



Srinagar
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Rahul's fitness in the spotlight as India begin six day conditioning camp

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77th Independence Day celebrated with patriotic fervor in Ganderbal

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We have touched moon, now we should set big goals: LG Manoj Sinha

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUG 24: Lieutenant Governor Shri Manoj Sinha today inaugurated and laid foundation stones for various developmental projects of Budgam District and launched the "Beautification of Budgam Town" initiative.

In his address, the Lt Governor congratulated the District Administration, public representatives and the people of Budgam.

"I am hopeful that planned infrastructure development projects & amenities for sustainable living by Budgam District Administration will create healthy competition amongst cities of Jammu Kashmir and encourage public and ULBs to improve infrastructure and make the urban spaces beautiful and inclusive," the Lt Governor said.

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Lt Governor performs Pujan of Shri Amarnathji Chhari Mubarak

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUG 24: Lieutenant Governor, Shri Manoj



Sinha today performed the Pujan of Shri Amarnathji Chhari Mubarak in presence of Sh Deependra Giri, Mahant Chhari Mubarak Shri Amarnathji, at Mahadev Gir Dashnami Akhada.

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NEWS BRIEF

Trial run of 6 e-buses procured under Smart City project begins in Sgr

SRINAGAR, AUG 24: The trial run of six e-buses procured under the smart city project began in Srinagar on Thursday. The trial run of these buses will take place from Lal Chowk to Nishat and will return via Foreshore road today.

CEO, Srinagar Smart City Limited, Athar Aamir Khan told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that the trial run of e-buses has been started today.

Khan said that the e-buses have

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Border tourism faces a challenge of indiscriminate waste disposal

BARAMULLA, AUG 24: Indiscriminate disposal of waste by visitors has given rise to environmental challenges and threatens the rich biodiversity of the tourist spots in the border areas of north Kashmir.

Keran, Bangus, Tangdhar, Gurez and Uri, located along the Line of Control (LoC) were previously cross-border shelling hotspots between the armies of India and Pakistan. Now, as the guns have fallen silent, these areas have become tourist hotspots.

The locals of these areas while

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Shopping complex gutted in overnight blaze at Nowgam

SRINAGAR, AUG 24: A shopping complex located, near Nayak Bagh, Nowgam Srinagar was gutted in an overnight blaze here, officials said on Thursday.

An official told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that a fire broke out in an intervening night of Wednesday-Thursday from a double-storey shopping complex, which houses 7 hardware shops.

The fire has caused extensive damage to all the hardware shops, the official said, adding that the timely response of fire-fighters thwarted a major tragedy and prevented the fire from spreading to nearby structures.

Meanwhile, the official said that the cause of fire is being ascertained.

Work Collectively To Ensure Equitable Competition Between Large, Small Sellers: PM Modi

■ HT News Network

JAIPUR, AUG 24: Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday suggested the G20 trade ministers to work collectively to ensure equitable competition between large and small sellers as there



are challenges in the fast growing cross-border e-commerce.

In a video message at the G20 Trade and Investment Minister's meeting here, he also emphasised on the need to address the problems faced by consumers in fair price discovery and grievance handling mechanisms.

"Digitizing processes and use of

TURN ON.....PAGE 02

Take number of Ayushman Bharat Gold Cards at least par with Aadhar Cards in JK: CS

■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUG 24: Chief Secretary, Dr Arun Kumar Mehta today impressed upon the officers of the Health Department to make concerted efforts to take the number of Ayushman Bharat- PMJAY (Gold Cards) at par with that of Aadhar Cards in J&K.

Dr Mehta was speaking in the 7th Governing Council Meeting of State Health Agency (SHA) here



which besides the Secretary Health was attended by Principal Secretary, Finance; Principal Secretary, H&UDD; Secretary, Labour & Employment; CEO, SHA; Secretary in RDD; Principal, GMC Srinagar/Jammu; Director General, Codes; Director Health Kashmir/Jammu and others concerned.

During the meeting, Dr Mehta emphasised on running campaigns in the educational

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KASHMIRI PANDITS PERFORM HAWAN AT BUDGAM TEMPLE

Thank Muslim neighbours for their help and support

■ HT News Network

BUDGAM, AUG 24: Kashmiri Pandits from different parts of the country on Thursday assembled at the annual Hawan function of Reganya Mata Asthapan temple and performed Maha Yagye (Hawan) at Raithan area of Budgam district.

Mohan Lal, a senior citizen while perform-

ing Hawan told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) that is happy returning to an ancient Asthapan after a long time and celebrating the festival with Muslim neighbours.

They said the event was a "symbol of hope and reconciliation" for all the communities in the valley. "We are very grateful to

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Stakeholders share ideas with govt to boost tourism in Kupwara district

■ HT News Network

KUPWARA, AUG 24: A crucial meeting of all stakeholders was held on Thursday here to "further explore and boost" the tourism potential of this north Kashmir's frontier district.

According to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), the meeting was chaired by

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Anaemia continues to be major health problem among women, children in J&K

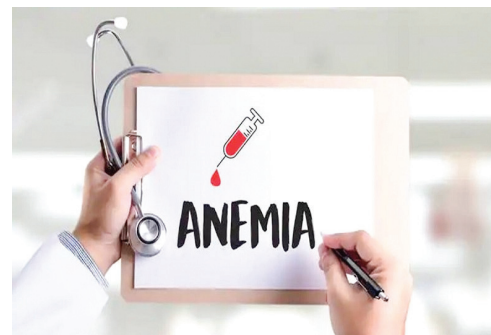
■ HT News Network

SRINAGAR, AUG 24: Anaemia continues to be a major health problem in Jammu and Kashmir especially in women and children.

Doctors blamed nutritional deficiencies, ignorance of menstrual health as the main reasons behind anaemia.

Several doctors while talking to news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said majority of women do not take nutrient rich diet.

They said anaemia is a condition that is marked by low levels of haemoglobin in the blood. "Iron deficiency is estimated to be responsible for about half of all anaemia globally. Still, anaemia can also be caused by malaria, hookworms,



other nutritional deficiencies, chronic infections and genetic conditions," they added.

Dr Sabeena, a gynaecologist told Kashmir

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BOTTOM

State-of-art skywalk flyover likely to be dedicated to Vaishno Devi pilgrims in Navratras



■ Vishal Bharti

JAMMU, AUG 24: Under construction state-of-art skywalk flyover worth Rs 15.5 crores is likely to be dedicated to devotees of Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Cave Shrine in Navratras falling in the month of October.

The sanctum of sanctorum Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Bhawan is nestled

in the Trikuta Hills of Katra Town in Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir and every year lakhs of devotees from all over the country and world pay obeisance at the cave shrine.

This year the nine-day Navratras are starting from October 15 and ending on October 24.

"The construction work of state-

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CONTINUE FROM FRONT PAGE.....

We have.....

The initiative for beautification of Budgam town will boost rapid development of economy, strengthen its ecology and ensure ease of living. These projects are reflective of vibrancy and resolve of the district, he added.

Addressing the gathering at Raj Bhawan, the Lt Governor called upon the public representatives, civil society members and the youth to discharge their collective responsibility in realizing the developmental goals for a glorious future.

"India is moving ahead with new thinking and new resolve. We have touched the moon. Now, we should set big goals. Now, we should work with new speed and scale and dedicate ourselves in building a progressive society and realize the vision of Smart Cities, Smart Towns and Smart Villages," the Lt Governor said.

The Lt Governor said the UT Administration is sensitive to the developmental needs of the people and is making every possible effort for inclusive and sustainable development of Jammu Kashmir.

"Our efforts are focused on inclusive growth as reflected in Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji's vision of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas and Sabka Prayas to provide better quality of life to the citizens, remove disparities and fulfill the aspirations of all sections," he said.

The Lt Governor commended the endeavour of District Administration for honouring Acharya Abhinav Gupt Ji by creating infrastructure, facilities and beautification works of the Bairam Cave at Beerwah.

It is a wonderful example of 'Vikas bhi, Virasat bhi' and multi-dimensional approach will help developing Beerwah as a major tourist destination, he said.

Sh Nazir Ahmad Khan, Chairman, District Development Council, Budgam expressed gratitude to the Lt Governor led UT Administration for taking development to the grassroots level.

The projects inaugurated by Lt Governor today include Public and Children Parks around Charar-e-Sharief Shrine; Renovation/ Beautification Works for Bairam Hill Cave at Beerwah, Budgam; Jogger's Park at MC Chadoora; Water Supply Scheme, Harinoo and New Type Primary Health Centre, Choon.

The projects worth Rs 41 crore for which the foundation stones were laid are Transit Accommodation at Kakanmaraan, Budgam; New Bus Adda Chadoora; Modernization of DC Office Complex; Water Supply Scheme, Gundipora, Beerwah and Construction of 19 new Panchayat Ghars across Budgam.

The Lt Governor also distributed Sports kits to youth of Budgam and smartphones and smart kits to specially-abled children.

Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, Chief Secretary; Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, Principal Secretary to Lt Governor; Sh Vijay Bidhuri, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir; Sh Akshay Labroo, Deputy Commissioner Budgam, PRI members, youth and large number of people from Budgam attended the ceremony at Raj Bhawan Auditorium.

Lt Governor.....

The Lt Governor sought the blessings of Lord Shiva and prayed for peace, prosperity, happiness and well-being of one and all.

The Chhari-Pujan on the auspicious occasion of Shravan Shukla Ashtami is an important ritual prior to the culmination of the annual pilgrimage of Shri Amarnathji Shrine.

The holy Mace will be taken to the Shri Amarnathji cave on August 26 following the traditional practice of Chhari Mubarak Yatra.

Dr Mandeep Kumar Bhandari, CEO, Shri Amarnathji Shrine Board; Sh Vijay Kumar, ADGP Kashmir; Sh Vijay Kumar Bidhuri, Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, senior officers were present.

