

Dalai Lama

IN SHORT

UT: Work on Kargil-Zanskar road begins

LEH: Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways Nitin Gadkari has announced the beginning of the upgradation and widening work of the 230-kilometer-long Kargil-Zanskar Road in Ladakh.

With its focus on ensuring year-round accessibility, the Centre government has put its weight behind the upgradation project of the Kargil-Zanskar Intermediate Lane on National Highway 301 in Ladakh.

"This extensive project, divided into 8 packages, has seen the successful completion of Pkg 5, with Pkg 6 and 7 scheduled for this fiscal." ▶P11

INDIA's first joint public rally in MP

NEW DELHI: Taking another step in its strategic plan to take on the BJP in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls, Opposition bloc INDIA on Wednesday decided to hold their first joint public meeting in Bhopal in poll-bound Madhya Pradesh in the first week of October, and said the constituent parties will start seat-sharing talks "at the earliest."

The opposition alliance also said it will raise issues related to rising prices, unemployment, corruption and caste census.

The decisions were taken at the first meeting of the coordination committee of the INDIA grouping which was held at the residence of NCP supremo Sharad Pawar here. Twelve leaders of the 14-member panel, the highest decision ▶P11

Rs 1,650 cr for addl 75L LPG connections

NEW DELHI: The government on Wednesday allocated Rs 1,650 crore towards the release of additional 75 lakh free LPG connections under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) over three years ending March 2026.

As per the existing modalities of Ujjwala 2.0, the first refill and stove will also be provided free of cost to Ujjwala beneficiaries, Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur told reporters after the meeting of the Union Cabinet.

He said Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the extension of PMUY for the release of 75 lakh LPG connections over three years from Financial Year 2023-24 to 2025-26. "Prime" ▶P11



EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: Chairman and CEO of LAHDC Leh, Tashi Gyalson on Wednesday expressed his

Prez Murmu launches Ayushman Bhav Campaign

Accessible healthcare facilities must for UT's remote areas: LG



■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: Asserting that healthcare services play a critical role in the well-being and prosperity of a region as unique and geographically challenging as Ladakh, Lieutenant Governor of Ladakh, Brigadier Dr B D Mishra (Retired) on Wednesday

The LG was speaking at

day underlined the need for accessible and quality healthcare facilities, especially in remote areas, to meet the healthcare requirements of the local population effectively, and added that his administration was working in this direction.

Ayushman campaign to ensure optimal delivery of health schemes to every in-

tended beneficiary, including those in the last mile of India. This comprehensive healthcare initiative aims to enhance healthcare access and awareness across India and aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals 2030, focusing on "Healthy Villages." It seeks to make healthcare services, education, and support accessible to all segments of society, ensuring good health as a fundamental right.

In a significant virtual address, the Lieutenant Governor underscored the paramount importance of healthcare services and the vital need for organ donation during the launch of the event Ayushman Bhav, an official spokesperson said.

In his insightful address, Mishra stressed the critical role that healthcare services play in ensuring the well-being and prosperity of a region as unique and geographically challenging as Ladakh.

"He highlighted ▶P11

to the ministry, action taken following the previous meeting held on April 13, 2022, UCS (Utilization Certificate Statements), and funds requisition submitted for AMRUT projects, including the approval of the revised project cost for the comprehensive sewerage scheme, sewerage treatment plant in Kargil town STP Kargil, and the development of the sewerage system in the left-out areas of Leh town. Additionally, approval was sought for the 24*7 water supply project for Kargil.

Advisor Dr. Pawan Kotwal advised a ▶P11



UT Ladakh. The total indicative outlay for AMRUT 2.0, which spans five years from FY 2021-22 to FY 2025-26, amounts to Rs 2,77,000

crores, including a central share of Rs. 76,760 Crores. The presentation covered crucial aspects such as the A&E Action Plan submitted

Advisor Kotwal reviews AMRUT Projects Progress in UT Ladakh

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: Advisor, Dr Pawan Kotwal, who serves as the Chairman of UTHPSC (UT High Powered Steering Committee), chaired a pivotal meeting to assess the action plan and project status under the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) 1.0 & 2.0 in UT Ladakh, an official spokesperson said on Wednesday.

During the meeting, key officials provided a comprehensive presentation on the AMRUT Mission, highlighting the progress achieved in

to the ministry, action taken following the previous meeting held on April 13, 2022, UCS (Utilization Certificate Statements), and funds requisition submitted for AMRUT projects, including the approval of the revised project cost for the comprehensive sewerage scheme, sewerage treatment plant in Kargil town STP Kargil, and the development of the sewerage system in the left-out areas of Leh town. Additionally, approval was sought for the 24*7 water supply project for Kargil.

Advisor Dr. Pawan Kotwal advised a ▶P11



presided over the meeting, demonstrating the Ladakh administration's commitment to ensuring the successful execution of PMAY-U in the region. During the meet-

ing, he emphasized the need for collaborative efforts between various stakeholders to achieve the desired objectives of the scheme.

In an informative and in-

sightful meeting, the concerned departments of Leh and Kargil presented comprehensive and detailed presentations on the progress of PMAY-U in their respective districts. These presentations covered various aspects of the program, including beneficiary identification, funding allocation, construction progress, and challenges faced. Officials from Leh and Kargil shared insights into the allocation and utilization of funds under PMAY-U. They discussed how financial resources were being judiciously utilized to facilitate the construction ▶P11

Khirwar holds back-to-back meetings on PMAY-U, STPs

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: Principal Secretary to the Ladakh Administration, Sanjeev Khirwar on Wednesday convened back-to-back high-level meetings and reviewed the progress of a number of government schemes.

In a significant effort to further the vision of affordable housing and urban development in the Union Territory of Ladakh, Khirwar, Principal Secretary, Housing & Urban Development Department, convened a high-level meeting at the Civil Secretariat in Leh.

The Principal Secretary

presided over the meeting, demonstrating the Ladakh administration's commitment to ensuring the successful execution of PMAY-U in the region. During the meeting, he emphasized the need for collaborative efforts between various stakeholders to achieve the desired objectives of the scheme.

In an informative and in-

Gyalson anguished over delay in 220 KV Power TL to Nubra

fairs, Ghulam Mehdi; Councillor Panamik, Tsering Sangdup; Chief Engineer PDD Ladakh, SE PDD Leh, Senior Deputy Manager PG-CIL, Project Manager REC PDC Ltd., and all concerned Contractors attended the review meeting chaired by Gyalson.

CEC Gyalson thoroughly reviewed the status of civil works which include erection of towers and completion of foundation base along the targeted locations. Officials of PIA informed CEC that the agencies have so far completed the erection of ▶P11

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: Chairman and CEO of LAHDC Leh, Tashi Gyalson on Wednesday expressed his

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: Chairman and CEO of LAHDC Leh, Tashi Gyalson on Wednesday expressed his

JKBFSL opens first branch in Ladakh



■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: To facilitate investment services other than banking to the people of Ladakh, Jammu and Kashmir Bank Financial

Services Limited (JKBFSL) - a wholly owned subsidiary of J&K Bank today threw open its first branch in Ladakh UT and 13th overall branch at JK Bank Zonal Office ▶P11

The Earth News brings to you the heroes from Ladakh in this special series...



P 3

The Earth News

Vol: 01 | Issue: 227 | Title Code: LDENG00001 | Thursday, September 14, 2023 | LEH | Pages 12 | Rs. 8.00

Army colonel, major, JKP Dy SP martyred in Anantnag encounter

LG Sinha, political parties condole sacrifices

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: An Army Colonel commanding a battalion, a Major of a unit and a Deputy Superintendent of Jammu and Kashmir Police were killed in a gunfight with terrorists in the higher reaches of Kokoreng area in the south of the valley, officials said here on Wednesday.

Colonel Manpreet Singh, Commanding Officer of 19 Rashtriya Rifles, Major Ashish Dhonek, and Deputy Superintendent Humayun Bhat were critically injured in the gunfight with terrorists that ensued in the Garol area of Anantnag district in the morning hours of Wednesday.

The officers succumbed to their injuries during the treatment, the officials said.

Bhat, father of a two-month-old daughter and son of retired Inspector General of Jammu and Kashmir Police Ghulam Hasan Bhat, died due to heavy blood loss, they added.

The banned Resistance Front, believed to be a shadow group of Pakistan-



of Sena medal. Dhonek belonged to 15th Sikhs LI.

Dhonek and Bhat were also hit by bullets resulting in critical injuries, the officials said.

Senior army and police officers, GoC 15 Corps Lt General Rajiv Ghai and including DGP Dilbag Singh rushed to the spot to assess the situation.

Earlier Jammu and

Kashmir Police had posted on social media handle that an "encounter has started in #Kokernag area of #Anantnag. Officers from Army and JKP injured. Details shall follow".

Kashmir-based XV corps also gave details that "based on specific intelligence on presence of terrorists a Joint Operation was launched by #IndianArmy & @JmuKmr-Police on the ▶P11

Another terrorist killed in Rajouri encounter Pak trying hard to infiltrate foreign ultras into J&K: NAC

■ EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: Northern Army Commander Lieutenant General Upendra Dwivedi said on Wednesday that Pakistan is making full efforts to infiltrate foreign terrorists into Jammu and Kashmir to hinder the progress being made in internal security conditions in the region, even as a second terrorist was killed in an encounter with security forces, raising the death toll during the ongoing three-day search operation in a remote village in Rajouri district to three.



The NAC said that the army has tried to neutralise foreign terrorists along the Line of Control (LoC) in Rajouri and Poonch.

"The biggest thing is that Pakistan is trying to make ef-

orts from its side to send foreign terrorists here, despite the better internal conditions (security situation), so that they can create some kind of obstacle.

"This is because of the progress that we are making in Jammu and Kashmir," Lt Gen Dwivedi told reporters on the sidelines of the North Tech Symposium at the IIT campus at Jagti on the outskirts of Jammu city.

He said that in 2022, over 1.88 crore tourists visited Jammu and Kashmir. "Our efforts are to have 2.25 crore tourists this year. ▶P11

Tasty PASTA

espato
good food & entertainment

ANDHERI WEST, MUMBAI | EXCHANGE ROAD, JAMMU | SECTOR 2, CHANNI HIMMAT, JAMMU | NORTH BLOCK, BAUH PLAZA, JAMMU



BHAGAVAD GITA | Chapter 7, Verse 21

यो यो यां यां तनुं भक्तः श्रद्ध्यार्चितुमिच्छति ।
तस्य तस्याचलां श्रद्धां तामेव विदधाम्यहम् ॥ 21॥

yo yo yām yām tanum bhaktah shraddhayārchipitum ichchhati
tasya tasyāchalam shraddhām tām eva vidadhāmyaham

yah yah—whichever; yām yām—whichever; tanum—form; bhaktah—devotee; shraddhayā—with faith; architum—to worship; ichchhati—desires; tasya tasya—to him; achalam—steady; shraddhām—faith; tām—in that; eva—certainly; vidadhāmi—bestow; aham—I

yo yo yām yām tanum bhaktah shraddhayārchipitum ichchhati
tasya tasyāchalam shraddhām tām eva vidadhāmyaham

TRANSLATION

BG 7.21: Whatever celestial form a devotee seeks to worship with faith, I steady the faith of such a devotee in that form.

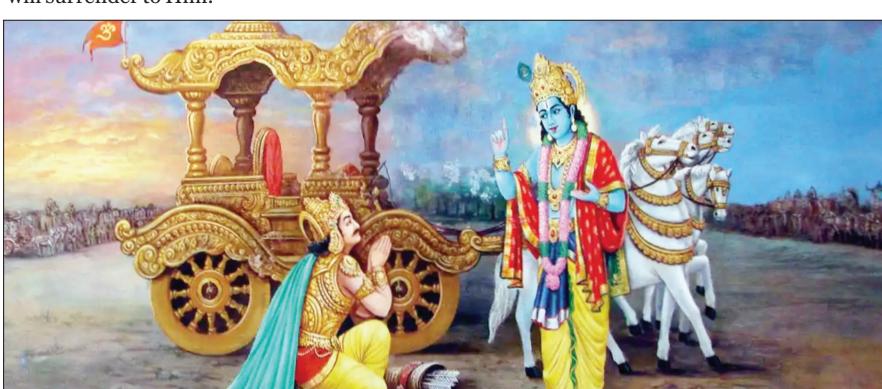
COMMENTARY

We find countless devotees around us engaging in devotion toward the celestial gods, with unflinching faith and wonder, how people develop such high faith in the lower form of worship? In this verse, Shree Krishna answers this and says that He is the creator of the faith in the celestial gods as well. When He finds people worshiping the devatās for the fulfillment of their material desires, He helps them in their devotion and steadies their faith. The ability to create shraddhā or faith is beyond the capacity of the celestial gods; it is the indwelling Paramātmā or the Supreme Soul who inspires faith in the hearts of the devotees. Later in the Bhagavad Gita verse 15.15, He states, "I am seated in the hearts of all living beings, and from Me come memory, knowledge, as well as forgetfulness. I alone am to be known by all the Vedas, am the author of the Vedant, and the knower of the meaning of the Vedas."

Shree Krishna had earlier mentioned that those who are in true-knowledge engage in the highest and the most beneficial kind of shraddhā that is to worship the Supreme Lord. Then one might ask, why the Supreme Lord creates faith in people toward the celestial gods—is it not inappropriate?

Let us look at this example of parents giving dolls to their small children. The child plays with these dolls as if they were real people and develops love and affection towards them. The parents are aware of the child's innocence, yet they encourage this play to help the child develop the qualities of love, care, and affection towards other people. These qualities will help children become socially responsible when they grow up.

Similarly, our eternal parent God is aware of our ignorance. Hence, when He finds that some souls engage in worship of the celestial gods for material gains, He helps them by steadying their faith. He is aware that this experience will help in the evolution of the soul, and once they acquire true-knowledge that the Supreme Lord is the summum bonum or the highest good of everything, they will surrender to Him.



Is it your Birthday today?

SEPTEMBER 14:

Governed by number 5 and the planet Mercury, you are active, authoritative, dashing, confident, helpful, sincere and kind hearted person. You are not very good in expressing your emotions to your lover and your tendency to behave extravagant and lazy always attracts criticism from those around you. You like to enjoy life to the fullest.

This is the right time to take important business decisions. Investments made during this phase will bring in good profits. Renovation of the house or construction related activities will also be high on your agenda. Matters related to property will bring gains. Distant travel, Oct be overseas, brings joy and happiness along with a possible reunion with an old contact. Chronic patients definitely need to be more careful about their health. Preventive medicines should not be avoided at any cost. The months of October, January, March and August will prove to be highly significant.

Figuring Out, What Next



Are you looking in every direction and feeling confused about what to do next in your life? Are you paralyzed with fear of making a move because change feels scary? Or are you feeling stagnant and going through the motions, daydreaming about how your life could be different?

Perhaps you have been contemplating your purpose to determine why you are here. You have reached a state of feeling like you just don't know what to do. Some people know early on what they will do regarding their career and family life. They go to school, start working in their chosen field, and live a happy and fulfilled life. Some people change mid-life (the mid-life crisis!).

Other people may change and re-invent themselves multiple times throughout their life. No one way is better than another. This is a good thing if you have reached a state of not knowing what to do with your life. It's a sign that things need to change—and that change is just around the corner. Whether you are facing a decision of what to do next in your personal or professional life, here are five steps you can follow:

Take Time Out

The first thing you should do, if you don't know what to do, is do nothing. Take time out to sit with the unknown. You don't have to hide away from the world by going away on a retreat for a month to sort out your life. But if you can do this, then more power to you! Taking time out could mean cutting back on non-essential tasks and activities, freeing up more time each day for you to just 'be.' Allow yourself to get still, to reconnect to your inner being. Whether you do this by spending time alone, journaling, meditation, or some other way, it's important that you clear the clutter of your mind. You can get stuck in a state of not knowing because there are too many choices. The mind is running with these choices repeatedly as possibilities, which

can be overwhelming. Take time out to realign your core values and examine your current state. Ask yourself what is really important to you in life. This is a process; you don't need to decide this minute. So take the pressure off of yourself.

Feel Your Emotions

With a little extra time to yourself, you may find that feelings that were previously hidden away or covered up because you were too busy will surface. You cannot avoid your emotions (although many people try by indulging in addictive behaviors). When you feel and examine your emotions, you find that they have something to teach you. You may experience doubt, apathy, or even panic about your future. Emotions left unattended by the conscious mind, such as anger or frustration, can manifest in your body in a physical form (e.g. upset stomach). Don't ignore them.

Explore Your Passions

With more free time and an increasing understanding of your emotions, you will want to explore what brings you joy next. Ask yourself what you feel passionate about. Maybe nothing comes to mind right away. This can feel defeating. But don't worry: you don't have to go out and save the world with a grandiose plan. What little things or activities bring you joy? What are your hobbies? Spend more time doing what you love or try something new. It will take your focus away from thinking too much about what to do with your life. When you are joyful, it sets you up to be in a position of receiving more joy—like attracts like.

Take Inspired Action

Can you recall a time in your life when you tried everything in your power to make something happen, but it just wasn't happening? Chances are that this path wasn't meant for you, or the timing wasn't right. The universe had other plans for you. As you explore your passions, it's vital for you to take inspired action.

