

TIME AND US

DAILY

SRINAGAR, KASHMIR

FRIDAY

- DECEMBER, 22, 2017
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WEATHER TEMPERATURE		
STATION	MAX TEMPERATURE	MIN TEMPERATURE
	ACT	ACT
SRINAGAR	9.0	3.1
JAMMU	24.4	11.0
LEH	7.3	-9.2
KARGIL	0.8	-6.2

SUNSET FRIDAY: 05:27 PM
SUNRISE SATURDAY: 07:34 AM

LOCAL FORECAST OF SRINAGAR
Generally Cloudy sky. Maximum & Minimum temperatures will be around 10°C & 1°C respectively.

RNI NO: JKENG/2015/62397 • PRICE RS.3/- (AIR SURCHARGE FOR DELHI, JAMMU & LADAKH 50/- PAISA)

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INDIA VS SRI LANKA 1ST T20 STATS: MS DHONI COMPLETES 200 DISMISSALS IN T20 CRICKET

India hits out at China, Pak for not clearly understanding threat of terrorism

UNITED NATIONS: India has hit out at some UN members for failing to "clearly understand" the common threat of terrorism due to their "narrow political and strategic concerns", apparently referring to Pakistan and China.

India's Permanent Representative to the UN Syed Akbaruddin said terror networks operate across borders in terms of propagation of hateful ideologies, sometimes based in deep-rooted perceived grievances; raise finances; procure arms; and recruit operatives.

"This is a common challenge which requires greater focus by this Council, one where closer international cooperation needs to be, can be and should be expanded for our common interest," Akbaruddin told the Security Council during an open debate yesterday on 'Addressing complex contemporary challenges to International Peace and Security'.

"It appears that this common threat to states and societies is not clearly



understood here. Even on counter-terrorism, cooperation continues to elude the Council," he said.

Akbaruddin was apparently referring to China's decision to repeatedly block a move by India to designate Masood Azhar, chief of Pakistan-based Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) militant group, as a global terrorist.

On an issue as serious as designation of terrorist individuals and entities, the Council-mandated Sanctions Committees fail to make concrete progress and fall victim to "narrow political and strategic concerns in some cases", he said.

Akbaruddin also referred to the

PAKISTAN LINKS KASHMIR ISSUE TO PALESTINIAN CRISIS AT UNSC

United Nations: Pakistan has raked up the Kashmir issue again at the UN Security Council, linking it to the Palestinian crisis and asserting that the world continues to watch these "egregious" situations without addressing them.

Participating in an open debate at the UNSC, Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the UN Maleeha Lodhi on Wednesday said challenges to international peace and security are intensifying at a time when the foundations of global order are fraying.

"The Palestinian and Kashmiri people continue to suffer horrific human rights violations at the hands

▶ See **Pakistan**...Pg 02

Deputation of contractual employees meets Chief Minister



JAMMU, DECEMBER 21: A deputation of a large number of contractual employees today met the Chief Minister, Mehbooba Mufti here today. They thanked her for taking a proactive approach in getting their ser-

vices regularized.

The deputation expressed their gratitude to the Chief Minister for fulfilling the promise of looking into their difficulties and

▶ See **Minister**...Pg 02

FRUADLENT'S ARRESTED BY PULWAMA POLICE

Srinagar, Dec 21: Pulwama police has arrested two fraudulent's who provided a fake cheque for buying items.

On 29th of November 2017, Police Station Pulwama received a complaint from one Mohammad Yaqoob Bhat son of Habib-ul-lah Bhat resident of Pinglena that he is running an electronics shop at

▶ See **Arrested**...Pg 02

Dineshwar Sharma visiting Valley next week

I will try to meet one and all once again: Sharma

Srinagar, Dec 21: The Government of India's special representative for Kashmir Dineshwar Sharma is visiting Valley next week and is expected to meet various delegations for over a week's time.

Confirming his visit, Sharma told KNS over phone from New Delhi that he is coming to Kashmir after December 24 and is expected to meet people from cross sections of the society here. "Yes, I am coming to Kashmir by next week and I will chalk out the strategy for my forthcoming visit," Sharma told KNS.

▶ See **Sharma**...Pg 02

Dr Nirmal Singh calls on PM, HM Extends personal felicitations on Gujarat, HP victory; Discusses JK's developmental issues

NEW DELHI, DECEMBER 21: Continuing his endeavor to meet the central leaders and Ministers to project JK's developmental issues and seek their redressal, the Deputy Chief Minister, Dr Nirmal Singh called on the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi and the Union Home Minister, Rajnath Singh here today.

While extending his felicitations to the Prime Minister for the recent victory in Himachal Pradesh and Gujarat elections, the Deputy



Chief Minister said these triumphs are a clear referen-

dum on the policies and

▶ See **PM**...Pg 02

G A Mir lashes out at Govt for failing to address people's concerns

Express grief over loss of lives in Reasi due to House Collapse

Srinagar, Dec 21: Addressing Party Workers of Larkipora, Shahbad Bocks, Dooru and Verinag Towns at Khanabal today, J&K Pradesh Congress Committee President G A Mir lashed out at ruling PDP-BJP coalition for failing to address genuine concerns of the People, as a result people were facing lot of hardships in every respect.

G A Mir also blamed the Govt for being insensitive to

people's Problems and advised the Govt to concentrate on genuine issues concerning people rather than making tall claims about development of State and People.

The Party Workers and Delegates in the meeting apprised the President of the day today problems arising in the valley such as erratic power supply, non availability of essentials, lack of development and sought im-



mediate end to the issues.