Work Collectively.....

e-commerce have the potential to enhance market access. I am glad that your group is working on the 'High Level Principles for the Digitalization of Trade Documents'. These principles can help countries in implementing cross-border electronic trade measures, and reduce compliance burdens.

"As cross-border e-commerce continues to grow, there are challenges as well. We need to work collectively to ensure equitable competition between large and small sellers," he said.

Trade ministers of G20 grouping have gathered to discuss ways to promote international commerce and investments.

Terming the government initiative Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) as a game-changer, he said it will democratise the digital marketplace eco-system.

Digitizing processes and the use of e-commerce have the potential to enhance market access, the prime minister added.

Modi also said that India is seen as a combination of openness, opportunities and options as the world sees optimism and confidence in the Indian economy.

During the last nine years, India has become the fifth largest global economy and it has increased its competitiveness and enhanced transparency, he said.

"Today we see global optimism and confidence in the Indian economy. India is seen as a combination of openness, opportu-

nities and options," he said.

India has expanded digitisation and promoted innovation and it has moved away from red tape to red carpet and liberalised FDI flows, he said.

"Above all we have brought policy stability," he said, adding, "we are committed to make India the third largest global economy in the next few years."

He further said that the global uncertainties have tested the world economy and as members of the G20, it is the responsibility of the countries to rebuild confidence in international trade and investments.

"We must build resilient and inclusive global value chains that can withstand future shocks. In this context, India's proposal to create a generic framework for mapping global value chains is important," Modi said.

He added that this framework aims to assess vulnerabilities, minimise risks and enhance resilience.

Further, he added that there is a need to put special focus on MSMEs as they account for 60 to 70 per cent of employment and contribute 50 per cent to the global GDP.

"They need our continued support... For us MSME means maximum support to micro, small and medium enterprises," he said.

Further, he said that the proposed "Jaipur Initiative to foster seamless flow of information to MSMEs" will address the challenge of inadequate access to market and business related information faced by the sector.

"I am confident that you will work collectively to ensure that the global trading system gradually transitions into a more representative and inclusive future," he added. (Agencies)

Take number.....

institutions and government offices for saturating the coverage of whole population under the scheme. He directed for dedicating a helpline to assist the general public in availing this benefit.

In order to decongest the public health institutions and shorten the waiting period for general public for appointments, the Chief Secretary asked for creation of online appointment management system for providing time slots each patients. He also directed creating other online services.

He observed that the public should be encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyle by making sports, yoga and other physical exercises part of their lives. He maintained that it is an age old adage that prevention is better than cure. He advised people to take care of their health before it worsens. He also asked for taking full advantage of the online services like e-Sanjeevani and Tele-MANAS for taking the best medical advice from the comforts of their homes instead of taking the pain of visiting hospitals to the extent possible.

Dr Mehta also stressed on taking quality certification of all the hospitals under Kayakalp. He asked for ranking all the health institutions on parameters to give window to each of them to make improvements continuously. He advised for giving due weightage to the feedback from public.

On the occasion it was given out that since the universal health coverage of the population of J&K the insurance companies had authorized treatment to the tune of Rs 1484.39 Cr at a premium of Rs 990.88 Cr. It was revealed that for all these years the cost of treatment paid in favour of patients is greater than the amount paid as premium to these companies.

It was further added that out of a total of 8,99,999 claims submitted 8,05,804 had been paid till date. It was also learned that the total of 99,86,962 eligible beneficiaries are there in the UT out of which 82,71,870 Ayushman Gold Cards had been issued.

The meeting was also informed that most of the private hospitals are also empaneled under this scheme besides the public health institutions. It was given out that more than 400 'Aarogya Mitras' have been hired to assist the general public in availing the benefits under the universal health insurance scheme.

Kashmiri.....

our Muslim brothers because they have helped us more than what we had expected. If we are worshipping here and staying here for the night, all this is possible only when our majority community are by our side," he said.

Thanking villagers, he said that they preserved Asthapan till now and even in the most difficult situations, they did not allow anyone to harm it.

Setting an example of communal harmony and brotherhood, the local Muslims came together to extend best wishes to Pandits and helped the devotees in the smooth celebration of the religious event.

"The event was held for second continuous year after covid and we received a lot of love from the locals," said a visiting devotee, Bhushan Lal.

"The humanity is still alive in the people of Kashmir and we had spent the time here due to the trust and strong brotherhood with our Muslim neighbours," he added.

Czech couple.....

tried to talk to us for at least a bit, Radka

said. "We felt totally safe and very welcomed in Kashmir."

Petr loves food here, and I would like it too, but for me, everything is too spicy; so I enjoyed Goshtaba and Lassi, the tourist added.

Klapova said they can "imagine spending months in Kashmir". "We really loved this place. It is a real heaven on earth," they said.

Currently, they have planned a trip to Ladakh and want to stay in Kashmir for more time after returning back and enjoying it here.

Stakeholders.....

the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Lolab Bungus Drangyari Development Authority (LBDDA) Ghulam Jeelani.

Kupwara district in the last couple of years has seen a new bloom of tourism. It was only after a renewed February 2022 ceasefire pact between Indian and Pakistani armies at the Line of Control (LoC) that the region witnessed calm, and saw a new dawn of border and religious tourism.

The meeting held at the Tourist Reception Centre (TRC) Kupwara was attended by the elected representatives and those associated with tourism activities, traders, hoteliers, and other stakeholders, an official told KNO.

During the meeting, the participants put forth their suggestions on how to uplift and further promote tourism in the district.

Talking to KNO, CEO LBDDA Ghulam Jeelani said the interactive session was aimed at gathering feedback from all stakeholders. "They are more connected with the people from different areas. Suggestions about area-wise development were sought," he said.

Citing an example, he said that BDC from Keran knows more about the area and shared ideas on the required development and aspirations of the people.

All these suggestions are aimed at creating ideas on how to move forward, Jeelani said. He informed that a plan will be prepared on how to develop the areas of Lolab, Bungus and Drangyari. He said this year's Bungus mela is scheduled to be held on 31st August.

The concept is to work on a participatory basis by involving people, the CEO said, adding that the elected representatives and the stakeholders have a great knowledge of the topography of Kupwara.

Asked about the strategy, he said further steps will be initiated based on the latest concepts of tourism promotion and infrastructure development.

The CEO, as per the official, assured the participants that he would immediately start working on the suggestions received. "The dearth of infrastructure, manpower and funds were also discussed during the meeting," he said.

"The Lieutenant Governor administration is very particular and more inclined towards uplifting the tourism sector and development," Jeelani said.

State-of-art.....

of-art skywalk flyover at Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Bhawan is in the last leg of its completion and expected to be dedicated to the pilgrims in Navratras falling in the month of October," Anshul Garg, Chief Executive Officer, Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board told UNI.

The CEO stated that the construction work is expedited and the skywalk will be equipped with waiting halls, resting rooms, first of its kind wooden flooring and also have two emergency exits.

"The 250-meter long skywalk will be laced with modern facilities like a waiting hall, seating arrangements, LED screens and resting rooms," said Garg.

He added that the wooden flooring has been used as a preventive measure so that the devotees do not feel cold at bare feet while standing in queue during the harsh weather conditions.

"The completion of skywalk flyover will resolve the issue of handling the rush of pilgrims as after its commencement, entry and exit points will exclusively be separated," the CEO said adding that overcrowding will be prevented during huge rush because skywalk flyover will be the entry point but old traditional path will remain the exit point.

Moreover, two emergency exits and CCTV cameras will also be installed as safety measures, he said.

"The skywalk flyover will also have an artificial cave at the entrance to give a feel of a natural cave to the devotees," said an official.

Notably, on January 1, 2022, 12 people were killed and 16 others injured during the stampede at the Vaishno Devi Bhawan.

Every year hundreds of pilgrims visit the cave shrine on December 31 to pay obeisance to seek blessings at the Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine to start the first day of the New Year. UNI

Anaemia.....

News Observer that a lack of nutrition diversity in meals — inclusion of quality sources of proteins, micronutrients in households is one of the main reasons behind anaemia.

"In women of reproductive age, heavy

periods and pregnancy are the most common causes of iron deficiency anaemia as their body needs extra iron for their baby during pregnancy," she said.

"If iron deficiency anaemia is left untreated, it can make you more susceptible to illness and infection, as a lack of iron affects the body's natural defence system (the immune system)," she said.

Doctors said that anaemia can result in maternal mortality, weakness, diminished physical and mental capacity, increased morbidity from infectious diseases, prenatal mortality, premature delivery, low birth weight, and (in children) impaired cognitive performance, motor development, and scholastic achievement.

They said that the reason for rising cases of anemia is lack of awareness, lack of education regarding dietary habits, nutritional deficiencies, ignorance of menstrual health.

A pediatrician from GMC Srinagar said anaemia is rising among children and main cause is nutritional deficiency.

He said that almost three out of every four children in Jammu and Kashmir are anemic thereby putting their physical and mental development of a generation at risk.

Notably as per the statistics published in 'Women and Men in India 2022' report by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) this year 66 percent women in Jammu & Kashmir have anaemia, including 25 percent with mild anaemia, 38 percent with moderate anaemia, and 3 percent with severe anaemia.

As per the report, during NFHS-4, 49 percent non-pregnant women aged between 15-49 were anaemic, which has increased to 67.3 percent during NFHS-5.

Over all the anaemic condition of all women aged 15-49 has increased from 48.9 percent in NFHS-4 to 65.9 percent in NFHS-5.

As per NFHS-5, about three-fourths (73%) of children aged 6-59 months are anaemic. This includes 25 percent who are mildly anaemic, 44 percent who are moderately anaemic, and 4 percent who have severe anaemia.

"The overall prevalence of anemia in children increased from 43 percent in NFHS-4 to 73 percent in NFHS-5. There is a slight difference in the prevalence of anaemia among girls (71%) and boys (71%) in NFHS-5," it said.

Children of mothers who have anaemia are much more likely to be anaemic. Although anaemia levels vary somewhat according to background characteristics, anaemia among children is widespread in every group.