Inspired action means you feel good about taking the next step and are moving ahead with conscious awareness. If you are just doing things because you feel you have to, you might be addicted to being busy and not even know it, and ultimately left feeling overwhelmed. If you're trying too hard to figure out your life or taking on too many new things to discover your passions, it's time to go back to step one and take a break! We are conditioned to believe that nothing can be achieved without hard work. Nothing will indeed happen without taking any action. However, the intention behind your action can make things easy or difficult for you. Line up your energy first and approach your next step from an inspired state. Life will unfold as it's meant to.

Let Go of The Outcome

You may refuse to take a step forward in life because you don't know what to expect. You don't know the outcome; therefore, fear creeps in. This keeps you in a state of inaction. But what if you let go of the outcome? How boring would life be if you knew exactly how each day would turn out from day one? There is a sense of intrigue when you don't know precisely how life will be when faced with changing direction. Don't let fear stop you from exploring possibilities. Remain open to whatever life presents. It may surprise you with an even better outcome than you could have imagined.

It's OK not to know what to do in life. Change can be scary—if you tell yourself that it is. However, change is inevitable, and it brings growth. You can't bury your head in the sand forever and ignore what change is trying to teach you. Well, you can bury your head in the sand for a while. But life has a wonderful way of encouraging (sometimes forcing) you to change when you stop going with the flow. Embrace the unknown for a while.

Word of the Day

ABSTAIN

verb | ub-STAYN

What It Means

To abstain from something is to choose to not do or have that thing. Abstain can also mean specifically "to choose not to vote." *The doctor insisted that Drew abstain from eating for at least 12 hours before his blood test.*

Ten members voted for the proposal, six members voted against it, and two abstained.

in Context

"In this impassioned plea to restore native ecosystems, landscape designer Reynolds (The Garden Awakening) sets out to recruit green 'warriors' to build ARKS, or 'Acts of Restorative Kindness,' on their land. ... Those looking to turn their gardens into ARKS should overcome 'the shame of having a messy garden'; abstain from using fungicides, pesticides, and herbicides; cut back on concrete usage in landscaping so as to 'let the earth breathe as much as possible'; and plant native flora." — Publisher's Weekly, 1 Aug. 2022

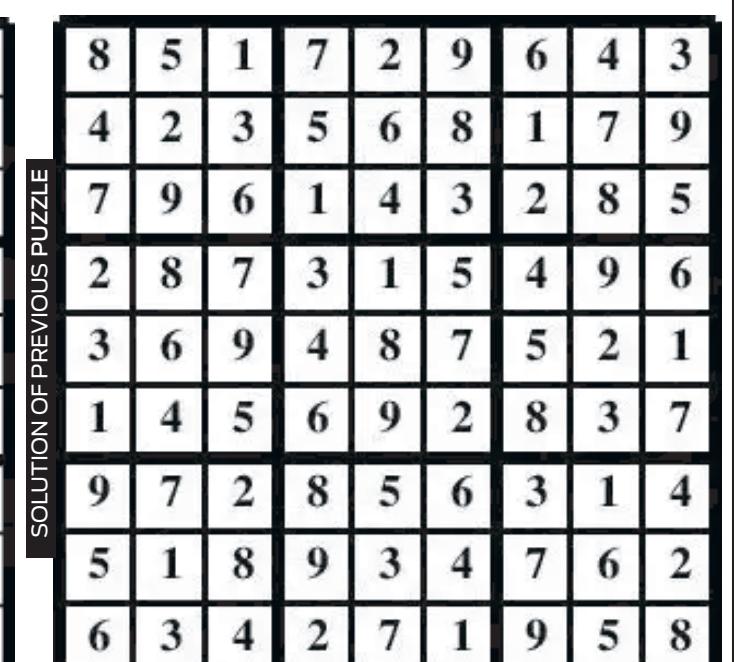
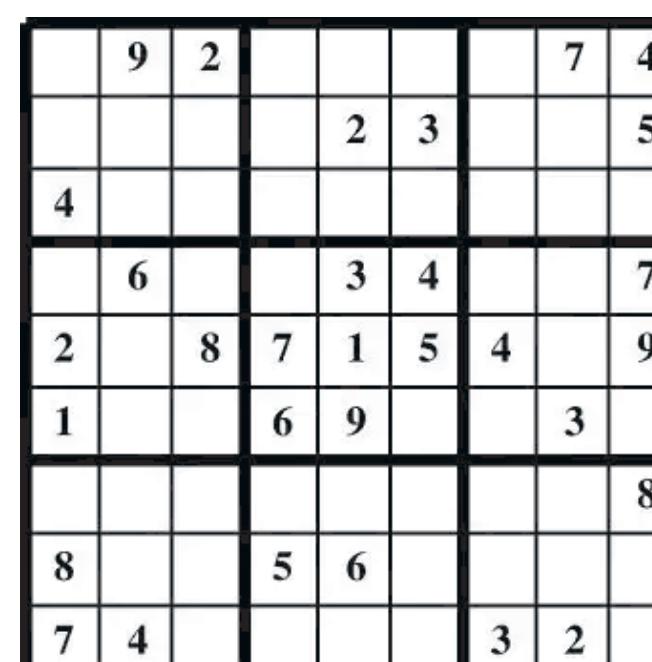
Did You Know?

If you abstain, you're consciously, and usually with effort, choosing to hold back from doing

something that you would like to do. Lucky for you, we'd never abstain from sharing a good bit of word history. Abstain traces back through Middle English and Anglo-French to the Latin verb abstinēre, which combines the prefix ab- ("from, away, off") with tenēre, a Latin verb meaning "to hold." (Spanish speakers might recognize tenēre's influence in the Spanish verb tener, meaning "to have, hold, or take.") Tenēre has many offspring in English; other descendants include contain, detain, maintain, obtain, pertain, retain, and sustain, as well as some words that don't end in -tain, such as tenant and tenacious. Abstain, like many of its cousins, has been used by English speakers since at least the 14th century.

SUDOKU PUZZLES

SOLVE THE PUZZLE AND GET HANDSOME REWARDS.
SEND YOUR SOLUTION AT: EARTHNEWSROOM@GMAIL.COM



Solved By: Kunga Chosdon

STARS & PLANETS

ARIES: Stay positive and radiant today, Aries. This is a great day for you to take control. Connect with others on group projects and feel free to offer creative input. Let the artist within take the spotlight, and cultivate this talent in any way you can. Take the time to engage in long conversations with people regarding recent events. You have a great deal to share.

TAURUS: People may be tired of your harsh attitude, Taurus. This doesn't mean you should necessarily change your ways or who you are. Just be more aware of how your words affect others. Be prepared to take the heat when people defend themselves. Don't kick people around and expect them to never kick back. There's a frenzy of warlike energy in store for you today.

GEMINI: You may feel the need to act aggressively regarding this climactic period in your life, thanks to long-term trends. There's expansive energy today encouraging you to take action, Gemini. There may be opposition, but keep in mind that you have a great deal of strength on your side. The warrior inside you is ready to fight, and you have a fire burning within.

CANCER: Try not to be harsh and judgmental today, Cancer. You don't understand others' perspectives and the codes they live by. Differences are no reason to find fault with people. You have a powerful personality that's perceptive and creative. Use these gifts in a positive, healthy manner instead of using them to get down on others and their behavior.

LEO: Long-term trends are coming to a favorable point for you, Leo. This is a good day to examine them and make some moves forward in pursuit of your goals. There's a great deal of energy working in your favor today and asking you to take charge and lead the fight toward a better reality. Get out of bed early and get moving.

VIRGO: This isn't a day to sit around and wait for good fortune to come to you, Virgo. It's time to make it happen. Get off the couch and get moving. Now that you've internalized, contemplated, and received information, it's time to direct that energy and wisdom outward. Express your creative, artistic self in any way you can.

LIBRA: Get ready for action, Libra, because today

could be a fast-paced adventure sure to keep you on your toes. Your desire to fight and conquer is probably much stronger than usual, and communication with others is the very thing that will fuel this fire. Your action-oriented instinct is likely to be bold, so use caution in all situations. Pace yourself and avoid confrontation!

SCORPIO: People may be tired of your harsh attitude, Scorpio. This doesn't mean you should necessarily change your ways or who you are. Just be more aware of how your words affect others. Be prepared to take the heat when people defend themselves. Don't kick people around and expect them to never kick back. There's a frenzy of warlike energy in store for you today.

SAGITTARIUS: Kick up your heels and get moving, Sagittarius. The fast-paced energy of the day is just what you need to get things done. You're ready to take action. You have power and strength behind you, so feel free to expand and explore this desire to conquer. New adventures are on the horizon now and you have a great opportunity to take advantage of situations that resonate with your true self.

CAPRICORN: It may seem like everyone else has a purpose and project except you, Capricorn. While everyone is charging out of the gate, you may still be unsure that this is the race you want to run. Don't push yourself into something you don't want to do. The energy of the day is fast and adventurous, but if you aren't feeling up for a fight, don't force it.

AQUARIUS: This is a great day for you, Aquarius. You'll find that long-term trends are coming together harmoniously. Connections are being made when you share good times and laughter with close friends and other people. Stick with the things that feel right. You have love and bravery to share with the world, so don't be afraid to go out and conquer. Take action and be strong.

PISCES: Don't let others push you around today, Pisces. People may talk themselves up, but there's little behind the words. Be careful that you don't misfire. This is a day to care about you and your needs. Take steps toward making sure you're getting what you want. Connect with people you've met recently. There's significance in these serendipitous meetings.



■ **ARIES:** Stay positive and radiant today, Aries. This is a great day for you to take control. Connect with others on group projects and feel free to offer creative input. Let the artist within take the spotlight, and cultivate this talent in any way you can. Take the time to engage in long conversations with people regarding recent events. You have a great deal to share.

■ **TAURUS:** People may be tired of your harsh attitude, Taurus. This doesn't mean you should necessarily change your ways or who you are. Just be more aware of how your words affect others. Be prepared to take the heat when people defend themselves. Don't kick people around and expect them to never kick back. There's a frenzy of warlike energy in store for you today.

■ **GEMINI:** You may feel the need to act aggressively regarding this climactic period in your life, thanks to long-term trends. There's expansive energy today encouraging you to take action, Gemini. There may be opposition, but keep in mind that you have a great deal of strength on your side. The warrior inside you is ready to fight, and you have a fire burning within.

■ **CANCER:** Try not to be harsh and judgmental today, Cancer. You don't understand others' perspectives and the codes they live by. Differences are no reason to find fault with people. You have a powerful personality that's perceptive and creative. Use these gifts in a positive, healthy manner instead of using them to get down on others and their behavior.

■ **LEO:** Long-term trends are coming to a favorable point for you, Leo. This is a good day to examine them and make some moves forward in pursuit of your goals. There's a great deal of energy working in your favor today and asking you to take charge and lead the fight toward a better reality. Get out of bed early and get moving.

■ **VIRGO:** This isn't a day to sit around and wait for good fortune to come to you, Virgo. It's time to make it happen. Get off the couch and get moving. Now that you've internalized, contemplated, and received information, it's time to direct that energy and wisdom outward. Express your creative, artistic self in any way you can.

■ **LIBRA:** Get ready for action, Libra, because today

could be a fast-paced adventure sure to keep you on your toes. Your desire to fight and conquer is probably much stronger than usual, and communication with others is the very thing that will fuel this fire. Your action-oriented instinct is likely to be bold, so use caution in all situations. Pace yourself and avoid confrontation!

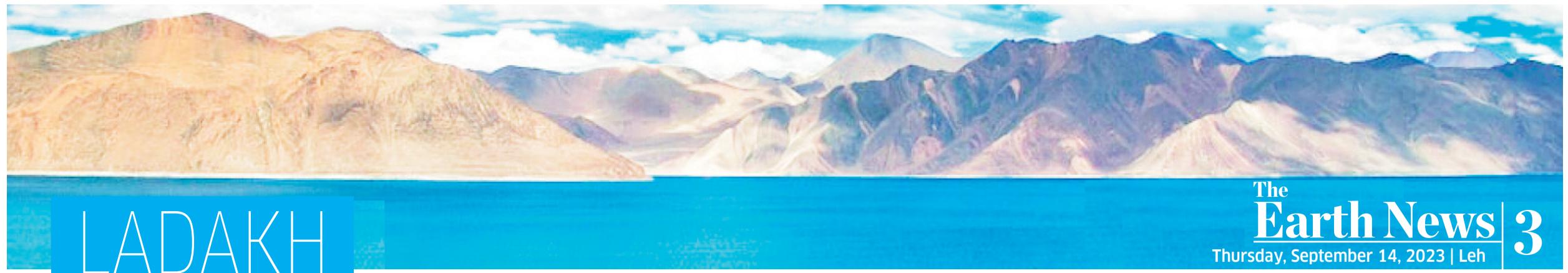
■ **SCORPIO:** People may be tired of your harsh attitude, Scorpio. This doesn't mean you should necessarily change your ways or who you are. Just be more aware of how your words affect others. Be prepared to take the heat when people defend themselves. Don't kick people around and expect them to never kick back. There's a frenzy of warlike energy in store for you today.

■ **SAGITTARIUS:** Kick up your heels and get moving, Sagittarius. The fast-paced energy of the day is just what you need to get things done. You're ready to take action. You have power and strength behind you, so feel free to expand and explore this desire to conquer. New adventures are on the horizon now and you have a great opportunity to take advantage of situations that resonate with your true self.

■ **CAPRICORN:** It may seem like everyone else has a purpose and project except you, Capricorn. While everyone is charging out of the gate, you may still be unsure that this is the race you want to run. Don't push yourself into something you don't want to do. The energy of the day is fast and adventurous, but if you aren't feeling up for a fight, don't force it.

■ **AQUARIUS:** This is a great day for you, Aquarius. You'll find that long-term trends are coming together harmoniously. Connections are being made when you share good times and laughter with close friends and other people. Stick with the things that feel right. You have love and bravery to share with the world, so don't be afraid to go out and conquer. Take action and be strong.

■ **PISCES:** Don't let others push you around today, Pisces. People may talk themselves up, but there's little behind the words. Be careful that you don't misfire. This is a day to care about you and your needs. Take steps toward making sure you're getting what you want. Connect with people you've met recently. There's significance in these serendipitous meetings.



LADAKH

In Social

@DIPR_Leh
Hon'ble LG Brig. Dr. B. D. Mishra (Retired) chaired the state-level launch of the Ayushman Bhava Campaign in Ladakh. This comprehensive healthcare initiative aims to enhance access, awareness, and well-being for all. #AyushmanBhava #HealthForAll #LadakhHealthcare @lg_ladakh

@DilipGhoshBJP
Defense minister Shri Rajnath Singh laid the foundation stone for an airfield in eastern Ladakh. The airfield, being built at a cost of ₹219 crore, will be one of the highest in the world for fighter jets at a height of 13,700 feet.

LUNA-2:
On this day in 1959, Luna-2 landed on the surface of the Moon. It was the first man-made object to reach the surface of the Moon, and first to make contact with another celestial body. This started the space competition in the Soviet Union and America.

URBAN AREAS:
In Urban areas of union territory of Ladakh, 95.6% is the percentage of Mothers whose last birth was protected against neonatal tetanus in Urban areas according to NFHS-5.

SPEED LIMIT
This sign designates the speed, as specified in the sign, of traffic on road. The limit specified must be invariable followed to avoid penal action and accidents on the road.

95



50

In History

In Numbers

Traffic Signs

Ayushman Bhava health campaign launched at CHC Sankoo Kargil

SANKOO: Ayushman Bhava Campaign, a nationwide initiative of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) was launched at Community Health Centre Sankoo, Kargil on Wednesday.

Ayushman Bhav is an initiative with an objective to saturate all health schemes.

During the virtual launching ceremony among those present Sub Divisional Magistrate (SDM) Sankoo Madam Kaneez Fatima, Block Medical Officer Sankoo Dr Ghulam Hussain, Dr Imtiaz Ali Surgen, Dr Ashiq Hussain Dental Surgeon, Dr Syed Abul Hassan RBSK Medical Officer, Paramedics staffs, RBSK Team, ASHA's and AWW's.



NOTABLES

The Earth News

brings to you the notables from Ladakh. In this series, we are covering the stories of the award winners, prominent personalities, social workers and activists from the union territory. Let us know more of them.

This year Chewang Rinchen was conferred with UT's highest honour. Chewang Rinchen has been in government service since 9th July 2007 and is now posted as Head Assistant in the District and Employment Counselling Centre Leh and currently working in the General Administration Department, UT Secretariat. He has shown great zeal, enthusiasm and dedication since day one of his duty. His commitment towards his official duties includes his humility, sincerity and integrity with which he carries out every assignment, never halting to work.

The official assisted in fast tracking and streamlining recruitments in his earlier postings in Leh Autonomous Hill Development Subordinate Services Recruitment Board, recruiting candidates against various categories of District Cadre posts since 2007. In his present tenure in General Administration Department he meticulously assisted in finalizing the Recruitment Rules of all the Subordinate Services/cadres of the UT Administration.

His utmost dedication, professionalism and untiring commitment toward his duty have been appreciated by several Deputy Commissioners and also recommended for the State Awards (erstwhile J&K) for the Year 2014, 2016 and 2017. He was also conferred with District Award on the eve of Republic Day 2014 for his meritorious public service.

