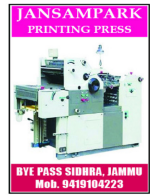




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Avalanche warning issued for seven districts in J&K

AGENCIES
SRINAGAR, APR 21

Jammu and Kashmir Disaster Management Authority (JKDMA) on Friday issued an avalanche warning for seven districts during the next 24 hours.

"Avalanche with low danger level is likely to occur above 2500 to 3200 metres above sea level over Doda, Kishtwar, Poonch, Ramban, Baramulla and Kupwara districts in the next 24 hours," the official statement said.

"Avalanche with medium danger level is likely to occur above 2800 metres over the Ganderbal district in the next 24 hours," it added.

"People living in these areas are advised to take precautions and avoid venturing into the avalanche-prone areas till further orders," JKDMA said.

India records 11,692 new infections, active cases climb to 66,170

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, APR 21

India has recorded 11,692 new coronavirus infections, while the active cases have increased to 66,170, according to the Union Health Ministry data updated on Friday.

The death toll has increased to 5,31,258 with 28 deaths, which includes nine reconciled by Kerala, the data updated at 8 am stated.

The Covid case tally was recorded at 4.48 crore (4,48,69,684). The active cases now comprise 0.15 per cent of the total infections and the national COVID-19 recovery rate has been

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Terrorism on rise in J&K, spreading its tentacles to Jammu also, Says Digvijaya: cites China links

AGENCIES
LJAJ, APR 21

Congress veteran Digvijaya Singh on Friday said Kashmir, contrary to the Centre's claim, terrorism cases are on the rise in Jammu and Kashmir, and referred to the latest attack on an Army vehicle that led to the death of five soldiers.

The Rajya Sabha MP also raised concerns over what he claimed were Chinese markings on the cartridges recovered from the site of the attack.

The former Madhya Pradesh chief minister maintained terror activities were largely confined to the Kashmir Valley, but violent incidents are now taking place in new areas like Poonch in the Jammu region of the Union Territory, and this was a matter of concern. Talking to

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ATTACK ON ARMY VEHICLE

Many detained for questioning, massive op continues in dense forests

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, APR 21

Security forces have detained many persons in connection with the investigation of a case involving Thursday's militant attack on an army vehicle on the national highway in

Poonch in which five army personnel lost their lives.

The attack was carried out in the dense forests between Bhata Dhurian and Bhimber Gali. An army vehicle was moving towards Bhata Dhurian and it was

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NIA team takes over investigation, DG BSF reviews security

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, APR 21

Day after the terrorist attack in Poonch that killed five Army personnel and injured one, the National Investigative Agency (NIA) took over the investigation of the case and visited the

spot while the Director General Border Security Force reviewed the security situation.

Meanwhile, a massive manhunt has been launched to nab the terrorists in the dense forest area of Bata-Doriya area of

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Various delegations call on LG Sinha



JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, APR 21

A delegation of National Awardee Teachers from J&K UT called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at Raj Bhawan on Friday.

The delegation led by Sunil Kumar apprised the Lt Governor on various welfare issues of National Awardee Teachers of Jammu Kashmir. The members of J&K Rehbar-e-Khel

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Lt Governor Sinha attends Rajya Puraskar Ceremony of J&K Bharat Scouts & Guides

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, APR 21

Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha Friday said that under a well-thought out deep-rooted nexus, an attempt is being made to destroy the society and youth of the UT. He, however, was quick to add that the Government will go tough against the drug peddlers and those behind the drug trade.

As per news agency, LG Sinha was speaking at the Rajya Puraskar Ceremony of J&K Bharat Scouts & Guides at Convention Centre, Jammu. LG is the Chief Patron of



Jammu & Kashmir Bharat Scouts & Guides, congratulated the Rajya Puraskar Awardee Scouts & Guides and

lauded their contribution to the society. "There is a deep rooted nexus of

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LG greets people on eve of Eid-ul-Fitr

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, APR 21

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha has greeted the people on the eve of Eid-ul-Fitr.

In his message, the Lt Governor said: "Heartiest greetings and good wishes to the people on the joyous occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr. The festival marks the culmination of the holy month of

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Army personnel pay tribute to 5 fallen braves, Punjab CM announces Rs 1 Cr each for kin of slain Jawans from State

JNEWS SERVICE
RAJOURI, APR 21

Army personnel on Friday laid floral tributes to the 5 bravehearts who lost their lives in a terror attack in the Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday.

"To pay homage to the supreme sacrifice of the five Bravehearts of the Indian Army who laid down their lives in the line of duty in



Poonch District on April 20, 2023, a wreath-laying ceremony was organised at Rajouri with full Military traditions,"

the Army said in a statement. Senior army officers and officials from the civil administration attended the sombre

wreath-laying ceremony of the fallen bravehearts.

Meanwhile, Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann announced an ex-gratia of Rs 1 crore each for the next of kin of four deceased soldiers from the state.

Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit, too, released a statement extending his condolences to the fallen bravehearts.

A statement from the gov-

ernor's office stated that he was "deeply saddened to hear the news of the martyrdom of five of our soldiers, including four from Punjab and one from Odisha", adding that "their sacrifice for the security of the country will not go in vain".

"The whole country will always remember and respect him," the release quoted the Punjab Governor as saying.

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CBI asks Ex-J&K Governor Satya Pal Malik To Answer Queries Related To Insurance 'Scam'

NEW DELHI, APR 21

The Central Bureau of Investigation has issued notice to former Jammu and Kashmir governor Satya Pal Malik to answer some queries related to insurance scam, said officials.

Reacting to the CBI move, Malik said that the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has asked for his presence at the agency's Akbar Road guesthouse here for "certain clarifications".

"They want certain clarifications for which they want my presence. I am going to Rajasthan so I have given them dates from April 27 to 29 when I am available," Malik said.

The CBI had examined him in connection with the alleged scam last year.

Last April, the probe agency had registered two FIRs in connection

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People hold protest, raise Anti-Pak slogans

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, APR 21

Scores of people raised anti-Pakistan slogans in Jammu on Friday and condemned the recent terrorist attack in Poonch district that killed five Army soldiers.

Led by its general secretary Yudhvir Sethi, the BJP took out a march and held a demonstration in Kachi Chawani area. The party workers raised anti-Pakistan slogans and held placards condemning the attack.

"We will avenge the killing



of our soldiers. We will further strengthen the zero-tolerance policy," Sethi told reporters.

He said the attack was aimed at derailing peace and development in Jammu and Kashmir but the administration will not be cowed down.

Five Army personnel were killed and another seriously injured on Thursday after their vehicle caught fire following a terrorist attack in Poonch, the Army said. It said the victims belonged to a Rashtriya

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Duty of bureaucracy to analyse whether political party misusing taxpayers' money: PM Modi

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, APR 21

Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed Civil Servants on the occasion of 16th Civil Services Day, 2023 at Vigyan Bhawan here today. The Prime Minister also conferred the Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration and released e-books

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J&K's Mission Youth Gets Prime Minister's Excellence Award

JNEWS SERVICE
JAMMU, APR 21

On the occasion of Civil Services Day today, Mission Youth programme of Jammu and Kashmir was given the coveted Prime Minister's Award for Excellence in Public Administration by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

As per an official statement, the prestigious award was received by the Chief Secretary Dr Arun Kumar Mehta, accompanied by CEO Mission

Youth Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary.

Brainchild of LG Manoj Sinha, the inter-sectoral initiative "Mission Youth", a specially designed program for empowering youth, clinched the top position in over 600 nominations from across the States and Union Territories in the Innovation (State) category. While second position was bagged by Gujarat Government's State Organ and Tissue Transplant Organisation (SOTTO).

Mission Youth was select-



ed for innovations leading to empowerment of youth in Jammu and Kashmir which included schemes in edu-

cation, skilling, coaching, volunteerism and effective use of technology for a very transparent and effective service delivery.

With more than 61,000 youth benefitted under schemes and close to 5 Lakh youth engaged over last two years Mission Youth earned the rate distinction of reaching out to maximum youth under any such initiative in the country.

The award carried Rs 20 lakh special cash reward for Mission Youth, vitation,

a Scroll and a Certificate of Appreciation in favour of CEO Mission Youth, Dr Shahid Choudhary for placing in Performance Appraisal Dossier of the officer by the Dept of Personnel and Trainings as the PMA scheme guidelines.

Chief Secretary Dr Arun Kumar Mehta described the occasion as momentous for Jammu and Kashmir UT especially the youth. He complemented CEO Mission Youth Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary and his team for outstanding

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BJP committed for development, faith, new ideas and victory of the country: Tarun Chugh



J I NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APR 21: Bharatiya Janata Party is committed for development, faith, new ideas and victory of the country and the mission could not be accomplished without the dedication of its activists, said Tarun Chugh.

Tarun Chugh, National General Secretary, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) & Incharge Jammu & Kashmir addressed back-to-back meetings of Assembly Constituency Incharges, Morchas, Cells and Booth Sashaktikaran Abhiyaan at party headquarter, Trikuta Nagar, Jammu. Ravinder Raina, President, J&K BJP and

Ashek Koul, General Secretary (Org.), J&K BJP also addressed the meetings, accompanied by former Dy. Chief Minister Dr. Nirmal Singh, former Dy. Chief Minister Kavinder Gupta, former Minister Sat Sharma, General Secretary Adv. Viboth Gupta and General Secretary Dr. Devinder Kumar Manyal.

BJP's Assembly Constituency Incharges, Convenors & whole timers, BJP's Morcha teams, Cells Convenors & Co-convenors, Both Sashaktikaran Abhiyaan team members participated in the respective meetings.

Tarun Chugh paid heartfelt tributes to the 5 martyred brave soldiers. While

various policies and programmes of the party especially PM's popular AIR programme 'Mann Ki Baat' from the senior party leaders.

Ravinder Raina, addressing the meetings, focused on the prominent role of party's different sections to strengthen the organization. He said that strong BJP definitely means more strength to the Nation and its democratic fabric. While condemning the terrorist attack on brave Army Jawans, he said that the Modi government is steadfast to give befitting reply to every nuisance on our soil.

"We are in new era, no body dare judge our strength, we have the finest Army and soon these Pakistan sponsored terrorists will be eliminated", said Ravinder Raina.

Ashek Koul discussed and presented the details of various organizational developments in the meeting. He asked the party leaders to present reporting and any issues encountered in the working of party's Morchas, Cells and particularly Booth Sashaktikaran on the ground level.

Adv. Viboth Gupta conducted the proceedings of the meetings.

Shiv Sena furious over attack on Indian soldiers; Pakistan flag and PAFF effigy burnt

Modi government should avenge the martyrdom of soldiers: Sahnii

J I NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APR 21: Expressing strong anger over the terrorist attack on a military vehicle on Thursday in Bhimber Gali area of Poonch district in Jammu and Kashmir, in which five Indian soldiers were martyred, the Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) Jammu and Kashmir unit protested strongly in Jammu, the flag of Pakistan and the effigy of Pakistan-sponsored terrorist organization PAFF mask of Jaish-e-Mohammed (which claimed responsibility for the attack) were set on fire.

Shiv Sainiks, led by party state chief Manish Sahnii, gathered near the party office in Roop Nagar, Jammu, and raised slogans against Jaish-e-Mohammed masks PAFF and Pakistan, advocating a strong military attack on Pakistan to avenge the martyrdom of



Indian soldiers. Sahnii said that Pakistan has been defeated three times by India in direct war.

It has reached the brink of poverty by hatching conspiracies against India and sponsoring terrorism in Kashmir.

Where prices have skyrocketed with acute shortage of even food items.

Pakistan, which has become pauper, is standing on the verge of defaulting

even at the international level. He has been begging to improve relations with India, but in spite of all this, Pakistan is not desisting from its nefarious antics!

The time has come for the central Modi government to teach a lesson by taking strong military action against Pakistan and full stop on all political, diplomatic, friendly and business relations with Pakistan.

Sahnii said that Bilawal Bhutto from the country who is the killers of Indian soldiers should not be allowed to set foot on Indian soil. On this occasion president Mehla wing Meenakshi Chibber, Gen Secretary Vikas Bakshi, president Kamghar wing Raj Singh, Shashi Pal, Teetu Sehgal, Mamta Bittu Bhat, Prem, Saroj, Banti, Ritu, Shushila, Bhagwati, Ravi, Harinder, Ramesh and many others were present.

BJP Jammu District South stages protest to condemn killing of Army soldiers



J I NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APR 21: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Jammu District South unit under the leadership of Rekha Mahajan on Friday held a massive protest at Satwari Chowk in Jammu South, against the killing of an Indian Army soldiers in a terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district.

DDC Prof.Garu Ram Bhagat, Former MLC Vikram Randhawa, District General Secretaries Akash Chopra and Pushpinder Singh, Mandal Presidents Neeraj Puri, Ranjit Singh,

Bharat Bhushan, Bikram Sandhu, and Activists of BJP Jammu District South held anti-Pakistan protests over the death of five army personnel and burnt an effigy of Pakistan for aiding and abetting terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir.

BJP leader Rekha Mahajan strongly condemned the terror attack on the army vehicle carrying the soldiers and condoled their death saying "We are united against terrorism". Over the death of five army soldiers in a terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district. While addressing the

against the killing of Army Jawans at Satwari Chowk along with BJP workers.

Vikram Randhawa said the proxy war that Pakistan has been waging in Kashmir will ruin that country because India will not tolerate any misadventure and will give a befitting reply to every act of mischief. He said Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given free hand to the army to tackle the issue independently and therefore it is a matter of time before those responsible for this ambush are brought to justice.

The BJP Jammu District South led by its President Rekha Mahajan also paid tribute to the soldiers for their sacrifice. " Indian Army salutes the sacrifice of Hav Mandeep Singh, L/Nk Debashish Baswal, L/Nk Kulwant Singh, Sep Harkishan Singh, Sep Sewak Singh, who laid down their lives in the line of duty in Poonch Sector on 20 Apr 23. We stand in solidarity with the bereaved families, " said Rekha Mahajan.



J I NEWS SERVICE

RAJOURI, APR 21: Expressing resentment over the proposed opening of liquor shop people of Budhal staged a massive protest demonstration and demanded cancellation of the proposal. The protest was led by locals including

Senior BJP Leader Manzoor Naik, Sarpanch and PDP leader Farooq Inqalabi Social Activist Waqar Lone, BDC Budhal Shamim Akhter Sarpanch Shabir Aftatoon Aijaz Bhat and others joined including a large number of adjoining villages people. The protesters raised slogans in

favour of their demand. The protesters said that the peaceful and most backward area Budhal should not be converted into town of alcohol Speaking on the occasion, Farooq Inqalabi Manzoor Naik, Shamim Akhter Waqar Lone and Aijaz Bhat in one voice said that

instead of providing better medicare facility and upgraded education Government is providing liquor shops without any demand We will not allow these shop to open as it will destroy our generation the protesters said adding that if their demand are not conceded then they will intensify their protest with support of women, children and elders They demanded that the Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha should intervene into the matter and direct the concerned department to reallocate the wine shop to some other area People of the area also met Naib Tehsildar Budhal and conveyed their resentment. He patiently listened to the public When contacted, he said I talked to the people about their reservations on the matter People have some issues with the opening of liquor concerned authorities for its redressal

Raman Suri remembers sacrifices of RR, describes Poonch attack as 'cowardice act'

J I NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APR 21: Expressing his shock over the militant attack on army truck at Village Bhatta Durrian in Mendhar area of Poonch district in which five soldiers were martyred and another one seriously injured, Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) J&K Executive Member Raman Suri today said that the days of militants are numbered and this residual lot is trying to show its presence in a cowardice manner by targeting soldiers in isolated areas, especially where they can hide and escape after the attack. Despite that, these terrorists will be hunted down by our valiant soldiers and punished.

Raman Suri expressed his condolences with the brave hearts and said that the entire nation stands with the bereaved families. The sacrifice of these soldiers will not go waste, he said, adding, that these brave hearts will be remembered for ages to come for protecting our borders and laying down their lives for the nation in Poonch area of Jammu and Kashmir.



This loss is irreparable for the families of martyrs but the entire nation is with them in this hour of grief.

The BJP leader said, soldiers in close coordination with police and other paramilitary forces are already on the hunt to eliminate those involved in Dangri massacre and none will be spared. He said, those trying to revive militancy are living in a fool's paradise. Terrorists as well as their mentors or sympathisers, who are providing them space to hide, will all be hunted down as the Union Government as well as UT adminis-

tration has resolved to wipe out militancy from its roots and provide people an atmosphere of peace and progress in the UT.

The frustration on the part of militants can be gauged from the fact that they struck the army truck from behind the bushes and that too in hostile weather conditions. They took advantage of bad weather condition and escaped but they surely will be chased in no time and this attack will be avenged appropriately.

The Rashtriya Rifles, Raman Suri said, has contributed a lot in saving lives in Jammu and Kashmir and protecting borders by sacrificing their lives. This sacrifice of the soldiers of RR is another debt on the nation which can never be forgotten, he said, adding that this is an established fact that the government is committed to wipe out militancy completely and those adventuring into this will be finished in no time. The entire world stands against terrorism and those trying to revive militancy will not be spared.

Apni Party pays floral tributes to 5 martyr Indian soldiers

J I NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APR 21: Apni Party today paid floral tributes to five martyred Indian Army soldiers who were attacked by coward terrorists on April 20, 2023 in Poonch.

A function was organized here at Apni Party Office in Gandhi Nagar, Jammu.

To pay their tributes to the martyrs, the Apni Party leaders assembled in the premises of the party office and offered floral tributes to the photos of five Indian Army soldiers who were martyred in the terror attack in Poonch.

This terror attempt took place Bhimber Gali to Sanglot, Poonch in which five soldiers were killed, yesterday.

While speaking on the occasion, the Provincial President Jammu, and Former Minister, S. Manjit Singh expressed grief over the incident in which the soldiers have lost their lives in the terror attack which was carried out by the cowardly terrorists on the behalf of Pakistan.



"This terror attack is an attempt to disturb the peaceful atmosphere in J&K. Therefore, the Govt of India must take revenge for the incident by launching a counter-terror operation in full scale.

Besides, a detailed probe into the incident should be conducted to identify and punish the accused persons under the stringent laws," he said.

He said that "The Pakistan does not want peace in J&K and uses their sympathizers to carry out cowardly acts against the people in general and the

security forces in particular."

He appreciated the role of security forces especially the Indian Army for maintaining peace and stability within and on the borders of Jammu and Kashmir.

He criticized the anti-peace elements who are bent upon to disturb peace in J&K. He said that the Govt of India should immediately summon the Pakistan High Commissioner and give a strong message to them.

Meanwhile, other leaders also spoke. Prominent among those who offered

the floral tributes include Provincial Secretary / District President Jammu Urban, Dr Rohit Gupta, Provincial President Jammu Youth Wing, Vipul Bali, Provincial President Jammu Women Wing, Pavnnet Kour, District Vice President Jammu Urban, Vaibhav Mattoo, District General Secretary Poonch, Surjan Singh, District President Youth Wing Jammu, Shivam Choudhary, District Vice President, Abinav Gupta, Shivani Koul, Vicky Sudan, Devansh Sharma and others.