Speaking on the occasion G A Mir while blaming the Govt said that the process of developmental has come to

standstill, although the Govt is making tall claims day in and day out with regard to developmental, but visibly there were no development taking place, anywhere, on the ground. He said mere issuing statements won't serve any purpose which amounts to create confusion among the people in order to divert the attention from the failures of the Govt.

▶ See **Mir**...Pg 02

YOUTH UPLOADS PHOTO OF STUDENT LANDS IN JAIL

Srinagar, Dec 21: Police have arrested a youth from South Kashmir's Pulwama district who had uploaded the photograph of a student on social media labelling him as a recently recruited militant.

The accused has been identified as Shadir Gull Wagay of Rajmohalla Bundzoo Pulwama.

A police official said that recently a photograph of a boy Shahnawaz Rashid Wani of Check Wanihama Beerwah having joined militant ranks of HM militant outfit was in circulation on social media in Kashmir Valley.

During the course of investigation conducted by Police Station Beerwah it surfaced that the boy, a Class 9th student from Government High School Chewdara had nothing to do with militancy and was busy in his studies.

"The accused used to work in the orchards of the victim where he clicked his photograph and later on uploaded it on social media," said a police official.

A formal case vide FIR number 178 under Information Technology Act was registered against the accused after the complaint filed by Shah Nawaz Rashid, the father of the victim.

▶ See **Youth**...Pg 02

ACCOUNTABILITY COMMISSION MAKES NO REPORT PUBLIC SINCE 2012

Govt. least interested to empower Commission amid mounting graft cases

Srinagar, Dec 21: The State Accountability Commission (JKSAC) hasn't issued its annual report since 2012, raising questions about its authority and integrity as a vital anti-graft body of the state.

Commission's official website http://jksac.nic.in reveals that last annual report published by the anti-graft body was during the financial year of 2011-12. Since then, no report has been published that could have revealed the functions of the commission and actions that it has taken against the affluent.

▶ See **Report**...Pg 02

Police recruitment: 'Report about discrimination with Kashmir mischievous, Says Police Chief

Srinagar, Dec 21: A day after media reports that Jammu Kashmir's Police's demography is being changed and the axe is falling on Kashmir valley, Pir Panjal region, Chenab Valley and Kashmir's cold desert region of Ladakh, Director General of Police Shesh Paul Ved while terming the reports 'mischievous' has said that only state subjects can get employment in J&K Police.

Media reports reveal that in the name of giving preference to border districts, J&K Police has discriminated with the Pir Panjal region, Kashmir valley and Ladakh in its latest recruitment drive of constables.

"While 704 persons have been recruited



from Jammu district alone, the recruitment share of the twin border districts of Pir Panjal region - Poonch and Rajouri together is only 491 and of the entire cold desert region of Ladakh comprising border districts of

▶ See **Chief**...Pg 02

HAKIM YASIN CONDEMNS USE OF PELLETS AGAINST CIVILIANS

Asks CM to take action against 'killers'

Srinagar, Dec 21: While expressing the serious concern over the spate of civilian killings in Kashmir, Peoples Democratic Front (PDF) president and MLA Khansahib Hakim Mohammad Yasin today said that unfortunately after every such killing, Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti only expresses anguish and isn't able to do anything to stop it.

"After every civilian killing, Mehboobaji issues a statement, where she condemns it and expresses anguish like all other political parties. It seems the Chief Minister is so helpless that she isn't able to take action against the culprits. Chief Minister, opposition and separatists, all issue statement after every killing to condemn it. But

▶ See **Yasin**...Pg 02

Hundreds of new posts of doctors, paramedics being created in JK

Health Dept submits file to CM's office for approval

Srinagar, Dec 21: Government is set to create hundreds of new posts of doctors and paramedics to overcome shortage of staff in hospitals and health care centres in Jammu and Kashmir.

A senior official of the Health Department said that Health Department has given nod for creation of new posts for doctors and paramedics in Jammu and Kashmir. "The Health Department



sent file for creation of new posts to Chief Minister's office for approval," the official told KNS. "Once the CM's office gives its nod, the file will be forwarded to Finance Department for final approval and

notification will be issued accordingly and recruitment agencies will make the selection process," he said.

For National Rural Health Mission, posts for 100 doctors and 500 para-medics have been created for the last few years, he said.

Since 2016, the official said that 371 doctors and paramedics have been recruited in the state.

▶ See **Doctors**...Pg 02

NHM employees continue to protest for regularization

Says will extend strike if demands won't met

Srinagar, Dec 21: The 72-hours-long strike of National Health Mission (NHM) employees entered into second day on Thursday with association protesting against the government demanding regularization of their duties.

The employees started their protest on Dec 20 to protest against the government for failing to regularize them from past several years. Notably, the protest of



NHM employees took place following the government

announcement regarding the

▶ See **NHM**...Pg 02

DEATH RATE IN ROAD ACCIDENTS ALARMING IN KASHMIR

▶ Bilal Bashir Bhat

Srinagar, Dec 21: The menace of stunt biking and speeding bikes on the roads of Kashmir Valley is getting grave every passing day and has resulted the death percentage in Jammu and Kashmir in road accidents is 66.5 per cent against the national percentage of 37.2. Despite the imposition of ban on stunts but still we watch on daily bases bickers doing dangerous stunts like wheelies, burnouts and stoppies, and other bike stunts.