As per NFHS-5 three-fourths (74%) of children in Jammu & Kashmir are anaemic even if their mother has 12 or more years of schooling.

Trial run of 6....

been procured under Smart city project and have been procured with an aim to overcome the unavailability of transport facility.

He said that a total of 100 e-buses have been procured for Srinagar, adding that there are two types of electric buses which include 75 nine meter buses and 25 12 meter buses.

These electric buses will ensure zero emission and the driver will have all the control on the vehicles like doors and other things, he said, adding that once these buses will start running on roads, it will reduce the congestion.

"These buses are more similar to those in London buses. The idea is that the buses will run for next 12 years," he said, adding that the contract for the first 12 years has been given to Tata Company and a proper route planning has been done in this regard.

At present there is a maintenance point at Pantha Chowk, but in the coming time, there will be charging

points at multiple places in Srinagar, he said.

The trial run that has commenced today will continue for the next few days and will be inaugurated formally by next month, he added.

Notably, KNO had earlier reported that Jammu and Kashmir administration has procured 200 e-buses, 100 each for Jammu and Srinagar cities.

These air conditioned buses with CCTVs installed inside are being procured under the Smart City project.

These buses will also have digital on-boarding facility, live tracking so that people can be aware about arrival timing of the buses.

Border tourism.....

talking to the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO) said a significant amount of waste is thrown by tourists in open spaces.

Keran in Kupwara stands out as a famous tourist destination where the surge in tourist activity has brought forth substantial challenges, particularly regarding environmental safety.

The local residents told KNO that tourists are discarding waste along the Kishanganga riverbanks. They said the tourism and other concerned departments must "wake up".

"It is regrettable that tourists have selected various dumping sites. They should either responsibly carry their waste upon departure or notify us about it so that we could properly dispose of the garbage," said Suhail Ahmad, a homestay owner.

However, the tourists have complained of the absence of basic amenities at the location, particularly the lack of dustbins. They said either proper dustbins should be set up for the convenience of visitors, or alternatively, prominent warning signs should be installed to discourage any form of waste disposal.

"While I have observed several conscientious visitors who carry their waste back with them upon departure, it is disheartening to see many others thoughtlessly discarding litter, including used plastic water bottles, to the side," said Syed Mujtaba, a visitor from Budgam.

Many young people arrive with tents, arrange campfires, host parties, and unfortunately leave behind a trail of bottles and food waste on the premises, said Mushtaq Ahmad, a resident of Dawar, Gurez.

"There is an absence of an effective solid waste management system in the region. This deficiency has posed a serious threat of pollution to most of the tourist zones. The indiscriminate disposal of plastic waste occurs haphazardly, with these discarded materials making their way to villages and eventually finding their way into water bodies," he explained.

Rakesh, a visitor from Delhi, said, "I came here to revel in the beauty of Gurez's hills, but what troubled me are the piles of trash scattered around. People need to realise their responsibility of preserving nature."

Describing a similar situation in the Bangus and Uri areas, Priya Sethi, another tourist from Delhi, expressed her dismay at the "disheartening" practice of discarding solid plastic waste in the open spaces of "these beautiful locations".

While solid waste management is a significant challenge, a small step that tourists and trekkers can take is to carry their plastic waste and food packet wrappers with them, which will ensure the cleanliness of the natural trails, said an environmentalist.

He said the administration should develop a comprehensive plan for the proper disposal of solid waste in these areas to ensure their upkeep and cleanliness.

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EDITORIAL

Overcrowding in Local Transport Needs Immediate Attention to Curb Harassment of Women folk

Theserene landscapes of Kashmir belie the distressing reality that has been unfolding within its local transport system. The overcrowding of buses and other public transportation has not only led to uncomfortable journeys but has also become a breeding ground for increasing cases of female harassment. This pressing issue demands immediate attention and effective measures to ensure the safety and security of all passengers, particularly women.

The valleys of Kashmir draw a multitude of tourists and locals alike, putting a strain on the existing transportation infrastructure. Overcrowded buses and inadequate facilities have become a norm, causing discomfort and compromising personal space. Such conditions inadvertently create an environment conducive to harassment, especially towards women who are disproportionately affected.

Women's safety is paramount, and the current situation warrants a multi-faceted approach. Firstly, there is an urgent need to expand and modernize the transportation system in Kashmir. Increasing the frequency of buses, introducing new routes, and investing in alternative modes of public transport can help alleviate overcrowding. Additionally, awareness campaigns about appropriate conduct and respect for fellow passengers should be carried out, targeting both men and women.

The role of law enforcement cannot be understated. Police presence at crowded transportation hubs can act as a deterrent against potential harassers. Furthermore, implementing a reporting mechanism within buses and stations can empower victims to seek help immediately. Strict legal action against offenders, along with a swift and efficient legal process, will send a clear message that harassment will not be tolerated.

Cultural norms and societal attitudes also play a crucial role. Promoting gender sensitivity through education and media can foster a more respectful environment. Encouraging men to be allies in this cause and holding them accountable for their actions is essential.

To conclude, the overcrowding of local transport in Kashmir has undeniably contributed to the rising incidents of female harassment. Tackling this issue requires a collaborative effort involving authorities, law enforcement, society, and individuals. By revamping the transportation system, promoting awareness, enforcing the law, and fostering a culture of respect, Kashmir can take significant strides towards ensuring safer journeys for everyone, regardless of gender.

Pre-Golden and Golden tests for class 10th: A check for preparation level



■ Mudasir Ali

The prime objective of any test on the part of school management is to check the level of performance among students and to get the better results in future exams. Pre-Golden and Golden tests are one of the special tests particularly designed for students who have to appear in board exams. It is a sort of self-assessment that gives a right direction towards greater success. These tests are likely to be taken in the month of August and September. Students are properly informed one week before for the exam date through official notice issued by the principal of the institution. The completion of syllabus should be at least 80-90%. Subject Teachers have the right to set the papers in consultation with the principal sir. If there is a separate well qualified school body that we find in public schools dealing with the supervision and management aspects can have a special right to set the papers. But mostly subject specialist teachers are ordered to set the papers in both private as well as public schools under the complete supervision of school heads. The level of papers should be moderate type and subject specialist teachers should take all the parameters into consideration while setting the papers. All the preparations and paper setting process is under the control of school heads. School management should not take these tests lightly but to streamline the process of these tests effectively that would determine the individual worth of students. A section wise question paper is an applicable method that has a great advantage to check the analytical skills of students that calls for concepts

rather than rote learning. These papers should be aligned with the board exam papers so that students understand the pattern by analyzing different sections. These tests check scale of preparation and performance level for each student in each subject individually and allowing them to analyze weak subjects. It would ignite inquisitiveness in them to set the new strategies for the final exams. These tests follow one after another. Firstly, there is a Pre-Golden test usually having maximum marks 80 and after that, Golden-Test which is to be conducted in the same way based on 100 marks for each subject. The level of paper should be from moderate tough to high level as this is a last test for the students before appearing in the board exams. In schools, class 10th students have to appear in board exams must undergo in Pre-Golden and Golden-tests prior to checking their preparation and progress level. Students also need to be very serious and putting in all the efforts for scoring good marks that will boost their confidence level for final exams. Tests can reveal their true picture of progress and subject understanding. One can't ignore such tests in schools as they have a longstanding positive impact on students that would definitely benefit them in outside exams.

Following are the points that students should get to know before appearing in these tests:

Revising the topics: - Students have to revise the topics thoroughly and write down the important points separately on any page for the questions that are concept based in paper carrying 1 to 2 marks. The more you revise the topics the more you will score better because revisions give inner boost that has a great significance in tests.

Go for practice writing and solving questions:- It is possible when students are sure that they have completed revisions for all the subjects. It is time to write down the answers of questions for practice as writing develops sharpness in our brain for remembering things. In the case of mathematics, students should

solve the exercise questions and examples seriously and note down the important formulas for practice work. It will help in time management during tests.

Math, science and SST subjects: - These three subjects seem difficult for the students; it may be the reason that students don't properly study them at home. There is no ambiguity that these subjects are so interesting in learning and often considered to be scoring ones in board exams because these are mostly based on concepts. It is my advice to all students that they need to devote maximum time to these subjects at home for studying.

Checking the question papers properly: - Students often do not read the papers correctly. They always jump over questions and do lots of mistakes. Always give time to reading your question papers and see the questions carefully. Don't rush to attempt the questions instead hold some amount of patience while writing the answers.

Writing precise answers for 1 and 2 mark questions: - It is very important to check the marks given in each section. Students often write long answers for the questions which are carrying the least marks. Try always to be precise as these questions need simple answers in one or two lines.

Attempting all questions which are compulsory in each section: - Check all sections individually and find the questions which you need to attempt and never repeat the same things in answer writing.

Leaving questions unanswered is a serious problem:- it is a serious problem that students leave two to three questions deliberately. There can be two factors; less preparation and lack of concepts. Without preparation, students can't do well in tests. Students can write answers in their own words to secure themselves when they have good concepts as it helps in tough situations.

The Author is a columnist and works as a teacher

Critical Thinking is a never-ending journey

■ Vijay GarG

How To Develop Critical Thinking Skills
Critical thinking is the ability to analyze arguments objectively, question assumptions, interpret and evaluate evidence, and consider issues from multiple perspectives. This essential skill allows us to make sound judgments and decisions in all aspects of work, education, and everyday life. Critical thinking enables us to move beyond snap judgments based on incomplete information, bias, or faulty logic. Instead, we can carefully evaluate the factual basis and reasoning behind claims and arguments before arriving at rational conclusions.