The awards were instituted in the year 2021 to acknowledge and honour the outstanding achievements of individuals and organizations who have made significant contributions in their respective fields and brought recognition to Ladakh.



CHEWANG RINCHIN

Dushyant Goutam, Ravinder Raina others pay tributes to Tika Lal Taploo

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

JAMMU: BJP Kashmir Displaced District (KDD) observed Martyrs Day at BJP headquarter, Trikuta Nagar Jammu to pay floral tributes to Amar Shaheed Tika Lal Taploo on his 35th Shaheedi Divas.

Dushyant Kumar Gautam, BJP National General Secretary, J&K BJP President Ravinder Raina and General Secretary (Org.) Ashok Koul chiefly addressed the tributes programme.

Former MLC Ajay Bharti (BJP Spokesperson & Prabhari KDD), President KDD Chand Ji Bhat, Seh-Prabhari Hira Lal Bhat were amongst the other prominent present on the occasion.

Respectful homage was paid to Amar Shaheed Tika Lal Taploo Ji, Pt. Prem Nath Bhat and to all those martyrs who attained martyrdom during the last 34 years in J&K including Army, Paramilitary, Police Personnel while fighting anti-national & Pakistan sponsored terrorists.

Two minutes of silence was observed as a mark of respect to martyrs. A documentary film on Amar



Shaheed Tika Lal Taploo was also shown on the occasion and Martyr's Photo Gallery set up by KDD Yuva Morcha.

Dushyant Kumar Gautam while paying tributes to Amar Shaheed Tika Lal Taploo termed him the tallest nationalist leader of Kashmir, who was known to all communities and earned love & respect from all the sects of the society. His supreme sacrifice for the nation will always be remembered.

Ravinder Raina said that he was a prominent figure of BJP in Kashmir and his aim was to strengthen the nationalist forces and defeat the design of anti-national forces. He was a popular leader among all communities because he was always available to needy people for help irrespective of caste, creed or religion.

Ashok Koul said that he was a great leader of BJP, social activist and sympathetic friend of the poor & needy. He was popularly called

as "Lala" by muslim community and his popularity among Muslims became a major challenge for terrorists. Chand Ji Bhat threw light on his life and said Tika Lal joined Kashmir Bar Association to fight for justice for poor, downtrodden people, without charging any fee. He was a long time member of RSS.

On this occasion, 12 families of martyrs were honoured and a citation and shawl was given to each martyr family.

Seminar on "Entrepreneurship & Startup" held at GDC Ramgarh

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SAMBA: Government Degree College Ramgarh in collaboration with JK Entrepreneurship Development Institute, Samba organized a one day seminar on the topic "Entrepreneurship and Start-Up" here today.

The programme was organized under the guidance of College Principal Prof. (Dr.) Geetanjali Andotra. On the onset of the event, a welcome address was delivered by Prof. Seema Sharma, convenor of the event.

She said that in an age defined by dynamic market shifts and technological revolutions, the spirit of entrepreneurship continues to be a beacon of hope and innovation. She further said today we shine a spotlight on the vitality of start-up ecosystems and the transformative effect they have on economies and society worldwide.

Vishal Ray, In-charge Start-Up and incubation Centre, and Divisional Officer Jammu and Virtpat Singh Slathia, District Nodal Officer, Samba were the resource persons.

Vishal Ray in his presentation shed light on the importance of innovation in education. He said that as he looks to the future, it is clear that entrepreneurship and start-ups will remain at the four fronts of progress. They hold the promise of a brighter, more innovative future for all.



Virtpat Singh Slathia also said that start-ups are not just business ventures, they are the vanguards of innovation and proponents of visionary ideas.

Dr. Aditi Khajuria, convenor of IQAC cell also said that we are dedicated to forcing innovation, in empowering entrepreneurship and driving positive change in our community.

The event was compared by Kirandeep Kour and Chahat of Semester 3rd.

The faculty members present on the occasion were Dr. Aditi Khajuria, Prof. Seema Sharma, Dr. Sandeep Kumar, Dr. Shamsher Lal, Prof. Risha Kumari, Dr. Ekta Rani, Dr. Paramjeet Kour, Dr. Shivali Choudhary, Priya Sharma, Sunil Kumar and Anil Sharma.

GDC Kishtwar Students take out rally to pay tributes to Martyrs

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

KISHTWAR: Government Degree College Kishtwar organized a student rally from the college premises to Shaheed Chowk to pay tributes to the martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the establishment of the college.

The rally served as a significant event to honor the memory of four individuals who made the ultimate sacrifice during an agitation in 1974 demanding a college in Kishtwar.

Led by the Principal of the College, Dr. Jyoti Parihar, the rally saw enthusiastic participation from students, faculty members, and staff. Marching from the college premises to Shaheed Chowk, the participants expressed their heartfelt gratitude and remembrance to the noble souls who selflessly laid down their lives in the pursuit of higher

education in Kishtwar.

Dr. Jyoti Parihar addressed the students during the commemorative event, highlighting the significance of the sacrifice made by the martyrs and the subsequent establishment of Government Degree College Kishtwar. She emphasized the importance of education and the role it plays in shaping a bright future for generations to come.

The establishment of Government Degree College Kishtwar stands as a testament to the unwavering determination and sacrifice of these four esteemed individuals. The college continues to provide quality education and holistic development opportunities to students in Kishtwar and surrounding areas.

The Martyrs' Rally served as a platform for the college community to remember and honor the sacrifice made by these four noble souls.

JU's Poonch Campus students showcase exceptional art, craft creations

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

POONCH: The talented students of the Department of Sericulture Poonch Campus, University of Jammu have once again demonstrated their artistic prowess by crafting a remarkable array of art and craft items. In a delightful display of creativity and skill, the students have produced an impressive collection of handmade crafts that reflect their dedication and passion for the arts.

The event organized by Poonch Campus University of Jammu, featured a wide range of art and craft items,



including bouquets, wall hanging rosette, Saraswati painting and other forms of creative expression. These creations are a testament to the creative talent flourishing within the Poonch Campus.

This art and craft event provided a platform for students to not only showcase their artistic abilities but also to explore their entrepreneurial skills as many of the items were available for purchase.

Director Poonch Campus Prof. Rakesh Vaid expressed great pride in the students' achievements, saying, "Our students have once again demonstrated their incredible talents in the realm of art and craft."

NOTICE

I, Ranuka Devi Vaddemanu spouse of No. 15671046W L/Hav P Anjaneyulu V, presently posted at Unit 3 IDSR C/O 56 APO have changed my name from Ranuka Devi Vaddemanu to Vaddemani Renuka Devi.

NOTICE

I, Bavrica Kour Sudan declare that my Father's Name Is Wrongly Written In my 10th And 12th Marksheet as Ranjeet Singh Sudan. The correct name is Ranjeet Singh. Now I am applying for the correction of the same. Objection if any may be conveyed to concerned authorities within 7 days from publication of this notice.

The Jammu & Kashmir Board of School Education
Rehari Colony, Jammu (Nov. To Apr.); Fax -0191-2583494, 2582704
Bemina, Srinagar (May-Oct); Fax- 0194-2494264, 2494948
E-mail: jsgeneral_id@jkbose.co.in

PUBLIC NOTICE
I have appeared in Class S.S.E (10th) under Roll number/s 4802114 Session Year Annual 2020/ 5/z respectively through the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education, due to the error committed by the concerned School/ Parent, My Mother's Name is recorded incorrect as Rita Devi instead of Rita Sharma correct name.

Now, I have applied for Correction/Rectification of error in the Jammu & Kashmir Board of School Education, Rehari Colony, Jammu, if any person has any objection in this regard may file the same in the Office of the Deputy/Assistant Secretary Certificates JD, within Seven days from the date of issuance of this Notice. After the expiry of the said period No Objection shall be entertained. This is published for the information of the General Public.

Name Sourav Sharma
Father Name Manohar Lal
Mother Name Rita Sharma.
Address: R/o Patrata Tehsil Sunderban, Rajouri.

The Jammu & Kashmir Board of School Education
Rehari Colony, Jammu (Nov. To Apr.); Fax -0191-2583494, 2582704
Bemina, Srinagar (May-Oct); Fax- 0194-2494264, 2494948
E-mail: jsgeneral_id@jkbose.co.in

PUBLIC NOTICE
I have appeared in Class S.S.E (10th) under Roll number/s 4802056 Session Year Annual 2017/ 5/z respectively through the Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education, due to the error committed by the concerned School/ Parent, My Mother's Name is recorded incorrect as Rita Devi instead of Rita Sharma correct name.

Now, I have applied for Correction/Rectification of error in the Jammu & Kashmir Board of School Education, Rehari Colony, Jammu, if any person has any objection in this regard may file the same in the Office of the Deputy/Assistant Secretary Certificates JD, within Seven days from the date of issuance of this Notice. After the expiry of the said period No Objection shall be entertained. This is published for the information of the General Public.

Name Minal Sharma
Father Name Manohar Lal
Mother Name Rita Sharma.
Address: R/o Patrata Tehsil Sunderban, Rajouri.

UNION TERRITORY OF JAMMU & KASHMIR DIRECTORATE OF HEALTH SERVICES JAMMU
(Near MLA Hostel, Indira Chowk Jammu, J&K, Pin: 180001
E-Mail: dhsjammu@rediffmail.com, dhsjammu@gmail.com
Tel. No.: 0191- 2546338, 0191-2549632 Fax No: 0191- 2549632

Smt. Anu Radha, FMPHW, (NTPHC Dudu, Basantgarh)
W/o Sh. Vinod Kumar Gupta,
R/o Ward No. 4, Kashyap Mohalla, Ramnagar,
Tehsil Ramnagar, District Udhampur
PIN 182122

No: - DHSJ/Est-4/Notice/ 9283-86

Dated: 11 /09/2023

Subject: - Un-Authorized Absence from Duty - notice thereof.

Whereas, Block Medical Officer, Basantgarh vide letter No. BMO/Bgh/438-39 dated 29-08-2023 and Chief Medical Officer, Udhampur endorsement No. CMO-U/6135 dated 09-09-2023 it is intimated that you are absent from duty w.e.f. 23-11-2019 onwards without any information; and

Whereas, two notices have been served upon you by the Block Medical Officer, Basantgarh vide Nos. BMO/Bgh/556-59 dated 11-09-2021 and DHU/R2/2022-23/837-41 dated 20-12-2022 with the directions to resume your duties immediately, but you have not joined till date; and

Whereas, continued absence from duties by a Government servant attracts action as warranted in terms of article 128 of J&K Civil Services Rules (Volume -I).

Now, you are once again directed to resume your duties within 10 days from the date of issuance of this notice, failing which, it will be presumed that you have nothing to say in your defense and your case shall be initiated in terms of article 128 of J&K Civil Services Rules (Volume -I).

Sd/-
(Dr. Rajeev K Sharma)
Director Health Services
Jammu

DIP/J-8182/23

Bank of Baroda launches 'BOB Ke Sang Tyohaar Ki Umang' festive campaign

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

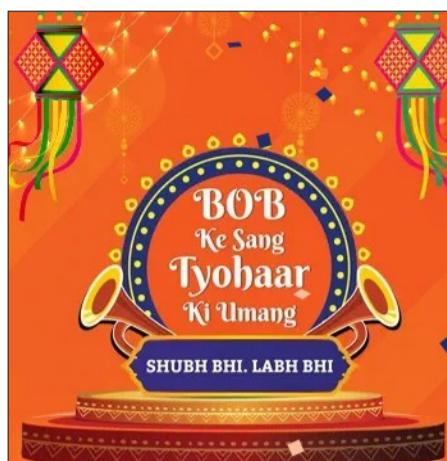
LEH: As the much-awaited festive season begins, Bank of Baroda (Bank), one of India's leading public sector banks, Wednesday announced the launch of "BOB Ke Sang Tyohaar Ki Umang" festive campaign, which will run up to 31st December, 2023.

Bank of Baroda's festival offers include the launch of 4 new savings accounts with a host of benefits & concessions and attractive interest rate offers on Home, Car, Personal & Education Loans. The Bank has also tied up with Top Brands across categories such as Electronics, Travel and Food to provide festive offers and discounts for its Debit and Credit Card holders.

During the festive period, Bank of Baroda Home Loans will be available at a highly competitive rate of 8.40% p.a. onwards – with complete waiver of processing fees. Baroda Car Loans start at 8.70% p.a. onwards nil processing fee. On Education Loans, the Bank has introduced a special rate beginning at 8.55% p.a., a discount of up to 60 basis points, and without collateral for students who have secured admissions in identified premier educational institutions in the country.

Baroda Personal Loans start at 10.10% p.a. – a discount of up to 80 basis points, with nil processing fee and higher loan limits up to Rs 20 lakh. The Bank has introduced a fixed rate of interest option in Personal & Car Loans and borrowers can now choose between fixed and floating rate of interest.

The Bank has also introduced a range of Savings Accounts for the benefit of its customers. These include the bob LITE Savings Account – a Lifetime No Minimum Balance Account; the BOB BRO Savings Account – a



Zero Balance Savings Account for Students (16 to 25 years), the My Family My Bank/ BOB Parivar Account – a Family Savings Account designed to meet the needs of the entire family and the Baroda NRI PowerPack Account.

Debadatta Chand, Managing Director & CEO, Bank of Baroda, said, "The festive season is upon us and we are already seeing the early signs of a spur in demand with high-frequency indicators such as car sales and credit card spends registering record highs. Bank of Baroda's festive campaign 'BOB Ke Sang Tyohaar Ki Umang' brings together a suite of attractive offerings across savings accounts, loans, and credit & debit cards.

These attractive festive offers coupled with the convenience of our digital platforms will make the festive season even more rewarding and joyous for people, thereby giving a significant boost to demand."

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD (R&B) DIVISION REASI

CORRIGENDUM

Subject:- 1.. CONSTRUCTION OF WORK AT MOHALLA MASJID AT W.NO. 07 REASI WITH COMPOUND WALL AND OTHER ALLIED WORKS 2.CONSTRUCTION OF CRATED R/WALL, IN KM 1ST RD 800-900 AND KM 3RD RD 850-900 ON DUB TO RIYALA ROAD.

Reference:- This office e-NIT No. 60 of 2023-24 Dated 22-08-2023

In view of poor response and to get a good competition in the tender, the above subject work and referred e-nit dates are hereby extended as below.

| Read as | Instead In |
|---|---|
| Bid Submission End Date | Bid Submission End Date |
| 16-09-2023 up to 16.00 P.M | 12-09-2023 up to 16.00 P.M |
| Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online) | Date & time of opening of Technical Bids (Online) |
| 18-09-2023 at 12.00 noon in the Office of the Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Reasi | 13-09-2023 at 12.00 noon in the Office of the Executive Engineer PWD (R&B) Division Reasi |

No:- 4309-12

Dated: 12/09/2023

DIP/J-8150/23

SD/-
(Er. Rajesh Sharma)
Executive Engineer
PWD(R&B) Division
Reasi.

| S. No | Name of Work | Name of Division | Estimated Cost (Rs. in lacs) | Cost of document (Rs.) | Earnest Money | Time Allowed for completion | Time and date of opening of tender | Class of Contractor |
|-------|---|------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 1 | Cleaning of Water Tanks and Septic Tanks of Vikas Bhawan, Pargati Bhawan, Division | | | | | | | |

Residential, handholding training for laboratory staff of PHED commences

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: The Administration Secretary, PHE Ladakh, Michael M. D'Souza, inaugurated the three-day residential training at Leh Wednesday.

The training programme is being organised for the staffs of drinking water quality testing laboratories of PHE Department Union Territory of Ladakh as part of National Jal Jeevan Mission (NJJM), launched by the Government of India for strengthening water quality monitoring and surveillance in rural areas of the country.

The training cum handholding programme is being organized by Shriram Institute for Industrial Research (SRI) a non-profit organization of Delhi from 13-15 September, 2023. The Institute is empaneled by Department of Drinking Water & Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India for capacity building of the PHE staffs of the country involved



in water quality testing.

The Secretary, PHED, Michael M. D'Souza emphasized on the importance of Water quality testing and role of laboratory personnel. He motivated the PHED laboratory staffs of the UT of Ladakh to learn, enhance their knowledge and fully utilize the training.

Highlighting the objectives of JJM, He assured UT administration's support in conducting more such trainings to develop the competency of laboratory staff in various aspects of Water quality monitoring and surveillance in future.

Dr Mukul Das, Director, SRI, during his welcome ad-

dress elaborated on need of regular training to strengthen the water quality testing laboratories to generate reliable data and pivotal role being played by SRI in this direction. He thanked Ministry of Jal Shakti for providing SRI the opportunity to impart training to the water quality testing staff of Rural

Water Supplies country.

Inaugural ceremony was also addressed by Dr. Vivek N. Singh, Sr. Asst. Director & Chief and Head of Department, Environment, Dr Jagdish Kumar, Sr. Asst. Director & Chief of SRI. The program was attended by Chief Chemist, Water Quality Laboratory, Urgain Nurbooo; expert faculty of Institute, Rajneesh Sharma, Gaurav and Dushyant Singh.

About 60 participants from Kargil & Leh district are attending training.

During these three days training will be delivered on aspects like water quality testing procedures to test physico-chemical and microbiological parameters; applications of regular and advanced instruments; optimal utilization of laboratory resources; measurement uncertainty; strengthening community-based water quality monitoring and surveillance and Quality Management System as per ISO/IEC 17025, etc.