Amit Kapoor starts three-day strike against arbitrariness of private schools



JJ NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APR 21: All Jammu Parents Association President Amit Kapoor started a three-day dharna today at Ambphala Chowk against the loot in private schools. Many social, literary, non-governmental organizations and other political leaders participated in the dharna. Along with this, a large number of media persons also reached the dharna site to highlight the arbitrariness of private schools and covered it and showed that they are also with the movement started under the leadership of Amit Kapoor on this issue of public interest.

Expressing his views during this, Amit Kapoor said that this three-day dharna is to wake up the administration which was sleeping in the slumber of Kumbhakaran. He has demanded the Lieutenant Governor to immediately replace the officials of the education department and other concerned officials who are not performing

their duties and to crack down on them so that the parents of the children can be saved from being looted by this mafia.

During a hastily convened press conference yesterday, he had said that this issue is related to the welfare of every household of the state, therefore people associated with all institutions and politicians belonging to different political parties should fully cooperate and actively participate in it. Must participate. Amit Kapoor said that the schools which have collected more fees from the children than the fees fixed by JKFC should be refunded immediately. He hoped that the new chairman of JKFC, understanding the agony of the parents, would immediately issue an order to refund the excess fees collected.

He said that if the Transport Department fixes the fare of passenger vehicles on kilometer basis, then the fare of private school buses should also be fixed on kilometer basis.

He said that some schools are looting children by taking bus fare from 1500 to 5000 and the traffic department is sleeping like Kumbhakaran.

Kapoor further said that the policy of Right to Education Act has come into force from the year 2020 but why it has not been implemented in Jammu and Kashmir yet. It should be clarified that how many schools have so far given free education to poor children under this policy. Amit Kapoor also strongly criticized the teams constituted by the department for not taking any action despite giving concrete evidence. He said that in place of these teams, a task force should be formed and those people who are well-versed in the matter should be included in it. He said that he has also complained to the Deputy Commissioner of Jammu and also said that he is ready to give evidence about the looting of schools.

Kapoor said that why

private schools are not using NCERT or Board books and the books of the children who have taken more books should be taken back. Action should be taken against the schools which have imposed books arbitrarily. Uniforms should also be changed only after five years and books and uniforms should not be sold at special shops or at the school's own shops. Kapoor said that no school should be allowed to have more than two uniforms and the uniforms should be changed only after five years.

Kapoor said that private schools charging more than the fees fixed by JKFC, or charging more fees or setting books arbitrarily should be seized. He said that in the case of robbing parents of children, collecting books, uniforms and high fees, all cases of looting in the name of transport are connected and it is a big mafia which needs to be curbed.

He said that the salary given to the teachers of private schools should also be made public so that the discrimination against these teachers can be ended. He alleged that private schools do not even deduct the PF of the teachers and most of the schools fire the teachers after one year so that their PF does not have to be deducted.

He told LG Manoj Sinha that if he wants to take a good image from here, he should take concrete steps to rein in this mafia so that parents of children can be saved from being robbed by this mafia.

Rajeev Charak listens to public grievances in Bahu Constituency

JJ NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APR 21: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Rajeev Charak on Friday listened to problems being faced by local residents of Sunjwan in Bahu Constituency.

As per press release, Charak along with other BJP leaders visited Shiv Mandir Mohalla Nawabad Sunjwan where several delegations apprised the visiting leader about their problems. A delegation apprised BJP leader about water scarcity and non availability of community hall or any other public place. The BJP leader was also apprised about the shabby condition of roads and drains of the area. The locals also handed over a memorandum to BJP leader Rajeev Charak for redressal of water issue and construction of community hall.

Speaking on the occasion, BJP leader Rajeev Charak said that the demands raised by people



are genuine and will be placed before the concerned department for immediate solution. He said that priority will be given to the construction of community halls and rooms so that the local people feel comfortable in holding religious, cultural and social gatherings.

Charak said that the coffers of the center have been opened for the all-round development of Jammu and Kashmir. "Jammu and Kashmir is on the path of progress. AIIMS, IIT, IIM, 5 new Medical College Ring Road in Jammu are being

gifted by prime minister Modi. The work of six lane expressway rail route from Jammu to Srinagar, four laning of national highway and rail project from Jammu to Poonch, four laning from Chenani Sudhmahadey to Kishtwar is in progress. He said that under the Pradhan Mantri Gramin Sadak Yojana, most of the villages of Jammu and Kashmir have been connected by National Highway. Charak told the local dignitaries of Shiv Mandir Mohalla that the deficiencies pointed out by you will be rectified

very soon because the central government run by the Bharatiya Janata Party is committed to solving public problems.

State BJP spokesperson Dr. Tahir Hussain, District Secretary of Bharatiya Janata Yuva Morcha Shakti Singh, R S Pathania, Kamal Singh, Kul Bhushan Singh, Madan Singh Salathia, Drob Sarai, Santosh Kumar Kaul, Ashok Kumar Ganju, Vijay Singh, Shakti Singh, Kuldeep Kumar, Dheeraj Singh, Manmohan Singh, Sardar Gurdeep Singh etc were present on this occasion.

POONCH TERROR ATTACK: BJP Jammu North unit blocks Jammu Poonch National Highway

SEEKS STERN ACTION AGAINST TERROR MONGERS



JJ NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APR 21: Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), Jammu district North unit today blocked Jammu Poonch National Highway as a mark of resentment against the killings of five Army Jawans in Poonch district, terming it a cowardice act of terror mongers.

In this connection, Omi Khajuria, President BJP Jammu district North along with hundreds of supporters assembled on the Jammu Poonch National Highway near Nagbani in Jammu and blocked the National Highway for two hours. The protesters raised anti-Pakistan slogans.

Talking to media per-

sons, Omi Khajuria criticized Pakistan for pursuing a policy of hostility against India and harboring terrorists in its soil.

He said that Pakistan, which has failed to provide democracy and development to its people, is making every effort to disturb peace in the Jammu and Kashmir. He said that no nefarious act of the enemy

would be allowed to succeed.

The senior BJP leader said that the attack on army vehicle was an attempt to disrupt peaceful atmosphere of Jammu region, aiming to spread fear among the people who live in communal harmony with each other. He appealed to the Central Government to take strict action against the terrorists responsible for this act.

Khajuria further appealed to the Central Government to take strict action against the anti-national forces as well as against the neighboring country Pakistan so that such acts are not repeated in future.

All Mandal Presidents, General Secretary Ajay Sharma, All Morcha Presidents, party workers and prominent people of the area also participated in the protest.

JKTF and NJCA jointly protest for restoration of old pension scheme



JJ NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APR 21: A massive protest demonstration was held today at B. R. Ambedkar Chowk, near the office of the Divisional Commissioner, Jammu, under the leadership of Ganesh Khajuria, Chairman JKTF and

Member Steering committee NJCA, on the call given by Shiv Gopal Mishra, General Secretary AIRF and National Convener NJCA, in order to mount pressure on the Govt to concede the legitimate demand of the NPS employees for the restoration of OPS in their favour. While addressing

the gathering on the occasion, S Surat Singh Toofani criticized the Govt for adopting the callous approach towards the just, genuine and legitimate demand of NPS employees who are very much worried about their future life after retirement. He appealed to the Government to scrap

the NPS and Restore OPS in favour of All Govt. employees working under NPS Scheme. While addressing the media and gathering

Ashwani Sharma appealed to LG Manoj Sinha to Restore OPS in favour of employees of JKTF. Other senior leaders who participated in the Protest Demonstration included Darshan Sharma, Shamsheer Singh, Gopal Singh, Prakash Chandra, Rajinder Gupta, Harpal Singh, S. Ravinder Singh, S. B. Dass, Raj Singh, Rajesh Sharma, Kuldeep Verma, Bandral, Kuldeep Singh, Subash Sharma J. P. Singh, P. D. Singh, Goutam Singh, Bharat Bhushan Sharma, Daleep Digra, Pawan Sharma, Gurmeet Singh, Mampreet Singh Surinder Kaithi, Rashpal Dass, Jarnal Chand, Sunil Kumar Sushil Khajuria Sachin Amla and others.

DFSS hold protest against Poonch Terror attack

JJ NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APR 21: Five soldiers were killed and another was critically injured in what appears to be a carefully-scripted ambush by terrorists who targeted an Army vehicle on Thursday, April 20, in Poonch district.

The attack is likely to cloud the preparations for a G-20 event which is scheduled to be held in J&K's capital Srinagar on May 22-23 and also the visit of Pakistan's foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto to Goa later this year in connection with the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation Summit.

Army truck was moving between Bhimber Gali, which is located in the Rajouri sector, and Poonch when unidentified terrorists took "advantage of heavy rains and low visibility in the area" and opened fire.

The vehicle caught fire, due to likely use of grenades by terrorists. Five personnel of the Rashtriya Rifles Unit deployed for Counter Terrorist operations, in this area, have unfortunately lost their lives in the incident.



Another seriously injured soldier was evacuated immediately to the Army Hospital at Rajauri and is under treatment.

The workers of Dogra Front & Shiv Sena under the leadership of President Ashok Gupta took out a massive protest rally in Jammu city by torching the Pakistani flag against the Poonch terror attack in which our 5 soldiers lost their life.

Ashok Gupta condemned the "cowardly attack" by Pakistan-sponsored terrorists and said the killing of soldiers should be avenged.

The party workers raised slogans of Pakistan hai hal. He stated that Pakistan is right now on the stage of extreme bankruptcy as there is high inflation and IMF is not giving any bailout package to the terror nation as 1 kg of wheat is being sold for 1900 rs and a dozen bananas cost 520 rs, but still it is focusing its efforts to infiltrate our nation with terror.

The terror camps is POK which were destroyed during the surgical strikes have been working again this time a bigger attack should be done to destroy the terror camps

once in for all as this nation would never understand the language of words but only of bullets.

At last he stated that during the G20 summit Pakistan foreign minister has been invited that should be canceled and if he sets foot on Indian soil there shall be repercussions which Pakistan shall never forget.

The party people who were present at the time I'd protest were Abhishek, Ashish, Sushil, Ashoka, Bantu, Rampal, Dinesh, Kalu, Janak, Vinay, Sham and various others were present.

Many detained for...

ambushed by militants and the vehicle caught fire. Officials told the news agency that the questioning of the detained people is going on.

On the other hand, the search operation launched in the area entered the second day with more teams of the army and police being deployed. Vehicular movement on the national highway 144-A, which connects Jammu with Rajouri and Poonch districts, has also been kept suspended on the 25-kilometre stretch from Bhimber Gali to Bhata Dhurian.

Police have put up barricades both on the Bhimber Gali side and Jarran Wali Gali side of the highway, blocking it for the movement of vehicles.

Director General of Police (DGP) Dilbagh Singh as well as a high-level team of the National Investigation Agency (NIA) visited the army vehicle attack site. The NIA team examined the site and reviewed the overall circumstances.

The DGP was accompanied by ADG Jammu zone Mukesh Singh. He later reached Rajouri where he chaired a series of meetings with security force officers and reviewed the overall security situation and aggressive counter-militancy operations launched in the region.

The fallen soldiers include Hav Mandeep Singh, L/NK Kulwant Singh, Sep Harkrishan Singh and Sep Sewak Singh, all natives of Punjab and L/NK Debasish Biswal, a native of Odisha.

Army on Friday also held a wreath-laying ceremony for five soldiers who lost their lives. The wreath laying was held in Army's General Hospital Rajouri. Senior officers from the army, police and civil administration also offered tributes to these soldiers—(KNO)

NIA team takes...

Bhimber Gali, Poonch. Official sources told news agency, a team of NIA led by Deputy Inspector General and Superintendent of Police rank officers visited the spot along with a team of forensic experts to collect initial details and possible evidence.

A Bomb Disposal Squad, Sniffer Dogs of Dog Unit and Special Operations Group (SOG) of Jammu and Kashmir Police also reached the spot where five soldiers lost their lives in the terror attack. The security forces also used drones for search and surveillance in the Bata-Dorjia area to track the terrorists who attacked an Army vehicle.

The incident occurred after an Army vehicle they were travelling in was fired upon by terrorists in the Rajouri sector in Jammu leading to the death of five soldiers, and injuring another.

Meanwhile, Director General of Border Security Force, Dr S L Thakson arrived at Frontier Headquarters BSF Jammu to review the security scenario of Jammu International Border.

He was welcomed by P V Rama Sastry, IPS, ADG (Western Command), D K Boora, JG, BSF Jammu & other officers. A BSF spokesperson informed that IG Jammu D K Boora gave a detailed presentation to the DG and apprised about all the critical aspects of Border Security and Domination on Jammu International Border & Line of Control in wake of recent incident in Mendhar -

"IG Jammu described the general security scenario of Area of Responsibility (AOR) covering the deployment pattern of BSF Battalions and their robust domination aspects on the complete Jammu IB," the spokesperson said.

DG BSF briefed the field commanders about recent threats being faced by the BSF on LC and Jammu IB. A special emphasis was given to the domination of LC and IB due to recent incidents in the Jammu and Rajouri area.

Moreover, a high alert has been issued for border districts Rajouri and Poonch, with close monitoring along the Line of Control.

Traffic on the Bhimber Gali-Poonch road has been halted, and people are being advised to take an alternative route through Mendhar.

According to the Army, soldiers from a Rashtriya Rifles unit on counter-terror operations were killed in the attack, with their vehicle catching fire after coming under unidentified terrorist gunfire.

The army also laid wreath of deceased soldiers, who have been identified as Havildar Mandeep Singh of Village Chankolian Kacan, Tehsil Payac, Ludhiana, Sepoy Harkrishan Singh of Village Talwandi Barth, Tehsil Batala, Lance Naik Kulwant Singh of Village Charik, Tehsil Moga, Sepoy Sewak Singh of Village Bagha, Tehsil Talwandi Sabo, Bathinda and Lance Naik Debasish of Village Alghum Samil Khandayit, Tehsil Satyabadi, Puri, Orissa.

The officials were attached with the army's Rashtriya Rifles unit and were deployed for counterterrorist operations in the area.

"A wreath laying ceremony was organised at Rajouri with full military traditions to pay homage to the supreme sacrifice of the five Bravehearts of Indian Army who laid down their life in the line of duty," a defence spokesperson said.

Political parties have condemned the attack, and the Vishva Hindu Parishad (VHP) and Bajrang Dal staged a demonstration on the Tawi bridge in Jammu City, chanting anti-Pakistan slogans—(KNO)

Various delegations...

Teachers Association headed by its Chairman and International Gold medalist Narinder Chib apprised the LT Governor on the concerning issues of Rehbar-e-Khel Physical Education teachers.

Later, a delegation of Kathua Vikas Manag led by its Patron Prof. Ram Murri Sharma, and Sahil Bhagat, Sarpanch Kashihrah, Udhampur projected various developmental issues of their respective areas.

The representatives of Bhartiya Yog Sansthan also on the LT Governor and apprised him on the promotion of Yoga in government schools of Jammu Kashmir.

The LT Governor assured the members of the delegations of appropriate redressal of their issues and demands based on merit—(KNO)

Lt Governor Sinha...

drug peddlers. An attempt is being made to destroy

the society and its youth by luring them towards drugs," he said, adding that the government will go tough against drug peddlers and those promoting the drug business.

He said that with its aspirational vision, Scouts & Guides is leading the change in society especially by serving vulnerable sections of the community & enabling the youth leaders to drive transformative change. The LG called upon the youth to follow the rich legacy of Mahamana Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya and dedicate themselves in the service of the nation.

"The young generation is the key to change and today they are eager to play a bigger role in sustainable economic growth and social cohesion. With their commitment to selfless service, Scouts & Guides is contributing to build an inclusive & prosperous society," the LG said, adding that in the fast-changing world, Scouts & Guides will have to turn their voice into action. In the partnership with local administration, they must engage in social welfare works to complement the government's efforts and to develop new youth networks to promote peaceful, equal and just communities. The LG also urged the trainers and teaching community to nurture individual growth and leadership qualities amongst the youth—(KNO)

LG greets people...

Ramzan and symbolizes the spirit of austerity, brotherhood, compassion and joy of sharing".

May Eid-ul-Fitr usher in peace, prosperity and happiness for all, he said—(KNO)

People hold protest...

Rifles unit deployed for counter-terrorism operations.

Another protest was held by Mission Statehood Jammu Kashmir, a local organisation, led by its president Sunil Dimple in New Plot area. The protestors burnt Pakistani flags and effigies amid sloganeering.

Dimple alleged the Poonch attack was due to the complete failure of the Centre and J&K administration even as they claim to have ensured peace and normalcy in the Union Territory. He recalled past incidents where several Army and security personnel lost their lives in militant attacks in Poonch and Rajouri border districts.

The Shiv Sena Dogra Front also staged an anti-Pakistan protest.

Its members, led by its president Ashok Gupta, demanded that Indian troops destroy the terror network in Pakistan. (Agencies)

CBI asks Ex-J&K...

with corruption allegations levelled by former Jammu and Kashmir Governor Satya Pal Malik in the awarding of contracts for group medical insurance scheme for government employees and work related to Kiru hydroelectric power project in the erstwhile state.

The central agency had named Reliance General Insurance and Trinity Re-Insurance Brokers Limited as accused in its FIR related to a controversial health insurance scheme for Jammu and Kashmir government employees cleared by Malik in the state administrative council meeting on August 31, 2018.

It was alleged that there were glaring deviations from the government norms in the contract awarded to Reliance General Insurance like absence of an online tender, removal of an original condition that the vendor should have experience of working in the state and companies having turnover of Rs 5,000 crore among others.

After allegations of irregularities surfaced, the scheme, which was supposed to come into operation in October 1, 2018, was scrapped, they said.

In the scheme which was initially signed up with RIGC for one year, the employees and pensioners would have got Rs 6 lakh cover for themselves and five dependent family members by paying an annual premium of Rs 8,777 and Rs 22,229 for employees and pensioners, respectively.

In a sensational claim, Malik, who was the Governor of Jammu and Kashmir between August 23, 2018 and October 30, 2019 had claimed that he was offered a Rs 300 crore bribe for clearing two files.

One going to Kashmir, two files came to me (for clearance), one belonging to Ambani and another to an RSS-affiliated man who was a minister in the previous Mehbooba Multi-led PDP-BJP coalition government and claimed to be very close to the prime minister, he had said. (Agencies)

J&K's Mission Youth...

performance and contribution leading to such a rare feat in a short span of over last two years. He reiterated the commitment of administration for taking every step to empower the youth and steps for a very meaningful engagement.

CEO Mission Youth, Dr Shahid Choudhary expressed great satisfaction over the very positive response to the initiatives by youth of Jammu and Kashmir, and proactive measures by the departments and especially Deputy Commissioners in making the scheme a grand success at the ground level. Pertinently, Mission Youth has been picked up as a unique success study by the Capacity Building Commission of India in collaboration with Harvard Business School for inclusion in courses of top management and public policy schools.