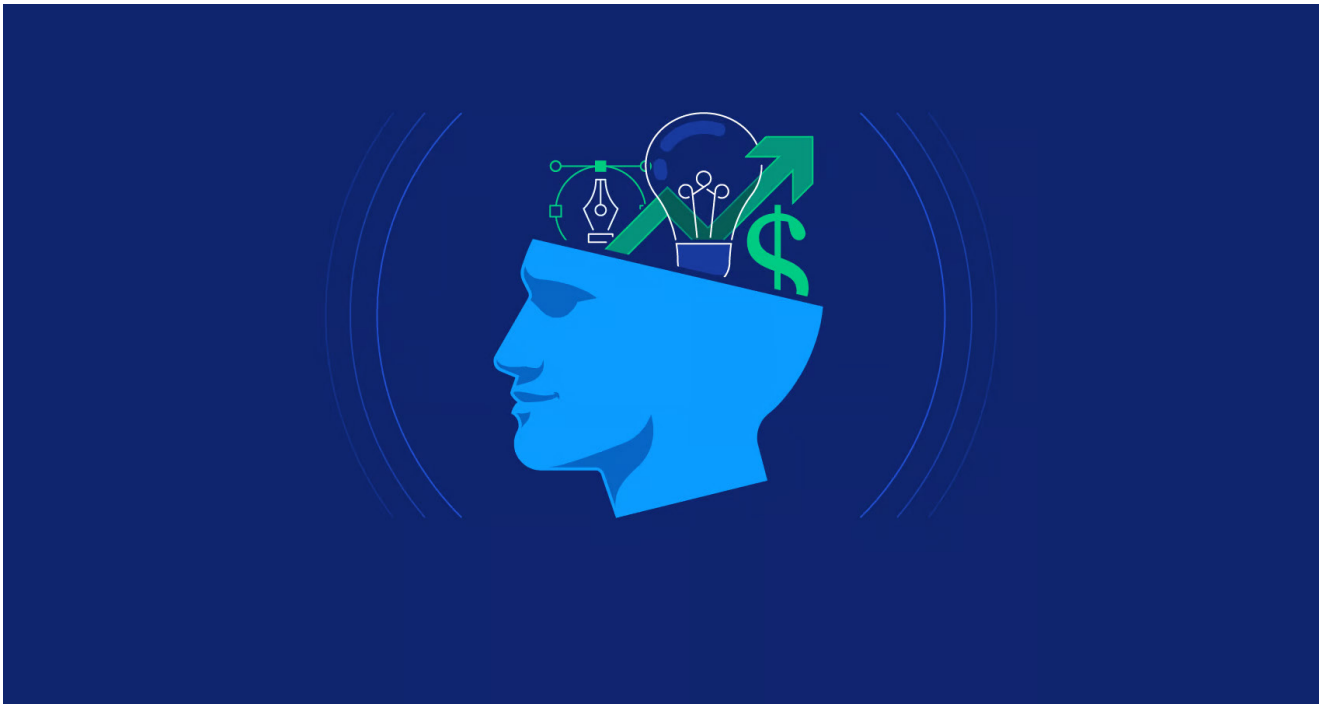
In today's complex information landscape, thinking critically is more important than ever. With the flood of content from media, advertising, politics, and more, countless claims are vying for our attention and belief. The stakes are also high—our decisions can impact our health, finances, relationships, and future. Without critical solid thinking capacities, we are vulnerable to manipulation, poor choices, and believing in falsehoods. Developing our critical thinking is thus crucial for success.

Fortunately, critical thinking is a learnable skill that anyone can sharpen with diligent practice. We can significantly improve our critical thinking abilities by mastering certain core principles of logic and reasoning, questioning assumptions, entertaining different viewpoints, analyzing evidence thoroughly, and reflecting on our thought processes. This leads to intellectual growth.

The Basics Of Logic And Reasoning

To think critically, you need to identify common flaws and weaknesses in arguments. Learn to recognize logical fallacies – errors in reasoning that invalidate an argument. For example, the “slippery slope” fallacy makes unreasonable predictions about the dire consequences of an action. “If we allow X, then Y will also happen!” Evaluate if each step logically leads to the next.

Also, look out for cognitive biases, which are tendencies that impair objective judgment. An example is confirmation bias, where people favor information supporting their views. Be aware of biases in your thinking. Challenge assumptions by looking at issues neutrally.



Also, be attuned to biases that shape your viewpoints. We all have them due to upbringing, culture, and experience. Awareness of your biases allows you to counteract them when necessary.

Entertain Different Perspectives

On any issue, make an effort to see things from multiple angles, not just your own. Imagine yourself arguing for the opposite position. What would your argument be? This “devil's advocate” technique strengthens or uncovers flaws in your stance.

Discuss ideas with people who have varied viewpoints to broaden your understanding. Don't just seek those who agree with you. Be open to revising your thinking if warranted.

Stay Curious And Open-Minded

Avoid forming rigid judgments early on. Remain open to new information that challenges your assumptions. Don't cling to existing beliefs if faced with convincing evidence otherwise. Keep asking questions to probe deeper.

Also, accept concepts too quickly before fully considering them. Give ideas a fair analysis, even if they seem odd at first. An open, curious mind discovers more truth.

Analyze Evidence And Arguments Carefully

When presented with a claim, don't just accept it mindlessly. Scrutinize the evidence and reasoning used to support it. Ask questions like:

Improve Your Metacognition

Metacognition means thinking about your thinking. Reflect on your thought processes to identify areas you need to develop. For example, do you evaluate evidence fully before making conclusions? Are you considering multiple perspectives? Being aware of your mental blind spots allows you to improve consciously. Think about how you can expand your critical thinking skills, then put them into practice.

Keep Practicing Critical Thinking

The best way to improve is to apply these skills in daily life continually. When making any important decision, use the critical thinking steps outlined. Discuss ideas and issues with others using logical reasoning. Over time, your analytical abilities will strengthen.

Conclusion

Developing strong critical thinking skills is incredibly valuable for work, education, decision-making, and all intellectual pursuits. The ability to logically

analyze arguments, question assumptions, interpret evidence, and consider multiple perspectives gives us a tremendous advantage. It allows us to move beyond biases, snap judgments, and limited thinking to arrive at sound, rational conclusions.

While critical thinking may seem intimidating initially, it can be cultivated with practice and dedication. Anyone can enhance their critical thinking by mastering the core principles of reasoning, being aware of their biases, thoroughly questioning claims, staying open-minded, and reflecting on their thought processes. The payoff is immense – better decisions, more profound knowledge, and intellectual growth.

Critical thinking is a never-ending journey, as there are always more profound levels of analysis to reach. But the rewards of intellectual rigor are well worth the effort. Sharpening our critical thinking skills allows us to separate truth from falsehood, make wise choices, and reach higher levels of understanding. We can all become better critical thinkers and informed decision-makers with consistent practice.

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

Auto Appeal System (AAS) ushers a wave of Accountability, Transparency and Zero Tolerance to Corruption

SRINAGAR, AUG 24: With the on-boarding 300 online services on the Auto Appeal System (AAS), for ensuring time bound delivery of citizen centric services, Jammu and Kashmir has become the first UT to launch the auto escalation mechanism in the country.

In order to achieve this objective, the J&K Public Service Guarantee Act (PSGA) has been amended to bring online services under its ambit. The AAS automatically triggers an appeal to appellate authorities when the specified timelines for availing services under the Act are breached. This mechanism has helped to enforce compliance for time bound delivery of e-services.

Commenting regarding its utility Chief Secretary, Dr. Arun Kumar Mehta stated that this is a significant milestone in the

digital journey of J&K which will go a long way in bringing about efficiency, transparency, accountability and curbing corrupt practices. The Chief Secretary, J&K impressed upon all the designated authorities and officers to monitor the appeals and dispose them in a time bound manner.

The key services offered in digital mode include the issuance of certificates such as category, income, property, character, and legal heir certificates, birth and death certificates, attestation of mutations, domicile certificates, obtaining fard and revenue extracts etc.

Other important services being offered include issuance of job cards under MGNREGA, acquiring water connection, obtaining marriage assistance or financial aid under Ladli Beti or pensions, street vending (Rehri) licenses



and obtaining credit cards for artisans and weavers. The Chief Secretary further stated that the AAS would enforce discipline amongst both government officials and applicants. The system

will keep track of the stipulated timelines for service delivery and has provisions for imposing penalties for failing to comply with the provisions of the PSGA. As on date, 22,305 appeals have been

triggered by the AAS to the appellate authorities after non delivery of services by the designated authority within the specified timeline. 5833 appeals have been disposed of by the appellate authorities and fines are being imposed on officers for wilful delays. The system is digitally empowering people like never before.

Monitoring of AAS is being done by the Committee constituted by the General Administration Department headed by Sh. Shaleen Kabra, Financial Commissioner (Additional Chief Secretary), Jal Shakti Department so that the AAS functions totally online with no human intervention. Facilities for SMS alerts and virtual hearing by appellate authorities are being worked out and shall shortly be provided to the applicants as well as the authorities.

Secy Health launches 7th edition of 108 free ambulance services magazine

SRINAGAR, AUG 24: Secretary Health and Medical Education (H&ME), Bhupinder Kumar today launched the 7th edition of 108 free ambulance services magazine here.

Speaking on the occasion, the Secretary said that since launch, the '108 free ambulance services' has rendered great services to the people while transporting patients to hospitals in emergency cases. He said that more than 2,30,000 patients have availed this service so far.

"108 has also played a key role during the pandemic," the Secretary said, adding that 12,110 Covid-19 positive patients availed 108 ambulance services during the pandemic.

Urging people to avail of the 108 services, the Bhupinder Kumar said these ambulances are fully equipped with lifesaving support and ensure safety as well as better medical care to the patient. He



appealed people to feel free to call on 108 toll-free number in case of any emergency to transport any patient to the nearest hospital which is far better than carrying him in a private vehicle.

Praising 108 services for coming up with a magazine, the Secretary said that the launch of magazine shall help generate awareness regarding 108 ambulance services among the people.

The Secretary also said that out of 203 ambulances, 139 are equipped with advanced life support having oxygen support, ventilator, an automatic external defibrillator, and fully trained paramedical staff for better patient care.