Secretary for modernization of all animal farms with latest technologies, techniques

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

LEH: Secretary of the Animal, Sheep Husbandry Department, UT Ladakh, Ravinder Kumar visited various farms of the Animal Husbandry Department in Leh Wednesday to assess the progress of infrastructure construction under the Capex/Special Development Package.

The Secretary empha-

sized the need to complete all infrastructure projects on time and directed the modernization of all farms using the latest techniques and technologies.

He praised the department's dedication and effort in controlling the stray dog population in Ladakh through comprehensive Animal Birth Control and Anti Rabies programs.

He directed the de-

partment to make all farm products like milk, egg, and poultry available to the public by setting up sales outlets at farms and exploring the entrepreneurship model of poultry and dairy development in UT Ladakh.

Dr Mohd Iqbal, Director of Animal Husbandry and Chief Animal Husbandry Officer, Leh accompanied the Secretary during the visit.

Kargil Police holds sensitization program at Kharbu, Bhimbhat

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

KARGIL: Ladakh Police stands committed to providing unwavering support and assistance to all women, ensuring their safety and security.

Women Police Station Kargil, along with social workers from Special Cell for Women Kargil, organized a program at Kharbu and Bhimbhat Drass, Kargil district.



Chuchot, Khaltse witness Ayushman Bhava launch

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

CHUCHOT: The virtual launch of 'Ayushman Bhava' by President Draupadi Murmu was witnessed by Naib Tehsildar Chuchot, Sarpanch Chuchot Shamma, Nambardar Chuchot Shamma, Member Women's Alliance Chuchot, and a multitude of dedicated individuals.

Among the attendees were the staff of HWC PHC, Medical Officer ICDS, Block Medical Officer, local residents, and ASHAs, all of whom joined in celebrating this significant healthcare initiative.

Naib Tehsildar, Attaullah addressed the gathering, shedding light on the vital task of including individuals who are not accounted for in the census. He assured the attendees of plans to organise a camp in collaboration with the health department to rectify this issue.

Block Medical Officer, Dr. Rinchen provided an insightful briefing on 'Ayushman Apke Dwar 3.0,' emphasizing the significance of the Ayushman Health Mela and Ayushman Sabha in reaching out to communities and delivering essential healthcare services.

All participants and PRIs expressed their commitment to supporting and cooperating with the Ayushman Bhava initiative.

The event concluded with the National Anthem, symbolizing the unity and commitment of

all present towards the cause of healthcare accessibility and inclusivity.

Meanwhile, in a significant milestone for healthcare accessibility, the virtual inauguration of 'Ayushman Bhava' by the President of India, Draupadi Murmu was witnessed at the Community Health Center (CHC) in Khaltse.

The event saw the presence of esteemed officials and dedicated individuals, including Incharge SDM, Khaltse, Tanveer Ahmad; Block Medical Officer, Khaltse, Dr. Nurbooo Angchuk; Block Development Officer, Khaltse, Pankaj Rajput; Zonal Education Officer, Khaltse, along with PRIs, paramedical staff, and members from ICDS.

The launch of 'Ayushman Bhava' reaffirms the commitment to extending quality healthcare services and ensuring the well-being of the community.

Climate changes and its impact on the alpine region of Alaska

■ AMAN GOUD

Alaska is facing a significant challenge with climate change, as it is experiencing warming at a rate that is two to three times faster than the global average. This accelerated warming is primarily due to its northern location and the seasonal variations in sea ice. The primary impacts of climate change in Alaska are a direct result of these rising temperatures. These effects include a noticeable decrease in ice coverage, such as the shrinking of glaciers, the retreat of sea ice, and the thawing of permafrost. Additionally, many areas in Alaska are seeing an increase in precipitation, with a shift from snowfall to more frequent rainfall.

Climate change is an imminent crisis that is fundamentally reshaping global temperatures. The main catalyst behind this shift in climate is the accelerated emission of greenhouse gases, which is happening at a much faster rate than it should be.

Permafrost and microorganisms

Permafrost and microorganisms are essential components of Denali National Park's ecosystem, and they play crucial roles in shaping its environment. Permafrost provides stability to the landscape and influences various ecological processes. It serves as a foundation for vegetation, helps regulate water flow and drainage, and stores organic matter and ancient carbon. Climate change, with its rising temperatures, is causing permafrost to thaw in many areas, including Denali. This thawing has significant consequences, such as soil subsidence, changes in plant communities, and the release of stored carbon into the atmosphere as greenhouse gases (GHGs).

The Matanuska Glacier at present is approximately a 27 mile long and four mile wide valley glacier. The Knik Glacier met with the Matanuska and formed a lobed shape during this time period. Geological evidence points to these two glaciers retreating in two separate phases. Glacial ablation occurred through stagnation with the Matanuska. This is to say that the glacier was melting faster than it could form.

So, thawing can have significant consequences for the park's ecological balance and overall health. Understanding and monitoring these processes are essential for managing and conserving Denali's unique and fragile environment in the face of ongoing climate change.

Denali and other mountains

Denali National Park houses a diverse and delicate ecosystem intricately linked to its unique alpine environment. However, this ecosystem is encountering significant challenges due to the consequences of climate change. Denali's high-altitude landscape is defined by permafrost, a layer of permanently frozen soil that plays a vital role in upholding ecosystem stability. As temperatures increase, permafrost in Denali is thawing, resulting in alterations in soil composition. The thawing permafrost can lead to soil subsidence, creating uneven terrain that impacts plant growth and drainage patterns. Changes in permafrost can also prompt shifts in vegetation and plant communities, causing them to thrive at higher altitudes.

These alterations in weather and soil types can disrupt the abundance of specific plants that herbivores and omnivores rely on for sustenance.

Microorganisms, including bacteria and fungi, serve as essential components of Denali's ecosystem, fulfilling critical functions in nutrient cycling and soil health. Climate change can affect these microorganisms in various ways. Elevated temperatures can influence the activity and composition of microbial communities, potentially impacting nutrient availability for plants. Changes in precipitation patterns and soil moisture levels may disrupt microbial processes and nutrient cycling. The thawing permafrost can release ancient carbon stores, influencing microbial decomposition and the release of greenhouse gases. Additionally, shifts in plant communities and litter decomposition rates can modify the types and quantities of organic matter accessible to microorganisms.

Therefore, Denali National Park's fragile ecosystem faces substantial challenges and these changes have far-reaching implications for the park's wildlife and overall ecological balance.

Vegetation

The vegetation within Denali's ecosystem is not only diverse but also essential, as it forms the fundamental building blocks of the food web and provides both habitat and sustenance for the park's wildlife. Nevertheless, the looming threat of climate change is poised to have a significant impact on these vital plant communities. Rising temperatures have the potential to disrupt the established order by altering growing seasons, shifting the ranges of various plant species, and disrupting crucial plant-pollinator interactions. Furthermore, changing precipitation patterns and increased evaporation due to climate change can subject plants to water stress, potentially impeding their growth. Additionally, the warmer conditions may create more favorable environments for pests and diseases, posing further challenges to plant health.

These various changes can result in shifts in the composition of plant species within Denali's ecosystem, which can have far-reaching consequences for the park's wildlife and overall ecosystem health. To address these formidable challenges, proactive conservation efforts are imperative. These efforts should focus on preserving the rich diversity of plant species, safeguarding critical habitats, and implementing strategies to mitigate the broader impacts of climate change on Denali's plant communities. In doing so, we can work towards maintaining the delicate balance of this unique ecosystem and ensuring its long-term resilience in the face of climate change.

Herbivores

Herbivores such as Dall sheep, caribou, and moose are integral components of Denali's ecosystem, shaping plant communities and providing a crucial food source for predators. However, climate change poses significant challenges to these herbivores. Altered growing seasons can affect the availability of forage plants, while shifts in plant composition may impact their diet and nutrition. Additionally, increased heat stress during warmer periods can harm their overall health. Changes in precipitation patterns can lead to water scarcity.



ty, posing challenges for hydration and nutrient intake. Invasive species and an increased risk of pests and diseases can further threaten these herbivores.

Predators: Predators like wolves and grizzly bears play critical roles in Denali's ecosystem by regulating herbivore populations and contributing to overall ecosystem health. However, climate change can affect them in several ways. Changes in herbivore behavior and distribution due to shifting plant communities and altered growing seasons may challenge the predatory strategies of wolves and grizzly bears. Warmer temperatures can also influence the availability of prey and their prey's nutritional quality. Additionally, changes in habitat and food sources may affect the abundance and distribution of these predators, potentially leading to altered interactions with other species.

Birds: The birds in Denali's ecosystem contribute to its biodiversity and ecological dynamics. They serve various roles, including seed dispersal, insect control, and participation in intricate food webs. Climate change may impact them through shifts in plant flowering and fruiting times, affecting their food sources and nesting opportunities. Altered migration patterns and timing can disrupt their seasonal movements, while changes in temperature and precipitation can influence the availability of insects and other food resources. Additionally, habitat alterations due to climate change can impact nesting sites and affect bird populations.

Insects: Insects in Denali's ecosystem play essential roles as pollinators, decomposers, and as a food source for various wildlife. Climate change can affect them in several ways. Warmer temperatures can influence their distribution and behavior, potentially expanding their range and activity periods. Altered temperature and precipitation patterns may disrupt their life cycles, impacting their availability as a food source for birds and

other predators. Additionally, changes in plant flowering times due to climate change can affect the timing of pollinator-plant interactions. Invasive insect species may also thrive in the changing environment.

Marine ecosystem:

Phytoplankton: Phytoplankton in Alaska's marine ecosystem are tiny, photosynthetic organisms that form the base of the ocean food web. They are critical for providing food and oxygen to marine life and play a key role in global carbon cycling. Climate change can affect them in several ways. Rising sea temperatures and changing ocean conditions can influence phytoplankton distribution and productivity. Altered nutrient availability due to warming waters may impact their growth. Changes in phytoplankton abundance and composition can have cascading effects on higher trophic levels, affecting fish populations and the entire marine ecosystem.

Zooplankton: Zooplankton in Alaska's marine ecosystem are small, drifting animals that play a crucial role in transferring energy from phytoplankton to higher trophic levels. They serve as a fundamental link in the marine food web, supporting various marine species. Climate change can impact zooplankton in several ways. Warmer sea temperatures and changing ocean conditions may influence their distribution and abundance, potentially disrupting the timing and availability of this critical food source for marine organisms. Shifts in zooplankton populations can have far-reaching consequences, affecting the health and productivity of Alaska's marine ecosystem, including commercially important fish species.

Salmon: Salmon are iconic species in Alaska's marine ecosystem, playing a pivotal role in nutrient cycling, supporting commercial and subsistence fisheries, and serving as a keystone species. Climate change poses several challenges to salmon in this region. Elevated sea temperatures can affect their physiology, migratory patterns, and oceanic survival rates. Altered precipitation patterns and streamflow can disrupt their freshwater habitats, impacting spawning and juvenile survival. Additionally, changes in ocean conditions can affect prey availability during their marine phase. These combined effects can lead to reduced salmon populations, affecting both ecological and economic aspects of Alaska's marine ecosystem.

Herring: Herring are vital components of Alaska's marine ecosystem, serving as a key forage fish species that supports numerous predators, including seabirds, marine mammals, and larger fish. Climate change can impact herring in various ways. Rising sea temperatures and altered ocean conditions may affect their distribution and abundance. Changes in herring populations can have cascading effects throughout the ecosystem, impacting the food web dynamics of the region. These changes may, in turn, influence the health and abundance of species that depend on herring as a primary food source.

Sea birds: Seabirds are integral components

of Alaska's marine ecosystem, comprising various species like puffins, kittiwakes, and albatrosses. They contribute to nutrient cycling through guano deposition, participate in complex food webs, and serve as indicators of ecosystem health. Climate change can affect seabirds in multiple ways. Altered ocean conditions and prey availability due to warming waters may impact their foraging success. Changes in sea ice extent can disrupt nesting habitats and food sources for some species. Additionally, shifting migration patterns and unpredictable weather events can affect breeding success.

Marine mammals: Marine mammals, including whales, sea otters, and seals, are keystone species in Alaska's marine ecosystem, playing critical roles in regulating prey populations, facilitating nutrient cycling, and supporting the balance of the food web. Climate change can impact marine mammals in several ways. Changes in sea temperature and ice cover can affect their distribution, prey availability, and reproductive patterns. Altered ocean conditions may influence the abundance and distribution of their preferred prey species. Additionally, the melting of sea ice can affect haul-out sites for seals and sea otters. These changes can have cascading effects throughout the ecosystem, with potential implications for both marine mammal populations and the broader marine food web.

Marine invertebrates: Marine invertebrates, such as clams, mussels, and sea urchins, are essential components of Alaska's marine ecosystem. They contribute to ecosystem processes and support the diets of numerous marine organisms. Climate change can impact marine invertebrates in various ways. Warming sea temperatures and changing ocean conditions can influence their distribution, abundance, and reproductive patterns. Altered ocean chemistry, including ocean acidification, can affect the calcification abilities of some species. These changes can have cascading effects on the entire marine food web, affecting species that depend on marine invertebrates as a primary food source.

Addressing Alaska's Climate Crisis: Alaska's pristine landscapes and unique ecosystems stand as both witnesses to the urgency of climate change and beacons of hope for effective action. The challenges posed by climate change in Alaska are profound, affecting not only its natural wonders but also the lives of its indigenous communities and the global ecosystem. However, in this crucible of change, we find resilience, innovation, and a commitment to conservation. As we confront the climate crisis, Alaska serves as a powerful reminder that our choices today will shape the fate of our planet and its fragile ecosystems. By reducing GHG emissions, conserving critical habitats, empowering communities, and fostering international cooperation, we can protect Alaska's treasures and work together to ensure a sustainable and resilient future for all.

(The author is a Student of Wayzata High School, Minnesota, USA and is a travel blogger)

“

All individual things pass away, strive on untiringly. Buddha to his students on his death bed

”

~ Buddha

Don't let kids suffer

In a major health crisis, two deaths caused by Nipah virus have been reported from Kerala's Kozhikode district. Nipah virus infection is a zoonotic illness that is transmitted to people from animals. It can also be transmitted through contaminated food or from one person to another. The reports come even as many countries across the globe are seeing Covid-19 infections yet again. Though COVID-19 may not be a health emergency for the world any longer, it is still a global health threat. Last month, the chief of the World Health Organisation, Director-General Dr Tedros Ghebreyesus had underlined that a new variant of coronavirus is already under the scanner, while asking the world to maintain surveillance. COVID-19 has taught us all an important lesson that when health is at risk everything is at risk. The world is learning the painful lessons of the pandemic which still continues to transform society in profound ways, often exacerbating social and economic inequalities in its wake. While India is being praised for introducing telemedicine at primary healthcare level, its commitment to universal health coverage at home especially through Ayushman Bharat, and overall leadership in developing the global initiative on digital health, one aspect that has not received the due attention is the education of school going children, which are most impacted by the pandemic. In an effort to curb the spread of Covid-19, governments around the world moved to suspend face-to-face teaching in schools, affecting some 95% of the world's student population—the largest disruption to education in history. Home of the youngest population in the world, India was naturally the most affected. After the first wave, as the joy of school reopening was just settling in with the students, the second wave of Covid-19 brought about a closure again. The same happened in the third wave, impacting the learning skills as well as mental well-being of children. The biggest casualty of school closures during the COVID-19 pandemic was among children who were just beginning to read and count and the ramifications of the loss of guidance during their formative years will become apparent when these children reach higher classes. According to the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), 2022, the basic reading ability of school students across all classes has dropped to pre-2012 levels while basic maths skills have declined to 2018 levels. Online schooling also largely left out children with disabilities or learning difficulties. The UNICEF India believes that India might be risking a lost generation of children who may never return to school. The impact on girls is disproportionately worse. In 2020-21, there was an assumption schooling could be conducted online during lockdowns but for a majority of schoolchildren in India, there was almost no access to schools for months due to several factors. Despite the hard lessons from 2020-21, India is no better prepared for the next pandemic. Policy needs to work towards 'digital welfare' which improves quality of access to the extent of making it a basic necessity and improving human capabilities to use digital platforms.

Beyond G-20 Summit: Building on 5Ds

PROF D K GIRI

In popular perception, across the globe, the G-20 Summit last weekend in Delhi came up roses. Overseas observers are lauding Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his team for the 'grand successes' of the mega world event as the Indian commentators are counting the take-aways from it for the country's global engagement beyond the Summit.

Admittedly, one could use several parameters to measure the success of the Summit, such as the history-making initiatives like the integration of the African Union to make it G-21, a Bio-Fuel Alliance, the consensus-declaration issued by the leaders, fringe bilateral meetings, assertion of multilateralism and so on.

To be sure, what stands out as the India moment of G-20 is the inclusion of the African Union, at least for two reasons. One, the global politics got restructured in Delhi. The European Union representing the North and the African Union of the South sit at the same table to discuss and decide the issues of the World. Second, the voice of the Global South reflected through the 55-countries AU and others got formally registered.