Dr Shahid thanked Lieutenant General Manoj Sinha for leadership of Mission Youth and personal efforts to bring stakeholder companies and organisations to Jammu and Kashmir. He expressed gratitude to the Chief Secretary for complete administrative oversight and support, effective role played by Administrative Secretaries, Dy. Commissioners, DECCs and HoDs besides the SDS and DD Mission Youth.

The Citation of Honour underlines the special initiatives like Youth Portal, customised livelihood linked schemes like Mumkin and Tejaswini, education support like Parvaz, Youth clubs and the effectiveness of District Level Task Force headed by DCs as many of the unique features of Mission Youth leading to a sustainable and effective platform of youth empowerment in Jammu and Kashmir.

Mission Youth awarded under the Innovation (State) category for PM award has launched more than 15 schemes for youth which include Mumkin, Tejaswini - for women, Parvaz (Graduate): UPSC Coaching, Parvaz (XII): NEET/JEE coaching , Rise Together, Tourist Vil-

lage Scheme, Spurring Entrepreneurship, Protsahan, LG Super-75 (Girls & Boys), LG Rolling Trophy in sports, Know-India Love-India: Bharat Darshan, Skill Development courses scheme , Youth Innovation Scheme , SAHAYITA: youth with disabilities, Scheme for youth in distress: Psycho-Social counselling and Hausla among others.

India records 11,692...

recorded at 98.67 per cent, the ministry said. The number of people who have recuperated from the disease surged to 4,42,72,256, while the case fatality rate was recorded at 1.18 per cent. According to the ministry's website, 220,66 crore doses of Covid vaccine have been administered in the country so far under the nationwide vaccination drive. (Agencies)

Terrorism on rise...

reporters here, Singh said the Centre had claimed that scrapping Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir (the constitutional provision granted special status to J&K) in 2019 and demonetisation (2016) will help in fighting terrorism in the erstwhile state, but figures of Defence and Home Ministries suggest terror-related incidents have actually gone up since these measures were announced.

"A big attack took place in terrorism-free Poonch which is part of Jammu. Such incidents used to take place in Anantnag and Pulwana (in Kashmir Valley)... now terror attacks have started taking place in new areas," he said.

Five Army personnel were killed and another was seriously injured on Thursday after their vehicle caught fire following a terrorist attack in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch.

The Army said the vehicle the soldiers were travelling in came under fire from unidentified terrorists and it caught fire because of the likely use of grenades.

"Cartridges recovered (in Poonch) have markings of China. This is a new thing that has come to light that such terror activities in India are seeing Chinese links," Singh said.

Slamming the Centre, Singh claimed the Defence Minister had accepted that China had captured Indian territory but the prime minister was proclaiming that no one had intruded into and seized our territory.

This means the prime minister has termed his own defence minister's statement as false, Singh alleged.

He also claimed a Gautam Adani firm with a Chinese director had entered the defence sector and questioned if this was not an issue of national security.

The Rajya Sabha member said Jammu has been a peaceful place and the terror attack there was disturbing.

In the last three years, 1,033 terror attacks have taken place in Jammu and Kashmir and 177 jawans have lost their lives, Singh said.

"In 2019, this number was 594 and in 2020, it was 244. Such attacks are on the rise and we are losing our soldiers," the senior Congress leader added. (Agencies)

Duty of bureaucracy...

on 'Viksit Bharat'.

Addressing the gathering, the Prime Minister congratulated everyone on the occasion of Civil Services Day. The Prime Minister noted that the occasion of Civil Services Day this year becomes much more special as the nation has completed 75 years of its independence and is starting to move forward to achieve the goals and objectives of a developed India. He highlighted the contributions of those Civil Servants who joined the service 15-25 years ago and emphasized the role of young officers who will contribute towards nation-building in the next 25 years of Amrit Kaal. The Prime Minister expressed confidence that the young officers are extremely fortunate to serve the nation in this Amrit Kaal. "The responsibility to accomplish the dreams of every freedom fighter of the nation lies upon every shoulder", the Prime Minister remarked as he pointed out the paucity of time but the abundance of potential and courage in the country.

The Prime Minister said that the country is prepared for take off due to the work done in the last 9 years. He said that different results are being obtained with the same bureaucracy and personnel. He acknowledged the role of Karmayogis in the growing profile of the country on the global stage, for the growing confidence of the poorest of the poor in 'Sushasan' and for a new momentum of development of the country. He mentioned India rising as the 5th largest economy in the world, taking strides in fintech as India is number one in digital transactions, one of the cheapest mobile data countries and the third largest startup ecosystem in the world. He remarked on transformative changes in the rural economy, railways, highways, port capacity augmentation and the number of airports. He said that the awards today reflect the contribution and sense of service of the Karmyogis.

Recalling his address from the ramparts of the Red Fort on 15th August last year when the Prime Minister invoked the 'Paanch Pran' namely the development of Viksit Bharat or developed India, breaking the slavery mentality, taking pride in India's heritage, strengthening the unity and diversity of the country, and keeping one's duties before anything else, the Prime Minister underlined that the energy emanating from these five resolves will take the nation to its deserved place in the world.

Dwelling on the theme of this year's Civil Service Day being based on the notion of Viksit Bharat, the Prime Minister said that the concept of Viksit Bharat is not limited to modern infrastructure. "It is important for Viksit Bharat that India's government system supports the aspirations of every Indian and every government servant helps every citizen in realizing their dreams and the negativity that was associated with the system in the previous years, turns into positivity", the Prime Minister added.

Throwing light on decades of experience after India's independence, the Prime Minister stated the importance of last-mile delivery in the implementation of government schemes. He gave examples of results from policies of previous governments and mentioned that there were more than 1 crore fake gas connections, more than 4 crore fake ration cards, and support was provided to 1 crore fictitious women and children by the Ministry of Women and Child Development, fake scholarships were offered to approximately 30 lakh

youths by Ministry of Minority Welfare, and lakhs of fake accounts were created under MGNREGA to transfer the benefits of workers who never existed. The Prime Minister highlighted that a corrupt ecosystem had emerged in the country under the pretext of these fake beneficiaries. He credited the civil servants for the transformation that has taken place in the system where roughly 3 lakh crore rupees have been saved from landing in the wrong hands, which is now being used for the welfare of the poor.

The Prime Minister emphasized that when time is limited, it becomes very critical to decide the direction and working style. "Today's challenge is not about efficiency but in figuring out how to find and remove deficiencies", he said. He recalled the time when in the garb of deficiency even the small aspect was attempted to be controlled. Today, he continued, the same deficiency is being turned into efficiency and removing obstacles in the system. "Earlier, the thinking was that the government will do everything, now the thinking is that the government will work for everyone", said the Prime Minister highlighting the efficient use of time and resources to serve everyone. "Motto of the government is 'Nation First-Citizen First', today's government's priority is prioritizing the deprived", the Prime Minister remarked, informing that the government is going up to Aspirational Districts and up to Aspirational blocks. He said today's government is treating border villages as the first villages rather than the last villages. He said that for 100 per cent saturation, we will need even more hard work and innovative solutions. He gave the example of departments asking for NoCs and information that is available somewhere in the system. He said for ease of living and ease of doing business we will have to find solutions for these.

Giving the example of PM Gatishakti Master Plan, the Prime Minister explained that all data layers related to any infrastructure project can be found on a single platform and stressed the need to utilize it to the maximum for better planning and execution in the social sector. He further added that it will greatly benefit in identifying the needs of citizens, tackling issues related to education that might arise in the future, and enhancing communication between departments, districts and blocks while also helping in the formulation of future strategies.

The Prime Minister stressed that the Amrit Kaal has brought immense challenges along with great opportunities. The Prime Minister elaborated that today's aspirational citizens are not willing to wait for long to see changes in the systems and this will need our full effort, he said. Taking quick decisions and implementing them with speed has become all the more important as the expectations of the world from India have also risen dramatically. As the world is saying that India's time has arrived, there is no time to be wasted by the bureaucracy of the country. "The government has put its faith in you, work while maintaining that trust. Basis of all your decisions should always be the national interest", he insisted.

Highlighting the importance and necessity of political parties with different ideologies in a democracy, the Prime Minister stressed the need for Bureaucracy to assess whether the political party in power is utilizing the taxpayers' money for the benefit of the nation.

"It is the duty of the Bureaucracy to analyze whether a political party is making use of taxpayers' money for the benefit of their own organization or the nation", the Prime Minister continued, "if it is using the money to create a vote bank or making the lives of the citizens easier; if it is advertising itself with the government treasure or making the people aware; if it is appointing its own party workers in various organizations or creating a transparent process for recruitment." Recalling the words of Sardar Patel about the Bureaucracy being the steel frame of India, the Prime Minister said that it is time to live up to the expectations and the dreams of the youth from getting crushed along with taxpayers' money from being destroyed.

The Prime Minister told the government servants that there are two approaches to life, first, getting things done and second letting things happen. The first is an active attitude and the second reflects a passive attitude. People with faith in getting things done take ownership in a proactive manner and become the driving force of their teams. "By this burning desire to bring change in the lives of the people, you will be able to leave a memorable legacy. You will not be judged by what you have done for yourself but by what changes have you brought in the lives of the people", the Prime Minister told the Karmayogis. Therefore, he said "Good governance is the key. People-centric governance solves problems and gives better results", he said. He gave examples of Aspirational districts that are performing better than other districts on many development parameters due to good governance and the efforts of energetic young officers. By focussing on people's participation a sense of ownership is created among the people and this people ownership ensures unprecedented results, he said. He illustrated this with examples of Swachh Bharat, Amrit Sarivar and Jal Jeevan Mission.

The Prime Minister referred to the District Visions@100 that are under preparation and said that such visions should be prepared up to Panchayat Level. What sectors should be focussed in the Panchayats, blocks and districts and the state, the government investment and identification of products that can be taken up for exports, a clear vision for all this should be developed, he said. He emphasized linking the chain of MSME and Self-Help Groups to promote local products and said "It is very important for all of you to encourage local talent, promote local entrepreneurship and start-up culture."

Underlining that he has been the head of the government for more than 20 years now, the Prime Minister expressed delight at getting the opportunity to work with civil servants. He emphasized a capacity building and expressed happiness that 'Mission Karmayogi' has become a huge campaign among all civil servants. He underlined that the Capacity Building Commission is taking this campaign forward with full force and said, "The aim of Mission Karmayogi is to utilize the full potential of civil servants." Highlighting the iGOT platform that has been created to ensure the availability of quality training material everywhere, the Prime Minister stressed that training and learning should not remain a formality for a few months. "Not all the recruits are also being trained on iGOT platform with the orientation module of 'Karmayogi Prarambh'", Shri Modi added.



This Earth Day, De Power Ko Green Signal: Tata Power & News18 take solar to center stage

J I NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APR 21: Sustainable is indeed attainable. In a big push to its long-term mass movement on promoting green energy adoption in India, Tata Power, one of India's largest integrated power companies, and News18 released an inspirational film on television and digital platforms on Earth Day 2023, promoting the theme of "Invest in our planet".

Set in Ladakh, the film depicts how solar power is leading to a future of great possibilities, and inspires us all to 'switch to' greener options, without being worried about switching off'. Tata Power exhorts all Indians to invest in the planet by adopting clean energy and #DePowerKo GreenSignal. The protagonist in the film, a young aspiring boxer in Ladakh, need not compromise on her training schedule due to power supply constraints. Solar power lights up the boxing arena she practices in and keeps on track, her dreams of making it big in the sport, where Indian women are already shining at the global stage.

"This Earth Day, we want to reinforce how Solar power is lighting up lives across the country and taking ahead India's vision of clean energy transition. The film showcases this effectively," said Jyoti Kumar Bansal, Chief - Brand & Communications, Tata Power. With this motivational film, Tata Power is underlining its 'Sustainable is Attainable' movement



highlighting how it is working to make adoption of sustainable products and services easy and affordable for both Corporate India and consumers, and how that is spurring behavior change. "In line with Mission LIFE introduced by the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, the movement is taking the discussion around sustainability into our daily lives and Tata Power is proud to be leading this conversation," added Bansal. The Sustainable is Attainable movement has been encouraged by

Hon'ble Union Minister of Power Shri R K Singh, Hon'ble Union Minister of Road Transport & Highways Shri Nitin Gadkari, Aamibah Kant (GZO Sherpa) and supported by corporate leaders across India and the world.

The movement aims to continue propagating the use of green and clean energy in the country. It is also working on popularizing how a sustainable lifestyle is 'attainable' for millions of Indians through wide-scale adoption of affordable green energy products and solutions. Tata Group has identified new energy as a large focus for the group as part of its contribution to India's Net Zero Goals.

"This film is an effort to amplify the power of solar, showcase how easy it is for us to switch to an alternative source for our energy needs, and encourage behaviour change, in keeping with goals of our initiative 'Sustainable is Attainable'. We hope that our audience finds the messaging heartfelt and, more importantly, that the film inspires them the way it does us," said Sidharth Saini, Senior Vice President, Network 18 Studio.

Tata Power, which supplies power to 12.5 million users across four states, has many iconic projects including one of India's largest - vertical solar farm in Bengaluru, carport installation in Pune, solar-powered cricket stadium, Brabourne Stadium in Mumbai. With its path breaking initiatives in the energy sector, it is leading India's mission of energy transition.

NC pays glowing tributes to Bodhraj Bali on his 20th death anniversary



J I NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APR 21: Jammu and Kashmir National Conference on Friday paid glowing tributes to former minister and senior party leader Mr Bodh Raj Bali on his 20th death anniversary, describing him as a leader par excellence who devoted all his life in service of the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Leading the party cadre in paying floral tributes to Mr Bali, at a function held at Sher-e- Kashmir Bhavan here this morning, Provincial President Jammu Mr Rattan Lal Gupta highlighted the immense contribution of the veteran leader in the development and progress of Jammu and Kashmir.

Paying tributes to Mr Bali,

Provincial President Jammu Province Mr Rattan Lal Gupta said that the departed leader worked with a sense of commitment.

Gupta said that Mr Bali worked tirelessly for the upliftment of poor and down-trodden in different capacities. His contribution in strengthening National Conference at the gross root level in the Jammu Province remains a high point of his political career, he said, adding that the veteran leader made a distinct mark by serving the people, which will serve as a source of inspiration for the coming generations. Mr Gupta further said that Mr Bali worked for strengthening the fabric of secularism and brotherhood in the state of J&K. While Paying tributes to Mr Bali

Provincial Secretary Jammu Sheikh Bashir Ahmed described the late leader as a person of immense qualities who remained at the forefront in solving problems of the people. He said that the veteran leader worked tirelessly in various capacities as a party functionary and senior cabinet minister for people belonging to all walks of life. His services shall be remembered for the years to come.

Paying tributes to Mr Bali, former minister and Central Zone President Jammu Babu Rampaul said the towering leader left an indelible mark on the National Conference cadre by dint of his determination and hard-work besides strengthening the party at gross root level. He said the best tribute would be to strengthen the party at gross root level and make it a vibrant force to salute the urges and aspirations of the people. He said that the late leader will be remembered for his high political caliber and having passion for serving the people, especially poor and down-trodden.

Several senior leaders, including: Vijay Lochan P.P. SC. Cell, Pardeep Bali Provincial Secretary, Lakshmi Datta, Nar Singh, Sardar Gurnam Singh, Ashok Dogra, Waris Gill, Dr. Vikas Sharma, Sardar Tejinder Singh, Som Raj Tarach, Master Baldev Raj and other functionaries of District and Blocks.

TSUS organises inter school poster making competition



J I NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APR 21: The Shri Ram Universal School under the aegis of Jammu Sahodya Schools Complex organised the Inter School Poster Making Competition for students of grade VI to grade VIII wherein twenty four (24) schools of repute participated.

Rakesh Kumar, a Contemporary Visual Artist and faculty at Institute of Music and Fine Arts, University of Kashmir, J&K was invited as Chief Guest cum judge.

Dr KCS Mehta, Principal International Delhi Public School, Akhnour and mentor JSSC graced the occasion as Guest of Honour. The other dignitaries present to witness the event included Mr Sanjiv Gupta, Chairman TSUS, Mrs Rajni Gupta, Director TSUS, Col VK Sharma, Principal TSUS, Mrs Shivani Vaid, Headmistress.

Keeping in line with Green Policy of the school, the Chief Guest and the Guest of Honour were felicitated by the School Management with a potted plant.

The students of the school presented Ganesh Vandana to evoke the blessings of the Almighty. Col VK Sharma, Principal TSUS extended a warm welcome to one and all and encouraged the participants to do their best.

Theme for the Poster Making Competition was "Be The Change That You Wish To See -Unlocking Limitless Potential". The students did full justice to the topic and displayed an excellent understanding of the nuances of fine arts. The Chief Guest boosted the morale of the participants and demonstrated the finer aspects of the subject by drawing sketches. The students as well as the accompanying arts teachers enjoyed the expertise of the Chief Guest. In his address to the students, the Chief Guest advised the students to be meticulous in their approach and to have a keen eye for observation. Based on the evaluation done by the judge the results were announced and the winners were given away the prizes as under:

First Position went to Rich Harvest School, Second Position was bagged by The Shri Ram Universal School and the Third Position was secured by International Delhi Public School.

Consolation prize were awarded to Shemford Futuristic School, Army Public School, Damana and Sai International School respectively. To mark the culmination of the event, the Headmistress presented the vote of thanks.

Gender Based Violence & its Preventive Measures an awareness session held



J I NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APR 21: Gender based violence is a serious problem, not only for women but also for the attainment of equality, development and peace. Sunrise Public School, an educational unit of Sunrise Educational Trust (SET INDIA), in collaboration with Special Cell for Women organized an awareness session on Gender Based Violence and it's Preventive Measures for students. This initiative was taken by Mr. Ravinder Singh (Social work trainee, Department of Social Work, Central University

of Jammu). Professional social worker Ms. Diksha Kumari from Special Cell for Women, Jammu supported by the National Commission for Women and implemented by Tata Institute for Social Science participated in an awareness programme as a resource person.

She explains students regarding gender based violence and the different kind of violence faced by women. Along with that she also told if someone is facing violence then what are the different preventive measures someone can take. Ms. Sheetal and Ms. Pinki, intern in Women

Cell, Jammu were also present during programme. Staff member of Sunrise Public School also attended the programme. Students of Sunrise

Students suffer due to Shortage of teaching, non-teaching staff in GHS, Nagbatna

J I NEWS SERVICE

KISHITWAR, APR 21: The inmates of Kuntwara villagers have expressed serious concern over the shortage of teaching, and non-teaching staff in Government Higher School Nagbatna Kishitwar. The inmates of the Himmat Singh Shiv Sena General Secretary District Kishitwar have appealed to the Director of School Education seeking his intervention in the matter. They have demanded that the staff be posted in the schools of Nagbatna Kuntwara immediately as the students' studies have been affected due to the lack of teaching staff.