On 6th June, 2014, 16 year old boy Rasik Shabir from Rajouri Kadal Srinagar died while doing bike stunts in downtown, the deadly stunt biking claimed the life of an 18-year-old student Muhammad Haroon Untoo, son of Abdul Rashid of New Colony when lost control over the

▶ See **Death**...Pg 02

ZULFKAR LAYS FOUNDATION OF RS 3.25 CR GUJJAR-BAKERWAL GIRLS HOSTEL AT BALLI

Reaffirms Govt's commitment towards promoting, encouraging education among tribal youth

UDHAMPUR, DECEMBER-21: Minister for Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs and Tribal Affairs, Chowdhary Zulfkar Ali, today laid foundation stone for Gujjar-Bakerwal Girls Hostel at Balli village to be executed by J&K Housing Board with an estimated cost of Rs 3.25 crore.

Member Legislative Assembly, Pawan Gupta, was also present on the occasion.

Zulfkar, after laying foundation for the building, said that this hostel will have all the modern facilities including sports and recreation activities for the female wards of Tribal community within the campus so that they could compete with the children of all other modern and reputed schools.

Termining education as an effective instrument in growth and development of society, the Minister said that tribal and other under privileged communities need special attention and focus in this regard. "The Government is making earnest efforts to



encourage and promote education among tribal youth to enable them improve their socio-economic standards and lead a dignified life", maintained the Minister while conveying present dispensation's commitment in this regard.

Appreciating MLA's demand of constructing Girls Hostel at Udhampur, the Minister said that this will facilitate education of about 100 girls by providing them free lodging, boarding, uniforms and books.

Meanwhile, various deputations called on the Minister and apprised him of their grievances seeking an early redressal to the same.

Zulfkar assured the deputations that all their issues would be looked into and presented before the concerned so that necessary action is initiated on this account.

Pawan Gupta expressed his gratitude to the Minister for the Gujjar-Bakerwal Girls Hostel which will provide an opportunity to the girl students living in far flung areas to

continue their education. He said that it is his moral duty to work for redressal of public grievances and development of his constituency for which people have given him mandate.

Among others Director FCS & CA, R A Inqalabi, Director Tribal Affairs Mohammad Rafi, Secretary Advisory Board Mukhtar Ahmad, Joint Controller LMD, ADDC Arvind Sharma, SSP Rayees Bhat, ACR Subhash Dogra, ACD, GM DIC, CMO and CEO were present on the occasion.

COMM SECY R&B REVIEWS PROGRESS OF ONGOING PROJECTS IN UDHAMPUR, RAMBAN

UDHAMPUR, DECEMBER-21-Commissioner Secretary PWD (R&B), Sanjeev Verma today chaired a meeting to review the physical and financial status of various ongoing development projects in Udhampur and Ramban districts, here today.

Threadbare discussions were held on various ongoing works of different departments to be executed by R&B, PMGSY. The meeting was informed about various undertaken projects in Ramban including construction of Chamal wasse neel road, Assar to Thanda pani road, 17 Km Ukhral Senabhathi Paristan road, Kunda Kainthi Bhatta road, Dam to kundi and Magarkote to Ukhral road.

In Education sector under RMSA, status of GDC Gool, building of HS Ramban, HS Prehinder, and HS Alinbass was discussed besides status of Dak Bunglow Ramban, improvement of Magarkote Dardahi road, Ramsu Sarbagni road, Khari & Khoura Bridge and status of health PHC Neel Batoo were also



reviewed. Commissioner Secretary instructed the officers to put in their best and achieve the targets within time bound manner.

The SE Circle, Doda Niaz Bandy gave detailed resume of works. He informed that 24 bridges have been taken in Ramban at an estimate cost of Rs 2354.21 lacs out of which works on 3 bridges have been completed. The SE Circle, Doda Niaz Bandy gave detailed resume of works. He informed that 24 bridges have been taken in Ramban at an estimate cost of Rs 2354.21 lacs out of which works on 3 bridges have been

completed.

Sanjeev Verma gave directions to keep provisions for safety measures like crash barriers, installation of reflective boards on road for safety for vehicles and public. He stressed for accelerating the progress besides gave direction to concerned officer to prepare DPR for the languishing leftover schemes of NABARD. Later, he also discussed action taken by department on Chief Minister's commitments made during outreach programme held at Ramban.

Commissioner Secretary passed on directions to Public Works Department to

establish close liaison and coordination with district administration to remove bottlenecks hampering progress of works.

Earlier, the District Development Commissioner, Udhampur Ravinder Kumar gave brief about the physical and financial status of various ongoing projects being executing in PWD (R&B) and PMGSY sector.

Among others, Chief Engineer PWD, (R&B) Sudhir Shah Chief Engineer PMGSY, S P Manhas, SE PWD, PMGSY, CPO Ashok Khajuria, ACR Subash Dogra, XeNs and other district officers were present on the occasion.

Continue from Front Page.....

INDIA

fact that the UN-designated terrorist and Mumbai attack mastermind, Hafiz Saeed, was seeking to contest elections in Pakistan.

Saeed had announced that his Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD) will contest the 2018 general elections in Pakistan under the banner of the Milli Muslim League, which is yet to be registered with the Election Commission.

"In other cases where Sanctions Committees have designated terrorists, there are states who venture to mainstream UN designated terrorist individuals into their political process in total disregard of international law, thus putting our common security in peril," Akbaruddin said in his address to the Security Council.

PAKISTAN

of occupying forces while the world continues to watch without addressing these egregious situations," she said during the debate on 'Addressing complex contemporary challenges to international peace and security'.