There are other feathers in the cap of G-20 added in Delhi Summit. Although other countries would have cooperated and contributed to the success, the negotiating and leadership skills will redound to the credit of the presidency, that was held by India since November 22; organising about 200 meetings across the country attended by 100,000 delegates, in the run-up to the Summit. A virtual Reflection Meet in November next has been proposed by Modi.

Let us look at the Summit and beyond with the lenses of 5Ds Prime Minister Modi used to build the Global future. Modi, as his wont, coins appropriate words and acronyms to capture the concepts in currency and formulate strategies for national and global politics. In his inaugural remarks, he talked about the unseemly global trust deficit prevailing in the world. That must end. He invoked his national strategy based on four vocal slogans—sabka saath (being inclusive), sabka vikas (welfare of all), sabka prayas (efforts by all) and sabka vishwas (mutual trust). He linked the last one to rebuild the Global trust.

At the international level, Modi coined 5Ds that should shape the Global future; recall the theme of the Summit, One Family, One Earth, One Future. These are: Democracy, Demography, Development, Dialogue and Diplomacy. In Delhi Summit, Modi sought to promote these as abiding Credos for Global politics and economy.

It will be worth our while to reflect on the year of India's leadership of G-20 culminating in the mega event. Arguably, the G-20 is the biggest world stage at present, given the ineffectiveness of the United Nations controlled by P-5 and the arbitrary use of the veto by any of them to block any decision on world issues.

At any rate, taking one D, not in any order, how important is dialogue? Evidently, over the year, New Delhi excelled in dialogue and diplomacy. Dialogue is essential for peaceful and amicable settlement of differences. India has been emphasising on dialogue and diplomacy, that go together, on the Ukrainian war. Modi said more than once, "it is no time for war," resort to dialogue and diplomacy. Truly, the saying goes, "all war represents a failure of diplomacy." Some may argue, to ex-



pect a dialogue when someone's head is inside the mouth of predator is ludicrous. Narendra Modi, on the other hand, used diplomacy to its fullest. A day before the start of the Summit in Delhi, he dashed for half-a-day to Indonesia for the ASEAN-India and the East Asian Summits held back-to-back. His presence lent the importance India accorded to those summits and earned the goodwill of the leaders Modi needed for the G-20 event. Arguably, the G-20 is the biggest world stage at present, given the ineffectiveness of the United Nations controlled by P-5 and the arbitrary use of the veto by any of them to block any decision on world issues.

Modi wrote to the leaders of G-20 much before the Summit if anyone had reservations on including AU as the permanent member. So, he had their buy-ins.

Similarly, on other pacts like the revival of Black Sea Grain Corridor, Food Security, the DPI, SDGs, Reform of MDBs, the political space for the Global South, the consensus was hammered out step-by-step, layer by layer. The sherpas and the concerned ministers had their dialogues and the Prime Minister stepped in as and when needed.

Development is an everlasting exercise. It is also a relative concept; some countries are less developed in comparison to others. Development also has differentiated meanings. Some measure it by GDP, others call for GDH

-- Gross Domestic Happiness. Modi gave a call for human-centric approach in place of the GDP-based measurement of development. He underlined that the pathetic pandemic had necessitated this shift. However, development should be driven by a few global organising principles—participatory, inclusive, just, and universal.

Demography has become an important input into growth and development. China's miracle growth is attributed to its 'captive and cheap' labour. But the demography has changed. China now has an aging population, and the labour cost has gone up. On the other hand, India, the most populous country in the world, has nearly 65 per cent of its population in the working-age. However, for India to harness its demographic dividend, its labour force needs to be imparted with appropriate skills for the modern economy. Demography in any country must be made productive with right skills and decent working conditions.

All the foregoing 4 Ds are contingent upon the 5th D, that is Democracy. The G-7, the forerunner of G-20 comprised all industrialised democracies. China's growth story confuses some countries, if the Chinese model conduces wealth-creation. That is far from the truth. But the Chinese economy, as said before, was spurred by the Western countries that were searching for cheap labour with 'strict regulations.' Now, as China challenges the western supremacy, they have begun to recoil and are turning to India and other democracies. Democracy is indispensable for stability, peace, and prosperity.

I would like to end the assessment by simply quoting former PM, Manmohan Singh's confirmatory as well as cautionary remarks, "I am not worried, am rather optimistic about India's future, it is on the right path on the world stage. But it will prosper only if it remains a harmonious society." It goes without saying that foreign policy and the international image of any country is a function of what happens within its borders, inside its territory. One only hopes that Prime Minister Modi and his team should hardly be oblivious to this existential reality.

---INFA

RUSSIA BRINGS IN MORE ENEMIES

FAZAL MEHMOOD

Concerning shifts are currently bursting up in the northwest Pacific, this time across Russia and Japan, whilst close attention has been focused on China's land grab in the Asia-Pacific region as a result of a newly released map arguing Chinese sovereignty throughout vast areas claimed by nations from India to Brunei.

Many people would be shocked to discover that Japan and Russia are still technically at war. The Second World War came to an end in September 1945 when Japan submitted to the Allies; nevertheless, Moscow and Tokyo never officially declared the end of the conflict. The cause for this is a 78-year-old border dispute between the two nations over four islands that sit between Hokkaido, Japan's Northern Island, and the Kuril Islands from India to Brunei.

The four Japanese islands were taken by Soviet forces in the closing stages of World War II, and Moscow has steadfastly refused to return them. In January 2019, President Vladimir Putin maintained that popular support would be required for any agreement to resolve the territorial conflict with Japan.

The majority, according to critics, is consistent with the majority of Moscow-

based surveys. Tokyo's attempts to focus its resources somewhere in order to equalize China and North Korea are complicated by the fact that one of the controversial Russian-held territories is only 2 miles off the northeastern coast of Japan.

The islands provide Moscow a strategic chokehold on the area since it exploits the Sea of Okhotsk as an anchorage for its Pacific Fleet, which is undoubtedly the major reason why Moscow won't give up its territorial hegemony. Along with fish, oil, and gas, the region also has rhodium, which is employed in aeronautical.

Japan was the Group of Seven (G7) member that showed a lack of enthusiasm when Russia entered the framework in 1998, becoming the G8, while the West welcomed the freshly democratized Russia in the 1990s. But during Shinzo Abe's leadership as prime minister, Tokyo committed to fostering closer ties with Moscow in its expectation of resolving the territorial conflict.

Upon Russia's illegitimate and coercive takeover of Crimea in March 2014, Abe continued to court Russia, rendering Japan arguably. As a result, Japan only put in place a minimal set of restrictions on Russia in an effort to maintain the possibility of advancement during the peace treaty negotiation. Due to China's ascent in the geopolitical panorama of northeast Asia, resolving the territorial issue was

only one aspect of strengthening relations with Russia.

On the basis of historically significant, territorial, and other grounds, he sought to use Moscow as blackmail against Beijing or at the very least try to stop Russia and China from forming a single front against Japan. Abe's initiatives to enhance ties with Moscow were actually a component of Japan's China strategy. Of course, looking back, it was almost illogical to think that Russia might be used as a negotiating chip towards China.

China is significantly more significant and significant to Moscow than Japan. Any notion that Russia would be willing to sacrifice its relationship with China in order to foster better ties with Japan is just unrealistic. Part of Abe's cautious optimism stemmed from the fact that Russia behaves in Asia in a more conciliatory and benign manner than it does in Syria or Ukraine.

Tokyo had been hesitant to adopt a tough stance against Russia up to the beginning of the Russian takeover of Ukraine, which was a flagrant breach of international humanitarian law. Much changed after the war. Shinzo Abe, a divisive figure in Japanese politics who had resigned two years prior, was killed shortly following the invasion as he gave a campaign speech ahead of the 10 July Up-

per House elections.

Fumio Kishida identified two causes for Tokyo's harsh stance towards Russia. First, it is difficult for Japan to remain neutral given the size of Russia's activities in Ukraine, which dwarf all past norms. Furthermore, Kishida consistently asserted that "The nation of Ukraine today, maybe East Asia tomorrow" meant that the invasion posed a direct threat to Japan. This echoes the Western position that if Ukraine is lost, Poland, Hungary, and the Baltic States would be the next countries to face danger.

Japan's help to Ukraine has primarily taken the shape of non-lethal equipment including transport trucks, bullet-proof vests, helmets, and healthcare supplies from the inventories of Japan's Self-Defence Forces due to Tokyo's self-imposed limits on weaponry exports. The amount of aid provided, including financial support, reached \$7.1 billion in March of this year, making Japan one of Ukraine's major contributors.

Nevertheless, this has been extremely helpful to Kyiv. Additionally, it appears that Russia's military capabilities against Japan have been rebalanced as a result of the conflict in Ukraine. The S-300 surface-to-air missile systems were installed by Moscow on Iturup and Kunashir, two of the four contested Kuril Islands, in late 2020. The two networks are now gone,

according to recent Maxar pictures, and are thought to have relocated repurposed towards Russia's northern frontiers with Ukraine in anticipation of an impending strike. This activity took place a week after the military intelligence of Ukraine reported that they had disabled a Russian S-400 missile protection system in the seized Crimea; Moscow has not yet responded to this assertion. Several outdated tanks and howitzers are also said to have been refurbished on the islands before being sent to Ukraine.

Yet who would blame Japan for wanting to protect itself or even reclaim territory that Russia had wrongfully taken? In its National Security Strategy, issued in December, Tokyo issued a warning. After the cessation of World War II, the security situation in Japan has never been more harsh and complicated. Russia's action against Ukraine has flagrantly violated the fundamental principles that guide world politics.

It is not impossible that a grave scenario such as this one may develop in the years to come in the Indo-Pacific area, particularly in East Asia. The whistleblower provided information on the movements of satellite-based warfare helicopters that were aimed toward Japan, and Russia's propaganda apparatus also began a major campaign to portray the Japanese as Nazis.

THE EARTH NEWS

Owner, Printer and Publisher:
Shivang Satya Gupta

Editor in Chief:
Shivang Satya Gupta

Devender Padha
Resident Editor: 94196-50048

Yash Khajuria
Senior Correspondent: 98584-08896

Abishkar Upadhyaya
Ladakh Bureau Chief: 88991-61232

Neeraj Singh
Advt. Manager: 99062-19474

Ashok Singh
Chief Designer: 70063-59316

Published at: Anjuman-Imamia Building, Main Market, Leh-Ladakh
Printed at: JK Printing and Publications, Near Matador Stand, Sunjwan, Jammu.

Phone No: 0191-2950849
e-mails: earthnewsladakh@gmail.com, editor.earthnews@gmail.com, shivangsatyapal@gmail.com

DISCLAIMER

The views expressed by authors are their own and the publication cannot be held responsible for them. All disputes are subject to exclusive jurisdiction of competent courts and forums in Jammu city.

Editor

Dhok: A Peek into History & Culture of highland pastures of Jammu & Kashmir

K D MAINI

The Pir Panchal is one of the important mountainous ranges of the Jammu and Kashmir State which divides Valley of Kashmir from Jammu province. This track is a part of Jammu province. The whole terrain is a combination of snow-capped peaks, mighty mountains, green forests, lovely lakes, glaciers, crystal clear streams, milky water falls, valleys, gardens, Dhoks (a cluster of hutments), Margs (meadows at the altitude ranging from 9000 feet and above), high pasture lands, healthy people and attractive lifestyle. There are numerous peaks in this region like Tata Kuttii (15560 feet), GirjanChotti (12013 Feet), Rattan Pir (8500 feet), KuthGali (12600 feet), DarhaliGali (13460 feet), ChorGali (13436 feet), Haji Pir (8600 feet) and Nil Kanth (12000 feet). There are charming Dhoks and Margs located in the base of these peaks. As per one estimates, 735 Dhoks and Margs are existing in Pir Panchal region. Some of the important Dhoks and Margs are Tata Kuttii Marg, Nain Sukhi Marg, Noorpur Marg, Pir Marg, Nandan Sar Dhok, Khouan, Panchtari, Girjan, Sari Mangiaya, Sari Mastandhoks etc. These Dhoks and Margs remain under the cover of snow and uninhabited for about six months during winter season.

In the beginning of spring when snow melts from the upper reaches of Dhoks and Margs, Gujjar Bakerwal tribes and Pahari speaking people start pouring in these nature blessed areas with their flock of sheep, herds of goat, fleet of horses, cattle, dogs, baggage and luggage to pass the summer season. While leading towards the Dhoks, the mothers usually lift their infants on their backs, while the young persons collect leaves and hay for the feast of cattle during the journey, while aged women and male persons travel on loaded horses. Normally, the Caravan halts during the night near the river sights, lit campfire, cook meal and sleep in the open. Next day early in the morning, they start again their tiresome journey again toward Dhoks and Margs. During the course of their journey, these people face vagaries of weather in which they lose their cattle.

35 percent population of Gujjars, Bakerwal tribes and Pahari people of Poonch-Rajouri Districts migrates to Dhoks and Margs during summer season. They are having their own Dhoks and Margs where they shift along with Qabilas and families and move in the shape of Caravan. Bakerwals are the offshoot of Gujjar tribes. Majority of them is nomadic. They remain wandering in the upper reaches along with their flock in search of fodder and live in tented colonies. Their livelihood depends upon the wool, mutton, blankets, etc.

The Gujjars and Paharis mostly rare cattle like buffalos, cows and goats, and stay in Dharas (one room hutment of wooden mud and stones with open front) Normally three to five families put up in a one Dharas. No road communication, administration, security agencies, school and health facility and no power and water supply is available in this track.

Gujjar, Bakerwal and Paharis live jointly in these Dhoks and Margs in a very congenial and peaceful atmosphere. The whole family sleeps on a big cot known as Dangi. Normally, a thick layer of green leaves of a particular bush is spread on the Dangi beneath blankets to use it as a bed. Their breakfast comprises of saltish tea, sattus (backed maize flour) or maize bread. After breakfast, the elders drink lassi (shaked curd without butter) and go to forest areas to collect leaves for cattle. The youth (both male and female) move to the pastures along with cattle and flock. While the cattle graze in the pastures, the youth enjoy playing Algoza (flutes) while the damsels sing folk songs to attract the male youth.

The house women go to collect the wild vegetables or remain busy in threshing curd, collecting butter, making Kalaris (special type of cheese). The aged women remain busy in doing embroidery work on their caps known as Tajkastani Cap. The young women also keep themselves busy in making their hairstyle. They do constitute a large number of plaits of hairs which takes almost a day to weave. This is mostly done once in a month. The aged persons engage themselves in sheep shearing with special scissors. The children, indulge in funny games like Panja, Bihni, (Power Game) and Panj Gitti. The young members (males and females) return from pastures before the sunset. The elders also return with bags of grass, leaves and women with herbs and vegetables. Then flocks and cattle are gathered near the Dharas in a compound wall area to protect them from wild animals during the night hours. The family takes dinner immediately after the sunset. The dinner mostly comprise of curry, rice, maize bread, vegetables and mutton.

On important days the tribes do take rice with curd and sugar. On festivals and marriages they also slaughter goats and sheeps and enjoy the feast. After taking dinner they relish wild fruits available in the dhoks like Bhacanas (wild straw Berry) and Gruchh which the young girls collect during day time. After relaxing a while, they afame a campfire outside the Dharas and the families sit around the campfire to narrate the happenings of day time and discuss the problems of the Qabila. Then the members of the families request the aged person to recite Sufiyana Kalam (devotional songs). The aged persons sing Sufiyana Kalams for a pretty long time during the night hours. This night session is a very amusing and thrilling, when the families sit in the open around the campfire in the light of moon and enjoy the night hours of Dhoks and Margs. After night session, the children, aged person and ladies sleep on Dangi, while the young male members remain awake turn by turn to watch the cattle and protect them from wild animals.

Their dresses in the Dhok are interesting. Their dresses are according to the climatic condition of the area. The male members normally wear Shalwar (trousers) Long Shirt, turbans on their head, keep blankets on their shoulders and sticks in their hands. While the women wear trousers, long shirt and keep dupatta on their head.

They celebrate their festivals with tribal flavour. Their hobbies are hunting, riddling and singing Sufiana Kalam. Their favourite musical instruments are Algoza, Banjli and Jodi. They also conduct the bull fighting and ram fighting for their amusement. Their favourite dishes are saltish tea, sattus (backed maize flour), Lassi, mutton, wild vegetables etc. Majority of them believe in Pirs system (Holy persons). They invite Pir Sahib in their colonies for Nayaz and get blessings in the shape of Tawiz and Phook (blowing of breath by the holy man on an object). They presume that with the blessing of Pir Sahib, their cattle remain safe from wild animals, give more milk and they remain healthy in the Dhoks. Gujjar and Bakerwal tribes and Pahari Speaking people are having very unique and distinct heritage. Most of the tribes are still living a Aryan style of Qabila life.

With the passage of time, this tribal lifestyle of Dhoks and Margs is vanishing day by day. The old traditions are disappearing as most of Gujjar Bakerwal tribes and Paharis people have embraced the modern life style. Majority of these tribes have stopped going to Dhoks and Margs and have settled once for all in the plane area and have become a part of modern



lifestyle. Therefore, there is a need of preserving this nature blessed lifestyle, old traditions, cultural heritage, through documentaries so that the

new generations could know about the original heritage of Pir Panchal region.