Traders expressed solidarity with Families of Brave Martyrs, condemns the Poonch Attack

J I NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APR 21: On the call of the Traders Federation Ware House Nehru Market (Regd.) Jammu Traders in large numbers took out Mashaal Rally (candle march) from Federation office to Bikram Chowk to pay tributes to the Five Brave Martyrs who attained Martyrdom in Poonch Militant Attack on Thursday.

Traders while passing through main road, ware house raised slogans against Pakistan and the anti-national forces who are behind this attack.

Speaking on the occasion Mr. Deepak Gupta, President Traders Federation Ware House Nehru Market (Regd.) strongly condemned Pakistan for carrying on the policy of enmity against India and harboring terrorists on its soil and using them to threaten life of the people & security forces in JKUT. He demanded that the UT administration should immediately identify the cowardly terrorists so that they are brought to justice. He demanded that law and enforcement agencies should also conduct a security review to ensure foolproof security in



Rajouri Poonch. Deepak Gupta appealed to the Lieutenant Governor Sh. Manoj Sinha that security agencies should be given free hand to neutralize all terrorists involved in such attacks. The Trade leader said there was an urgent need to review the security arrangements in both districts because earlier terrorists killed innocent people

in Rajouri and no clue has been found about these killers. Among those who were present in the Candle March were Munish Mahajan, Sr. Vc. President, Abhimanyu Gupta, Vc. President, Sham Lal Langer, General Secretary, Vishal Gupta, Secretary and Amit Gupta, Cashier of the Federation.

Excise deptt hand in glove with liquor vendors duping customers: NDPI

J I NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APR 21: The National Democratic Party Indian (NDPI) J&K UT Chief Rajesh Gupta on Friday while interacting with media said, Excise Department is minting money with hand in glove with liquor vendors in Jammu. The liquor vendors backed by excise department duping customers without any hesitation or any fear of law. NDPI leader appealed to Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to take action against violation of regulations and guidelines by liquor vendors and officials of excise department.

NDPI leaders said that in J&K, liquor is a heavily taxed commodity, and the price of alcohol can vary greatly depending on where you purchase it from. Unfortunately, in some cases, liquor vendors may charge consumers more than the legally prescribed price, which is a violation of



the law. If you have been a victim of liquor overcharging, you have the right to file a complaint against the seller. Gupta appealed to general public if you felt cheated when liquor vendor charges you extra on the name of cooling or remote location charges. Several reports keep coming across the country where consumers often complain about overcharging by liquor vendors. Gupta further added as a consumer, you have the right to be charged the correct price for the liquor you consume.

You should be aware of the maximum retail price (MRP) of the liquor, which is fixed by the government and cannot be exceeded. Additionally, you should be aware of any taxes or service charges that may be applicable. You can find the rate list on the official excise department site of every state.

NDPI president said the Excise Department is responsible for regulating the sale of liquor in J&K. If you have been overcharged for liquor, you should contact the Excise Department in your union territory. You can find the contact details for Excise Department on their official website or by searching online. Once you have their contact details, you can call or email them to lodge a complaint. You can also raise a complaint with the District Magistrate.

J&K Hoteliers Club Sonamarg Chapter President Farooq Hafiz Grets People On Eid-ul-Fitr

J I NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR, APR 21: As The Devotes Across The Globe Celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr, Marking The Culmination Of The Holy Month Of Ramzan, Jammu Kashmir Hoteliers Club Sonamarg Chapter President And Managing Director (MD) of Snow Land A Chain Of Hotels Farooq Hafiz Grets People On Eid-ul-Fitr has

Extended Heartiest Greetings To The People In Particular The Muslim Ummah On Eid-ul-Fitr. In His Message, Farooq Hafiz Said That Eid Mubarak To All Countrymen, Especially Muslim Brothers And Sisters! Celebrated After The Holy Month Of Ramadan, This Festival Is A Holy Occasion To Strengthen Brotherhood And Harmony In The Society. The

Hoteliers Club Sonamarg Chapter President Takes This Opportunity To Reaffirm Its Commitment To Promoting A Diverse And Inclusive Business Environment Where Everyone Can Thrive. We Believe That Diversity Is A Strength That Enriches Our Communities And Economies. This Festival Is The Celebration Of Sincere Devotion, Charity And Gratitude To The Almighty.

THOUGHT OF THE DAY

Logic will take you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere - Albert Einstein

JINDRAH IMAGES

PATH BREAKING INITIATIVE

To keep pace with the fast changing world, the government of India recently released the draft of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) as per the suggestions made by the committee of experts constituted for its alignment with the pedagogical modifications envisaged by the National Education Policy. If one looks back, the NCF was last revised in 2005 and the government is now intended through NCF to keep pace with the changing times and ensure a deeper engagement with real stakeholders—students. As per the proposed draft, the teachers, students, parents and other stakeholders can give their opinion on it before being finalised and put to implementation. The government move suggests that the recommendations made for adoption by all school boards are aimed at overcoming limitations that the current system is saddled with. The implementation of the pre-draft recommendations is surely going to be a big challenge in current times. The government draft states that the first language should be the mother tongue, while English could be the second or third option in the three-language formula. The experts of the opinion that the implementation of such proposals would be challenging as they call for an overhaul of the way the students have been taught and assessed. With a lot of country's schools equipped with just rudimentary staff and education tools, the changeover would need some handholding and a pooling of resources. It is not clear whether the existing educational setup is ready to make such changes at ground level. No doubt, there are certain suggestions recommending alternations spanning the whole spectrum, from pre-school to class 12, are worth pursuing. The draft curriculum framework, having adopted global best practices, has proposed to break the rigid barriers around the courses that pupils of classes XI and XII can opt for. It is also quite appreciable to see the flexibility to mix subjects of various streams—science, arts and commerce—as per the individual's choice as this multi-disciplinary approach would not only ensure better performance but also offer students broad-based education and a bouquet of career choices. Apart from this, another commendable move is the move to lessen the anxiety caused by the board exams to students and parents. Linking classes IX and X for assessment and a modular two-term exam structure for classes XI and XII, as opposed to the one-exam schedule, would let the children take the exam when they are ready for it. The move could pave the path for NEP's long-term goal of holding on-demand exams. The government has taken the right decision to put it in the public domain to get feedback before its implementation as it would make the draft more inclusive and comprehensive with some genuine suggestions from the stakeholders.

COVID IS HERE TO STAY, WE WILL HAVE TO ADAPT

SARS-CoV-2 is like other respiratory viruses which flare up periodically and cause severe disease in some individuals like the elderly or those on drugs that suppress immunity. Regarding boosters, experts suggest that they are probably best reserved for people who need protection against severe disease—specifically older adults, people with multiple coexisting conditions such as cancer or diabetes and those who are immunocompromised.

RAKESH KOCHHAR

THERE has been a surge in Covid cases in many parts of the country. India recorded nearly 13,000 new cases in a day, the highest in around eight months, while the active case burden increased to over 65,000, according to Union Health Ministry data updated on April 20. The numbers are rising in Delhi, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and Haryana.

India reported over 61,000 cases in the period between April 9 and 15, around 80 per cent up over the preceding week. A cause for worry is the increase in the number of deaths recently, though most of them have been of patients with prior comorbidities.

The recent uptick in Covid cases in India is due to a recombinant variant XBB and its descendants XBB.1.16 and XBB.1.5—both subvariants of Omicron. It is possible that XBB.1.16, also called Arcturus, may turn out to be the dominant variant in many parts of the world.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has categorised it as a VUM (variant under monitoring). There is a concern about this variant as it has some mutations which can make it escape immune response of the host (human being). There is little information about it causing severe illness, but it is more transmissible and some reports suggest it to be causing red eyes (conjunctivitis) also. The prevalence of XBB.1.16 has increased from approximately 21 per cent in February to over 35 per cent in March.

There was a great scare in the last few months of 2022 with Covid cases rising rapidly in China because of the likelihood of spread to other countries. With international travel fully opened, there is free admittance of possible cases from different countries and the eventuality of development of new variants. Variants are modified viruses with one or more new mutations. Mutations are changes in genetic structure of an organism and occur naturally as the virus multiplies. The natural tendency of an organism is to acquire mutations which benefit it by making it more virulent or infectious.

Scientists keep track of emerging mutations and variants by genomic surveillance of selected samples from different states. The idea is to incorporate the new information into preventive and therapeutic strategies. We have already seen the havoc caused by the Delta and Omicron variants around the world and in India. The Delta Plus variant had increased transmissibility, stronger affinity for receptors in lung cells and immune-escape property, making it evade protective response of the host. The new variant believed to be behind the recent upsurge in India is also being reported from other countries like the US, Australia and Singapore.



Irrespective of the emergence of new variants, the symptoms remain more or less the same—fever, cough, sore throat and body aches. There are minor variations, though, with change in incubation period or propensity to cause more severe disease with different variants.

Soon after identification of Covid-19 disease, the original strain of the virus, called Wuhan-1 or ancestral strain, was isolated and sequenced, paving way for the development of vaccines against it.

All vaccines, including the mRNA (messenger RNA) vaccines (Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna, USA; Genovax, India), the viral vector vaccines (AstraZeneca or Covishield in India and Johnson & Johnson in the US), inactivated whole virus vaccine (Covaxin) and others were designed to protect us from the disease caused by the ancestral strain. For SARS-CoV-2, primarily a mucosal disease affecting the respiratory system, the goal has been to protect against severe disease, hospitalisation and death, not to prevent infection.

As the virus spread and multiplied, it underwent a number of mutations and it was thought that the existing vaccines and therapies (monoclonal antibodies) may not be effective against the new strains and, thus, bivalent (effective against two strains) vaccines were engineered. These were supposed to protect against the ancestral strain as well as the new variants. It was proposed that updated boosters could be given periodically to counter newer variants which might

develop in the meantime, as is done for influenza virus with flu vaccine.

A recent article in the New England Journal of Medicine suggested that the bivalent vaccine and bivalent boosters provided only a modest extra benefit. Scientific data, so far, suggests that the Covid-19 variants haven't evolved to escape the protection against severe disease, offered by vaccination against the ancestral strain or previous infection. In the coming years, we can expect pan-variant vaccines which will be effective against multiple strains and vaccines which can be administered through nasal inhalation or even a pill-based or skin-patch vaccine. All of this could perhaps remove vaccine hesitancy.

Is there a cause for alarm in India? Though a mathematical model has predicted cases climbing up to 50,000 by mid-May, most of the cases, so far, are mild and self-limiting. Patients who are elderly or those who have other concomitant diseases need to be cautious. It is advisable to take preventive measures and wear a mask, especially in crowded places. The question in everybody's mind is to take a booster dose or not.

Over 220 crore vaccine doses have been administered since the beginning of vaccination two years ago, though less than 20 per cent of the vaccinated have received a booster shot. Additionally, with a large proportion of population getting protection following natural infection, there does not seem to be a cause for alarm presently. We, however, need data to see how long the protective efficacy of natural infection or vaccination or hybrid immunity lasts.

EPS tweak should be employee-friendly

P VALSARAJ

THE Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS), the contributory pension system intended for the well-being of the Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) members when they retire from service, has become very chaotic. Frequent amendments and unilateral interpretations by the fund authorities and the litigation that followed have resulted in the present impasse wherein hundreds of thousands of employees and retirees across the country find their eligible benefits denied by the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO).

In its verdict on the EPS amendment of 2014, the Supreme Court on November 4, 2022, upheld the methodology amended with retrospective effect for calculating the employee's pensionable salary.

Under the EPF framework, the employee and the employer contribute monthly to an employee's EPF account. The EPS was implemented in 1995 to guarantee pension to EPF members upon retirement. A portion of the employer's EPF share is transferred to the pension fund, using which the member is given a monthly pension after retirement. If the employer contributes a share equal to 12 per cent of the total salary to an employee's EPF account, the employee becomes eligible to receive a higher pension proportionate to his full salary, provided an option is exercised for the same with permission to transfer a higher amount from the employer's EPF share to the pension fund.

The amount of monthly pension is calculated as the pensionable salary multiplied by pensionable service and divided by 70.

The pensionable salary before the 2014 amendment was the average monthly salary over the last 12 months in service. The 2014 amendment to the EPS altered with retrospective effect the pensionable salary as the average monthly salary over the last 60 months, which was upheld by a three-judge Bench of the Supreme Court in November 2022.

The apex court has held that "we do not find any illegality or unconstitutionality" in effecting the 2014 amendment for computing, with retrospective effect, the pensionable salary as the average salary of the last 60 months against the average salary of the previous 12 months. In doing so, the Supreme Court noted that the legislative authorisation does exist to modify the scheme prospectively or retrospectively.

The stipulation in paragraph 32 of the pension scheme, which says "At any time, when the Employees'

Unlike state-funded agencies such as NASA and ISRO, which have long timelines and funding constraints, private companies like SpaceX have ambitious timelines and clear commercial goals. This has lessons for India where the space sector has been opened to private players. The road to a reusable space vehicle is long and challenging and it needs both ambition and technology.



Pension Fund so permits, the Central Government may alter the rate of contributions payable under this scheme or the scale of any benefit admissible under this scheme or the period for which such benefit may be given", also received the consideration of the Supreme Court. The SC further considered the illustrations presented by the EPFO showing that the manual labourers and women drawing low wages would get reduced pension when pensionable salary is computed on a 12-month average basis instead of a 60-month average basis. Resultantly, the amended method of calculating the pensionable salary got validation with the observation that

there is a reasonable basis for effecting change in the computation methodology for determining pensionable salary.

The salary in regular employment increases gradually over time. Hence, the pensionable salary computed as the average salary of the last 60 months will be considerably lower than that calculated as the average salary of the last 12 months, reducing the pension amount substantially. On an average, a retiree with 30 years of regular service and a last-drawn monthly salary of Rs 1 lakh will lose around Rs 5,000 in his monthly pension owing to this modification. Members who joined the pension

scheme knowing and believing the pensionable salary as the amount averaged over the last 12 months suffer because of this rule change midway through service. Backtracking from the pre-agreed terms by the EPFO, causing financial loss to the employees throughout their retirement, is nothing but a breach of trust, unexpected from a statutory body. Furthermore, if two employees joined the EPS on the same date before the 2014 amendment and continued in service on matching salaries, and if one of them retired a few months before and the other one retired a few days after the 2014 amendment, the employee who retired later will receive a lower pension than the other who retired earlier despite contributing more to the pension fund than the employee who retired first.

If, on the other hand, the EPFO, citing the validity of this amendment, resorts to recouping the pension disbursed over the past years to the already retired employees, it will again fail to be just and fair, apart from causing untold misery to those retirees. A more significant repercussion is that the EPFO, blessed with this authorisation received, is now free to alter the pension calculation retrospectively whenever it so desires

in the future, forcing pensioners to pay back the money received.

The 2014 amendment of retrospective modifying the methodology for calculating the pensionable salary is highly one-sided, unjust and detrimental to the employees concerned. The liberty to amend retrospectively cannot be the liberty to do so in a harmful way. If the intention behind the change of methodology for the calculation of pensionable salary is to ensure a higher pension, as projected by the EPFO before the Supreme Court using certain case studies, it would have been fairer to consider both the computation methods and allow whichever is better.

Even though Section 7 of the Employees' Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952, permits a rule change with retrospective effect, the change should have only been applied, if necessary, to those joining the EPS after the date of effect of the 2014 amendment. The EPFO needs to take a proactive approach and move quickly for this rectification. The Central Government's intervention is also essential to resolve this issue in a just and practical manner.

Priyanka Chopra is happy her 'sample-size' comment started a discussion: 'I am not sample size but I am looking fab'

Last month, Priyanka Chopra's had revealed that a stylist had insulted her by saying that she wasn't 'sample-sized'. The star went on to reveal that she was reduced to tears following the incident. Priyanka, who was at the premiere of her upcoming Prime Video series Citadel in London, has now reacted to the response that her 'sample-size' comment had received and said that the conversation around it is 'healthy' and should be encouraged.

Priyanka had said during an interaction with Amazon Studios head Jennifer Salke at the South by Southwest Film Festival (SXSW 2023) in Los Angeles, 'I've been told many things that are difficult to hear. I arrive

feeling crappy because somebody told me yesterday I wasn't 'sample sized'. I was hurt and I discussed it with my family and I cried to my husband and my team and I felt really bad about the fact I'm not sample-sized and that that's a problem, apparently.

Most of us are not. 'Sample-sized' is a size 2. Who's a size 2? I don't see a lot of hands.' Now during the Citadel premiere in London, Priyanka was asked in an interview with Flip Your Wig, about the reaction to her comment on not being sample-sized! Responding to this, the actor said, 'Somehow in my position if I say something, to see a response...which created debate, which created conversation, is always good.



Salman Khan's Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan gets mediocre advance booking despite Eid; trade says 'better trailer, songs could have helped'



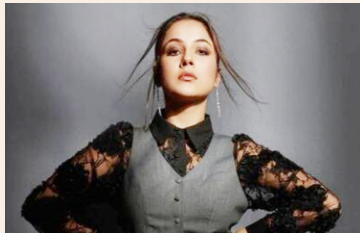
Actor Salman Khan has sustained his stardom for almost three decades. Ever since his debut in Biwi Ho To Aisi (1988), he's brought joy into the lives of his audience through his films. His pull on the fans made his Eid releases, barring few, into sure-shot that resulted in regular hits for 'Bhaijaan'. However, this time around the actor has taken four years to return to the silver screen in a full-fledged role.

During his absence, the dynamics of the box office have changed drastically. The audience is now unforgiving of poor content, irrespective of the headline act. Film trade experts believe that just like other biggies, who were once hit-churners irrespective of the quality of their projects, Salman, too, will have to pass the litmus test of content to ensure a good run for Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan in theaters. Film producer and trade expert, Girish Johar says, 'Post-pandemic, the box office dynamics have changed. Audiences' preferences have changed and films which are not liked are not even taking a single breath at the box office - they are dying on the day of (the) release itself. I am sure Salman Khan will also have to pass this test.

Shehnaaz Gill says Salman Khan giving her film break doesn't mean 'everything's sorted': 'If you are an outsider, dhakke khaane padhte hain'

Life isn't a viral tweet and a career in Bollywood is not a cakewalk. Actor Shehnaaz Gill, who enjoys quite an unprecedented loyal internet fan following, says she is under no delusion that just because she is debuting with a mega Salman Khan Eid release, she is going to be the "rising star". At least, not just yet.

Shehnaaz started her career as a model and moved to doing Punjabi films. Her career changed when she participated in the reality show Bigg Boss 13 in 2019. She didn't win the Salman Khan-hosted show, but emerged as one of the most pop-



ular contestants of the season, making her a household name. "I had told Salman sir, in the

first week itself, that I don't want the trophy, I just want to work with him in his film.

Maybe he remembered that," Shehnaaz toldhead of her Bollywood debut Kisi Ka Bhai Kisi Ki Jaan. The action comedy is scheduled to release on April 21.

