rashes that can crack, crust, or ooze and cause discoloration.

"I had an underlying condition that brought out my moderate eczema," said Danielle. "I just felt it all the time... it made me feel not myself at all and so I just stayed home with the kids," she said.

The emotional effects of eczema can be profound

Kevin witnessed how eczema added stress and anxiety to his wife's already busy life which was packed with mothering their two daughters, running a jewelry line, writing children's books, and managing the scrutiny of being in the public eye.

"[Dealing] with moderate eczema and having to feel all those things and not feel yourself. She would stop going to shows with me. We would stop



doing events certain ways and I'd just do what I had to do, and this was my teammate," said Kevin.

The emotional and mental effects of eczema can be profound, said Dr. Michele Green, cosmetic dermatologist at Northwell Lenox Hill Hospital.

"Uncontrollable itchiness can disrupt sleep, leading to moodiness and irritability," she told Healthline. "Individuals with eczema are more likely to isolate themselves from social interactions and activities to hide their appearance or itching behaviors."

Many people spend a lot of time coping with persistent and often debilitating symptoms, added Dr. Annabelle Garcia, a dermatologist at Sonterra Dermatology.

"Everyday tasks can be difficult for people with the disease, and sometimes activities that many of us take for granted, like brushing hair, going out with friends, or taking a shower,

can be tough," she told Healthline.

Around the time Danielle began having symptoms, she also began experiencing hair loss. However, she said it is unclear if losing her hair was directly a result of having eczema.

"Every time I took a shower it was clumps [coming out] and...I would get more stressed out seeing that and then the symptom got worse," she said.

The connection between eczema and hair loss

While eczema does not directly cause hair loss, Green said seborrheic dermatitis, a chronic form of eczema, which often develops on the scalp, can present as dandruff or a rash, leaving the scalp flaky, red, and itchy.

"The excess sebum produced can trigger an overproduction of Malassezia, a yeast that naturally develops on the skin. Although seborrheic dermatitis does not directly cause hair loss, if left untreated, excessively high levels of Malassezia can further inflame the skin, resulting in hair follicles being unable to push new hair through," she said.

Additionally, excessive itching on the scalp can lead to hair follicle damage and hair strands accidentally being ripped out, she said.

Any kind of inflammation on the scalp can impact the hair follicles, which can result in hair shedding or hair loss, Garcia added.

Women's Health: 7 Ways Mediterranean Diet Can Reduce Your Risk Of PCOS

A Mediterranean diet is a way of eating that is inspired by the traditional dietary patterns of countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea, such as Greece, Italy, and Spain. It emphasises plant-based foods like fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts, and seeds. Additionally, it includes moderate consumption of fish, poultry, and dairy products, while limiting red meat, saturated fats, and processed foods. Olive oil is typically the primary source of fat in this diet.

PCOS is a hormonal disorder that affects women of reproductive age, characterised by enlarged ovaries with small cysts and symptoms such as irregular periods, excessive hair growth, weight gain, and insulin resistance. The Mediterranean diet can potentially help manage PCOS by promoting weight loss, improving insulin sensitivity, and reducing inflammation in the body, all of which are common issues associated with PCOS. Read on as we discuss



other ways in which the Mediterranean diet can prevent PCOS.

1. Maintaining a healthy weight

The Mediterranean diet emphasises fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats. This balanced eating pattern can help regulate body weight and prevent obesity, which is often associated with an increased risk of polycystic ovary syndrome.

2. Controlling blood sugar levels

PCOS is often accompanied by insulin resistance, which can lead to high

gets the nutrients it needs to reduce the risk of PCOS.

4. Promoting heart health

PCOS is associated with an increased risk of cardiovascular diseases. The Mediterranean diet is known for its heart-healthy benefits, as it emphasises the consumption of foods like fish, olive oil, nuts, and seeds, which are high in healthy fats such as omega-3 fatty acids. These fats have been shown to reduce inflammation and promote heart health, reducing the risk of cardiovascular complications associated with PCOS.

5. Decreasing inflammation

Chronic inflammation is a common characteristic of PCOS. The Mediterranean diet, which includes plenty of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and healthy fats, has been shown to have anti-inflammatory effects. By following this eating pattern, you can help reduce inflammation in the body, which may alleviate PCOS symptoms.