The envoy said conflicts continued to rage across the world, from Africa to Afghanistan.

Civil wars and factional fighting in Syria, Libya and Yemen are becoming more vicious and consequential, generating record levels of human displacement, she said.

"Efforts to change the status of Jerusalem threaten to drive an already volatile Middle East into further turbulence and chaos," Lodhi said, referring to US President Donald Trump's decision to recognise Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

"And as UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has warned, in the Korean peninsula, we may be sleep-walking into a catastrophe. At the same time longstanding, internationally recognised disputes of Palestine and Jammu and Kashmir continue to fester," the Pakistani diplomat said.

All this is compounding the challenges of a more turbulent and volatile world, she asserted.

Pakistan frequently raises the Kashmir issue at various UN forums. However, for the second consecutive year not a single other nation has come out in its support.

MINISTER

redressing them in such a fast pace.

The Chief Minister assured the deputation that her Government, since the beginning, has been seized of the problems of the contractual employees. And since then, efforts are on to extend benefits to them as are available to other employees to restore their confidence in the system, she told the deputation.

Mehbooba Mufti appealed them to work with renewed real and dedication and deliver their services for the betterment of the State.

ARRESTED

Pinglena. The complaint further reads that on 25th of November 2017, two unknown persons bought two LED TV's, two inverters with two batteries valuing rupees one lac and gave a cheque, which later proved fake.

On this information a case FIR number 410/17 under section 420, 467 RPC was registered in Police Station Pulwama and investigation was taken up.

During the course of investigation, Pulwama Police traced out and arrested both the fraudulent who were identified as Tahir Amin Bahadur son of Mohammad Amin Bahadur and Abdul Waheed Bhat son of Mohammad Akram Bhat residents of Batamalo, Srinagar and recovered all the property.

SHARMA

When asked whether he is going to again try to meet the Hurriyat leadership that has so far expressed reluctance in meeting him, Sharma, guarded in his words, said he will see what his next Kashmir visit is going to yield. "So far I can only tell you that I am coming and it hasn't been yet decided that whether I am going to meet any specific delegation or group," Sharma told KNS.

On 6 November, this year, Sharma embarked on his first visit to the state as the GOI appointed interlocutor. His appointment was termed by the government as a major initiative for the efforts related to the sustenance of peace in the strife torn Kashmir Valley.

On November 24, this year, Sharma made his second visit to Valley and met people in south Kashmir.

Sharma's next week visit will be his 3rd one on the past two months and is likely to meet government and civil society actors to know the progress of government initiative of first time amnesty to the stone pelters.

PM

programmes of the central government and also an endorsement of the leadership of the Prime Minister. He said the people of the country are clearly with the Prime Minister and they have also vindicated the same by reposing their faith in his leadership.

Dr Singh also informed the Prime Minister about the recent visits of the Government of India's Special Representative to J&K. He also gave a brief about the status of various developmental initiatives undertaken in the State and the status of Urban Local Bodies and the Panchayati Raj institutions.

While presenting the book titled 'Way of Life' containing write-ups by Dalai Lama, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Douglas Abrams to the Prime Minister, Dr Singh also requested the Prime Minister to lay the foundation of Habitat Centre at Warehouse Jammu and launch the Tawi River Front Project.

The Prime Minister while interacting with the Deputy Chief Minister, assured all help to the state.

Later, the Deputy Chief Minister also called on the Union Home Minister, Mr Rajnath Singh and discussed several issues like construction of community / individual bunkers along the international border and line of control, working out modalities of the package to be given to POK refugees and also the issues of West Pak refugees. He also called for undertaking fresh recruitment of the SPOs in the state.

The Union Home Minister assured the Deputy Chief Minister that the issues projected by him will be redressed in a time bound manner.

MIR

G A Mir said the problems confronting people must be addressed by adding top priority to them to ensure their resolution, ensuing that people get some respite from the harsh winter

Adding that PDP BJP regime is discriminating with people under the garb of development, G A Mir blamed the coalition partners for accommodating blue eyed persons in respect of development, employment and other facilities, as a result common people continue to suffer, which is very unfortunate.

He urged upon the Govt to ensure adequate facilities to people and ensure that people do not suffer on account of electricity, essentials etc.

On this occasion G A Mir expresses deep sorrow over the loss of five precious due to house collapse at Panassi in Reasi today. G A Mir described the incident as very unfortunate. He offered condolences to bereaved family and sympathized with them.

He also emphasized that victims be provided full compensation.

YOUTH

"The accused has been arrested. A cell phone and a fake identity card was recovered from his possession," the police official told news agency CNS.

REPORT

The State Accountability Commission had been constituted under the Jammu and Kashmir Accountability Commission Act-2002 to inquire into grievances and allegations against public functionaries and for matter connected therewith Under the Act, the Commission should consist of a chairperson and two members. The first chairperson of JK-SAC was Justice R.P Sethi, a retired judge of the Supreme Court.

On the other hand, more than Rs six crore, thirty lakh were the expenditure borne by the Jammu and Kashmir State Accountability Commission (JKSAC) during the past five years. During the year 2010-11, more than Rs 85 lakh rupees were spent on the anti graft body by the state dispensation Rs one crore and seventy three lakhs were spent by the JK-SAC a year later in 2011-12. More than Rs two crore were spent in 2012-13. During 2013-14, the State dispensation revealed

that the expenditure borne over the functioning of SAC. Interesting to mention that Governor NN Vohra raised pitch in the year 2011 to strengthen the SAC but the State Government remained unmoved even over appointing the second member. SAC could not take the suo-moto cognizance of any issue due to failure of the State Government to empower it. The High Court here had held that the anti-corruption watchdog cannot exercise suo- moto powers in absence of inherent powers.