Acting was Shehnaaz's childhood dream, so naturally the anticipation of the big Friday is already making her feel like she's "flying high". But the dream came true moment wasn't without hiccups. The Punjab-born and raised actor says her journey in films actually started with a hurtful rejection, which had pushed her to tears early on in her career. "When I look back, I feel des-

tiny can change anytime. How foolish is it to call someone on set and then reject them. If you want to reject, do it before, not when the person is already there. They said, 'Oh she is a kid, how can we take her.' It hurt me. Now when they would listen to this... Main haath nahi aani (you can't catch me now), ab toh main bohut badi hogayi hu, apni nazron mein (I have become big in my own eyes). Today I feel rejections should be accepted, it's ok."

Shehnaaz Gill says her big realisation today is that acting isn't an "easy" job, as many people think of it.

Priyanka Arul Mohan teams up with Pawan Kalyan for OG



Priyanka Arul Mohan has only done a handful of films in Tamil and Telugu, but she already commands a huge fan following in both Tamil Nadu and Telugu-speaking states. Now, she is moving on to the next level in her career with Pawan Kalyan's OG. Priyanka is paired opposite 'Powerstar' in the film, directed by Sujeth of Saaha fame.

The production house of the film, DVV Entertainment took to Twitter to announce the new cast member.

Priyanka tweeted, "Thrilled to be a part of the OG family! A power-packed entertainer is coming your way." For Priyanka Arul Mohan, who made her debut in Telugu with Nani's Gang Leader, OG marks her third film in Telugu. She was last seen in Sivakarthikeyan's Don, a blockbuster college drama. Other than OG, the actor is also part of Dhanush's Captain Miller and Rajesh M Selva's untitled film. Meanwhile, OG is already on the floors. Pawan Kalyan joined the sets of the film on Tuesday.

The Song of Scorpions trailer: Irrfan Khan's last movie promises to be heart-wrenching tale of love

A popular myth goes that if a scorpion bites someone, they will die, unless a scorpion-singer sings her song and cures them. Death can perhaps be cured, but is there a cure for love? The trailer of actor Irrfan Khan's The Song of Scorpions was unveiled on Wednesday. The film is set to hit the theatres on April 28 ahead of the beloved actor's third death anniversary.

Directed by Anup Singh, the film also stars veteran actress Waheeda Rehman and Golshifteh Farahani in important roles. The Song of Scorpions had its world premiere at the 70th Locarno Film Festival in Locarno, Switzerland on August 9, 2017.

The film's trailer is a deep-dive into the enchanting world of the Rajasthan-set drama,



which follows the story of Nooran, a fiercely independent tribal woman, who learns the ancient healing art of scorpion-singing from her grandmother Zubeida, played by Waheeda Rehman.

But things change when she is snubbed by her villagers and is then

says, to which Irrfan replies, "If you are less than a scorpion, then bite me."

The official Twitter account of Panorama Studios shared the trailer and called The Song of Scorpions "a heart-wrenching tale of love, obsession and betrayal." Presented by Panorama Spotlight and 70MM Talkies and backed by A Feather Light Films and KNM Production, the song also stars Shashank Arora, Tillotama Shome. Irrfan's son, actor Babil also took Instagram and shared the trailer, writing, "Bringing alive a heart-wrenching tale of love, obsession and betrayal."

ALSO READIrrfan's last big screen appearance was in Angezi Medium, which released in March 2020. In April that year, Irrfan passed away aged 53.



Alaya F claims there's - o race to be No 1 amo- g you- ger ge- eratio- of actors, says she is - ot a 'fully - epo baby'

If you've grown up reading film magazines in the 90s or even early 2000, you would know female actors were always eyeing the number one place. While the Khans and a Kumar and Devgn ruled the industry, the heroines were left fighting for the top slot. However, in recent years, with the younger generation taking up most work, that race seems to have been called off. Alaya F, who is all set to star in the thriller U-Turn agrees, and reasons the vast opportunities for the same. "I do agree that there's no race. The types of

roles and opportunities today are wide. Also, everyone has a distinct identity, and no one needs to clover or fight anyone. There are enough movies and shows. Also, with the age of social media, the whole mystery is not there anymore. We are just people out there, who are doing good work, and hoping to make the most of every role, opportunity, and post," Alaya said. The Jawaani Jaaneman actor, however, shared that she follows her contemporaries like Sara Ali Khan, Janhvi Kapoor, or Ananya Panday's work, as that

is 'education' for her. "This is basic homework and one needs to know about what's happening. I definitely do follow everyone's work," she shared. But is there a competition? "It's a healthy one," pat came the reply. Elaborating on the same, Alaya shared, "It's important to have healthy competition. When I see someone's good work, I also want to do something like this. I need to pull my socks up. You always want to do better. This is healthy because I want good for myself and never bad for the other person. I have never wanted

bad for anyone else, I just want to do better."Alaya F comes with the baggage of being Pooja Bedi's daughter and Kabir Bedi's granddaughter. However, the actor believes she is not a 'nepotism baby' unlike many of her contemporaries. When asked about the same, the actor laughed to share, "I don't count myself as a fully nepo baby, because you need to understand there are different levels in that. My mother was done with the industry, she had quit acting before I was born. I have not grown up

among industry parties, that's not been my life. So sometimes it does get frustrating because there are levels of nepotism. At the end of the day, I do come from privilege and that's half of someone else's journey. It does get me into rooms but it doesn't really guarantee me movies. But reaching there is the hardest part. While I won't deny the access, it's the merit that takes one ahead. You may agree or disagree, I am a nepo baby but it's unfair to base everything I do to put it on where I come from.

How to Get Your Resting Heart Rate Under 60 BPM



Years ago, we asked a fitness expert named Michael Matthews, author of *Muscle for Life*, for his take on the recommended "normal" resting heart rate range for an adult American male, which is 60 to 100 beats per minute. He was unimpressed. "Considering that the average person is overweight, obese and sedentary, it's probably not best to look at 'normal' as 'ideal' in this case," Matthews replied. "Instead, a healthy range to shoot for would be closer to 50 to 80 beats per minute, and if you're in very good shape, your resting heart rate might dip as low as 40 to 50 beats per

minute." What's the benefit in lowering your resting heart rate, anyway? Well, it's a premier indication of improved cardiovascular health, increased aerobic capacity and efficient heart function. Elite athletes like Lance Armstrong have claimed everyday RHR ranges below 35 bpm, while marathoners like Eliud Kipchoge eventually develop phenomenally large left ventricles, on account of that compartment pumping so much blood throughout the body on a consistent basis. Basically: you make it hard for the heart some of the time, so it can beat as relaxed as possible most of the time. And it's possible for you to join the

week...as slow as humanly possible.

A little HIIT: The heart still needs to be pushed to the limit once in a while, though (This

rate monitor, fitness tracker or smartwatch. Ideally, you'll want to measure your resting heart rate first thing in the morning, before engaging in any physical

MAKE LIKE AN ELITE ATHLETE AND SLOW DOWN YOUR TICKER

helps develop another key cardiovascular biometric: heart rate variability, or HRV.) Along with all the cardio, you'll want to mix in HIIT workouts, which alternate between short bursts of high-intensity exercise and periods of rest or low-intensity activity. Research has shown that HIIT can help lower heart rate. Just don't make it your primary form of exercise. Take a breather: Stress does no favors for your heart rate; over time, it can really take a toll on your cardiovascular health. Incorporate stress management practices, such as mindfulness meditation, yoga, or deep breathing exercises, to help lower your resting heart rate. Oh, and as always, adequate sleep is paramount and will definitely regulate your heart rate. Aim for 7-9 hours of quality sleep each night. Try this trick for staying sleep through the night.

Keeping tabs: How will you know if your RHR is headed in the right direction?

To accurately monitor your heart rate, get yourself a heart

monitor, fitness tracker or smartwatch. Ideally, you'll want to measure your resting heart rate first thing in the morning, before engaging in any physical

activity. That'll yield the most accurate results. But it's okay to check in periodically throughout the day. I have an Apple Watch, and check it when I'm reading or watching TV on the couch. Also kind of fun: trying a deep breathing technique to lower your RHR as much as possible. They actually have competitions centered around this in South Korea.

Don't stress: If you can get below 60, or even 40 beats per minute, that's spectacular. If that's proving a struggle, don't stress; it's important to remember that individual factors, such as age, genetics and medical conditions, can influence one's heart rate. For some folks, aiming for a resting heart rate below 60 BPM may actually not be realistic or safe. Always talk with a health-care professional before embarking on a plan to significantly lower your heart rate. They'll help you determine a healthy target based on your unique circumstances. Tour de France shape awaits — for your heart, anyway.

I did 70 plank pikes every day for a week — here's what happened



Plank pikes, or pike planks, are a moving plank variation that torches your shoulders and core muscles by changing your hip, shoulder and foot position. During plank pikes, you'll start in a forearm or straight-arm plank position, then push your hips up and slightly back while drawing your legs towards your arms into a pike (similar to a downward-facing dog but taller and more front-loaded). In theory, it's simple to execute, but this core-torching plank exercise puts your upper body through the wringer, especially after 70 reps each day for a week.

If you add the exercise to your bank of the best ab exercises, you could strengthen the muscles in your shoulders, arms, chest, back, core, hips and legs. Moreover, you can develop flexibility and mobility in your spine, down the backs of the legs and hips — depending on which plank pike variation you choose.

What are plank pikes? The plank pike is the exercise equivalent of loading the dishwasher — everyone has an opinion on how it should be done. The plank pike takes many forms, and you'll see it done in various ways, including the straight-arm or forearm variation. Using forearms protects your wrists, and choosing straight arms will activate more arm muscles. You could also use a TRX or sliders — some even use a tea towel on wooden floors — to drag your feet towards your elbows instead.

Each variation activates various muscle groups, emphasizing different parts of your body. For example, sending your hips and shoulders slightly back (see the video above) stretches and strengthens the shoulders and backs of the legs, targets the rectus abdominis (six-pack muscles), and develops core stability, strength, and mobility through the spine and hips.

The straight-arm variation activates your upper back and arms, especially as you transfer and push up to a pike. Try to avoid defaulting to downward dog during either.

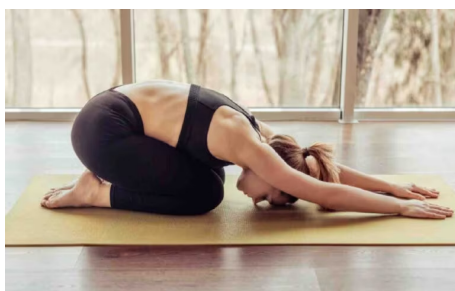
IS VAGINISMUS HAMPERING YOUR SEX LIFE? TRY THESE 5 EXERCISES

Vaginismus is a condition characterized by involuntary contractions of the muscles around the opening of the vagina, which make penetration painful or even impossible. This condition is said to affect several women at some point in their lives and can have a significant impact on their sexual and emotional well-being. Let's take a look at some exercises that can help treat vaginismus.

Causes and symptoms of vaginismus Vaginismus can have various causes, including psychological, physical, or a combination of both. Psychological causes can include anxiety, fear of pain, past trauma or sexual abuse, or negative attitudes towards sex. Physical causes can include hormonal imbalances, infections, or pelvic floor muscle dysfunction.

The symptoms of vaginismus can range from mild discomfort during intercourse to severe pain, burning, or tearing sensations. Women with vaginismus may also experience anxiety, shame, guilt, and frustration about their sexual difficulties.

1. Kegel exercises Kegel exercises can help strengthen the



pelvic floor muscles and improve blood flow to the vaginal area. A study published in the *International Journal of Impotence Research* found that pelvic floor muscle exercises, including Kegel exercises, improved sexual function in women with sexual dysfunction, including vaginismus. Want to make pocha from

scratch? Here's how to make it using rice: To perform Kegel exercises, simply contract and relax the muscles that you use to stop urine flow. Start with a few repetitions of 10 seconds each, gradually increasing the duration and frequency of the contractions. 2. Pelvic floor drops

Pelvic floor drops involve relaxing and releasing the pelvic floor muscles, which can help to reduce tension and pain in the area.

A study published in the *Journal of Sexual Medicine* found that pelvic floor drops were effective in reducing pain and improving sexual function in women with vaginismus.

To do pelvic floor drops, sit or lie down in a comfortable position. Take a deep breath in and exhale slowly, allowing your pelvic floor muscles to relax. Imagine that your pelvic floor muscles are dropping down and away from your body. Hold the relaxation for a few seconds, then inhale and repeat the exercise.

3. Child's pose Child's pose is a yoga posture that involves sitting back on the heels with the knees apart and the forehead resting on the floor.

This posture can help to stretch and release tension in the pelvic area. A study published in the *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy* found that yoga, including child's pose, can reduce the symptoms of vaginismus.

High reps vs heavy weights: which is better for building muscle?

High reps vs heavy weights, which is better for building muscle? Determining whether you should lift heavy or increase your rep count depends on your fitness goals, and we've got some answers to help you decide which is for you.

Whether you plan to build muscle, increase strength or improve muscle endurance, barbells, kettlebells, or the best adjustable dumbbells will help you achieve it. But the muscle mass building process (called hypertrophy) requires particular variables and stimuli, so reps and weights matter.

Fear not, because we've got some answers. Read on to find out whether you should lift heavier or increase reps to build muscle and why it all matters anyway.

For most of us, throwing weights around doesn't guarantee muscle growth. Despite being able to increase strength, improve muscle endurance and build muscle in various ways, there are core principles to follow for each if you want to reach success. Lifting heavy weights for fewer reps (around 2-6) and higher sets (4-6) with rest periods of a few minutes is the preferred method for strength training programs. You'll lift heavier weights close to your one rep max (1RM), which means choosing weights you could only manage a few reps at a time. Lifting heavier weights impacts the central nervous system and offers neuromuscular advantages, so you'll need more rest between sets.

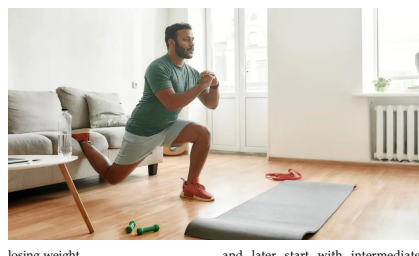
Man performing a lat pulldown with a wide grip on a machine in the gym

Want to lose weight without hitting the gym? These tips are all you need for your workout plan at home

Home workouts have become a go-to for many who are reluctant to spend a large sum of money on gym memberships. Hitting the gym is no longer quintessential to losing weight. While it is totally possible to lose weight by working out at home, many individuals seldom know the right way to go about it. If you are looking to embark on a weight-loss journey through home workouts, you have arrived at the right destination.

Mid-day online brings to you tips from experts that will help you in your weight loss journey from within the comfort of your home.

Dr Meenal Kulkarni, a physiotherapist with more than 20 years of experience in the healthcare industry speaks largely about the right ways to workout at home and Dr Rohini Patil, MBBS and certified nutritionist with over eight years of experience in the field of diet and nutrition sheds light on the role diet plays in the process of



losing weight. Basics of exercising at home: When starting out, you should perform exercises which are less intense and gradually upgrade the workout sessions as per one's endurance level, says Kulkarni. You must start by incorporating cardio exercises like jumping jacks and T jumps in order to improve your endurance capacity and later start with intermediate workouts followed by a core strengthening programme. When working out at home, it is very important to perform the exercises correctly since home workouts rob you of the personal attention of a professional gym trainer or fitness coach. The lack of professional guidance can result in performing exercises

incorrectly. Wrong movements during exercise can end up causing injuries. A lot of people start with heavy exercises like crunches with 5 to 6 sets right from the beginning.

IF YOU HAVE BEEN WONDERING ABOUT HOW TO LOSE WEIGHT AT HOME, YOU HAVE ARRIVED AT THE RIGHT DESTINATION. WE HAVE EXPERTS SHARING TIPS THAT WILL SURELY HELP YOU LOSE WEIGHT

This can cause severe harm to your back as well as your abdominal muscles. The most common mistake people make when working out at home is neglecting post-workout stretching exercises to relax the muscles. Lunges, planks, jumping jacks, crunches, and hip movements are some exercises you can start with, Kulkarni suggests. Initially, you won't need any exercise equipment, but once you undertake advanced-level exercises, you can invest in equipment like resistance bands, and weights. According to Kulkarni, the

best time to work out is in the early morning for over 30 to 60 minutes depending on the person's endurance level. Treating post-workout muscle pain

We all experience gnawing pain after we start exercising, even if it is at home. Kulkarni suggests warm-up and cool-down exercises pre and post-workout sessions.

This helps the body in dealing well with the rapid movements of the exercises. You can also make use of ice packs to soothe sore muscles after the workout. An ice bath is the best to reduce soreness. Along with that, an adequate amount of rest and relaxed sitting and sleeping positions are also a key. Common misconceptions about home workouts

Though staying fit should be the main goal when trying to reduce weight, there are still some individuals who stress their bodies beyond capacity to build a certain body type

go about it. People have these common misconceptions regarding weight loss. Some of them include: Exercising rigorously speeds up the weight loss process, starving yourself guarantees weight loss and slimming pills are a game changer in the weight loss journey. Kulkarni says, "It is wrong to expect quick results when losing weight. You should be consistent with your workout to gain the desired results. I believe one should have a strong metabolism as it greatly helps one lose weight."



FROM WALL STREET TO THE VATICAN: ELON MUSK'S GLOBAL DOMINATION

SAN FRANCISCO, UNITED STATES: Elon Musk was at the news epicenter Thursday, from stripping Pope Francis of Twitter verification to Tesla's drag on stocks and the explosion of the world's largest rocket. Three utterly disparate stories dominated global news in a way that underlined the extraordinary influence of the one person who connects them all -- Musk.

"Elon Musk has outsized capability to sway the news cycle," University of Florida assistant media professor Andrew Selepak told AFP.



Musk has quickly gone from being an in-water few knew of to a "tech billionaire playboy who has almost taken the place of Donald Trump as a Twitter troll," Selepak said.

Twitter began the mass removal of blue ticks on Thursday, with the symbol previously signifying a verified account vanishing from users including the Pope, Donald Trump and Justin Bieber.

Twitter owner Musk, who has seen his \$44 billion investment in the site shrivel, had pledged to get rid of what he described as a "lords & peasants system."

The platform had been providing free blue checkmarks to the accounts of high-profile users to show they were who they claimed to be.

Musk's switch does away with verifying who is behind accounts, with the checks now simply indicating who has paid a monthly subscription fee.

Technospatial analyst Avi

Greengart described Musk's blue checkmarks as "receipts" rather than verification.

The removals coincided with the disappearance of "state-affiliated" and "government-funded" labels from media accounts, according to a review by AFP as of 0600 GMT Friday.

Many major outlets from Western nations, Russia, China and other countries that previously had either of those tags no longer displayed them, including NPR from the United States, China's official Xinhua agency and RT from Russia.

The removal followed spats in recent weeks between Twitter and news organizations that had objected to those labels, saying they cast doubt on their editorial independence.

"Unscheduled disassembly" Musk was looking to the sky as well, with the colossal Starship built by SpaceX exploded minutes after launch in Texas.