The house women go to collect the wild vegetables or remain busy in threshing curd, collecting butter, making Kalaris (special type of cheese). The aged women remain busy in doing embroidery work on their caps known as Tajkastani Cap. The young women also keep themselves busy in making their hairstyle. They do constitute a large number of plaits of hairs which takes almost a day to weave. This is mostly done once in a month. The aged persons engage themselves in sheep shearing with special scissors. The children, indulge in funny games like Panja, Bihni, (Power Game) and Panj Gitti. The young members (males and females) return from pastures before the sunset. The elders also return with bags of grass, leaves and women with herbs and vegetables. Then flocks and cattle are gathered near the Dharas in a compound wall area to protect them from wild animals during the night hours. The family takes dinner immediately after the sunset. The dinner mostly comprise of curry, rice, maize bread, vegetables and mutton.

Briefs

NASA astronaut Rubio sets new US record for longest spaceflight

LOS ANGELES: NASA astronaut Frank Rubio has set a new record of the longest trip in the International Space Station (ISS), the agency said Tuesday. Rubio surpassed NASA's single spaceflight record of 355 continuous days in space on Monday, which was made by NASA astronaut Mark Vande Hei on March 30, 2022. The astronaut is set to return to Earth on Sept. 27, when he will have spent 371 days in space, said NASA. Since boarding the ISS in September 2022, Rubio has worked on several experiments involving robotics, space physics, and biology, and he participated in three spacewalks, said the agency.

10 soldiers killed in Mali attack

BAMAKO: Ten Malian soldiers were killed and 13 others wounded in a complex vehicle bomb attack against a camp of the Malian Armed Forces in Bourem, northern Mali, the army said on Tuesday. In a statement, the army said that they killed 46 terrorists and destroyed 20 of their pick-ups. On Thursday, at least 49 civilians and 15 soldiers were killed during a dual terrorist attack targeting the passengers of the boat "Tombouctou" and a military camp of the Malian Armed Forces in Gao region in northern Mali. Since 2012, Mali has been engulfed in a deep multi-faceted crisis at the security, political and economic levels. Independence insurgencies, jihadist incursions, and inter-communal violence have left thousands of people dead and hundreds of thousands more displaced in the West African nation.

600 families displaced by floods in Libya

TRIPOLI: More than 600 families were displaced by the floods that hit eastern Libya on Sunday, an official from the Libyan Health Ministry told a press conference in the capital Tripoli later on Tuesday. Medical teams have been sent to eastern Libya to help those in need, said Mohamed Kablan, head of the emergency department of the Health Ministry. According to the ministry, more than 130 ambulances, 14 tons of emergency medical supplies and dozens of medical professionals were sent to eastern Libya to help deal with the aftermath of the floods. Rubber boats have been sent to eastern Libya to help recover the bodies, and a team of specialists is taking DNA samples from the bodies for identification, according to Mahmoud Ashour, head of the Criminal Investigation Department. According to official data, at least 5,300 people are feared dead and over 10,000 more missing after the floods, triggered by Mediterranean storm Daniel, hit eastern Libya on Sunday.

Kim Jong Un calls ties with Russia, N Korea's 1st priority

PYONGYANG: North Korean leader Kim Jong Un on Wednesday called North Korea's ties with Russia his country's first priority. "Our friendship has deep roots, and the very first priority for our country now is relations with Russia," Kim stated at the meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin at Russia's Vostochny spaceport. The North Korean leader thanked the Russian president for the invitation to Russia, adding that the visit is taking place "at a very important period."

UK, B'desh to sign SOP for B'desh returnees: Masud Bin Momen

DHAKA: Bangladesh and the United Kingdom are set to sign a Standard Operating Procedure, SOP, soon to facilitate the return of irregular or illegal Bangladeshis from the UK, said Senior Foreign Secretary Ambassador Masud Bin Momen Wednesday.

"We made decisions about one or two mechanisms. We will sign the SOP soon so that the people who are living without a visa in the UK can be returned. We discussed the matter. The UK agreed to form a joint working group, JWG, regarding migration and mobility," he said.

The foreign secretary further stated that recently many of our students and workers are going there (in the UK) and we discussed how this number can be increased. Masud Bin Momen was talking to the media after the fifth UK-Bangladesh Strategic Dialogue on Tuesday at the Foreign Service Academy in Dhaka.

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) of the UK and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) of Bangladesh held the dialogue.

The foreign secretary also informed the media that the UK is interested to see a free, fair, participatory and violence-free election in Bangladesh. The country is also ready to help Bangladesh if



required to fulfil their expectations of a "desired election."

During the discussion, Sir Philip Barton, the FCDO permanent under-secretary offered the proposition to Bangladesh's foreign secretary.

Bangladesh, however, said the government and election commission can ensure that all the voters can take part in the election. But to ensure whether all the parties contest in the election is the responsibility of the po-

litical parties.

Momen informed these to mediapersons at a press conference after the dialogue at the Foreign Service Academy.

He further stated that climate change, economic development, Indo-Pacific Strategy, immigration, trade, investment, cybersecurity, good governance, human rights, elections and other related issues were discussed during the fifth partnership dialogue.

We also restated our promise about holding a free and peaceful election.

Despite what no other country is saying, the UK is

talking about participation. When asked how the government will ensure participation, the foreign secretary explained, participation could mean a lot.

One of the meanings could be that all the people will vote. It is up to all the parties whether to participate in the elections or not.

There may be an expectation that everyone will contest. But the main issue is people's exercise of their right to vote. It will be ensured by the

government and the election commission, he insisted.

When asked what the UK under secretary meant by conducive environment, foreign secretary Momen said, they are ready if we seek specific help for the participation of all the parties in the election. We said, it is our internal matter. We held elections before. The independent election commission is adequately capable to hold a free and fair election.

They talked about a free and fair election where violence will be less. Our say is to make sure about the participation of the people. Whether every party takes part in the election is the discretion of those parties.

To a query whether the UK has proposed any political compromise, the secretary said no such proposition was placed on their behalf.

When asked whether any discussion about the repatriation of Tarique Rahman, the convicted acting chairperson of opposition Bangladesh Nationalist Party, BNP, was raised, the foreign secretary said as far as we know he is there in a political asylum.

"We discussed legal frameworks like Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty (MLAT), flexibility agreement. Discussions are being held among many organisations."

Musk says would have activated Starlink over Crimea for Ukraine attack if told so by Biden

WASHINGTON: US tech entrepreneur Elon Musk said he would have activated the Starlink satellite network over Crimea had he been directed to do so by President Joe Biden in support of Ukraine's attempt to attack the Russian navy in the Black Sea.

Last week, US media reported that Musk rejected Ukraine's request to activate Starlink services near Crimea in 2022, which disrupted a Ukrainian drone attack on the Russian naval fleet.

"Although I'm not President Biden's biggest fan, if I received a presidential directive to turn it on, I would've done so... no such request came through," Musk said on Tuesday.

Crimea rejoined Russia after a referendum was held there in March 2014 following a coup in Ukraine. The Russian leadership has repeatedly stated that the Crimean residents democratically, in full compliance with international law and the UN Charter, voted for reunification with Russia. Russian President Vladimir Putin has said the Crimea issue is "closed."

Musk said the Starlink services are turned off in regions around Crimea because the United States has sanctions against Russia, which includes Crimea, and the company is not allowed to grant connectivity to a sanctioned country without US government approval.

Violent attacks on tourists in Namibia spark concern

WINDHOEK: Namibia's Ministry of Environment, Forestry, and Tourism (MEFT) on Tuesday condemned the recent violent attacks targeting international tourists across the country.

Minister Pohamba Shifeta said there had been a significant uptick in incidents in the Windhoek and Okahandja areas.

The government, together with vital stakeholders including the hospitality industry, car rentals, neighborhood watch groups, and

City Police, is swiftly taking action, said the official, adding that their collective goal is to fortify the nation's security measures and maintain Namibia's hard-earned reputation as one of the safest tourist destinations in the world.

The MEFT is set to collaborate with the Namibian police to establish a robust surveillance and intelligence mechanism aimed at apprehending the criminal gangs responsible for these attacks.

Additionally, the ministry

is reaching out to the Ministry of International Relations and Cooperation to ensure the safety of international visitors and underscore Namibia's commitment to legendary hospitality.

The sector has only recently begun to recover from the two-year devastation caused by the outbreak of COVID-19, he said, stressing that tourism positively impacts 12 other sectors in Namibia, contributing significantly to the country's gross domestic product.

Israeli DM denies sending US weapons to Palestinian forces

TEL AVIV: Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant denied media reports on Wednesday that claimed Israel approved and transferred US weapons to Palestinian forces.

Earlier in the day, Israeli army radio Galei Tzahal reported that Palestinian authorities had recently received a shipment of US weaponry and munitions directed for use in counterterrorist operations against Palestinian militant group Hamas and the Islamic Jihad movement. At least 1,500 rifles and a number of US armored vehicles were reportedly sent from US bases in Jordan to Palestine over the past few days.

The report drew a wave of criticism from several Israeli cabinet ministers, who demand the news story's official retraction.

"I heard false claims... Despite misrepresentations emerging from various reports, I have neither approved nor carried out the transfer of weapons to the Palestinian National Authority since I assumed the position of Minister of Defense. Any attempt to pres-

Death toll from Morocco earthquake surpasses 2,900

MARRAKESH: The death toll from the devastating earthquake in Morocco has risen to 2,901, and the injuries to 5,530, according to the latest statement released by the Moroccan government on Tuesday. In Ouarzazate, one of the hardest-hit villages in the mountainous areas, Xinhua reporters saw all the houses flattened and rescue teams using excavators to clear the debris.

Morocco has accepted offers of aid from Spain, Britain, the United Arab Emirates, and

Qatar, while the help offers from other countries are pending approval. The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) on Tuesday launched an emergency appeal for 100 million Swiss francs (112 million U.S. dollars) to support the victims of the earthquake in Morocco.

The most pressing needs at this time are water, sanitation, and shelter, Caroline Holt, global director of operations at IFRC, told reporters in Geneva. "We need to make sure that we avoid a second

wave of disaster," she said.

Zhang Feigong, chief of the Agadir unit of the Chinese medical team in Morocco, told Xinhua that the medical team has donated urgently needed medical supplies such as finger pulse oximeters, electronic sphygmomanometers, and antibacterial hand sanitizers to local hospitals.

The 6.8-magnitude earthquake hit the North African country at 11:11 p.m. local time (22:11 GMT) on Friday at a depth of 18.5 km, said the United States Geological Survey.



HANOI: At least 10 people died in a fire in a multistorey apartment building in the Vietnamese capital of Hanoi, the country's news portal VietnamExpress reported on Wednesday.

was complicated by narrow streets and tight construction density. About 70 people were rescued before the fire was finally put out in the early hours of Wednesday morning.

The fire broke out at a 10-storey apartment building in Hanoi's Thanh Xuan District at 11 p.m. on Tuesday (16:00 GMT), when most of the residents had already gone to bed, the media outlet reported, adding that a total of 150 people were registered in the building.

The arrival of fire services

added. Emergency services still do not know the exact number of people who were in the building when the fire broke out.

However, eyewitnesses and firefighters said that at least several residents escaped the fire by jumping on the roof of neighboring buildings.

The media also reported that, according to preliminary investigation, the fire started in a bike parking lot, located on the building's ground floor.

Japan, S Korea, US discuss N Korea's missile launch on Wednesday



North Korea's launches of ballistic and other missiles, including the ones on September 13, pose a grave danger to the region's security and are a frank and serious challenge to the global community... The parties

have also exchanged views on the current situation in North Korea, including the Russian-North Korean leaders' meeting," the statement read.

Earlier in the day, the Japanese Defense Ministry

said that it had recorded two ballistic missile launches, carried out by Pyongyang within nine minutes from one another. Both missiles are believed to have landed outside the exclusive economic zone of Japan. Later, Tokyo responded to the launches by expressing strong criticism of Pyongyang's actions and adding that it will work with the US protecting "people's lives." No damage to Japanese vessels or infrastructure has been reported. This was the 17th missile launch by North Korea in 2023.

Search and rescue operation are still ongoing and more victims and survivors may be found, the report

Ayushi presides over Mega Block Diwas in Kupwara

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

KUPWARA: The District Development Commissioner (DDC) Kupwara, Ayushi Sudan today presided over proceedings of Mega Block Diwas programme at Far-flung Moori Panchayat of Block Kalaroos.

During the Block Diwas programme, local residents and PRIs apprised the DDC about various issues related to augmentation of water supply schemes and electricity, construction of Moori road, grid station in Kalaroos, Patwar-khana, bank counter in Moori and Nagsari, Mobile network, Animal and Sheep Husbandry centres at Moori and other demands of public importance.

The DDC patiently listened to all the issues and demands put forth by the public and PRIs and directed the concerned officers to prioritise the basic issues of the people.

The DDC while presiding over the proceedings said that people here have grievances regarding basic amenities and Government is committed



to provide these basic facilities.

She said that the demands of locals regarding construction of road under PMGSY and mobile network connectivity will be taken up with government.

Ayushi urged people to come forward and take benefit under differ-

ent centrally sponsored schemes and programmes and support and Co-operative government. Earlier, officers of different departments disseminated information to the audience about different centrally sponsored schemes and programmes.

Block Diwas was attended by JD

Planning, ASP Kupwara, BDC Kalaroos, CEO Kupwara, CMO Kupwara, Chief Agriculture Officer Kupwara, EXen PHE, BDO Kalaroos and other district and Sectoral officers of all Line Departments, PRIs, and a large number of people of Moori and other adjoining habitations.

Police organizes anti-drugs conference in Baramulla

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Acting tough against the drug menace, police in Baramulla have organised one-day Anti-Drug Conference for Religious Leaders & Religious Preachers (Imams) at Dak Bungalow Baramulla.

Various police officers including DIG North Kashmir Range Shri Vivek Gupta-IPS stressed the pivotal role of civil societies and religious institutions in combating the scourge of drug addiction within our society. Emphasizing the intense influence of religious leaders, he noted that they are not only respectable figures but also our moral compass,

Weekly Block Diwas held at Gutlibagh

GANDERBAL: To take firsthand appraisal of public grievances, the Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Ganderbal, Mehraj-u-din Shah today held public darbar as part of weekly Block Diwas at Gutlibagh Ganderbal.

The program witnessed immense participation of locals and PRIs who apprised the ADC about grievances and developmental needs in their respective areas.

Locals put forth their issues relating to problems particularly development of existing roads, augmentation of drinking water supply, better health care facilities and other issues of public importance. The Officers and officials of all line departments were present on the occasion who remained busy in registering the demands and grievances of the locals with an aim to ensure redressal of grievances in minimum possible time. The ADC gave patient hearing to the grievances raised and assured quality disposal of genuine issues in a time bound manner. He also gave on spot directions for redressal of many issues of urgent category as per the competence of concerned departments.

Among others, the program was attended by District Youth Services and Sports officer, District Lead Bank Manager and other officials of line departments.

DDC Chairman Budgam, Delegation of Apple Farmers' Federation call on LG

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: Nazir Ahmad Khan, Chairman, District Development Council, Budgam called on Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha at Raj Bhavan today. The DDC Chairman expressed gratitude to the Lt Governor for the comprehensive development initiatives being undertaken in Budgam District. Sh. Rafi Ahmad Mir, former legislator from Pahalgam also met the Lt Governor and discussed various developmental issues of the area.

A delegation led by Zahoor Ahmad Rather, President, J&K Committee, Apple Farmers' Federation of India called

on the Lt Governor and apprised their concerning issues. A delegation of National Awardee Teachers of J&K led by Sh Wali Mohammad Bhat met the Lt Governor and put forth issues of the National Awardee teachers.

Later, Dr. Farida Khan, BDC Chairperson Sopore also called on the Lt Governor and discussed public importance issues of her area.

While interacting with the public representatives and the members of the delegations, the Lt Governor assured them of appropriate action on all the genuine issues and demands presented during the meetings.

Green India Mission has produced remarkable achievements in South Kashmir: Irfan

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SHOPIAN: The Conservator of Forests (CoF) South Forest Circle (SFC), Irfan Ali Shah reviewed working of Forest Department in Shopian Forest Division, delivery of Government work and the targets set for the current financial year in a meeting held at Padpawan Forest Complex.

The CoF interacted at length with the Forest Officers and Forest frontline staff, on various Deliverables, schemes and Government programs in forestry sector including Green J&K Drive, Green India Mission, Har Gaon Hariyali, Non Timber Forest Products policy implementation, Forests for recreation, fodder, livelihood, development of eco-tourism etc.

The CoF said "Green India mission is one of the missions that come under the umbrella of the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC). Every country has an obligation to arrest the downward spiral of climate change. Hence, India as a responsible growing global power took up the responsibility of reducing the deleterious effects of climate change by launching



different missions under NAPCC. Accordingly Green India Mission was launched in Shopian in the year 2021 to protect, restore and enhance forest cover".

He said our focus in Shopian is to increase the quality of degraded moderately dense forests and to ecologically restore open forests which have suffered degradation here due to different reasons. He added that Grasslands and wetlands revival are other focus areas under this mission.

The CoF informed that during the year 2022-23, 39350 numbers of plants were planted in the already fenced up areas with financial implication of Rs 6.786

lacs.