CHIEF

Kargil and Leh districts is only 118."

"While 704 persons have been recruited from Jammu district, even less than its half, only 328 persons were recruited from Srinagar district, 39 Schedule Caste candidates being from Jammu," the report reveals.

The link of the news report was shared by Congress leader Salman Anees Soz on his Twitter handle.

"Perhaps Director General @spvaid has an explanation. He is aware that we want inclusive development in J&K, as in other parts of the country," Soz tweeted.

Jammu Kashmir Police Chief replied twice to the tweet and wrote: "Only state subjects can get employment in J&K Police, they are citizens of the state & are mandated to work anywhere in the state. Please don't mislead people."

"It's mischievous reporting as vacancies are allocated district wise," he concluded.

YASIN

if government is condemning the killings, what stops it from taking action against the culprits," Hakim Yasin said in a statement issued to press here.

Reminding the government of its 'healing touch' and zero tolerance claims on human rights violations, he said, "All these statements have proven a hoax. Duty of any government is to safeguard the rights of its citizens, but this government has miserably failed. They can't be fool people of the state anymore now on such promises."

The PDF chief also said that use of pellet guns against civilian protesters has resurfaced in Kashmir as in the past few days, several youths have been hit by the deadly pellets. "Despite state and international human rights organizations urging the government to stop the use of this deadly weapon, it seems the government is least bothered about it. It is unfortunate that Kashmiri youth are being blinded and maimed through these deadly weapons and the government is silent," he rued.

"The government should take into consideration the ground realities and create an environment of trust. But instead, it is taking such steps which make the situation tenser. The government should announce an immediate ban on pellet guns and advise relevant quarters against the policy of mass harassment, raids and arrests as this has worsened an already volatile situation in the State and also goes against the values and principles of democracy," Hakim Yasin added.

DOCTORS

Minister of State for Health and Medical Education, Aesia Naqash, said that all these measures are being taken to overcome understaffed healthcare centres of the state. "We are committed to work for the betterment of the healthcare system," she said. She confirmed that file of creation of new posts has been submitted to CM's office for final approval. "Creation of new posts is necessary to overcome shortage of doctors and paramedics," she told KNS.

Sources said that government was also going for a major reshuffle to strengthen the understaffed health care centres in far-flung areas in J&K.

"Those doctors who have served in cities only will be sent to rural areas to strengthen the understaffed hospitals in rural areas. Every doctor has to serve now some time in rural area," the official said.

The official said there was a shortage of over 1500 doctors in rural areas of the state. "There is a sanctioned strength nearly 1500 doctors for valley hospitals run by the Directorate of Health Services, Kashmir (DHSK) but only 900 doctors are available for duty while rest are either absent or deputed on choice postings in Medical Colleges and other departments," the official said.

Official sources said the doctor patient ratio in J&K is

1:2104 as against the recommendations of World Health Organization (WHO) of 1:1000, which is grossly insufficient.

"The Health department over the years has seen less recruitment of doctors thereby letting patients suffer. The doctors are also unwilling to serve in remote areas and instead prefer to serve in urban areas and many give up their jobs to move outside the state," an official said.

The Health and Medical Education Department recently directed officers that they should ensure that the places where two or more persons have been posted against one sanctioned post, "the one who have a longer stay should be transferred out only if he/she has completed a minimum tenure of two years there".

"All such doctors-paramedics hospitals staff except for those appointed under RBA/ALC categories and serving in such areas who have completed more than five years of tenure in a health institution, shall be shifted and action shall be taken under rules," a recent circular of the government said.

NHM

regularization of 61000 casual labours and daily wagers in the state.

The NHM employees decided to protest for their demands for 72-hours, saying that the protest is aimed to press the government for their demands of regularization.

The protesters especially the women participants held a sit-in at Pratap Park and chanted slogans in favour of their demands.

According to the KNS correspondent, the protesters welcomed the Facebook post of the Health Minister, Bali Baghat wherein he referred to the demands of NHM employees. "We will not stop our protest until the government takes any serious step for securing our career," they said.

They said that they will extend their strike in case the government fails to fulfill the demands of NHM employees. "We are working on meagre amount and the government is not paying any heed towards our sufferings. The government must come up with a proper road map and should secure the future of thousands of NHM employees," they demanded.

Earlier, in March this year, the NHM employees staged protest in favour of their demands and after protesting for consecutive eight days, the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Baseer Ahmad Khan along with Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Farooq Ahmad Lone met protesting employees and assured them that their demands will be convened to CM.

Reports quoted asking the protesting employees to resume their duties and make memorandum of demands. "The absence of employees from the hospitals has caused immense hardships to the patients," he had said.

DEATH

bike while performing a deadly stunt at Nowpora Sopore, reports said, adding, the youth was without helmet and his bike rammed into a parked Maruti van (JK05D/2266) with great force.

Masses are aghast over the lack of will shown by law enforcement agencies to crack a whip on bike stunting and over speeding. Tahir Ahmad, an activist stated - "Bike stunts should be heavily discouraged for those who are not trained in the discipline and are doing it for the thrill in those roads which are bustling the traffic. Safety should be the first priority for all, and due regard must be paid to the safety of innocent bystanders who become unavoidable victims of accidents resulting from these stunts. After witnessing deaths from these deaths the ban on stunts should be imposed. Unfortunately so far we have not witnessed much proactive approach from Traffic Police or civil society to curb menace of speeding and killer bike stunts. The media can also play a vital role in curbing the attitude of these youngsters who think it is 'hip' to risk their necks while carrying out such acts and the government should focus upon providing other productive activities for youngsters."