Musk congratulated his SpaceX team on an "exciting" test of the

next-generation spacecraft designed to send astronauts to the Moon, Mars and beyond.

Despite the failure to complete the flight test and reach orbit, SpaceX and Musk, the founder and CEO of the private space company, declared it a success.

Starship malfunctioned and began spinning out of control, exploding four minutes after lift-off in what SpaceX euphemistically called a "rapid unscheduled disassembly."

Meanwhile, Wall Street stocks ended lower on Thursday following lackluster corporate results from electric vehicle maker Tesla and several regional banks.

Shares of Tesla slumped after reporting a drop in quarterly earnings and hinting the Musk-led company could face further profit pressures from more price cuts on its vehicles.

As Twitter, Tesla and SpaceX deal with turbulence, Musk is a common denominator, noted independent tech analyst Rob Enderle.

"The CEO is supposed to be the mature member of the staff who keeps the train on the tracks," Enderle told AFP.

"Musk is the opposite of that, he often lacks maturity and knocks the train off the tracks."

After revolutionizing the auto industry, sending his own rocket to space and building a fortune, the eccentric billionaire bought Twitter late last year and fired its top executives.

He promotes himself as a champion of free speech but has been accused of being autocratic and

bullying, as well as of endorsing misinformation on the platform.

The 51-year-old is among the richest people in the world.

To Mars... and beyond?

Born in Pretoria, on June 28, 1971, the son of an engineer father and a Canadian-born model mother, Musk left South Africa in his late teens to attend Queen's University in Canada.

He transferred to the University of Pennsylvania after two years and earned bachelor's degrees in physics and business.

Musk abandoned plans to study at Stanford University in California.

Instead, he started Zip2, a company that made online publishing software for the media industry.

He banked his first millions when he sold Zip2 to US computer maker Compaq for more than \$300 million in 1999.

Musk's next company, X.com, eventually merged with PayPal, the online payments firm bought by internet auction giant eBay for \$1.5 billion in 2002.

After leaving PayPal, Musk embarked on a series of ever more ambitious ventures.

He founded SpaceX in 2002 and became chairman of Tesla in 2004.

Musk enterprises include tunnel-drilling The Boring Company and Neuralink, which is focused on linking human brains and computers.

He has said he wants to make humans an "interplanetary species" by establishing a colony of people living on Mars.

Hong Kong bishop invites head of China's state-backed church

HONG KONG: Hong Kong's Roman Catholic bishop on Friday said he had invited the state-appointed archbishop of Beijing to visit his city, in a symbolic gesture that experts said could strengthen the fragile relationship between China and the Vatican.



Bishop Stephen Chow said Joseph Li, who is the leader of the mainland's Communist Party-sponsored version of the Catholic church, appeared to be "quite positive" about the invitation. The report gave no indication when Li might visit.

Chow announced the invitation on the last day of a five-day trip to Beijing, the first by a bishop of Hong Kong in nearly three decades.

Chow's trip followed a year of strained relations, in which Beijing unilaterally appointed two church leaders and Hong Kong arrested a cardinal.

"Hong Kong is affiliated with the Vatican, so implicitly, it can be said that this strengthens Vatican-Sino ties," said Lo Lung-kwong, an honorary senior research fellow at the Divinity School of Chung Chi College at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Last month, Chow said that Li's invitation to Beijing underscored the mission of the Hong Kong Diocese to be a bridge

writing a separate opinion, and asked for a couple of extra days.

The challenge to mifepristone, brought by abortion foes, is the first abortion controversy to reach the nation's highest court since its conservative majority overturned Roe v. Wade 10 months ago and allowed more than a dozen states to effectively ban abortion outright.

In his majority opinion, Alito said one reason for overturning Roe was to remove federal courts from the abortion fight.

"It is time to heed the Constitution and return the issue of abortion to the people's elected representatives," he wrote.

But even with their court victory, abortion opponents returned to federal court with a new target: medication abortions, which make up more than half of all abortions in the United States.

Women seeking to end their pregnancies in the first 10 weeks without more invasive surgical abortion can take mifepristone, along with misoprostol. The FDA has eased the terms of mifepristone's use over the years, including allowing it to be sent through the mail in states that allow access.

The abortion opponents filed suit in Texas in November, asserting that FDA's original approval of mifepristone 23 years ago and subsequent changes were flawed.

They won a ruling on April 7 by US District Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk, an appointee of former President Donald Trump, revoking FDA approval of mifepristone. The judge gave the Biden administration and New York-based Danco Laboratories, mifepristone's maker, a week to appeal and seek to keep the ruling on hold.

Responding to a quick appeal, two more Trump appointees on the 5th US Circuit Court of Appeals said the FDA's original approval would stand for now.

But Judges Andrew Oldham and Kurt Enghardt said most of the rest of Kacsmaryk's ruling could take effect while the case winds through federal courts.

Their ruling would effectively nullify changes made by the FDA starting in 2016, including extending from seven to 10 weeks of pregnancy when mifepristone can be safely used.

The court also said that the drug can't be mailed or dispensed as a generic and that patients who seek it need to make three in-person visits with a doctor.

agreement on Catholic bishops has been renewed twice, most recently in October for two more years.

But in November, a feud broke out over the installation of an auxiliary bishop in Jiangxi province, which the Vatican does not recognize as a diocese; and two weeks ago Vatican News, the news portal of the Holy See, tersely reported that China had unilaterally appointed a new bishop to Shanghai.

The agreement has been harshly criticised by Hong Kong's Cardinal Joseph Zen, who was detained in May on suspicion of colluding with foreign forces under a Beijing-imposed national security law that jailed or silenced many activists.

He was released on bail and has yet to be formally charged, but he and five others were fined in a separate case in November for failing to register a now-defunct fund set up to help arrested protesters.

Brazil's Lula visits Portugal amid Ukraine tensions with EU

LISBON: Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva was set to arrive in Portugal on Friday amid heightened tensions with the European Union over his position on the war in Ukraine, following statements suggesting the invaded country and the West share responsibility for the conflict.

Lula said last weekend while travelling in the United Arab Emirates and China that both Ukraine and Russia had decided to go to war, and that the US was "stimulating" the fighting.

Earlier in the month, he irked Ukraine, the US and the EU by suggesting that Ukraine cede Crimea, which Russia seized in 2014, to end the current conflict.

Lula also welcomed Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov to Brasilia on Monday. The following day, Lula condemned the "violation of Ukraine's territorial integrity" while promoting his proposal for a club of nations, including Brazil, to mediate a peaceful resolution to the war.

Lula's trip to Portugal is an opportunity to repair some of the damage to Brazil-EU relations his comments caused, said Guilherme Casarões, a political scientist at the Getulio Vargas Foundation, a think tank and university in Sao Paulo.

"It could be an important step for Lula to show that he is really willing to adopt a position of balance or equidistance between the parties involved in the conflict, potentially allowing Brazil to play the role of mediator in the medium term," Casarões said.

Lula was expected to meet with Portugal's president and prime minister this weekend and to appear at a



Portugal-Brazil summit with various ministers.

He is also scheduled to attend a Monday prize-giving ceremony for Brazilian musician and writer Chico Buarque.

Lula plans to address Portugal's parliament on Tuesday, which is the anniversary of the 1974 Carnation Revolution that ended nearly a half-century of authoritarian rule in Portugal.

Trade will also be high on the agenda, with Lula pushing for implementation of an agreement between the European Union and the South American Mercosur bloc.

It was signed in 2019 but hasn't yet taken effect as not all EU and Mercosur member nations have ratified the agreement.

"Through this trip to Portugal, Lula is seeking to draw closer to the European Union itself," Casarões said.

"Portugal is a Brazilian ally within the European Union and can serve as a platform for Brazil to defend its position in the context of these negotiations."

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SC set to decide on abortion pill access

WASHINGTON: The Supreme Court is facing a self-imposed Friday night deadline to decide whether women's access to a widely used abortion pill will stay unchanged or be restricted while a legal challenge to its restrictive FDA approval goes on.

The justices are weighing arguments that allowing restrictions contained in lower-court rulings to take effect would severely disrupt the availability of the drug, mifepristone, which is used in the most common abortion method in the United States.

It has repeatedly been found to be safe and effective, and has been used by more than 5 million women in the US since the FDA approved it in 2000.

The Supreme Court had initially said it would decide by Wednesday whether the restrictions could take effect while the case continues.

A one-sentence order signed by Justice Samuel Alito on Wednesday gave the justices two additional days, without explanation.

The justices are scheduled to meet for a private conference Friday, where they could talk about the issue.

The additional time could be part of an effort to craft an order that has broad support among the justices.

Or one or more justices might be

writing a separate opinion, and asked for a couple of extra days.

The challenge to mifepristone, brought by abortion foes, is the first abortion controversy to reach the nation's highest court since its conservative majority overturned Roe v. Wade 10 months ago and allowed more than a dozen states to effectively ban abortion outright.

In his majority opinion, Alito said one reason for overturning Roe was to remove federal courts from the abortion fight.

"It is time to heed the Constitution and return the issue of abortion to the people's elected representatives," he wrote.

But even with their court victory, abortion opponents returned to federal court with a new target: medication abortions, which make up more than half of all abortions in the United States.

Women seeking to end their pregnancies in the first 10 weeks without more invasive surgical abortion can take mifepristone, along with misoprostol. The FDA has eased the terms of mifepristone's use over the years, including allowing it to be sent through the mail in states that allow access.

The abortion opponents filed suit

in Texas in November, asserting that FDA's original approval of mifepristone 23 years ago and subsequent changes were flawed.

They won a ruling on April 7 by US District Judge Matthew Kacsmaryk, an appointee of former President Donald Trump, revoking FDA approval of mifepristone. The judge gave the Biden administration and New York-based Danco Laboratories, mifepristone's maker, a week to appeal and seek to keep the ruling on hold.

Responding to a quick appeal, two more Trump appointees on the 5th US Circuit Court of Appeals said the FDA's original approval would stand for now.

But Judges Andrew Oldham and Kurt Enghardt said most of the rest of Kacsmaryk's ruling could take effect while the case winds through federal courts.

Their ruling would effectively nullify changes made by the FDA starting in 2016, including extending from seven to 10 weeks of pregnancy when mifepristone can be safely used.

The court also said that the drug can't be mailed or dispensed as a generic and that patients who seek it need to make three in-person visits with a doctor.

Sudan's Paramilitary Forces Agree To 72-Hour Ceasefire For Eid Holiday

KHARTOUM: Sudan's paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) said it had agreed to a 72-hour truce on humanitarian grounds from 6 a.m. (0400 GMT) on Friday, to coincide with the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr.

The capital, Khartoum, was rocked by bombing and shelling earlier on Friday. There was no immediate comment from the army and its chief, General Abdel Fattah el-Burhan, did not mention a ceasefire in a pre-recorded speech posted on the army's Facebook page.

"The truce coincides with the blessed Eid al-Fitr ... to open humanitarian corridors to evacuate citizens and give them the opportunity to greet their families," the RSF said in a statement.

Fighting between the RSF and Sudan's army erupted on Saturday, derailing an internationally backed plan for a transition to a civilian democracy four years after the fall of Islamist autocrat Omar al-



Bashir to mass protests and two years after a military coup.

The RSF said it had to act in "self-defense" to repel what it described as a coup attempt, adding that it is committed to a "complete ceasefire" during the armistice period.

At least 350 people have been killed in the power struggle between two previously allied leaders of the ruling military junta, army chief Burhan and RSF leader General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo.

The conflict has dashed hopes for progress towards democracy in Sudan, risks drawing in its neighbours and could play into regional competition between Russia and the United States.

The RSF had earlier condemned the military for what it said was new assaults.

"At this moment, when citizens are preparing to receive the first day of Eid al-Fitr, the neighbourhoods of Khartoum are waking up to the bombings

of aircrafts and heavy artillery in a sweeping attack that is directly targeting residential neighbourhoods," the RSF said early on Friday.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Thursday appealed for a ceasefire to allow civilians to reach safety.

Thousands of civilians streamed out of Khartoum as gunfire and explosions sounded on Thursday. Large numbers also crossed into Chad to flee fighting in the western region of Darfur.

A doctors' group said at least 26 people were killed and 33 were injured in El-Obeid, a city west of Khartoum, on Thursday. Witnesses there described clashes between the army and RSF troops and widespread looting.

"MILITARY SOLUTION"

Guterres, speaking to reporters after meeting virtually with the heads of the African Union, the Arab League and other organizations on Thursday, said: "There was a strong consensus on condemn-

ing ongoing fighting in Sudan and calling for cessation of hostilities as an immediate priority."

Urging a three-day ceasefire, he said civilians trapped in conflict zones should be allowed to escape and to seek medical treatment, food and other supplies. The United States endorsed the ceasefire proposal.

Burhan told Al Jazeera he would support a truce on condition it allowed citizens to move freely - something he said the RSF had prevented. He also said he saw no partner for negotiations, and "no other option but the military solution."

His rival, Dagalo, widely known as Hemedti, told Al Jazeera he was ready to implement a three-day truce. Dagalo has said several times he supports short ceasefires but each has quickly collapsed.

"We are talking about a humanitarian truce, we are talking about safe passages ... we are not talking about sitting

down with a criminal," Dagalo said, referring to Burhan.

Burhan accused Dagalo, until last week his deputy on the council that has ruled since a coup two years ago, of "a power grab". An alliance between the two men had mostly held since the overthrow of strongman Bashir, whose rule saw Sudan become an international pariah that was on the US terrorism list. The latest violence was triggered by disagreement over an internationally backed plan to form a new civilian government. Both sides accuse the other of thwarting the transition.

FIGHTING AND FLEEING

Much of the fighting has focused on the Khartoum compound housing the army headquarters and Burhan's residence. The embassy district and airport have also been the scene of clashes.

In Khartoum and sister cities Omdurman and Bahri, residents gathered on Thursday at bus terminals with suitcases.

"There's no food.

Supermarkets are empty. The situation isn't safe," said a resident who gave only his first name, Abdelmalek.

Many people remain trapped, along with thousands of foreigners in a city that has become a war zone.

Burnt-out vehicles littered the streets and buildings had gaping holes from shells. Hospitals, where bodies lie unburied, were closed.

About 10,000 to 20,000 people have taken refuge in villages along the border inside Chad, U.N. refugee agency UNHCR and the World Food Programme (WFP) said.

Even before the conflict, about a quarter of Sudan's people were facing acute hunger, but the WFP halted one of its largest global operations in the country on Saturday after three of its workers were killed.

Sudan borders seven countries and sits strategically between Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia and Africa's volatile Sahel region, so the hostilities risk fanning regional tensions.

SC agrees to hear plea for grant of uniform compensation to victims of hate crime

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Friday agreed to hear a petition seeking uniformity in grant of compensation to the victims of hate crime and mob lynching, and sought the response of the Centre, states and union territories.

A bench of Justices KM Joseph and BV Nagarathna also asked the Centre, states and UTs to inform it within four weeks by way of affidavits about the steps taken for formulating a scheme for providing relief to the families of victims of mob lynching, as directed by it in the 2018 verdict in the Tejseen Poomavai case.

It posted the matter for further hearing after eight weeks.

Advocate Javed Sheikh, appearing for petitioner Indian Muslim for Progress and Reforms (IMPAR), said some states have framed schemes pursuant to the 2018 verdict of the apex court but there was no uniformity, while many states still do not have any such scheme.

He gave the example of Rajasthan where, in the event of an earning member getting lynched by a mob, the family gets Rs 5 lakh compensation which is reduced to Rs 2.5 lakh in case of a non-earning member.

Sheikh sought a direction to the states for formulating a uniform compensation scheme.

The plea, filed through advocate Rizwan Ahmad, said the petitioner is praying for an order or direction to bring in uniformity in the grant of



compensation to the victims of hate crimes/lynching/mob lynching as the present practice of granting ex-gratia amounts by various state governments is discriminatory and contrary to the provisions of Articles 14, 15 and 21 of the Constitution of India.

It said that IMPAR also prays for an order directing the State Governments and Union Territories to provide just, fair and reasonable compensation to the victims of hate crime and mob lynching pursuant to the scheme framed by them in compliance with the direction of this court in 2018.

The petition flagged "whimsical, discriminatory and arbitrary approach" adopted by states in grant of ex-gratia to the victims of hate crime and mob lynching and the "meagre" compensation provided to them.

The plea said the compensation awarded by states in most cases depended on extraneous factors like "media coverage, political impera-

tives and the victim's religious identity".

"It is seen that the trend of awarding compensation to the victims of hate crime/mob lynching is decided based on the religious affiliation of the victims. In some cases, where the victims belong to other religious denominations, huge compensation is awarded for their losses, while in other cases where the victim belongs to a minority community, the compensation is woefully inadequate," it claimed.

The petition said such acts were not only in violation of Article 14 (equality before law) but also a breach of Article 15 which mandates non-discrimination against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them.

On June 29, 2022, it said, a man named Kanhaiya Lal Udaipuri, Rajasthan was murdered in an alleged hate crime and the next day the chief minister, while visiting the victim's family, handed over a cheque for Rs 51 Lakh. The two sons of the victim were also given government jobs, he said. The plea said on February 17, 2023, the bodies of two people from the minority community were found in a burnt car. They were killed in a most brutal and cruel manner which shook the community to the core. On March 3, 2023, the Rajasthan chief minister, while visiting the victim's family announced Rs 5 Lakh as compensation.

Amid Buzz About Leaving NCP, Ajit Pawar Skips Party Convention In Mumbai

MUMBAI: Senior Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) leader Ajit Pawar has conveyed to the party that he is unable to attend its day-long convention in Mumbai today due to his prior commitments elsewhere, which has raised eyebrows in political circles as speculation about his next political move refuse to die down.

Speaking to reporters in Pune, Ajit Pawar played down the buzz saying that he is not able to attend the NCP meeting as he has to remain present for some other programmes happening at the same time.

The NCP also said that Ajit Pawar's inability to attend the party meeting does not mean he is planning to quit the organisation.

NCP chief Sharad Pawar is scheduled to address the party meeting in the state capital in the evening. The party met started this morning.

Intense speculation is going on in Maharashtra's political circles about Ajit Pawar's growing proximity with the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Rumours about his next political move started swirling last week when he suddenly cancelled his scheduled meetings and also made comments which were seen as being soft on the BJP and Chief Minister Eknath Shinde's camp.

The BJP is part of the Shinde government.

Talking about Ajit Pawar's absence at the meeting, NCP spokesman



Clyde Crasto said the party's Mumbai event was planned a month ago.

"Ajitdada is continuously busy and he has accepted invitations to several programmes in Pune."

He expressed his inability to attend (the NCP meet). All leaders have their schedule to follow. Just because they are unable to attend one function, it does not mean they are planning to quit. He was present along with (Sharad) Pawar saheb for an 'iftar' party earlier this week in Mumbai," Mr Crasto said.

In Pune, Ajit Pawar said one has to choose between two political programmes happening at the same time.