Pertinently, 887 deliveries have been successfully conducted by 108 Emergency Medical Technicians at the scene and inside the ambulance. During the ongoing Shri Amarnathji Yatra, 108 ambulance service provided assistance to 531 Amarnath pilgrims. These cases included 390 medical emergencies, 71 trauma cases, 25 vehicular road accident cases, 5 cases of intoxication/poisoning, 40 other emergencies, and 6 critical patients who were shifted on ventilator support. 16 ambulances with advanced life support and basic life support capabilities at various base camp hospitals and medical aid centres have been deployed, demonstrating a commitment to providing quality pre-hospital care to the pilgrims.

Launched on 24th March, 2020, the 108 ambulances, operated by BVG India Limited Group provides free of cost ambulance services in every district of Jammu and Kashmir. There are presently 203 fully equipped ambulances providing pick-up services in emergency cases, referral cases, and inter-facility transfer services to patients in J&K.

Chairman DDC Kupwara inaugurates new SE Circle Office

KUPWARA, AUG 24: The Chairman, District Development Council (DDC) Kupwara, Irfan Sultan Panditpori today inaugurated Superintendent Engineer (SE) Public Works Department (R&B) Office at Kupwara in presence of Vice Chairman DDC, Haji Farooq Ahmad Mir and Deputy Commissioner Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan.

Superintendent Engineer R&B Circle Kupwara, Suhail Ahmad Malik, Chairman Municipal Council Kupwara, Reyaz Ahmad Mir; DDC Members, BDC Chairpersons, besides, Engineers and staff of the R&B Circle Kupwara were present at the occasion.

Speaking at the occasion, the Chairman said that it is a matter of pride that district Kupwara has got a separate SE Circle Office adding that this will further augment the developmental scenario of the district. He expressed hope that the new SE office will meet the expectations of the vast population of Kupwara.

The Deputy Commissioner in her address said that with the establishment of a new SE Office there also comes certain challenges regarding the achievement of targets which needs to be fulfilled by the new office. She asked the concerned engineers to ensure completion of the tendering process of developmental works and to maintain quality of works.

Vice Chairman DDC also spoke and expressed gratitude towards the Government for establishment of the SE Circle at district level. He hoped that people of Kupwara district will get respite from visiting outside the district in getting the formalities fulfilled adding that roads will get more smooth and better across the district now.

Preparations for Urs Syed Qamar-ud-Din Bukhari finalized at Ganderbal

GANDERBAL, AUG 24: The Chairperson, District Development Council (DDC) Ganderbal, Nuzhat Ishfaq today convened a meeting of officers to review the preparations for the Urs of the revered sufi saint Syed Qamar-ud-Din Bukhari at Conference Hall of Mini Secretariat here.

The six-day event, commencing today will be marked by special night-long prayers and supplications at the shrine on 28th August.

At the outset, threadbare discussion was held regarding finalization of the arrangements for power supply, adequate safe drinking water supply, firefighting measures, traffic and parking plan, sanitation measures in and around the shrine, health, installation of stalls and other related arrangements.

Municipal Council Ganderbal was directed to ensure cleanliness in and around the shrine and installation of street lights wherever required and temporary mobile toilets near the shrine. PDD was directed to ensure round the clock power supply in the area besides availability of gen set at the main venue during the urs days.

Similarly, the police and traffic



officials were directed to ensure proper security and traffic regulations on routes leading to the shrine where large congregations are expected.

The meeting also finalized the arrangements for conducting cultural programmes, decoration, installation of amusement equipment and shayamya.

The Chairperson DDC impressed that Urs shall be celebrated with great fervor and vigour. She exhorted upon all the departments to work in coordination and ensure all arrangements

are put in place on time for smooth conduct of Urs.

The meeting was attended by President Municipal Council Ganderbal, Altaf Ahmad; ADDC Ganderbal, Mushtaq Ahmad Simnani; ADC, Mehraj-ud-Din Shah; CPO, Tehsildar Ganderbal, BDC Chairperson Ganderbal, DDC member Ganderbal, CMO, GM DIC, representatives of Qamariya Auqaf Trust and other district and sectoral officers.

DC discusses Action Plan for celebration of Digital J&K Week in Baramulla

BARAMULLA, AUG 24: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Baramulla, Dr. Syed Sehrish Asgar today presided over a meeting of concerned officers at Dak Bungalow here to review the preparations for celebration of Digital J&K Week-2023, being observed across J&K from first week of September for the empowerment of people.

Speaking on the occasion, the DC stated that the Digital Programme was started with the goal of transforming J&K into a society that is empowered by technology.

She reaffirmed that the introduction of e-services has considerably benefited the general public and increased openness in how government agencies operate.

On this occasion, the DC laid out plans for the celebration of Digital Week, during which it was

announced that the departments would offer online services by setting up booths for the convenience of the general public and organize literacy and awareness campaigns across the district to inform residents about the various government programmes and services offered online so they could benefit from all of these community-focused initiatives.

Moreover, District Heads were

also given instructions on how to celebrate the Digital Week by launching campaigns to promote their online services while working with the District Administration. They were instructed to designate Nodal Officers in this regard as well.

The DC further emphasized upon the concerned officers to involve PRLs, Students and Field Functionaries for generating

awareness on Online Service Delivery during the digital week.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Baramulla, Zahoor Ahmad Raina; Additional Deputy Commissioner Sopore, Shabir Ahmad Raina; Joint Director Planning, Assistant Commissioner Revenue, SDMs of Pattan, Uri besides other functionaries of all concerned departments were present in the meeting.

DC Bandipora reviews progress of Agriculture, Allied Sectors



BANDIPORA, AUG 24: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Dr. Owais Ahmad on Thursday took a detailed review of the performance of Agriculture Department along with its other allied sectors.

During the meeting, district officers of the respective departments briefed the chair about the performance of their respective departments and the future plans.

Chief Animal Husbandry

Officer, Gh Ahmad Line informed that the department established a milk processing plant under (IDDS) with the capacity of 7000 liters per day.

He further informed that Mobile Veterinary Units have been introduced in the district which so far provided Veterinary services to more than 3000 animals in mostly inaccessible areas.

Chief Agriculture Officer Bandipora, Javid Samoon

informed that the department has provided different machinery and equipment to the progressing farmers under different schemes.

In the sericulture sector, the officers informed that the district recorded thousands of kilograms of cocoons, and the department provided production based incentives to many cocoon growers.

A detailed discussion was held regarding targets and achievements in this regard.

The DC hailed the role of agriculture and allied sectors in creating self-reliant and sustainable employment in the district. He said agriculture and horticulture are the backbone of rural economy, and the development of these sectors is essential for rural prosperity.

He emphasized on working in mission mode to meet targets and work religiously to improve production in the district.

DC Shopian visits Kapal Mochan Temple at Nagbal

Takes stock of arrangements for upcoming Annual Religious rituals

SHOPIAN, AUG 24: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Shopian, Faz Lul Haseeb today visited Kapal Mochan Temple at Nagbal, Shopian and took stock of the arrangements being put up for upcoming Religious rituals which commences w.e.f. 26th August, 2023.

Faz Lul met management authorities and local people there who sought coordination of District Administration in addressing certain issues of public importance for early redressal, keeping in view the performance of religious rituals.

The DC instructed officers to ensure uninterrupted power

supply, portable drinking water facility, cleanliness in and around the Kapal Mochan, cleaning of springs etc.

He also directed the health functionaries for providing better health care facilities to the devotees and local public, visiting Kapal Mochan.

The authorities of Municipal Council Shopian were directed for proper sanitation in and around the revered religious place.

The DC was accompanied by ACD, EO MC, BMO Shopian and other concerned officers.

MC President, Subhash Koul was also present on the occasion.

DDC Kupwara chairs DLRC/DCC

Directs officers, bankers to ensure grassroots awareness of Government schemes

KUPWARA, AUG 24: The District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan today chaired the meeting of District Level Review Committee (DLRC)/ District Consultative Committee (DCC), here to review the progress of saturation of various Government schemes in the district.

Addressing the meeting, the DDC impressed upon all the officers of line departments and bankers to be proactive on ground and ensure cent percent outreach of Government schemes to the targeted beneficiaries across the district. She asked them to work with added dedication and coordination to achieve the targets of develop-

ment and generation of employment opportunities for the unemployed youth of the district.

The DDC directed the bankers and line departments to hold joint awareness camps across the district to generate grassroots awareness about the Government schemes among the targeted beneficiaries so that they could be benefitted at large. She asked JD Planning to frame a calendar for holding the joint awareness camps across the district by the bankers and line departments.

While highlighting the overall performance for 4th quarter under Annual District Credit plan, Lead District Manager, Kupwara, Mehboob Ellahi Khan



informed the house that against the Annual Credit Plan of Rs.1801.07 Crores for 2022-23, the achievements under priority sector advances were to the tune of Rs.757.67 Crores against target of Rs.1574.99 Crores for 4th quarter 2022-23 which constitutes 48% while as under non-priority sector the achievements are to the tune of Rs.1371.72 Crores against target of Rs.226.09 Crores which constitutes 607%.

He further informed that the deposits of the banks in the District were to the tune of Rs.3120 Crores as on 31.03.2023 compared to Rs.3067 Crores as on 31-03-2022.

The advances of the banks stood at Rs.3887 Crores as on

31.03.2023 against Rs.3496 Crores as on 31-03-2022 thereby registering an increase of Rs.391 Crores, constituting 11%.

The CD ratio of the District as on 31-03-2023 stood at 125%.

Moreover, Rs.1434 crore has been disbursed by the banks amongst 72528 beneficiaries under PM Mudra Yojana Scheme till 31-07-2023.

Under the new KCC scheme for Animal husbandry, Sheep & Fisheries, the banks have sanctioned 15522 cases and have disbursed Rs.70.64 Crores to the beneficiaries.