Statistics related to traffic accidents are quiet alarming in Jammu & Kashmir. Jammu and Kashmir stands at second place, only behind Nagaland, in high accidental death prone areas, according to the statistics provided some time back by National Crime Record Bureau. The death percentage in JK in road accidents is 66.5 per cent against the national percentage of 37.2.

Masses are calling to take efforts against deadly bike stunts and over speeding so that precious lives of youngsters.

JTFRP to help build strong disaster mitigation mechanism: Veeri

Reviews progress on World Bank funded project

JAMMU, DECEMBER 21 - Minister for Revenue, Disaster Management, Relief Rehabilitation & Reconstruction and Parliamentary Affairs, Abdul Rehman Veeri today reviewed the progress on implementation of Jhelum-Tawi Flood Recovery Project (JTFRP) being funded by World Bank, here today.

The meeting was attended by Commissioner Secretary Industries & Commerce Shailendra Kumar, Commissioner Secretary R&B Sanjeev Verma, Director General Police (SDRF) Dilbagh Singh, Development Commissioner Works Bimal Tickoo, CEO JTFRP Vinod Sharma, General Manager JKPC HarKewal Singh and other concerned officers of various executing agencies.

Commissioner Secretary Industries & Commerce briefed the Minister about progress of works taken up by the department and assured for their completion in given time frame.

CEO JTFRP briefed the meeting about project's progress and about the issues hampering the pace of Rs 1500 crore project. He said that works on construction of bridges and roads are underway

and for tendering process is underway for other important works under the project.

The Minister asked JTFRP to execute the road works on fast track basis and also to make estimate of land to be acquired for construction of roads including the funds required for compensation to owners. He said that take up the works on priority where land acquisition is not required.

Regarding works on construction of roads, bridges and school buildings, Commissioner Secretary R&B apprised the Minister about the progress on these works and issues hampering the project's progress.

Veeri asked the concerned executing agencies to prepare the DPRs for various sub-projects being executed under the Jhelum - Tawi Flood Recovery Project and so that works can be executed at the earliest

The meeting was further informed that works on Bone & Joint Hospital Srinagar and works on construction of additional building at LD Hospital Srinagar would soon be commenced. It was



decided in the meeting that works at Lal Ded Hospital would commence by March next year.

With regards to creation of health infrastructure, the Minister asked JTFRP to expedite the process at these two health institutions and also to ensure that new structures are earthquake resistant.

Progress on works related to Srinagar Municipal Corporation was also discussed and meeting was informed that process

of procuring required machinery is underway. The Minister asked SMC to prepare DPRs for all new projects and complete all the necessary formalities for starting the works on same.

DGP, SDRF, while giving out the details of the measures taken to meet any eventuality, informed that process of buying boats is under process and a good number of boats have been received by SDRF. Other necessary equipment

required are being procured in a phased manner.

He demanded some funding for providing required training to SDRF personnel. The Minister asked DGP to submit a comprehensive training proposal to CEO JTFRP so that funds would be arranged under Skill Development Programme.

Discussing the progress on Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) at in

Srinagar, the Minister directed the JTFRP to establish the centre at safe and easily accessed location and to make it functional soon.

Veeri directed the CEO JTFRP to review the functioning of prestigious project on weekly basis besides asking all the concerned to expedite developmental works under this prestigious project.

"This ambitious project is envisaged to recover and reconstruction of critical infrastructure, capacity building and livelihood in the State and to enhance the capacity of emergency response units like hospitals, emergency services", the Minister said adding that the works should be carried out on fast track basis for implementation of the project without further delay.

The Minister said that Jhelum-Tawi Flood Recovery Project needs to be completed at the earliest for putting up a strong mechanism in place to respond during emergency situations and directed the all concerned officers to prioritize the important works for their early completion.

Kavinder dedicates 250KVA transformer to residents of Ward No 58; Listens to people's issues

JAMMU, DECEMBER 21: The Speaker Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly and MLA Gandhi Nagar Constituency, Kavinder Gupta today inaugurated 250 KVA Transformer here at Ward No. 58 opposite Digiana Ashram.

On the occasion, Kavinder Gupta said that with the installation of this Transformer a long pending demand of local people has been fulfilled. He hoped that upgraded facility would help to improve power supply scenario in the area.

He said PDD has made all arrangements to replace old and damaged transformers from the Gandhi Nagar Constituency within shortest possible time.

Kavinder Gupta said that the present government has started a new phase of devel-



opment in the state especially in neglected and underdeveloped areas. He said that a number of road macadamization and up gradation works have been taken up with special thrust on the use of quality material.

Meanwhile, Kavinder Gupta also convened a public meeting to listen to people's grievances and demands. He sought close cooperation of

the people of the area to expedite the ongoing development works started by different agencies in the area. He assured the people that no compromise would be made in the use of quality material.

The locals sought construction and beautification of parks, construction and up gradation of lanes and drains, replacement of old electric poles and wires, repair and

installation of street lights, hassle free distribution of ration cards, old age and widow pension, safe drinking water, improved sanitation including daily garbage lifting and installation of lights along sub-way of Digiana Ashram.