"One should not have any doubts," he said when asked about his absence

from the party meeting in Mumbai.

Ajit Pawar, who is the Leader of Opposition in the state Legislative Assembly and a former deputy chief minister, had said on Tuesday that he would work for his party till he is alive and scotched speculation that he and a group of MLAs loyal to him might align with the ruling BJP.

When Maharashtra was under President's rule after the results of the 2019 Assembly polls were out and Shiv Sena (undivided) severed ties with ally BJP, Ajit Pawar had secretly

joined hands with Devedrera Fadnis and a government was formed with Fadnis as the chief minister and the NCP leader as his deputy. However, that government lasted for just 80 hours after Ajit Pawar resigned.

NHRC notice to UP govt, AMU VC, municipal commissioner over death of man in attack by stray dogs on varsity campus

NEW DELHI: The NHRC has issued notices to the Uttar Pradesh government, vice chancellor of the Aligarh Muslim University and the city's municipal commissioner over a man being mauled to death by stray dogs inside the varsity campus, officials said on Thursday.

Safdar Ali (65), a resident of a locality adjoining the campus, was out on a morning walk in a garden at Sir Syed Museum when the dogs attacked him on Sunday.

The National Human Rights Commission, in a statement, observed that "painful incidents" such as the one reported by the media in the instant case indicate that "there is a need to review the prevailing safeguards" as this is not a problem of any one state or Union Territory, and the "situation is grim and alarming".

A clip of the incident, which was captured on a CCTV camera, went viral on social media, it said.



The NHRC has taken suo motu cognisance of a media report, carried on April 17 that in yet another incident of stray dog attack, a 65-year-old elderly man was killed in a park inside the AMU campus in Uttar Pradesh.

Expressing serious concern over the incident, the Commission has issued notices to the chief secretary, the government of Uttar Pradesh, the vice chancellor, AMU, and the commissioner of the Aligarh Municipal Corporation, seeking a detailed report within six weeks, the statement said.

The state government is expected to inform whether any relief has been given to the next of kin of the deceased, it said.

The Commission has also called for the comments of the secretary, Animal Welfare Board of India, Union Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying on the present status of the implementation of the provisions of law and their strategies, if any, to deal with the issue of the right to life of humans and protection from stray animals in the light of the recent increasing incidents of attack by stray animals on humans without any

provocation.

The response is expected within six weeks, the statement said.

In the past too, the Commission had taken cognisance of such incidents and called for reports from the authorities.

It has been further observed that animal rights are advocated and supported in the same way as human rights because it is quite imperative to safeguard and protect animals from oppression, confinement, and abusive treatment, which they may be prone to suffer at the hands of human beings.

But on the other side, there are "constant conflicts" arising between humans and unruly animals, and these are certainly rising in number with each passing day, and that is why it is necessary for the authorities to understand the gravity and seriousness of the issue, and to take effective action in the matter, without any delay, the rights panel said.

No Crisis In Manipur BJP, Says Chief Minister N Biren Singh

IMPHAL: Manipur Chief Minister N Biren Singh on Friday asserted that there is no crisis in the state BJP.

He said this after attending a state BJP meeting in the wake of three party legislators resigning from administrative posts. Asked by reporters whether there is a crisis in the Manipur BJP unit, Mr Singh said "One minister has taken leave of absence from me. He went to Indore. Three of them are having medical treatment in Delhi. That's all. There is no crisis in the party and everyone has attended the meeting."

BJP MLA Paoman Brojen on Thursday became the third legislator to resign from an administrative post. He gave up the chairmanship of Manipur Development Society on "personal grounds." BJP legislator Karam Shivam resigned on Monday from the chairmanship of Tourism Corporation Manipur Limited complaining that he had "not been assigned any responsibility". On April 8, another MLA Thokhom Radeshaayam quit as the advisor to the chief minister citing a similar grievance.

Assam, Nagaland Agree To Go Ahead With Oil Exploration Along State Border



NEW DELHI: Assam and Nagaland Chief Ministers Himanta Biswa Sarma and Neiphiu Rio have agreed in principle to go ahead with oil exploration in areas along their disputed boundary for the economic benefit of both states.

Himanta Sarma and Neiphiu Rio reached an understanding during a meeting Thursday night, hours after Assam and Arunachal Pradesh governments signed an agreement to resolve their over five-decade-old border dispute. Assam and Nagaland are exploring all options to bring an end to the decades-old border imbroglio in an amicable manner, an Assam government statement said.

During their one-to-one discussion here, the two chief ministers discussed issues of mutual interest and collaboration on oil exploration along the interstate boundary, it said.

Mr Rio told reporters that Assam and Nagaland have in principle decided to go for an MoU on oil exploration in the disputed areas so that oil can be extracted and royalties can be shared between the neighbouring states.

"Once it is formalised, there is huge potential for exploration of oil inside Nagaland also. And to move forward as the country needs oil in a big way," he said.

Mr Sarma tweeted: "Happy to have got an opportunity to spend time with Hon'ble Chief Minister of Nagaland @Neiphiu_Rio Ji at Assam House, New Delhi. We had an engaging discussion on bringing closure to the ongoing boundary issue and other areas of mutual gains and collaboration."

The Nagaland chief minister said he had a fruitful discussion with his Assam counterpart on the out-of-court settlement of the boundary dispute with the support and cooperation of ethnic groups from both sides.

"We have discussed about our border and development issues. Because we have to work together, support one another and how to go forward," he said.

Assam and Nagaland share a 434 km border. The boundary dispute between the two states is more than six decades old and has been marked by several skirmishes. In the last major clash, in 1985 at Merapani, in present-day Golaghat district, 41 people, including 28 Assam policemen, were killed.

There have been several attempts by the Centre to resolve the issue.

Mr Rio said the governments of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh have signed an agreement on the border dispute and likewise "we are also discussing how we should settle our border dispute outside the court with the support of ethnic groups from both sides."

BJP endorses corruption, Cong after video of Eshwarappa talking to PM over phone emerges

NEW DELHI: The Congress Friday accused the BJP of endorsing corruption after Prime Minister Narendra Modi reached out to ex-Karnataka minister K S Eshwarappa who was denied a party ticket in the upcoming state assembly polls.

The Opposition party said that Prime Minister Modi congratulating Eshwarappa for not rebelling despite not being given a poll ticket "is unacceptable".

Eshwarappa stepped down as Karnataka's Rural Development and Panchayati Raj minister in April 2022. This was the fallout of a contractor, Santosh Patil, ending his own life after accusing Eshwarappa of collecting a 40 per cent commission on public works in Belagavi.

A probe later gave Eshwarappa a clean chit.

The former minister had recently conveyed to the BJP's central leadership his



wish to retire from electoral politics but is said to have sought the ticket for his son K E Kantesh. The party, however, gave the ticket to Channabasappa overlooking the senior leader's request.

The Congress on Friday said on Twitter, "This man is accused of demanding 40 per cent commission and was forced to resign over corruption charges after BJP worker Santosh Patil committed suicide." "By praising such corrupt leaders, the BJP is sending a clear message that it endorses corruption and illegal activities," it added.

Satyapal Malik that "the prime minister has no problem with corruption", Congress leader Randeep Surjewala said in Bengaluru.

"It is a sad day for India's democracy. PM Modi has put his stamp on 40 per cent corruption. He has conveyed that lives don't matter to the BJP. The PM called top BJP leader Eshwarappa for not rebelling."

"Eshwarappa is accused of demanding a 40 per cent commission and was forced to resign over corruption charges after BJP worker Santosh Patil committed suicide," Surjewala said.

The Congress leader said, "Today is a day when none less than the prime minister has committed a sacrilegious crime."

He claimed that while the prime minister spoke to Eshwarappa, he has not even bothered to speak to Santosh Patil or his family members.

Saket Court complex firing raises questions over security at Delhi courts

NEW DELHI: The firing incident at the Saket court complex on Friday morning has raised several questions on the security arrangements made by Delhi Police at the district courts in the national capital.

While the police said they have tightened the security, some lawyers called for a strict vigil at the entry gates and those entering the court premises should be frisked and their vehicles checked thoroughly.

The security personnel deployed at the court complex claimed not many lawyers get themselves frisked but some lawyers asserted they themselves offer to be checked and follow the security rules and regulations.

Police said they have increased the number of barricades inside the court complex and deployed additional paramilitary forces.

According to advocates who practice law at the court, general entry is allowed through four gates. Gate no five remains closed permanently. And through gate no 6, everyone can

exit but only judges can enter. Through gate no 1, judges can enter but no pedestrian entry is allowed.

Through gate no 2, only lawyers, police and court staff can enter.

Gates no 3 and 4 are open to all but no vehicle is allowed to enter through them. Metal detectors are placed at gates no 3 and 4. There are adequate number of CCTV cameras inside the court complex, the advocates said.

On Friday, security personnel at gate no 3 claimed they frisked everyone passing them and checked their baggages. Still, a man dressed as a lawyer and carrying a gun gained entry to the court complex and fired multiple shots at a woman over a monetary dispute involving Rs 25 lakh.

The woman received bullet injuries in her abdomen and a hand as she ran screaming around the lawyers' block to escape the attacker, an advocate who was suspended by the Saket Court Bar Association. Videos of the incident were widely circulated

online and several users questioned the security at the court complex.

One of the lawyers, who witnessed the incident, said the woman had come to the lawyers' block after hearing in the cheating case filed by her attacker had gotten over.

"When he started abusing her, I intervened and told him to not abuse since she is a woman. But he continued. Then suddenly, I don't know what happened. He took out a pistol and started firing at the woman," he said. Some lawyers claimed hundreds of them visit the court for their respective cases everyday and if each one of them is frisked, they will get delayed for work. They also said it is difficult to get every vehicle checked.

Besides the litigants, there are hundreds of lawyers who come to the court. So if each of us are checked, then our work would get delayed and there will be a huge queue. Plus even though vehicles are checked, security personnel do not check the vehicles from inside.

Trends Talk: No fortress at home

DEEPU NARAYANAN

No 'home' fortress: One of the distinct things about IPL 2023 was the return of the home-away format after Covid-enforced restrictions in the last three instalments. In a league where equal purse ensures equitable spread of talent, every win comes at a premium and more often than not, one win is what separates a side making it to or missing out on the Playoffs. In such a scenario, it is imperative for every side to make their home ground a fortress and maximise as many wins as possible from the seven league games there. This season, none of the sides have been invincible at home, with each of the ten teams losing at least one game at home. Away teams have won 16 of the first 28 matches this IPL and 13 of the last 17. The most notable of those being CSK getting beaten at Chepauk for the first time in a decade by an active IPL franchise not named Mumbai Indians.

Impact Subs a boon for weaker bowling lineups
One of the early trends of this season was the higher scoring rates thanks to the additional batting depth offered by the Impact Sub. The extra batter has now given a lifeline to sides with depleted bowling resources in particular, the likes of MI and CSK whose already thin bowling attacks have been ravaged further by injuries. Teams have realised early that part totals won't suffice while batting first - more so for sides with weak bowling attacks - and have gone hard early on. It is reflected in the higher Powerplay run rates. CSK top the Powerplay scoring rate while MI are just marginally behind RCB and RR in the list despite scoring just 29/33 in their season opener against RCB.

The theory was exemplified in CSK's batting efforts against LSG



and RCB where they kept going right from the start and lost of wickets in the middle didn't deter them from their gung-ho approach. Devon Conway expressed the same after his Player of the Match performance against RCB.

"So for us to get those big totals, it's about trying to create a strike-rate around 200+. I didn't manage to achieve that but some of the other work done by the other players like Ajinkya, Shiv, Rayudu, Moeen... guys all chipped in with really good strike-rates, and I think that's what got us to a very competitive total. And that's probably a method on a wicket like this, where it is really good to bat. You just gotta come in, try to make a quick impact and back your bowlers to do the job later on." MI attempted the same against CSK, hitting 61/1 in the Powerplay before a spin choke in the middle overs. In their back-to-back wins over DC and RCB, they broke the back of the chase inside the Powerplay itself. The extra depth in bowling by Impact Subs have offered weaker bowling attacks the flexibility to hedge the risk more evenly among their bowlers. Two of the best come from behind wins in run chases in IPL 2023 had one common factor -

the defending champions Gujarat Titans were at the receiving end of both heists. Rinku Singh pulled off a photo finish hitting five successive sixes with 28 required off the final five balls and exactly a week later Sanju Samson and Shimron Hetmyer scripted another improbable win with Royals requiring 14-an-over off the final eight overs. And Titans have no mean bowling attack - a seam bowling metronome, one of the best swing phase fast bowler, a left-arm spinning bowler, a hard length merchant and a wicket taking leg spinner, who is arguably the greatest bowler ever to play the format. Yet for a side that is considered among the better - if not the best - bowling attacks they have a below par record defending totals: four wins and five defeats when batting first which pales when compared with their exemplary record chasing (11 wins in 12 chases). In the aforementioned match against Royals, Titans hit 20 boundaries of which only seven were sixes whereas Royals hit 25, but more importantly 15 of them were sixes and Royals faced 49 dots in compared to just 33 by Titans. Remarkably, Titans have hit the fewest sixes since the start of last IPL - 107 - 14 less than the next

worst side. Titans hit 17.5% boundaries which is third from bottom while in terms of dot%, Titans' 33.6% is the lowest and their engagement rate (% of 1s, 2s & 3s of total balls faced) is again the highest - 48.9%.

This year, Titans lost both their games batting first and they lost only four wickets in the first of those while in the second three of the seven wickets they lost were off the final seven deliveries in the innings. Rahul Tewatia and Rashid Khan, two of the finest finishers from last season, have faced just 21 deliveries between them this year.

This puts question mark to the strategy by Titans which served them well in the title winning campaign last year, but the additional depth offered by Impact Player rule has neutralised it to some extent. While the opponents have unleashed the attack on Titans' bowlers, the holders haven't quite been able to reply in kind. Whether they will tinker their tried and tested methodology is something to watch out for as the season progresses. Big buy all-rounders fail to deliver the hotcakes in IPL auctions are typically seam bowling all-rounders and death bowling specialists, given the paucity of the two skillsets among the domestic talent pool. While Ben Stokes matched the all-time record with Chris Morris for a player bought in the IPL auction, rookie Cameron Green and Player of 2020 World Cup Sam Curran went one step ahead and set new records.

Add Hardik Pandya and Andre Russell who were the first retainers from their respective franchises ahead of the mega-auction, the five leading seam bowling all-rounders sit among the top 20 on the payroll this IPL edition with big things expected of them.

Mickey Arthur formally announced as Pakistan team director in part-time role

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's new team director Mickey Arthur will only be available to the team in a limited capacity over the next ten months but he will be involved in designing and overseeing strategies remotely while he also fulfills his responsibilities as head coach of Derbyshire. His appointment was formally announced by the PCB in Rawalpindi on Thursday.



Arthur is only one year into his four-year contract with Derbyshire and his reluctance to leave that role meant that it took months for him and the PCB to arrive at an arrangement to work part-time with the Pakistan team. Arthur will be available to Pakistan for only one game in this year's Asia Cup - against India - and will miss the tour to Sri Lanka and the series against Afghanistan in UAE. He will be available for the ODI World Cup in October-November, the away tour to Australia and home series against West Indies.

The PCB had also hired former South African international Morne Morkel and Andrew Puttick as bowling and batting coach, while Pakistan's former fielding coach Grant Bradburn is now the head coach. Assistant coach Abdul Rehman is the only Pakistani in the coaching group, which has been

designed to facilitate Arthur working remotely as team director.

"I am pleased that Mickey has formally re-joined the Pakistan men's cricket team with an enhanced role in which he will be responsible for formulating and implementing strategies for the upcoming assignments across all formats," the PCB's head Najam Sethi said. "Furthermore, he will also be responsible for strengthening the national team culture and identifying and grooming future stars, so that we can strengthen our bench strength and strategically secure our future."

"Having lived and worked in Pakistan during his previous tenure, Mickey knows the current players, the structure, and the system at the back of his hand. I am sure he will incorporate learnings from the previous tenure so that

he can have an even more successful second term."

Arthur's re-hiring wasn't straightforward. He wanted to stay on with Derbyshire while the board wanted him full time, and discussions stalled twice before both parties reached a consensus. At one stage, the PCB said it had moved on from Arthur, but negotiations were ongoing.

Arthur was Pakistan's head coach from 2016 to 2019, a tenure that included a Champions Trophy title in 2017 and during which Pakistan became the top ranked T20I team. They were not as successful in Test cricket under Arthur, and a league-stage exit from the 2019 World Cup led to him being replaced as head coach by former Pakistan captain Misbah-ul-Haq.

Arthur's reappointment was criticised by Misbah, who called it a "slap on Pakistan cricket."

Jofra Archer focuses on 'feeling good' as he nears Mumbai Indians return

HE DOESN'T KNOW WHEN HE WILL BE AVAILABLE BUT IS "TRYING TO PUT MYSELF IN THE BEST POSITION POSSIBLE"

MUMBAI: Jofra Archer says he is "trying to put myself in the best position possible" to return to the Mumbai Indians team after missing their last four matches as a precaution following soreness in his right elbow.

Archer, who made his return to international cricket earlier this year after a long lay-off, made his Mumbai debut in their defeat to Royal Challengers Bangalore at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium on April 2. He finished with 0 for 33 from his four overs, and has been unavailable since due to what coach Mark Boucher described as "a little niggle".

But he's expected to play again within the next week, potentially as soon as Mumbai's home fixture against Punjab Kings on Saturday night. He bowled around four overs in the nets on Thursday

afternoon, and the ECB - who have been in regular contact with Mumbai's medical staff - is expecting him to return soon.

"Obviously the last two weeks aren't exactly what you would hope for after being so fully active," Archer told ESPNcricinfo. "But it's what you expect when you've been off for a long time: the body's not going to be 100 percent straight away."

"There are going to be moments where it feels a lot more serious than it actually is. I don't know which game will be the next game, but I'm just trying to put myself in the best position possible [to play]."

"To be honest, I still want to bowl fast and stuff - but when you feel good, you bowl good. I just want to focus on feeling good at the minute." Mumbai have



invested heavily in Archer, initially signing him for INR 8 crore (€780,000 approx.) in last year's auction despite knowing that he would miss the season through injury. He has since represented MI Cape Town, their affiliate franchise in the SA20, where he played alongside his Mumbai

team-mates Dewald Brevis and Duan Jansen.

Since arriving in India, he has been working closely with Ben Langley, the former ECB lead physiotherapist who joined Mumbai as their head of sports science and medicine earlier this year. "I've been really well looked

after here. You feel at home," Archer said.

"Everyone has welcomed me with open arms. It's a great franchise and hopefully, I get the opportunity to win a few games for them. We've won more games than we've lost which is miles better than what we did last year, so everything is going well and the mood in the camp is good."

After starting the season with back-to-back defeats, Mumbai have now won three games in a row - and having watched their first two games at the Wankhede from the dugout, Archer is excited at the prospect of a potential home debut before long.