He said in tune with Government initiatives on generation of livelihoods, the Forest Department in the last two years is also focusing on an increase in forest-based livelihood incomes for hundreds of households in and around the forest areas. He said the Green India Mission implementation mechanism in Shopian is quite robust and largely democratic in nature. At the district level, the implementation is being done by the Forest Development Agency. The Gram Sabha and various committees are the key institutions for planning and implementation at the village level and works are being

done through Village Forest Committees here. The CoF informed that with long-term goals, the Green India Mission in Shopian District has the capability to fight the evils of food insecurity, climate change, water scarcity and livelihood insecurity of local and Tribal communities here.

The meeting among others was attended by Mohammad Ayub Sheikh, Divisional Forest Officer, Shopian Forest Division, Gh. Nabi Chaton, Range Officer Romshi, Fayaz Ahmad Mir, Range Officer Shopian, Mukhtar Ahmad Malik, Range Officer, Soil Conservation Range Shopian, Foresters of different forest blocks.

2-day seminar, awareness programme organized on Beekeeping at Shopian

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SHOPIAN: The Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare, Shopian today organized a Seminar cum Awareness programme on 'Transformation of Bee-Keeping', under National Beekeeping & Honey Mission (NBHM) at mini-secretariat, Shopian with the aim to deliberate the importance of beekeeping and to achieve the goals of 'Sweet Revolution'.

The programme was inaugurated by the Deputy Commissioner, (DC) Shopian, Faz Lal Haseeb and was attended by officers of Agri-allied departments, experts from SKUAST, KVK, Information, Banks, Employment, NRML and other officers, besides farmers, beekeepers and unemployed youth.

During the seminar, the resource persons provided awareness to the beekeepers and potential youth regarding the potential of beekeeping in the district.

They sensitised farmers and potential youth to take up benefits of the available government schemes for creating livelihood for the youth on one side and for pollination and health benefits on the other.

Speakers also disseminated awareness among the people about various new and

scientific beekeeping cultivation methods so that production and productivity is increased across the district.

Emphasis was also laid on to ensure hand holding of farmers not only in increasing the production but to work on the marketing aspect to fetch the best prices of their products.

Speaking on the occasion, CAO asked the farmers to take maximum benefit under the programme by getting training and awareness of different Government schemes to establish their income generating units under the Apiculture sector.

Bee keepers, integrated farmers and others engaged in interactive sessions with experts on varied issues of beekeeping management strategies.

During day one, sessions on the importance of bees, the role of pollination, management of bee colonies and high income opportunities in the beekeeping sector were held where detailed information was provided.

Dr Owais launched 'Ayusman Bhava' campaign at Bandipora

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

BANDIPORA: The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Bandipora, Dr Owais Ahmad in presence of Chairperson, District Development Council (DDC) Bandipora, Ab Gani Bhat Wednesday launched the 'Ayushman Bhava' campaign across the district to promote health target services and spread awareness about all health schemes. The campaign was today launched across the nation by the Hon'ble President of India, Shri Droupadi Murmu.

The DC, on the occasion, informed that 'Ayushman Bhava' is a public health campaign launched for people belonging to economically weaker sections. The program will enhance healthcare accessibility and raise health awareness



across the nation.

Dr Owais said that awareness cum screening camps shall be conducted by the health department across the district to curb the further growth of unnoticed underlying diseases including Non Communicable Diseases (NCDs) besides Tuberculosis, Hepatitis etc.

On the occasion, ADDC Bandipora, Ali Afsar Khan; District Nodal Officer Coordination, Mohammad Ashraf Hakak; JD Planning, Imtiyaz Ahmad; CMO Bandipora, Dr Rafi Ahmad Salati besides officials from health and other departments were present.

ULB Elections 2023: Training Session conducted in Baramulla

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

BARAMULLA: The District Election Officer Baramulla today conducted a day long training session for micro observers to be deployed for Urban Local Bodies (ULB) Election 2023. The training session was held under the supervision of Deputy District Election Officer Baramulla and Nodal Officer SVEEP.

The one-day training session which was conducted at various locations of Baramulla including Government Degree College Boys, Government Higher Secondary School and Government Boys Higher

Secondary School Baramulla was led by District-Level Master Trainers (DLMT) to impart training on the occasion. During the training programme, the District Level Master Trainers presented detailed information regarding the preparation and conduct of the upcoming Urban Local Bodies (ULB) election 2023. The Nodal Officer Election Monitoring urged ROs and AROs to adhere to the rules and regulations and go through the ROs handbook.

On the occasion, a question-and-answer session to address the doubts about the election procedures and rules were held, ensuring that the ULB Elections in

the district are conducted in a free, fair and transparent manner. With regard to the elections, many participants raised several queries to which the Master Trainers gave satisfactory answers, clearing all the doubts regarding the EVM and other necessary procedures. Meanwhile, a comprehensive role to be played by ROs and AROs were explained to them including the election management, the nomination process, scrutiny of nomination papers, procedure for withdrawal of candidature, EVM management, polling and counting votes, declaring results, and adhering to the provisions of the model code of conduct.

Come forward and avail benefits under various schemes: Dir Horticulture to growers

ANANTNAG: The Director Horticulture Kashmir, G R Mir today conducted an extensive visit of District Anantnag and participated in two awareness programmes held at departmental nursery Bijbehara and Sirhama in Sirigupwara zone.

The twin programmes were attended by a large number of growers. Director Horticulture in his address emphasized upon growers to come forward to avail the benefits available with the department under various schemes. Scientists of SKAUST-K gave a detailed account on management of different diseases, pests, leaf minor etc. Suggestions from farmers were encouraged for redressal of various issues regarding implementation of different schemes prevalent in the department. During the visit, Director was accompanied by Joint Director Horticulture Kashmir, Zahoor Ahmad Bhat, a team of scientists of SKAUST-K, Chief Horticulture Officer Anantnag, senior technical officer, DLSMS Anantnag, DLSMS Pulwama, Horticulture Development Officers and officials of the department.

Grievance redressal camps held at 3 blocks of Kulgam

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

KULGAM: Under the ambitious weekly Block Diwas programme and with an aim to strengthen the grievances redressal mechanism in the district, the District Administration Kulgam today organized Mega Block Diwas in three blocks of the district viz. Devsar, Kulgam and D.H.Pora.

During the grievance redressal camps, all the concerned officers of different departments remained available for people at all the three venues and lis-

tened to their issues and grievances for early redres-

sal. The Deputy Commissioner (DC) Kulgam, Dr. Bilal Mohi-Ud-Din Bhat chaired a grievances redressal camp at Kulgam where he listened to issues and grievances of people. Public delegations from Chowgam, Santa's, Srandoo, Frisal and various other areas participated in the grievance redressal camp and apprised the DC of their issues and grievances besides other developmental requirements of their areas. Earlier, ACD gave a detailed brief on action taken on grievances and issues raised during previous block diwas.

FROM PAGE 1

Accessible healthcare ...

the need for accessible and quality healthcare facilities, especially in remote areas, to meet the healthcare requirements of the local population effectively," said the spokesperson.

The Advisor of UT Ladakh Dr Pawan Kotwal commended the dedicated efforts of healthcare workers in Ladakh, who have been at the forefront of battling the challenges and he expressed his gratitude for their unwavering commitment and urged continued support and resources to enhance the region's healthcare infrastructure.

Dr Pawan emphasized that organ donation can save countless lives and transform the landscape of healthcare in Ladakh. He encouraged individuals and families to consider registering as organ donors, emphasizing the positive impact such a decision can have on society.

In the momentous event, Dr Pawan officially launched the Tuberculosis (TB) Diagnosis Van, an innovative initiative aimed at bringing TB diagnosis services closer to the public. The TB Diagnosis Van, equipped with the latest technology, particularly the Cartridge-Based Nucleic Acid Amplification Test (CBNAAT), will travel to various communities, reaching even the most remote and underserved areas, to provide timely and accurate TB diagnosis services. This initiative is a crucial part of the ongoing efforts to combat tuberculosis, a disease that continues to affect millions of people.

The launch ceremony marked the beginning of an extensive outreach program that will see the TB Diagnosis Van visiting various locations in UT Ladakh in the coming months. This initiative is expected to make a significant impact on the region's efforts to eradicate TB and improve the health and well-being of its citizens.

Director of Health Services Dr. Motup Dorje expressed profound gratitude to all those who attended the launch of Ayushmaan Bhav.

Advisor of UT Ladakh Dr. Pawan Kotwal; Additional Director General of Police, UT Ladakh, Dr. S. D. Singh Jamwal; Commissioner/Secretaries Padma Angmo and Kacho Mehboob Ali Khan; Secretary Yatinder M. Maralkar; Deputy Commissioner, Leh, Santosh Sukhadav; Director of Health, UT Ladakh Dr. Motup Dorje; Director of Tourism Kunzes Angmo; Executive Director SIDCO, and officials, dignitaries, healthcare officials, attended the launch event of the Ayushmaan Bhav.

Army colonel, ...

intervening night of 12-13 Sep in Area Garol, Anantnag

"Contact established and firefight ensued. Two Army personnel and one J&K Police personnel injured. Operation in progress."

In the evening, Director General of Police Dilbag Singh, Additional Director General of Police (Kashmir) Vijay Kumar along with other senior officers paid floral tributes to the slain DySP.

The attack comes a day after an Army personnel and Kent, a six-year-old female Labrador of the Army's dog unit, were killed and three security personnel injured in the gunfire in South of Pir Panjal at Rajouri in Jammu region. Two terrorists were killed in an encounter in the remote Narla village.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha saluted the bravest hearts.

"I salute the courage and supreme sacrifice of Army's braveheart Rifleman Ravi who laid down his life in the line of duty in Rajouri. His selfless service to the nation will always be remembered. My heartfelt condolences to the family of the martyr," the LG wrote on X.

Former chief minister of Jammu and Kashmir Omar Abdullah offered his condolences.

"Terrible terrible news from J&K. An army colonel, a major and a J&K Police DySP gave the ultimate sacrifice in an encounter in Kokernag area of South Kashmir today. DySP Humayan Bhat, Major Ashish Dhanack, and Colonel Manpreet Singh laid down their lives in an encounter with terrorists. May their souls rest in peace & may their loved ones find strength at this difficult time," he posted on X.

PDP president Mehbooba Mufti while offering condolences to the bereaved families said there was no place for such acts of violence.

People's Conference chairman Sajad Gani Lone also condoled the death of the bravehearts. Paying tributes to the three fallen officers, BJP leader Altaf Thakur said the security forces are committed to root out terror from Jammu and Kashmir.

Advisor Kotwal ...

reevaluation of the population projections for Kargil District concerning water supply and sewage systems. He emphasized prioritizing densely populated areas that require development attention. Furthermore, he authorized UT High Powered Steering Committee PS H&UDD (Planning Section Housing and Urban Development Department) to exercise financial authority at their discretion.

The meeting saw the participation of Secretaries, Deputy Commissioners (DCs), concerned officers, and officials, making it a comprehensive and productive session dedicated to advancing the AMRUT projects in UT Ladakh.

Pak trying ...

They are trying to stop this journey of progress but we will not allow them to succeed," he said.

His remarks came on a day Colonel Manpreet Singh, Major Ashish and Deputy Superintendent of Jammu and Kashmir Police Humayan Bhat were killed in a gunfire with terrorists in Kokernag area of Kashmir's Anantnag district.

Replying to another question about the Rajouri encounter, he said that in Poonch and Rajouri "we tried to neutralise foreign terrorists on Line of Control (LoC) itself".

"But some come... and try to do some acts here. We

have done good action in this recent encounter. One of jawan was martyred", he said.

On the death of sniffer dog Kent in gunfire by ultras, he said, "Our Kent laid down his life to save his handler. He attacked the terrorist by moving ahead first."

A second terrorist was killed in an encounter with security forces on Wednesday, raising the death toll during the ongoing three-day search operation in a remote village in Jammu and Kashmir's Rajouri district to three, officials said.

A suspected Pakistani terrorist was killed in an encounter in the remote Narla village on Tuesday. An Army personnel and Kent, a six-year-old female Labrador of the Army's dog unit, also died while three security personnel were injured in the gunfire.

Additional Director General of Police (Jammu Zone) Mukesh Singh said another terrorist was killed in Wednesday's encounter.

Despite bad weather, security forces laid a strong cordon around the area, 75 kilometres from Rajouri town, throughout the night and extended the search to nearby areas in the morning, officials said.

Intermittent firing was reported during the night, creating fear among locals who demanded permanent security posts, they said.

The security forces launched a cordon and search operation in the forested Patrada area on Monday and fired a few rounds after noticing the suspicious movement of two people, the officials said.

However, both the suspects managed to escape under the cover of darkness and the thick foliage. They left behind a rucksack and some clothes and other articles that were recovered by the search parties.

A wreath-laying ceremony was held for Ravi Kumar, the slain rifleman from Kishtwar district, at the Army garrison in Rajouri early on Wednesday.

Deputy Commissioner (Rajouri) Vikas Kundal and senior Army officers along with those from other ranks laid wreaths on Kumar's coffin. His body is being airlifted to his hometown for last rites with full military honours.

"White Knight Corps salutes the supreme sacrifice of Rifleman Ravi during 'Op Sujaligala' in the highest traditions of the Indian Army. His unwavering dedication and service to our nation will always be remembered," the Kammu-based XVI Corps said in a post on X.

A defence spokesperson said a brave Army dog lost her life while saving her handler during Tuesday's gunfire.

"The Army dog, Kent, was at the forefront of Operation Sujaligala. Kent was leading a column of soldiers on the trail of the fleeing terrorists. She came down under heavy hostile fire. While shielding her handler, she laid down her own life in the best traditions of the Indian Army," the spokesperson said.

On September 4, a terrorist was killed and two security personnel were injured in nearby Gali Sohab village in the Chassana area of Reasi district.

The border districts of Rajouri and Poonch have witnessed several encounters this year, resulting in the deaths of about 26 terrorists and 10 security personnel.

Most of the terrorists were killed while attempting to sneak into this side from across the border, the officials said.

Khirwar holds ...

and enhancement of housing units.

While addressing the gathering, the Principal Secretary Sanjeev Khirwar reiterated the Ladakh Administration's unwavering commitment to ensuring that the benefits of PMAY-U reach every eligible citizen in the region. He called upon all stakeholders to work together cohesively to transform the housing landscape of Ladakh.

The meeting served as a platform for constructive dialogue and collaboration, marking another milestone in the Union Territory's journey towards inclusive and sustainable urban development.

The meeting concluded on an optimistic note, with both districts reaffirming their dedication to the successful implementation of PMAY-U in the region.

PMAY-U, launched by the Government of India, is a flagship affordable housing scheme. Under the scheme, financial assistance is extended to eligible beneficiaries to facilitate the construction or enhancement of their dwelling units.

The meeting was held with the attendance of the Deputy Commissioner/CEO of LAHDC, Leh; Executive Officer of the Municipal Committee, Leh; and key officials, while the Deputy Commissioner/CEO of LAHDC, Kargil; Director of Housing & Urban Development Department (H&UDD), UT Ladakh; Executive Officer of the Municipal Committee, Kargil and key officials joined the meeting virtually to deliberate on the implementation and progress of the Prime Minister's Awas Yojana Urban (PMAY-U) in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

In another significant sustainable development aimed at addressing vital infrastructure needs, Khirwar took charge by convening a high-level meeting at the Civil Secretariat in Leh.

This meeting focused on the critical subject of Sewerage Treatment Plants (STPs) and their crucial role in improving sanitation and environmental conditions in the region.

At the outset of the meeting, the consultant agency Yash Innovative Solutions left an indelible mark by delivering a comprehensive and detailed presentation on the state-of-the-art sewerage treatment plant in Leh. The meeting, attended by key stakeholders and experts in the field, served as a pivotal moment in shedding light on the groundbreaking advancements in sewage management.

The Principal Secretary emphasized the UT Ladakh administration's commitment to environmental sustainability, detailing how the treatment plant operates in an eco-friendly manner. He highlighted the plant's increased capacity to handle sewage, demonstrating its ability to accommodate growing urban populations while maintaining high-quality treatment standards.

Sanjeev Khirwar emphasized that sewerage treatment plants should not only treat sewage effectively but also meet stringent environmental standards. He underscored the importance of involving local communities in the planning and execution of sewerage treatment projects.

Discussions and deliberations revolved around the ambitious plans for the expansion and establishment of new Sewerage Treatment Plants in Ladakh. The objective is to meet the growing demands of urbanization while pre-

serving the pristine environment of the region. STPs are expected to significantly enhance sanitation and environmental conditions across the UT.

The meeting was held with the attendance of the Director of the Housing & Urban Development Department (H&UDD), UT Ladakh; key officials and officers from UT Administration, and the consultant agency.

Meanwhile, Khirwar also chaired a meeting to discuss the nitty-gritties of the Detailed Project Report (DPR) of the comprehensive sewerage system and Sewerage Treatment Plan (STP) for Kargil district being prepared by executing agency Ecofirst Services Limited, in the presence of officials of the Project Monitoring Unit – PricewaterhouseCoopers Private Limited.

Discussions were held on revising the report as per the revised population data and additional areas incorporated in the project, identified as newly populated. The Principal Secretary also discussed the means and methods to incorporate the existing sewerage systems of individual households with the main sewerage line, leading to the STP, and directed the PMU to explore all possible options to get it done in the most efficient and effective manner.