Kavinder Gupta gave a patient hearing and assured the locals that their genuine demands would be taken up with the concerned authorities for early redress.

Responding to the demands, the Speaker assured locals that a special camp would be held in all areas to listen to issues of locals including verification of ration cards and other related matters.

Among others present were concerned Officers of PDD, Ex-Councilor, Ward No. 58, senior leaders and prominent citizens of the area.

Engage with children to bring out best; Asia urges teachers

JAMMU DECEMBER 21 - Minister of State for Housing & Urban Development, Social Welfare, Health & Medical Education, Asia Naqash today asked the teachers to engage with children and bring out the best from them for society and for their own life.

The Minister was speaking at Annual Day function celebrations of a private school, here today.

Vice Chairman, Medical Supplies Corporation J&K, Choudhary Manmohan Singh was also present in the function.

The Minister said that it is nice to be with young people. Apart from making feel younger ourselves, one is able to share the joy energy and spirit that are commonly associated with youth.



The Minister said there is a need to lay focused attention to identify different aptitudes, abilities and interests of children for proper development of their individual potential. "We should also equip our youths with the necessary knowledge and skills so that they can meet the demands of a fast-changing world and become lifelong learners", she added.

The Minister said to equip the students with the skills of decision making, problem

solving, critical thinking and creativity, teachers have to switch over to latest teaching practices.

"Rather than asking students to memorize and recite facts, the teachers should provide students the opportunities to learn independently, to retrieve information from different sources, to analyse it critically and use it effectively through project learning and other multidisciplinary learning activities", the Minister added.

The Minister said that life is like a large piece of marble and teachers are the sculptor, the mind and skill of a sculptor decide the shape of the marble. "It is your mind and skill that will help shaping life of our children," she asked the teachers

The Minister congratulated the students for their success in studies and wishes them best for their future endeavours.

The founder Chairperson of the school, Veena Handa also spoke on the occasion and highlighted the achievements and progress of the School.

President Kissan Cell, Satpal Charak, Patron Yuva Rajput Sabha Rajinder Manhas besides students, parents and teachers were present on the occasion.

Govt committed to recapitalize 3 Central Cooperative Banks: Dorjay

Mir Zahoor calls for setting up of Cooperative Medical Shops at every Tehsil Headquarters

JAMMU, DECEMBER 21: Minister for Cooperatives and Ladakh Affairs, Chering Dorjay said that Government is committed for recapitalization of Anantnag, Baramulla and Jammu Central Cooperative Banks as they are presently unlicensed due to which their performance has slowed down. He said the matter with regard to recapitalization have already been taken up with the Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti who in response had shown positive response in this pursuit.

This was stated by the Minister at a felicitation function after the successful completion of Cooperative Week-2017 organized by the J&K Dairy Producers Processors and Marketing Cooperative Union Limited (JKDCUL), here today.

Minister of State for Forests, Animal Husbandry, Fisheries and Cooperative, Mir Zahoor Ahmad was also present on the occasion.

While appreciating the role of Cooperative department for successfully conducting elections for Primary Cooperative Societies in the state, the Minister said the employees of the department have to perform their duties with a positive approach and to play a significant role in the growth of our economy. He calls for strengthening of the Cooperative movement across the State and revitalization of existing Cooperative Institutions.

Dorjay said there is potential in the field of Cooperative for creating employment avenues for educated unemployment youth of the State.



He also called for massive awareness among the general masses at gross root level so that cooperative movement would be enhanced and flourished across the State.

The Minister congratulated the organizers for such events and said that there is dire need to launch awareness programmes of Cooperative Movement in the State so

that maximum people can be benefited by the welfare schemes of the Centre and State Governments.

Minister of State for Cooperative, Mir Zahoor stressed for setting up of Cooperative Medical Shops at every Tehsil headquarters to ensure availability of quality medicines to the people on concessional rates. The Minister said that it is the

ECI conducts awareness Quiz at Jammu

JAMMU, DECEMBER 21: Election Commission of India (ECI) today conducted semifinal round of Quiz competition at Teachers Bhawan, Gandhi Nagar Jammu.

The competition, aimed at to educate youth regarding the importance of enrolling oneself for voting, was organized by the ECI and Department of Education J&K is working as nodal agency in conducting these programs.

The Quiz was attended by the students from 21 districts and the selected students will participate in ECI National Quiz which is to be held in New Delhi soon.

Chief Electoral Officer, J&K, Shaleen Kabra, said that these events are an attempt to create awareness about the Indian Election system and function of democracy in the country besides engaging young students in the age group of 14-17 years the future voters, in a self-learning exercise about the electoral process so as to build an informed electorate in near future. He added that right to vote is a biggest right that a citizen of this nation enjoys and it must be utilized in an earnest manner. Joint Chief Electoral Officer, Raman Kesar, while throwing light on the details of the quiz, said that it was organized in three tier processes which started from intra school competitions and topper of state level competition will compete at national level. Among others, Deputy CEOs Jammu, Kashmir and other Senior Officers of election and education Department were present on the occasion.

Div Com conducts city tour to review traffic scenario

SRINAGAR, DECEMBER 21: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Baseer Ahmad Khan today reviewed the traffic scenario in Srinagar and directed removal of various bottlenecks so that there is no impediment for smooth plying of traffic.

The Div Com discussed the matters related to various issues confronting the traffic flow with VCLAWDA, VCSDA, SSP Traffic and other officers. The officers informed the Div Com about various initiatives taken by their respective departments. The Div Com directed the officials to construct dividers at Hawal and Qamarwari within two days so that the menace of traffic jams is



reduced at these places. He also directed the SDA and SMC to install signages and remove all unauthorized vendors.