"I probably didn't have the debut that I wanted," he said, "but I do have the opportunity to debut at home. Hopefully, I can make it a proper one this time."

PSL expansion faces a few roadblocks

ISLAMABAD: Despite developing interest in new franchises in the PSL, a signed agreement in 2021 between the PCB and franchisees means no new teams can be added to the current six before the completion of the tenth season in 2025. Interest among potential new owners and within the current PCB for new franchises has been growing, understandably for the board given the revenues it generates from franchise fees. But there are several challenges that might become a cause for concern and a new stress point for the league going forward.

Although the current PCB head Najam Sethi has formally taken up the proposition of new franchisees, he has publicly opened up a discussion about the possibility of introducing at least one and a maximum of two teams. In a recent interview with local media Sethi said: "The revenues will increase and also teams will increase, and my advice to the other six franchisees is that you will not suffer any loss, but you will make a profit from this, and if the revenue decreases, then we will help you in this matter."

But a clause added in to the agreement between the board and franchisees after a protracted renegotiation of financial terms explicitly prevents franchises from being added. "The PCB agrees that it



shall not introduce a new franchise team in the PSL under the same financial model contained herein, before the tenth edition of the Tournament has concluded, whereafter the PCB may include new franchise team(s) to participate in the PSL from time to time at its sole discretion," reads the new clause 2.12 to the agreement, a copy of which ESPNcricinfo has seen.

But if a new team does come in, continues the clause, prior to the tenth season, then the share the six current franchisees receive from the central pool of income - 95% of media rights, sponsorship rights and gate money - will not be reduced. That share was one of the main outcomes from the negotiations that led to the new financial model being agreed upon, under the chairmanship of Kamiz Raja.

The PCB has not taken the matter up with franchisees formally or informally yet but ESPNcricinfo understands that the issue is likely to be on the agenda of the PSL governing council meeting next month. The sixth franchise Mullan Sultans came into being after the third edition and was sold for an annual fee of USD \$6.5million: after four seasons they are yet to break even financially.

One of the major challenges an expanded league will face is the window the PSL has in the current, cramped calendar. At the moment the league runs for 34 days and is hemmed in at one end by the BPL, the BBL and, from this year, the ILT20 and SA20. At the other end is the IPL and growing in that space could hurt the prospects attracting top foreign talent. The PSL's window itself has not always been

fixed. While February-March has been the preferred spot since 2016, it was pulled back to January-February in 2022 to accommodate the home series against Australia. And a packed international calendar means that in 2025, when Pakistan is due to host the Champions Trophy, there will be a clash of dates with the IPL. And the 2026 PSL will end up taking place fewer than seven months later, in December 2025-January 2026.

The Pakistan economy is also struggling currently, so new sponsorship may not come so easily. And for the next couple of years the league will also have to work around the Islamic month of Ramadan. The league and the month itself are two major commercial opportunities in the year and thus far have not faced major overlaps (the Islamic calendar is lunar-based so each year Ramadan starts ten days or so earlier on the Gregorian calendar). We are now entering a period, however, where there will be overlap and franchisees worry that may eat into their commercial opportunities. Another worry is the current depth of the player pool in Pakistan, especially in the top two categories, with six teams already struggling to pick players because of the depleted draft list - another two would stretch that further.

PUBLIC NOTICE

I, Bilal Ahmad Rather, F/o Afsha Bilal wants to state that my Daughter's Father and mother's name has been wrongly written as Bilal Ahmed rather (Father) and Hasena Begum (Mother) in her school record, but her actual father name and mother name as per her birth record is Bilal Ahmad Rather (Father) and Hasena Banoo (Mother). Therefore, Now I want to correct the father's name and mother's name in her school record as Bilal Ahmad Rather (Father) and Hasena Banoo (Mother). If anybody have any kind of objection regarding the same may please contact ZCO/DIET office Banihal within seven days from the date of publication of this notice.

NORTHERN RAILWAY E-Auction	
The Senior Director Commercial Manager, Northern Railway, Firzpur for and on behalf of President of India invites E-Auction for lot over Firzpur Division as per detail given below:-	
Name of work	Allotment for Parking Contract at Srinagar Railway Station over Firzpur Division for the period of three years.
Auction Catalog No.	EA-FZR-PARGG-23-12
Auction Start	08.05.2023 12:00 hours
Lot No.	Station Name
PARKING-FZR-SINA-MX-68-23-1	Srinagar
Only registered Vendors can participate. For other details please visit Railway website www.irps.gov.in	
SERVING CUSTOMERS WITH A SMILE	

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER JAL SHAKTI (PHE) MECH RURAL DIVISION JAMMU

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

e-NIT No. 11 of 2023-24 (JMM)
For and on behalf of Lieutenant Governor of J&K UT, Executive Engineer, Jal Shakti (PHE) Mech. Rural Division Jammu, invites tenders by e-tendering mode from the reputed/registered firms/individuals for the below mentioned work:-

e-NIT No. & Date.	Name of work	Est. cost (in Lakh)	Cost of document / tender fee (in Rs.)	Earnest Money Deposit	Bid validity
e-NIT No. 11 of 2023-24 (JMM)	Providing, Installation, Testing and Commissioning of IS reputed make pumping machinery along with other electrical and electro-mech. works at WSS Churta under Jal Jeevan Mission	41.00	1500/-	2% of the est. cost.	180 days

- Position of funds : Approved Under Jal Jeevan Mission (JJJM)
- Position of AAA : Accorded
- Position of T.S : Sanctioned
- Date of Publishing: 19/04/2023.
- Bid documents can be seen at and downloaded from the website <http://jtenders.gov.in> from 19/04/2023 (03:00 PM) to 21/04/2023 (12:00 PM)
- The Bids shall be deposited on the website <http://jtenders.gov.in> from 21/04/2023 (12:00 P.M) to 03/05/2023 (2:00 P.M).
- The valid bids received shall be opened online in the office of the Executive Engineer (PHE) (M) Rural Division Jammu Bids must be accompanied by bid security and cost of Tender Document as specified in column 4 & 5 of the table and shall be payable at Jammu.
- The cost of tender documents should be in form of Treasury challan in favour of Executive Engineer (PHE) (Mech.) Rural Division Jammu.
- The hard copies of cost of tender document in shape of Treasury challan, Earnest money in shape of CBS/FPN/BG and other relevant documents shall be obtained from the bidder who is declared as L1 after opening of financial cover.

DIP/J-515/23
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
JAL SHAKTI (PHE) MECH. RURAL
DIVISION JAMMU

Div Com Jammu reviews progress on Special Summary Revision in districts

JJ NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APRIL 21: Divisional Commissioner, Ramesh Kumar, chaired a meeting with District Electoral Officers to review the progress on the Special Summary Revision of Electoral Rolls. Pertinently, the date for filing claims and objections regarding the Special Summary Revision of Photo Electoral Rolls has been extended to May 6, 2023.

The Divisional Commissioner reviewed the progress achieved in the districts and inquired about the number of applications received, as well as the number of claims and objections. He instructed District Electoral Officers to conduct revisions according to guidelines and schedule, and to expedite the



process for achieving targets. He also asked them to ensure timely disposal of claims and objections. The Divisional Commissioner directed District Electoral Officers to complete the revision



of the special summary, including the addition of new voters and deletion of duplicate voters, within the extended date. He also instructed them to pass instructions to all officers and officials

District Electoral Officers were instructed to ensure that the list of Booth Level Officers (BLOs), along with their contact numbers, is uploaded on websites and pasted on notice boards for public information.

It was reported that various mega camps have been organised in districts for young voters' awareness. The Divisional Commissioner stressed organising special camps and campaigns in colleges and villages, as well as door-to-door campaigns for achieving targets. The meeting was attended by Additional Commissioner Jammu, Deputy DEOs of Jammu, Kathua and other concerned officers while all other District Election Officers participated in the meeting through video conferencing.

16th Civil Services Day celebrated at B'pora

JJ NEWS SERVICE

BANDIPORA, APRIL 21: The District Administration Bandipora today celebrated the 16th Civil Services Day to recognize the contribution of civil servants towards the development of the Nation under the theme, 'Viksit Bharat - Empowering Citizens and Reaching the last mile'. The event was presided over by the District Development Commissioner (DDC) Bandipora, Dr Owais Ahmad who lauded the efforts of civil servants in achieving developmental goals across the Nation. He emphasized the importance of public service and urged the officials to continue to work towards the welfare of the people and development of the Nation. The programme was attended by SSP Bandipora, Lakshay Sharma;

ADDC Bandipora, Ali Afsar Khan; ACR Bandipora, Shabir Ahmad Wani and other officers of the District Administration.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Owais stated that the Civil Services Day celebration provides an opportunity to reflect on the role of civil servants in the development of the district and the nation as a whole. He also appreciated the efforts of the civil servants in ensuring the smooth functioning of the government machinery. Dr. Owais said the District Administration of Bandipora has always been committed to the welfare of the people and will continue to work towards achieving the developmental goals of the district. The 16th Civil Services Day celebration is a testimony to the commitment of the civil servants towards their duty and

responsibility towards society. The program was coordinated by Program Manager DIC Bandipora Mehraj Wani. Every year, on 21st April, National Civil Services Day is celebrated in India as a token of appreciation for all officers, engaged in various public departments in the country, who work tirelessly to run India's administrative machinery. This day also acts as a reminder for civil servants, working in various departments, of the cause to serve the citizens of the country above all else. At the culmination of the event, various officers, including, ADCC, Nodal Officer Coordination, ADC, ACR, ACP, DFO, Tehsildar Bandipora, PM DIC Bandipora, ExEn PDD Bandipora/ Sumbal, DSHO, CAHO were felicitated for their meritorious contributions and services.

NCC cadets of GCW Parade conduct cleanliness drive on Tawi banks

JJ NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU, APRIL 21: NCC Cadets of 2 J&K Girls Battalion from Government College for Women, Parade Ground Jammu, organised a cleanliness drive under the Puneet Sagar Abhiyan. The drive focussed on collecting plastic waste near the bank of River Tawi at Har Ki Pauri. The aim was to increase awareness among the local population about the importance of keeping rivers, canals and seashores clean to prevent contamination of water areas. 100 NCC cadets volunteered in this drive, engaging youth in cleaning water bodies. Cadets also installed dustbins in the nearby area and interacted with local residents and shopkeepers/vendors through a street play to spread awareness about the harmful effects of littering water bodies and its impact on the environment. Various activities were held under this campaign, including rallies as well as a painting competition.

Ramban administration celebrates 16th Civil Services Day

JJ NEWS SERVICE

RAMBAN, APRIL 21: Ramban district administration celebrated the 16th Civil Services Day under the theme "Viksit Bharat - Empowering Citizens and Reaching the Last Mile".

Additional District Development Commissioner, Rajinder Sharma presided over the event and praised civil servants for their efforts in achieving developmental goals. He emphasised the importance of public service and urged officials to continue working for people's welfare and national development.

The programme was also attended by Additional Deputy Commissioner, Harbans Sharma; District Social Welfare Officer, Rahul Gupta; Chief Medical Officer and Chief Horticulture Officer, among other district administration officers.

Harbans Sharma said that the district administration is committed to people's welfare and will continue working towards district developmental goals.

National Civil Services Day is celebrated on April 21 every year, in India, to appreciate officers who work in various public departments.

Kishtwar administration celebrates Civil Services Day

JJ NEWS SERVICE

KISHTWAR, APRIL 21: District Administration Kishtwar organised a programme to commemorate Civil Services Day, dedicated to reflecting on civil servants' contributions and planning for their departments' future. The event was attended by various district officers, including ADCC Sham Lal; ADC, Jireesh Parihar; ACR, Varunjeet Singh Chakrala along with other officials from various departments.

The programme also included a live streaming of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's address on Civil Services Day.

On the occasion, the civil servants shared their experiences, achievements and commitment to serving citizens and the nation.

Div Com Kashmir inaugurates 4-month long Exhibition at Kashmir Haat

JJ NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR, APRIL 21: The Divisional Commissioner (Div Com) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar Bidhuri today inaugurated a four month long Exhibition at Kashmir Haat Srinagar.

The Exhibition will bring a diverse range of activities including Magic Shows, amusement activities, handicraft and Handloom products and food courts and much more.

The Event has been purposely started on the eve of Eid so as to attract a maximum footfall especially the Gaming zones that have been set for children.

The bid for the current season has been won by the SHARMA BROTHERS for a record amount, and it is for the first time that revenue of such extent has been generated from the Haat area.

The Div Com emphasized that such type of activities should be replicated at other spots in the Srinagar city. Director Handicrafts & Handloom Kashmir Mahmood Ahmad Shah gave a detailed brief about the activities the Department is planning to organize in the coming months at the Kashmir Haat area.

B'pora Admin books 30 traders for overcharging, Rs 20K fine recovered

JJ NEWS SERVICE



BANDIPORA, APRIL 21: The District Administration Bandipora on Friday booked almost 30 traders for violating different legal metrology rules including over charging and realized a fine of Rs 20,000 from the erring. The action was taken by the Legal Metrology Department (LMD) after complaints were received against the unscrupulous traders who during the market inspection drive in Jammu across the district were found operating in violation of the Legal Metrology laws. Officials further stated that on the directions of Deputy Commissioner Bandipora Dr Owais Ahmed, Legal Metrology Department (LMD) intensified its market checking operations in order to ensure that businesses in the area comply with legal requirements for accurate rates of commodities and weighing and measuring instruments.

The fine was collected from different traders which include Bakery, Vegetable and Mutton sellers. The shopkeepers were warned to refrain from any unfair trade practices during the auspicious occasion of Eid.

Moreover, the consumers were advised to check the various mandatory declarations on the products before purchasing them including MRP and expiry date.

Rakesh meets Maharashtra Dy CM Fadnavis, discusses issues concerning J&K

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MUMBAI, APR 21: Rakesh Mahajan, Incharge All Cells BJP J&K met Devender Fadnavis Deputy Chief Minister of Maharashtra here today and discussed multiple issues related to the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and areas of mutual interest between Maharashtra and J&K.

During the meeting between Mahajan and Fadnavis the areas of main focus remained the tremendous potential vis-a-vis trade and industries and tourism sectors of J&K in which Maharashtra can play a vital role in the common interest of the people of J&K as well as Maharashtra.

Rakesh Mahajan apprised Fadnavis that presently there is a need to set up small scale industries in Rajouri, Poonch, Bani, Besholi, Reasi, Doda, Bhandarwah and Kishtwar regions of the J&K UT and the J&K Govt is extending full support to industrialists to set up their new ventures in J&K in the form of incentives specially meant for industrial sector. He



Rakesh Mahajan also apprised the Dy CM of Maharashtra about the rich tourist potential of J&K and said it is a prominent destination for travel and hotel industry and people interested in opening new vistas of entrepreneurship in this choicest international destination can fulfill their business targets in the said sector in a very short span of time. He requested the Maharashtra leader to initiate efforts at the official level to make the entrepre-

neurs of Maharashtra as also the people aware about the opportunities awaiting them in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

He also briefed him about the ongoing activities of Party's All Cells which are playing vital role in taking the policies and programmes of the Party at grass roots level.

Mahajan asserted that the scenario in Jammu and Kashmir has changed totally since the BJP Govt came to power at the Centre especially after Abrogation of Art 370 and today there is complete normalcy in the UT with peace and prosperity ruling the roost after three decades of terrorism onslaught. He also extended an invitation to Dy CM Fadnavis to visit Jammu and Kashmir.

The Maharashtra Dy CM Fadnavis assured Mahajan that he would make all efforts to increase cooperation between Maharashtra and J&K especially in the areas of mutual interest. While thanking Mahajan for the invitation, Fadnavis assured to soon schedule a plan to visit J&K.

Akhil Bhartiya Kshatriya Mahasabha condemned attack by Pakistan sponsored Terrorists in Poonch

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JAMMU, 21 APRIL 2023: Mreegank Manhas (Aadil Manhas) UT President of Akhil Bhartiya Kshatriya Mahasabha (ABKM) & other members Strongly Condemned the attack and the dastardly work being done by terrorists through Pakistan in Poonch Area of Jammu and Kashmir is condemnable and shows cowardice. The terror attack on an Army vehicle in Poonch District, Jammu & Kashmir, Manhas said that our deepest condolences to the families who sacrificed his life for the country in Poonch terror attack. All members doing Prayers for the injured personnel for giving strength to their families to bear this irreparable loss.

The incident took place on Thursday at around 3 pm when the vehicle was fired upon by unidentified terrorists near the Bhimber Gali area. According to the Army, heavy rain and low visibility in the area were taken advantage of by the attackers. The vehicle later caught fire, likely due to a grenade attack.

The Army has deployed its Northern Command to locate the terrorists, and the injured soldier has been evacuated to a hospital for treatment. As the ABKM strongly condemn this cowardly act and request the Government of India to do the harshest work on Pakistan. So, these terrorists activities going to stopped.



MD, KPDCCL commissions 33/11 KV, 1x6.3 MVA Nihalpora Receiving station at Patan

TAKES STOCK OF UPGRADATION WORKS OF DIFFERENT RECEIVING STATIONS UNDER PROGRESS AT SHOPIAN

JJ NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR, APRIL 21: Manging Director (MD), Kashmir Power Distribution Corporation Ltd (KPDCCL), M Yasin Choudhary test charged 33/11 KV, 1x6.3 MVA Nihalpora Receiving Station thereby addressing the long pending demands of the people of Patan and Tangmarg.

The Nihalpora Receiving station outgoing feeder will feed power to the people of Patan which will decrease the overall

demand on the already existing Patan Receiving Station thus bringing respite to the people of the Patan and Tangmarg by providing better and reliable power to both the sections of the society through load division.

Its is worth mentioning here that before commissioning of Nihalpora Receiving Station, part of Tangmarg and Patan was being fed from the existing Patan Receiving station due to which the outgoing 11KV feeder was heavily overloaded specially during winters with a peak

demand of 12 MWs leading to forced curtailments.

With addition of Nihalpora Receiving Station to the system, the total load stands equally segregated between the two parts of the society by way of creation of two separate 11KV outgoing feeders instead of one, which in turn will provide better and reliable power supply to the people of Patan and Tangmarg specially during winters. Meanwhile, Managing Director, KPDCCL also visited Shopian on 19th April and took review of progress of

various electrical works being executed by Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd (PGCIL).

These include Augmentations/ Upgradations of already existing 33/11 KV Receiving stations at Landoor, Batpora and Reshipora of District Shopian under PMPD Scheme. The MD KPDCCL on spot directed the officials of PGCIL and KPDCCL to complete the augmentations within shortest period of time, so that the people of

district Shopian will be provided with a better quality of power supply round the clock and meet their long pending demands.

It is worthwhile to mention, that with these augmentations in district Shopian, the overall power handling capacity of these Receiving Stations will increase from its existing 32.6 MVA to 56.3 MVA. At both the districts, MD KPDCCL was accompanied by Senior Officials of KPDCCL and PGCIL including SE Sopore (North) and SE Pulwama (South) of KPDCCL.