Among others, JD Planning, District Officers from line departments, NABARD and representatives of different banks attended the meeting.

Health Department, Shopian to organise Mega Surgical Camp at DH Shopian

Camp with Rotary Club to start from 3rd September; public asked for availing the opportunity of free surgeries

SHOPIAN, AUG 24: As per the authorities of District Hospital (DH), the Health Department, Shopian in collaboration with the Rotary Club is organising Mega Surgical Camp at DH Shopian from 3rd of September to 14th of September, 2023 for the benefit of the public of the district.

During the camp, all types of surgeries including super specialty surgeries shall be conducted by a team of specialists/ super specialists, coming from outside UT.

In this connection, health authorities are calling out for maximum registrations and have appealed to the public, advised by doctors to undergo any type of surgery, to register themselves at DH Shopian as soon as possible.

"The conduct of the surgeries shall be done free of cost", said MS DH Shopian, Dr Rubeena.

Meri Maati Mera Desh

Director Agriculture inaugurates 07 days Training programme on scientific Bee-keeping

SRINAGAR, AUG 24: The Director Agriculture Kashmir, Chowdhury Mohammad Iqbal today inaugurated seven days divisional level training programme on scientific beekeeping under (NBHM) at Agriculture Complex, Lalmandi Srinagar.

Under the Aegis of Meri Maati Mera Desh, the inaugural session of the week-long programme was attended by Joint Director Extension, Joint Director Inputs, Chief Agriculture Officer Srinagar, students and a large number of beekeepers.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony, the Director highlighted the importance of small scale Agri- Cottage industries including bee keeping, Mushroom Cultivation and other allied activities in the overall development of



agriculture sector. He said the main aim of organising such training programmes is to promote entrepreneurial culture among the farmers and educated youth of the region.

Iqbal said the agriculture diversification is the key to reduce risk in farming activities and hence beekeeping has emerged as one of the important tools which enhances agricultural income of the farming community and also secures it against changes in climate and soil resources.

Director expressed satisfaction and said many people; mostly educated youth, are able to earn their livelihood, because of honey bee colonies. With time, more and more young men and women are turning towards bee-keeping. He said bee keeping forms the potential part of integrated farming and could play an important role in increasing the farmers income.

Director said that bee keeping as an off- farm activity has a potential of employment generation due to wide agro-climatic diversity enabling round the year bee flora availability.

JKEDI facilitates 1st meeting of TiE Global's J&K Chapter

Will give a boost to entrepreneurship and startup ecosystem of the UT

SRINAGAR, AUG 24: The Jammu and Kashmir Entrepreneurship Development Institute (JKEDI), entrepreneurs from J&K and The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE) Global through TiE Chandigarh today conducted its first meeting to formalize the opening of TiE-J&K satellite chapter.

The J&K Chapter will provide budding and established entrepreneurs with a global platform to connect, learn, and will give fillip to their businesses.

Director JKEDI, Ajaz Ahmad Bhat convened the meeting online and the participants included local startups and entrepreneurs from J&K besides it also witnessed the presence of key individuals from TiE Chandigarh, Jitin Talwar, Chief Mentor; Harit Mohan, President; Satish Kumar Arora, Vice President; and Anjum Singh, Executive Director represented TiE Chandigarh.

"It is indeed a significant step forward in fostering entrepre-

neurship and economic growth in the UT. The TiE-J&K satellite chapter holds great promise for the aspiring and established entrepreneurs of J&K. By becoming a part of the TiE network, they will gain access to a vast global platform that facilitates connections, knowledge sharing, and valuable insights. This platform will catalyze the growth of their businesses and provide them with the resources they need to expand their reach," said Director JKEDI.

By offering a platform for learning, networking, and mentorship, the TiE-J&K satellite chapter will play a pivotal role in driving innovation, economic progress, and job creation in the region.

In line with this vision, the meeting also laid out the membership framework, including Charter and Associate memberships. It was also informed that reputed Universities and Technical Institutes of J&K can apply for Institutional Membership.

Moreover, a dedicated point of contact will be designated to streamline the on boarding process for entrepreneurs and startups from J&K, ensuring their seamless integration into the TiE network.

As the TiE-J&K satellite chapter takes its first bold steps, it underscores an unwavering commitment to harnessing the indomitable spirit of entrepreneurship and directing it towards the prosperous future of Jammu and Kashmir.

Two-week long Cleanliness, Plantation & Awareness drive culminates across all Treasuries at Pulwama

PULWAMA, AUG 24: The two-week long cleanliness, plantation and awareness drive organized as part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav and under Meri Maati Mera Desh campaign by District Treasury office Pulwama concluded across District treasuries and sub treasuries successfully.

The Office of Treasury Officer Pulwama initiated an overall cleanliness drive in the Treasury Premises and Tehsil Complex and under this initiative adopted three places viz. backyard of Treasury and Tehsil Compound, MLA Hostel Pulwama and historically recognised Shikargah Tral (In collaboration with Sub Treasury Tral).

Under this initiative, the abandoned area used to dump seized vehicles was cleared and made user friendly for the general public. Similarly Housing Colony Pulwama turned into heap of garbage/ waste over a period of time was cleared and made usable. Besides, sub-Treasury Tral, the historic Shikargah area of Tral was also cleared of waste thrown around.

To combat many environmental issues like deforestation, erosion of soil, global warming and enhancing the natural beauty, a plantation drive was launched at District Treasury Pulwama. Under this initiative around 500 saplings were received from DFO Social Forestry Pulwama and were planted at all five Treasuries of Pulwama including at under construction buildings of Treasury Pampore, Tral and Awantipora.

Saplings were also planted at Housing Colony Pulwama ZEO Pulwama and ZEO Tahab were invited to be part of the drive.

Similarly, a comprehensive awareness program under Treasury Darshan was conducted in collaboration with Boys Central High School Pulwama. Students participating in the program were given awareness on Treasury functioning and overall financial management. The role of the Treasury was highlighted. Students were given insight of softwares/ applications involved in the process of payments like TreasuryNet, JK. PaySys, BEAMS, CPIS, PROOF etc.

Various questions asked by students were answered by District Treasury Officer Pulwama to the satisfaction of students.

The students also visited the office campus and praised the Treasury for overall sanitation and converting garbage dumping site into lush green parks in the last three years.

A pledge was taken at District Treasury Pulwama and all sub-Treasuries to continue such drives in future for maintaining cleanliness and contributing towards maintaining ecological balance by planting more and more trees.

GOVT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR.

Office of the Executive Engineer FBI Division Tangmarg

Fresh E-TENDER NOTICE No.19 of 2023-24 FBI Division Tangmarg

Office Phone No.01954-254611 Email Address: fbividivisiontangmarg@gmail.com

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Jammu and Kashmir e-tenders on Percentage basis are invited from approved registered eligible contractors with J&K UT Govt. for following works:-

| S. No | Name of work | Estt. Cost of Work (In Lacs) | Earnest Money (Amount in Rupees) | Time of completion | Class of Contract | Cost of Tender document (Amount in Rupee) | M.H. of Account | Ref to AAA No | Ref to T.S No | Position Of Funds |
|-------|---|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------|---|-----------------|--|---|-------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 1 | Spot Treatment of Ferozpora Nallah at critical spots from Magam to Matpora and Khore to Trikbal on either sides | 86.17 Lac s | 172340/- | 90 Days | AAY | 1600/- | 4711-UT Copex | Order No.185E/H yd/DB/IF C of 2023-24 Dated:- 15-07-2023 | Order No.20/SE/H yd/DB/TS of 2023-24 Dated:- 08-08-2023 | Assured |
| 2 | Construction of drain retaining wall Chain link fencing including repair renovation of Filtration plant RSFP Staff Hut Quarter clear water sump including electrifications construction of road at WSS Namblinar Seteraan | 30.74 Lac s | 61480/- | 30 days | AAY & BEE | 1000/- | NRDWP | Order No. PHE/DB/11/2023 Dated:- 03-08-2024 | 04-PHE of 13-06-2023 | Assured |

| | | | |
|---|----------------------------|------------|----------|
| 1 | Publishing date: | 23-08-2023 | 06:00 PM |
| 2 | Download date start: | 23-08-2023 | 06:10 PM |
| 3 | Bid Submission date start: | 23-08-2023 | 06:30 PM |
| 4 | Bid Submission date Ends: | 29-08-2023 | 04:00 PM |
| 5 | Date of Opening | 30-08-2023 | 11:00 AM |

Terms and Conditions: -

1.Bids must be accompanied with cost of 2% CDR/FDR tender document non-refundable /non-transferable) to be deposited under M.H 0702 Rev Miscand S.No.2 M.H 0215 Rev Miscin the shape of Treasury challan/e-challan (mentioning therein NIT No. S.No of work) to be pledged in favour of the Executive Engineer Jal Shakti FBI Division Tangmarg and date on it must be prior to date of issuance of this tender notice, EMD) 2.The contractor has to arrange all key construction and any other material required for the execution and successfully completion of the works, as per orders of Engineer in charge, on his own. However, if any such material is available in the divisional stores, the same shall be supplied on stock issue rates prevailing at the time of the supply of such material including rapdite etc. if required at site.

3.Bidders must upload the scanned copy of all necessary documents like CDR /PAN/ in GSTIN/treasury Challan/E-Challan/ latest GST Clearance Certificate/ Registration card duly renewed and hard copies of L1 physically to Tender Receiving Authority after the date of opening of bid.

4.The rates quoted by the contractor shall be inclusive of charges for dewatering if any.No extra charges shall be paid on Account of dewatering (if any).

5.The tenderer should in his own interest inspect and examine the site, its surroundings /topography, nature of ground, climatic conditions, accessibility or other relevant information at his own expenses and responsibility to satisfy himself before Tendering his rates for the different components of these advertised work.