The implementing agency also apprised the chair of the comments received from IIT on the feasibility of the DPR and informed that the suggested changes have been duly incorporated.

Deliberations were also held on developing STP for Kurbathang, which is fast becoming a growing area in the Kargil district.

53 towers to date.

They further assured the gathering of their commitment to complete the erection of 90 towers and the foundation base for an additional 30 towers at both Package-I and Package-II sites by the end of October 2023.

Taking strict note of the delay in work execution at the designated Package-II sites, CEC Gyalson and Deputy Chairman Angchuk emphasised the need to enhance manpower at all project sites and instructed the agencies to ensure the timely execution of civil works before the conclusion of the working season.

The CEC also instructed Chief Engineer PDD Ladakh and Officers of PGCIL to closely monitor the work progress for a smooth and timely completion of the developmental works for the strategic 220 KVS/C Phyang-Diskit, Nubra Power Transmission Line project.

JKBFSL opens...

building, Main Market here.

Chief Executive Councillor (CEC), LAHDC Leh, Adv. Tashi Gyalson inaugurated the new branch in presence of bank's Zonal Head Dorjee Angchuk, Managing Director JKBFSL Syed Aadil Bashir Andrabi and senior officers of J&K Bank and prominent customers of the area. The latest addition takes number of J&K Bank FSL branches to 13, with 12 of them in Jammu & Kashmir and 1 in Gurugram.

Speaking on the occasion, the CEC lauded the JKBFSL for diversifying its product portfolio to provide tailor made solutions to the investment needs of its customers in Ladakh. He exuded confidence that people in Ladakh would avail financial investment services and grow their capital.

Also speaking, the Zonal Head, Dorjee Angchuk briefed about the objectives of JKBFSL and the facilities available at its newly opened branch. "The JKBFSL is a wholly owned subsidiary of J&K Bank to function as a financial intermediary for providing investment services other than banking to its' customers," he informed the gathering.

MD JKBFSL gave an overview of financial services being offered by the branch to its customers. "Regulated by SEBI, the Company is registered with NSE and BSE as a Stock Broker and Self-Clearing Member and with Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) for distribution of Mutual Fund products," he informed.

He also informed that JKBFSL would also open its branch in Kargil next year to extend the facilities of financial services to people there.

UT: Work...

year," Gadkari said in a series of tweets on Tuesday evening.

The Minister said these 3 packages encompass a staggering 97.726 Km, featuring 13 major bridges, 18 minor bridges, and an astounding 620 box culverts.

Gadkari said the terrain presents immense challenges, with a deep gorge on one side and a steep hill on the other. He said the region's harsh environment, marked by scant vegetation and low oxygen levels, coupled with its extreme cold climate, compounds the difficulties. Over half of the stretch lacks habitation and network connectivity.

The Minister said upon completion, this all-weather road will serve as a crucial infrastructure asset, facilitating troop and heavy artillery movement. Beyond its strategic importance, the project is poised to spur economic development and boost tourism in the region, he added.

Gadkari said under the visionary leadership of PM Shri Narendra Modi this ambitious initiative reflects a commitment to achieving efficient, trouble-free, and environmentally conscious mobility in the border region.

INDIA's first...

making body of the alliance, were present at the meeting that took place against the backdrop of a raging row over DMK leader Udhayanidhi Stalin's controversial remark on the Sanatan Dharma.

Congress General Secretary KC Venugopal, who is a member of the panel, said Abhishek Banerjee of the TMC could not attend the meeting due to the summons issued by the Enforcement Directorate (ED). The CPI(M) is yet to nominate its member.

He alleged that the ED summons was a result of the "vendetta politics" of the BJP and the prime minister.

"The coordination committee decided to start the process of determining the seat-sharing. It was decided that the member parties will hold the talks and decide (seat-sharing) at the earliest," Venugopal said, reading out from a joint statement.

He said the committee also decided that the opposition bloc's leaders will hold joint public meetings in different parts of the country.

"The first public meeting will be held at Bhopal in the first week of October on the issue of rising prices, unemployment and corruption of the BJP government. The parties present in the meeting agreed to take up the issue of the caste census," the Congress leader said.

Meanwhile, West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee had an awkward moment when a smiling Sri Lanka President Ranil Wickremesinghe asked the TMC chief in a lighter vein, whether she is going to lead the INDIA bloc at a chance meeting in Dubai.

Banerjee met Wickremesinghe at the Dubai airport.

"If people support us, we can be in a position (power) tomorrow," replied a visibly amused chief minister, who is on a 12-day official trip to Dubai and Spain.

At his media briefing, Venugopal also said the coordination committee authorised the sub-group on media to decide upon the names of the anchors on whose shows none of the INDIA parties will send their representatives.

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) leader Raghav Chadha later told reporters that the BJP is "badly scared" of the INDIA alliance, claiming that "they are so scared that they are even ready to change the name of the country. They love neither Bharat nor India, they only love power."

National Conference (NC) chief Omar Abdullah said discussions on seat sharing will start soon.

"It is impossible to have a uniform formula applied to all. But discussions will start immediately," he said, adding that the primary focus is going to be on Parliament seats, but wherever possible it will happen in the assembly polls too and discussion started on that as well.

"One of the things I have proposed is seats that are already held by members of INDIA bloc, those seats should not be disturbed," he said.

Javed Ali Khan of the Samajwadi Party (SP) said there were no differences between the members. "We decided that seat sharing should be completed as soon as possible."

Asked if there will be seat sharing in assembly polls as well, he said, "It is an alliance... If they bring one nation one election, even for Panchayat elections there will be seat sharing, but that is not the case at present."

Besides Pawar, Venugopal, Chadha, Abdullah and Khan, the other leaders present at the meeting were Jharkhand Chief Minister and JMM leader Hemant Soren, CPI's D Raja, DMK's TR Baalu, RJD leader Tejashwi Yadav, JD(U)'s Sanjay Jha, PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti and Shiv Sena (Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray) leader Sanjay Raut.

Holding of joint public rallies while taking up public issues was decided at the last meeting of the grouping held in Mumbai.

The resolution issued on September 1 after the third meeting of the bloc in Mumbai, said the parties would contest polls together "as far as possible", and that seat sharing in arrangements in different states would be "initiated immediately" and concluded "at the earliest".

According to opposition leaders while seat sharing in states like Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Bihar have been more or less sorted out, the negotiations in Delhi, Punjab and West Bengal could be challenging.

The meeting also focussed on finalising campaigns and rallies to be held in the coming days, but no decision in this regard was announced.

Over two dozen opposition parties have formed the Indian National Developmental Inclusive Alliance (INDIA) to challenge the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) united in the 2024 Lok Sabha polls.

Inter-District-Divisional Level U-14 Girls Volleyball Tournament commences



EARTH NEWS SERVICE

DODA: The Inter-District Divisional Level Volleyball Tournament for U-14 year girls commenced today here at the Sport Stadium.

The event is being organized by the Youth Services and Sports Department Doda and the tournament shall continue till 5th of October 2023.

The inaugural function was held today with great enthusiasm and passion, with 8 districts of Jammu Division

participating in the Volleyball tournament. The Districts of Jammu, Doda, Rajouri, Reasi, Poonch, Kathua, Udhampur and Samba are participating in the grand event.

The grand opening ceremony was attended by Deputy Commissioner, Vishesh Mahajan as the chief guest.

Accompanying him as the guest of honour was SSP, Abdul Qayoom. The welcome address was delivered by the DYSSO, Jaffer Haider Sheikh. He gave details of

the competitions that are being organised by the District Youth Services and Sports Office Doda.

A colourful cultural programme was also presented by the students which mesmerized the audience with the beautiful dance performances.

The DC, while speaking at the opening ceremony, said that the participation of the girl players in the tournament will strengthen their willpower. He urged the District Youth Services and

Sports department to take the participating girl players to some beautiful locations of the district Doda to familiarize them with the beautiful and historic spots of the area. The DC also interacted with the volleyball players and wished them best of luck.

The pledge for sportsmanship spirit and loyalty towards the sports was also taken up by the sport officials and participating players.

The tournament began with a match between Kathua and Poonch volleyball teams. The Deputy Commissioner Doda and SSP Doda also joined the first playing match between Kathua and Poonch with beautiful services.

ua and Poonch volleyball teams. The Deputy Commissioner Doda and SSP Doda also joined the first playing match between Kathua and Poonch with beautiful services.

The event's inauguration

marked the beginning of an exciting and competitive journey for young female volleyball players from across all districts of Jammu Division. The tournament promises spirited matches and a grand show of the talents of the aspiring athletes.

About 4000 players & officials to be part of the sports extravaganza: Director Sports

67th National School Games: J&K to host Nationals in four games

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: A preliminary meeting regarding hosting of 67th National School Games in the Disciplines of Football, Volleyball, Judo and Fencing was convened by the Director Youth Services & Sports J&K in his office chamber here.

It was decided that all the arrangements will be made in advance for the smooth and successful conduct of the important sports event.

The Department of Youth Services and Sports under the aegis of School Games Federation of India shall host these 4 National level events in Football for under 19 Boys and Volleyball for under 17 boys at Srinagar.

Simultaneously the sports discipline of Judo for U/14 Boys/ Girls and in the discipline of Fencing for U/19 Boys/Girls at Jammu as per the calendar of School Games Federation of India (SGFI).

Expectedly teams from all the 44 SGFI affiliated units from different states/ UTs and organisations shall participate in each discipline.



parts across the country are going to participate in these events" Director YSS&S said.

Joint Director Kashmir Waseem Raja, District Youth Services & Sports Officers and section in-charges of various sections of the Directorate of YSS were also present in the meeting.

B'la triumphs in U-17 boys Inter-district Provincial Handball Competition

EARTH NEWS SERVICE

BARAMULLA: The under 17 boys' competition, which began with great excitement and enthusiasm yesterday as part of week-long Inter-District Provincial level competition, culminated today with district Baramulla emerging victorious.

A total of 10 districts from the Kashmir province participated, showcasing their talent and determination. Districts Baramulla, Bandipora, Ganderbal, and Kupwara earned their places in the semi-finals after intense battles on the field.

In the semi-finals, Baramulla triumphed over Kupwara, securing their spot in the final, while Bandipora secured their place by defeating Ganderbal in a fiercely contested match.

The final match between Baramulla and Bandipora



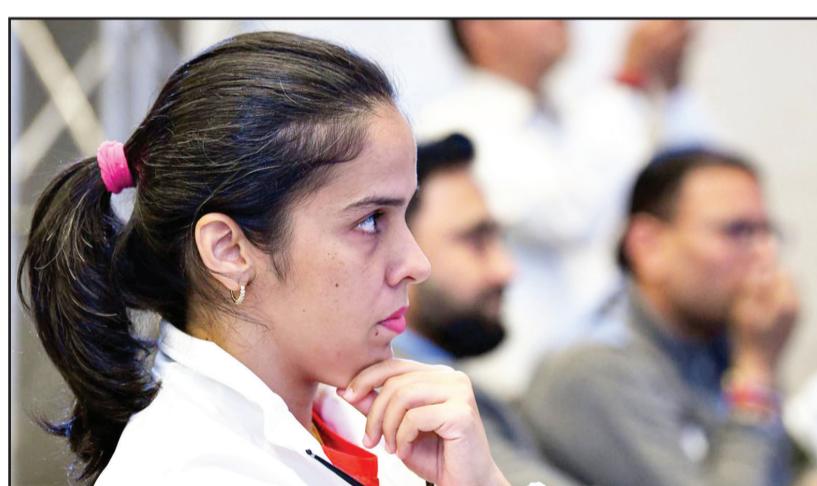
was a true spectacle, with Baramulla emerging as champions with a remarkable 19 goals to Bandipora's 8, thereby winning by a

margin of 11 goals.

During the prize ceremony, winners and runners-up were given trophies and certificates.

Meanwhile, the excitement shall continue tomorrow with the under 19 boys' competition set to take place at the same venue.

Olympic qualification tough but Retirement is not on mind: Nehwal



NEW DELHI: Saina Nehwal is aware that qualifying for the Paris Olympics will be "tough" for her but the injury-ravaged Indian shuttler has no plans to quit badminton and would do everything under the sun to resurrect her career.

Laid low by a spate of injuries, including a recurring knee issue, and other health problems, the 33-year-old from Hyderabad has found it tough to stay fit to consistently turn up at the BWF World Tour events.

Her ranking has plummeted to number 55 in the world.

"I get inflammation in my knee whenever I train for an hour or two. I am not able to bend my knee so a second session of training is not possible. The doctors have given me a couple of injections. Of course the Olympics is near and it is tough (to qualify)," Saina told reporters.

"But I am trying my level best to come back. The physios are helping me but if the inflammation doesn't reduce, it will take little more time to recover. I also don't want to play half-heartedly and results will also not come."

"If you are trying to compete against An Seyoung, or Tai Tzu Ying or Akane (Yamaguchi), it won't happen with just one hour of training. The level has improved so much. So when you are playing such high level players, you need a high level game," Saina, who was named a 'Race Ambassador' for Harvest Gold

I love the game and I have been playing for so many years.

"But if it doesn't happen, then it means, how much I have tried. I have done everything, I mean I shouldn't have any regret. My target is not to play Asian Games or Olympics because I have achieved a lot in those tournaments and of course it could have been better if I would have been able to play, but let's see how it goes."

Saina, who trained under former India coach Vimal Kumar in 2015-16, backed fellow shuttler PV Sindhu's decision to train for a week at the Prakash Padukone academy in Bangalore to regain her form.

"Change in coaches will help if you feel something is not working under some coach or change of atmosphere also helps. You need to try it out. I tried it and I could reach world no 1, reach world championships final."

"After playing 8 quarterfinals, somewhere mind stops thinking if I can ever cross quarterfinal stage. But I could do it after some change. It is required for a player."

"And why not? It is your career. After all, it is you who will sit and think what I have achieved in my career, so changes are always good if it is helping."

Saina reckons that world championships bronze medallist HS Prannoy has a chance to return with a medal from Hangzhou, China.

"All are doing well, especially Prannoy is giving back-to-back good results. Let's see there are some tough challenges. But I feel Prannoy is good and Sindhu has always done well in big tournaments," she said.

The London Olympics bronze medalist feels the young brigade in women's singles is lacking the all-round game required to succeed at world stage.

"Badminton is one of the toughest sports in the world physically. You need to be 100 per cent fit throughout the year to play 17 to 20 tournaments in a year. Sindhu and me were gifted, we were natural retrievers on the court and we had an attacking game as well."

"But other players as far as I am watching the matches, they lack a few things. It is not easy to play at the highest level unless you have an all-round game."

"But at the moment I am trying. As a sports person, it is my duty to try because

Gill attains career-best second spot in ODI batters chart; Rohit, Kohli also in top-10

DUBAI: Opener Shubman Gill has achieved a career-best second position and is the highest-ranked among three Indian batters, who are now in the top 10 of the ICC Men's ODI rankings issued on Wednesday.

The other two Indians in the top-10 are skipper Rohit Sharma (8th) and the peerless Virat Kohli (9th).

Last time, three Indian batters were in ODI's top-10 list, it was way back in January 2019. At that time, Rohit, Kohli and out-of-favour veteran Shikhar Dhawan were the three batters.

Gill, who had scored 58 and figured in a 121-run opening partnership with Rohit Sharma in the Asia Cup match against Pakistan, has moved up one spot while Indian skipper Kohli have gained two places each in the latest chart released by the global cricket body.

Rohit has scored three successive half-centuries so far in the ongoing Asia Cup while Kohli advanced, thanks



to his unbeaten 122 against Pakistan. Pakistan also have three batters in the top-10 with less than a month to go for the start of the ICC men's ODI World Cup.

Captain Babar Azam is at the top and enjoys a lead of more than 100 rating points over Gill, while Imam-ul-Haq and Fakhar Zaman are in fifth and 10 positions, respectively.

The latest weekly update, that also considers performances in three matches of the South Africa-Australia

series and two matches of the England-New Zealand series, saw South Africa's Temba Bavuma closing in on a top-10 place after striking three centuries and two half-centuries in his last eight ODIs. He has advanced 21 places to 11th position while his previous best was 25th. Australia players Davis Warner (up one place to fourth), Travis Head (up six places to 20th) and Marnus Labuschagne (up 24 places to 45th) have made significant progress as has the Indian

pair of KL Rahul (up 10 places to 37th) and Ishan Kishan (up two places to 22nd).

Aiden Markram, Sadeera Samarawickrama, Liam Livingstone, Daryl Mitchell and Devon Conway are among others to gain in the latest update.

New Zealand's Trent Boult is up to joint-second place among bowlers while Australia's leg-spinner Adam Zampa is in the top five of the bowling rankings for the first time after taking four wickets in the second match against South Africa. Indian left-arm wrist-spinner Kuldeep Yadav has gained five places to reach seventh position after grabbing nine wickets in two Asia Cup matches.

Pakistan fast bowler Haris Rauf has soared eight spots and is in the 21st position while India fast bowler Jasprit Bumrah (up eight places to 27th) and all-rounder Hardik Pandya (up 21 places to 56th) have also made big gains. Pandya is also up four places to sixth among all-rounders.

espato
good food & entertainment

JAMMU | MUMBAI

On all COFFEES

BUY 2 | GET 3
EVERY FRIDAY

OFFER VALID AT ALL OUTLETS