6.If L1 fails to start the work within 15 days of the issuance of letter of intent or allotment, whichever is earlier, the department shall Allot the work to the other willing Lowest bidder like L2, L3, L4 and EMD additional Security Performance of the lowest bidder shall be forfeited, besides debarring the Contractor for a period of two years for participating in the e-Nit's issued by the this division

7.In case of seriously unbalanced bids from bidders (i.e more than 15% lower than adv.Cost)The additional performance security deposit of 50% of unbalanced cost shall be mandatory for the bidder if he qualifies as the lowest bidder .

8.The tender documents can be down loaded one-procurement Portalhttp://jktenders.gov.inThe tender documents can be down loaded as per schedule shown in the e-nit. Thee-tender so uploaded shall be accompanied with a e-Challan or Treasury Challan/Govt. Receipt drawn in favour of Executive Engineer JSD FBI Division Tangmarg towards the cost of the tender documents (Non-transferable /Non-refundable) as shown against each work above in the e-NIT, which shall not be refunded and shall be submitted up to the date mentioned above. To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get "Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)" as per information Technology Act 2000. Bid escargot digital certificate for Approve vendor. The bidders have to submit their Bids online in electronic form along with digital signature No. financial bid will be accepted in physical form. Bidders are advised to down load bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on Website http://jktenders.gov.in acquaint bid submission process.

9.Any other information can be obtained from the office of the U/S on any working day during office hours.

10.All other terms and conditions shall be the same as laid down in the PWD Form No.-25(double).and as per the GFR-2017.

11.Taxes in vogue under new tax regime shall be deducted at sources at the time of payment i.e, IT/ GST, etc

12.In case of any typographical error or confusion found in the advertised rate list the items quantities Rate/nomenclature etc. shall be deemed as per the proposed estimate and SOR of 2022.

13. If the work is not completed within the stipulated time, penalty @ 10% of allotted amount will be levied and deducted from contractor's claims.

14.In no case, the quantity of work executed shall exceed the allotted quantities, the contractor is himself / herself responsible for such extension and no payment in excess of allotted cost shall be paid by this division.

15.The date of start of the work shall be reckoned as communicated by concerned Asstt. Executive Engineer

DIPK-7705/23

Date: Aug 24 2023

Executive Engineer
Technical Officer FBI Division Tangmarg

Even a Simple Daily Walk Can Significantly Lower Your Risk of AFib and Stroke

New research suggests that exercise can help lower the risk of atrial fibrillation (AFib).

Greater exercise performance was found to be associated with lower rates of AFib, although even a simple walk a day can help.

The findings also suggest that exercise may further reduce stroke risks, beyond AFib-associated risks.

A walk a day could help reduce your risk of heart rhythm disorder (also known as atrial fibrillation) and stroke.

That's according to new research being presented at the European Society of Cardiology.

Data from over 15,000 people without prior atrial fibrillation (AFib or AF) who underwent exercise treadmill testing between 2003-2012 were analyzed. Greater exercise performance was found to be associated with lower rates of AF, although even a simple walk a day could help.

Specifically, participants were divided into three fitness levels according to metabolic equivalents (METs) achieved during the treadmill test: low (less than 8.57 METs), medium (8.57 to 10.72), and high (more than 10.72).

The probability of remaining without atrial fibrillation over a five-year period was 97.1%, 98.4% and 98.4% in the low, medium, and high fitness groups, respectively.

"The exercise capacity is determined by many factors, including age, morbidities, and cardiopulmonary fitness," said Dr. Shih-Hsien Sung, MD, PhD, study author and associate professor at National Yang Ming Chiao Tung University, Taipei (Taiwan). "The study results demonstrated subjects with achieved METs of <6-9 were at risk of developing AF."

"Given morbidities and fitness were modifiable risk factors, the encouragement of simply daily walking training may mitigate the risks of AF," Sung added.

Sung also pointed out that their findings demonstrate exercise capacity may further reduce stroke risks, beyond AF-associated



risks. How the findings from this research can inform Afib and stroke prevention

The American Heart Association report sTrusted Source over 12 million people are projected to have AF by 2030. Atrial fibrillation is characterized by irregular heart-beat or arrhythmia. It can lead to other heart complications such as:

"As an electrophysiologist, this is something that we discuss with all of our patients as part of lifestyle modifications for prevention and in patients with AF for management of their atrial arrhythmias," said Dr. Nikhil Warriar, MD, cardiac electrophysiologist and medical director of electrophysiology at MemorialCare Heart & Vascular Institute at Orange Coast Medical Center in Fountain Valley, CA.

Warrior says the findings are consistent with what has been shown in prior studiesTrusted Source with respect to the link between regular exercise and reduced risk of AF in a large cohortTrusted Source.

"Interestingly, there is a significant body of literature showing paradoxically increased risk of developing AF by participating in endurance exercise," said Warriar.

Dr. Ernst von Schwarz, MD, PhD, FESC,

FACC, FSCAI, a cardiologist, professor of medicine at UCLA and Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, and author of The Secrets of Immortality said these observational data are confirming the benefits of exercise for cardiovascular health even though the data are not derived from a prospective, controlled randomized study.

The link between exercise and heart rhythm disorder

Overall, Warriar explained that physical activity can lead to improved weight loss, lipid (blood fat) profiles, blood pressure, glucose control, and can lead to reduced instances of myocardial infarction (heart attacks) and incidence of heart failure.

"All of these are risk factors for development of AF, and so by decreasing the incidence of these risk factors, AF incidence could be decreased," said Warriar.

Von Schwarz said that this study confirms what cardiologists have preached for decades: exercise is good.

"The reasons are not completely understood but are likely due to the fact that our blood vessels remain elastic doing regular physical activity and our hearts are more conditioned with exercise that renders us

more tolerant towards the development of degenerative cardiac problems including the occurrence of arrhythmias such as atrial fibrillation," von Schwarz told Healthline.

How to begin an exercise routine to improve your heart health

"If you already have a cardiac condition, it is important to discuss this with your medical provider," Warriar warned.

However, even if you haven't had a cardiac event, working with a healthcare provider or personal fitness trainer can still be helpful before beginning any new exercise program, particularly if you are living with any complex physical health conditions.

Warrior said it's important to keep in mind that the exact recommendations for people looking to start exercising for specific heart health reasons will vary from person to person. Therefore, it's important to not compare your specific routine with the intensity of others.

"The first step is to assess your own physical fitness. If you have not been active, then the goal would be to slowly work up to 30 minutes of moderate aerobic exercise 4-5 days a week," Warriar said.

Incorporation of strength training is also advised, he adds.

The American Heart Association recommendsTrusted Source at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic exercise a week, or 75 minutes of vigorous activity, or a combination of both.

Aerobic activities including walking, jogging, swimming, cycling, or any activity that increases your heartbeat enough to change how much oxygen is flowing in the blood and to organs and muscle groups.

The guidelines also suggest adding at least two days a week of muscle-strengthening activities, such as resistance training using resistance bands, free weights, or weight machines.

NEWS

How The DASH Diet Can Protect Your Heart Health



The DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diet is a flexible eating plan designed to lower blood pressure and promote heart health. It emphasizes consuming a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins, and low-fat dairy products while minimising the consumption of saturated fats, cholesterol, and sodium.

The DASH diet also encourages reducing processed foods, sugary beverages, and excessive intake of sweets. It is recognised as a healthy eating plan that can help prevent and control hypertension. Keep reading as we discuss the many ways in which the DASH diet has proven beneficial for the heart.

1. Reduces high blood pressure

The DASH diet is specifically designed to lower blood pressure, one of the major risk factors for heart disease.

2. Lowers cholesterol levels

The DASH diet includes plenty of foods that are low in saturated fat and cholesterol, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins, which can help lower cholesterol levels and reduce the risk of heart disease. High cholesterol increases the risk of heart attack.

3. Promotes weight loss

The DASH diet emphasises portion control and a balanced approach to eating, which can help with weight loss or maintenance. Maintaining a healthy weight is important for heart health. Being overweight puts pressure on the heart, increasing the risk of various heart diseases.

4. Increases intake of heart-healthy nutrients

The DASH diet encourages the consumption of foods rich in potassium, magnesium, calcium, and fibre, all of which are beneficial for heart health. The nutrients also further boost your overall mental and physical health.

5. Reduces inflammation

The DASH diet includes many anti-inflammatory foods, such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and nuts, which can help reduce inflammation in the body and protect the heart. Inflammation can cause various diseases including chronic heart diseases.

6. Promotes a lower sodium intake

The DASH diet recommends limiting sodium intake to help reduce high blood pressure. Excess intake of sodium is a major risk factor for heart disease.

Is Ghee Bad For Your Cholesterol Levels?

People with high cholesterol levels usually avoid consumption of oil and ghee. But nutritionist Lovneet Batra challenges this idea in her latest Instagram post. She writes, "Contrary to popular belief, ghee, when consumed in moderation, can be a part of a healthy diet without adversely affecting cholesterol levels." According to Batra, medicated ghee in higher amounts reduces cholesterol, triglycerides, and other compounds in psoriasis patients. Their skin condition also improves

significantly. An herbal mixture called MAK-4, which has ghee protected a certain type of cholesterol in patients with high lipids and didn't change overall cholesterol, HDL, LDL or triglyceride levels.

Ghee-containing mixtures have also shown positive effects on the liver, memory, seizures, and wound healing. So, it seems that having some ghee wisely might not be a bad idea after all.

Ghee health benefits you shouldn't miss

As per Lovneet Batra, ghee has



various health advantages. Here are some benefits listed by her:

1. Gut Inflammation Reduction: Ghee is a good source of butyric acid, a type of fat linked

to less inflammation and better digestion based on studies in humans and animals.

2. Conjugated Linoleic Acid Richness: Some research suggests that conjugated linoleic acid in ghee might be helpful for conditions like cancer, high cholesterol, and obesity.

3. Enhanced Beta-Carotene Intake: Ghee can increase your intake of beta-carotene, which is like a starting point for vitamin A. Vitamin A is important for healthy eyes, skin, immune function and more.

4. Heart Health Support: Ghee contains omega-3 fatty acids that can lower inflammation and provide heart disease protection.

According to Lovneet Batra, choosing A2 Cow ghee over Regular ghee is a good idea. A2 Desi Cow Ghee is the purest kind and comes entirely from the milk of desi cows. This ghee is made using A2 milk, which contains only A2 Beta casein, a kind of protein. This protein is found in the milk of specific Indian cow breeds and other animals like Indian buffalo, goat, sheep.

Study Finds Fish Oil Supplements May Overpromise Health Benefits

Dietary supplements are big business in the US, with the industry valued at over \$50 million and around 60%Trusted Source of adults regularly taking a supplement to support their health and well-being.

A big component of the sector revolves around fish oil supplements — with many of these products possessing claims related to heart health benefits.

But are these claims backed by science? This is a question that scientists at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center explored in a new analysis reportTrusted Source published August 23 on the JAMA Cardiology website. Their findings stated that the majority of fish oil supplement labels comprise health claims relating to the heart (and other organs) — "despite a lack of trial data showing efficacy."

Furthermore, they revealed that levels of all-important eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA) and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) can



What the analysis involved

The researchers looked at data from on-market fish oil (and non-fish omega-3 fatty acid) supplement labels, taken from the National Institutes of Health Dietary Supplement Label DatabaseTrusted Source.

They reviewed the prevalence of two types of claims concerning cardiovascular disease: qualified health claims and structure/function claims.

Qualified health claims (QHCs) are claims relating to a supplement's potential to aid in disease treatment or prevention and are made by the US Food and Drug

Administration (FDA) following an evidence review.

The study revealed there are currently two cardiovascular-related qualified health claims for fish oil, one relating to coronary heart disease and the other to blood pressure. For instance, "Supportive but not conclusive research shows that consumptions of EPA and DHA omega-3 fatty acids may reduce the risk of coronary heart disease." On the other hand, the FDA states that a structure/function claim

"describes the role of a nutrient or dietary ingredient intended to affect the structure or function in humans." These claims cannot declare that the supple-

ment prevents, treats, or cures any illness or disease.

Some structure/function examples shared in the paper include "Promotes heart health," "Supports heart, mind, and mood," and "Omega-3 fatty acids are important for cardiovascular, immune, and nervous system health."

Out of 2,819 unique fish oil supplements assessed, 2,082 (73.9%) possessed at least one health claim — most of which were structure/function claims.

Only 399 supplements (19.2%) used a QHC: 394 relating to coronary heart disease, three for blood pressure, and two relating to both. Of all health claims on fish oil supplements, a significant proportion (62%) related to heart health.

This is problematic, said the researchers, as "Multiple randomized clinical trials have shown no cardiovascular benefit to fish oil supplements."

Further, they added, the pervasiveness of structure/function claims could lead to misinformation among consumers.

Your Period Products May Contain Dangerous PFAS: What to Know

Potentially harmful 'forever chemicals' or PFAS have been found in some — but not all — period products such as liners, pads, tampons, cups, and underwear.

Researchers at the University of Notre Dame analyzed over 100 period products for fluorinated compounds or per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances more commonly referred to as PFAS or 'forever chemicals.' PFAS have stick-, stain- and water-resistant properties, making them desirable characteristics for period products.

Currently, there are few regulations of PFAS in clothing and period products in the U.S. and Europe.

None of the tampons tested in this particular study contained 'forever chemicals,' but PFAS were found in high concentrations in some tampon plastic wrappers and plastic applicators, liners, and pads, and the outer layers of period underwear.

These findings are being presented at the American Chemical Society (ACS) Fall 2023 meeting. No brands



were named in the study, and the research is ongoing.

The problem with PFAS in period products

Dr. Graham Peaslee, PhD, a physics professor at the University of Notre Dame and the principal investigator of the project, tells Healthline that PFAS in period products are not only concerning for the wearer but for the environment and future generations.

"PFAS are all man-made, and when they enter our bloodstream they typically last for years," he says. "The reason for this is that they transport to all of our organs and there is known toxicity with all the PFAS that have been studied to date," he explains.

"What isn't as obvious to most people is that while it is possible to absorb PFAS through the skin, only a small fraction of the PFAS used in these products will do that (we think), but 100% of these PFAS will be released when these items enter the landfill," says Peaslee.

"Paper products will typically release PFAS into the environment within months, and textiles within a few years, which means these forever chemicals will end up in the water supply for drinking as well as irrigation water for our food...and everybody will be indirectly exposed to PFAS eventually," he tells Healthline.

"That is why we are try-

ing to urge companies not to use it when it isn't essential, and the fact that only some period products have PFAS obviously means that they aren't essential," he adds.

Alyssa Wicks, a graduate student in Peaslee's lab who is presenting at the meeting, suggests in the press release that high concentrations of PFAS "might be used to keep moisture out of the wrappers so that the items inside remain dry." Similarly, she says that adding PFAS to the outer layer of period underwear would keep fluid from escaping the inner layers and prevent it from spreading onto a person's clothing.

"The extent to which per- and polyfluorinated alkyl substances (PFAS) are a risk to health is not fully understood despite the fact that they have been around since the 1950s and extensively used both in industrial and consumer products," says Dr. Winston Morgan BSC, PhD, FHEA, FRSB, director of Impact and innovation at the School of Health Sport and Bioscience.

Rahul's fitness in the spotlight as India begin six day conditioning camp

■ Shashank Kishore

ALUR: India's Asia Cup-bound players have begun arriving in Bengaluru for a six-day conditioning camp that begins on Thursday at the Karnataka State Cricket Association's (KSCA) Three Ovals campus in Alur.

While fitness parameters of players, particularly those who returned from the Caribbean earlier this month, will be a key focus area, the camp also aims to serve as an exercise in team bonding before the focus shifts to the final stages of World Cup preparation.

Fifteen of the 18 players - the exceptions being Sanju Samson, Jasprit Bumrah and Prasidh Krishna (all of whom are set to arrive in Bengaluru from Dublin late on Thursday) - will undergo fitness assessments followed by a few indoor sessions on the opening day. From Friday onwards, players will be divided into batches for the outdoor conditioning and skill-based programmes.

ESPNcricinfo understands the senior players, who didn't take part in the T20Is in the Caribbean, were



given personalised fitness and diet plans over the past two weeks. While this practice isn't unique, India have been especially mindful of workloads keeping in mind the slew of injuries to key players over the past couple of years.

How KL Rahul pulls up will be of high interest. He has only been deemed conditionally fit for the Asia Cup. While he has fully recovered from a thigh injury for which he underwent surgery followed by a comprehensive rehabilitation at the NCA, Rahul is believed to

have picked up a minor niggle that makes him a doubtful starter for at least the first two Asia Cup games. This was confirmed by chief selector Ajit Agarkar at the press conference to announce the squads on Monday.

As reported by ESPNcricinfo, the NCA's medical team is believed to have been happy with Rahul's batting workload but is carefully monitoring his wicketkeeping load; he is understood to have complained of soreness after one of the practice matches organised

by the NCA last week.

Shreyas Iyer, meanwhile, is fully fit and ready to go. The camp marks his return to the senior set-up for the first time since the home Test series against Australia in March. Iyer has pulled up well after both practice games and has also been batting against net bowlers from the India A squad, who are at the NCA for a skill-based camp for emerging players.

The team is expected to depart for Colombo from Bengaluru on August 30. India, who open their campaign against Pakistan in Pallekele on September 2, can play a maximum of six matches if they reach the final. The Asia Cup will be followed by three ODIs at home against Australia before India begin their World Cup campaign.

On Wednesday, the ICC announced the warm-up fixtures for the tournament, with India playing England and Netherlands on September 30 and October 3 respectively, before flying out to Chennai where they take on Australia in their tournament-opener on October 8.

South Africa name Wolvaardt as women team's interim captain

NEW DELHI: Opening batter Laura Wolvaardt has been named interim captain of the South Africa women's team for their next two assignments. Wolvaardt will take charge of the team for three T20Is and as many ODIs in Pakistan, and three ODIs and five T20Is against New Zealand at home before her position is reviewed. The series against New Zealand ends on October 15. The ODIs all form part of the ICC Women's Championship, which is the qualification path-

way to the 2025 World Cup.

Wolvaardt's appointment comes barely a week after Sune Luus stepped down from the post, after leading South Africa to their first senior World Cup final at the T20 tournament in February. A CSA spokesperson said Luus made the decision to "focus on her cricket", but ESPNcricinfo understands she is among a group of players who are unhappy with Hilton Moreeng continuing as national coach after more than a decade in charge. The players sent a letter to the board outlining their grievances and desire for a change in ideas but Moreeng will remain in the role till the end of 2023.

Vice-captain Chloe Tryon was not available to take over from Luus, as she requested a leave of absence for the Pakistan series, leaving CSA to choose between Wolvaardt, Marizanne Kapp and Nadine de Klerk as an interim captain. Neither Kapp nor de Klerk have led before. Wolvaardt, who has done the job twice in ODIs against India in 2021, was selected. Although she previously told the media that captaincy was not an immediate goal, she has embraced the

opportunity.

"It's a massive honour to be offered this position as captain for the next two tours," Wolvaardt said in a CSA statement. "It's something that I have always aspired to do, having played in this team for a couple of years. Having more of a leadership role is something I've wanted to take on. It will help me as a cricketer, and learning to think as a captain on the field will hopefully help my batting as well. It is very new to me but I am keen to learn and do everything that I can to do well in the position. I am lucky that I have a couple of senior players within the squad around me as well, who would be able to help me and guide me if I do need help along the way." Wolvaardt will meet up with the South African squad in Pakistan, having just finished her stint with Manchester Originals in Women's Hundred. She was their leading run-scorer with 147 runs in six matches. She has also gained experience at the FairBreak Invitational Tournament and WPL, and is one of only two South Africans to have played exhibition T20 matches in Pakistan earlier this year.

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