The officers later conducted a city tour to review the ground situation. The DDC Srinagar also accompanied

the officials on the tour.

The Div Com directed removal of permission of roadside car parking at certain places on MA Road as the same has proved to be a bottleneck. Outside banquet hall, the Div Com directed the R&B depart-

ment to repair the road around the Chinar tree. The Div Com also inspected the work on Grade Separator constructed outside Radio Kashmir building. He directed the executing agency to start the work on double shifts to commission the project within the deadline.

The Div Com also inspected the traffic scenario at Karanagar where he directed the officials to level the road so that traffic movement is not hampered. He also directed removal of bottleneck structures at the earliest.

The Div Com also visited Parimahal where he directed the officials to conduct daily cleanliness drives so no garbage is accumulated anywhere.

Developmental scenario reviewed at Baramulla

BARAMULLA, DECEMBER 21: Additional Secretary Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Arun Kumar Mehta today chaired a meeting here at Dak Bungalow to review the pace and status of various ongoing developmental activities undertaken by various executing agencies in the district. The meeting was attended by District Developmental Commissioner Dr Nasir Ahmad Naqash, ADDC Mohammad Qasim Wani, ADC Farooq Ahmad Baba, Joint Director Planning A G Malik, SEs and Exens of different line departments and various other district and sectoral officers.

On the occasion, the DDC briefed the Additional Secre-



tary about the status of various developmental projects. He said that out of the total CAPEX budget of Rs 254.35 crore for this fiscal, Rs 71.28 crore has been released and Rs 48.25 crore have been expended up to November 2017 in various sectors through the state as well as centrally-sponsored schemes.

He informed that 10 schemes involving a road length of 153.50kms under

Central Road Fund (CRF) were approved at a cost of Rs 158.96 crore against which an amount of Rs 32.98 crore were released till this November.

The meeting was also informed that under PMGSY, a total of 143 schemes were approved against an allocated outlay of Rs 365.20 crore, out of which 80 schemes were completed till this November. A detailed account of pace and progress in various developmental works under R&B, PDD, PHE, Irrigation, Health, and Education sectors was presented.

Meanwhile, the Additional Secretary, who is also the Nodal Officer Developmental Projects Baramulla, took a comprehensive review

of various developmental projects wherein he stressed upon the concerned to ramp up the pace of work so that all the undertaken projects are completed within a stipulated timeframe. He exhorted upon the officers to deploy additional men and machinery in expediting the pace of works besides assuring every possible support in ensuring progress and prosperity of the district. He called for effective coordination between various agencies so that qualitative services are delivered for the overall welfare of the people. He also sought suggestions and feedbacks from officers for the overall effective implementation of various programmes.

DAILY Editorial Time and Us SRINAGAR J&K

TRANSIT GAMBIT

Already grappling with the Goods and Services Tax transition, businesses are now anxious about how the roll-out of e-way bills will pan out. Starting February 1, all inter-State movement of goods worth over ₹50,000 will be tracked with the introduction of the e-way bill system under the GST regime. All consignments moving more than 10 km from their origin will require prior registration and generation of an e-way bill through the GST Network, which will be valid for varying durations depending on the distance travelled. While a few States have already imposed their own requirements for such bills since the GST roll-out in July, all States must implement the bill system for capturing intra-State trade by June 1. Therefore, a fully integrated tracking system for all taxable goods can be expected only then. This poses an interim headache for firms operating across States, as they will now face differing compliance requirements for inter-State trade and intra-State trade, depending on when individual States launch their own e-way bill systems. To be fair, inter-State movement of goods was also tracked under the VAT (value-added tax) regime, but intra-State transactions were not. Over 150 items of common use, including LPG cylinders, vegetables, foodgrain and jewellery, will be exempt from such transport permits, which can be checked by designated tax officials by intercepting a transporting vehicle. Goods moved on non-motorised conveyance, such as carts, have been left out.

In October, the GST Council had decided to introduce e-way bills in a staggered manner from January 1, with a nationwide roll-out on April 1, 2018. After easing the GST burden on small businesses and exporters in its recent meetings, the GST Council's decision on Saturday to advance the implementation of e-way bills just two days after polling closed in Gujarat signals that there are serious concerns on the tax collection front. After a monthly ₹90,000 crore-plus inflow in the GST's first three months, revenue in October plummeted to just over ₹83,000 crore. And this was even before substantive tax rate cuts made by the Council kicked in. With States claiming a revenue shortfall of about ₹40,000 crore so far under the GST, the Centre, which has to fill that gap, is also feeling the pinch. Finance Minister Arun Jaitley, who faces a serious fiscal dilemma even before he presents the Union Budget in less than two months, has said the next set of GST features, such as e-way bills and matching of invoices, will make tax evasion difficult and bump up collections. Plugging revenue leakages is essential, and encouragingly, Karnataka's e-way bill experience in the first month saw very few glitches. Given industry's nervousness, the government must simplify the onerous rules proposed for e-way bills (a one-day validity for distances up to 100 km, for instance), ensure that the IT backbone is robust, and make inspections the exception, not the norm.

Seeing through a glass darkly: on combating terrorism

▶ M. K. Narayanan

Yet another anniversary of the November 26, 2008 terror attacks on multiple targets in Mumbai has come and gone. Much has changed since then and terror has evolved into an even more dangerous phenomenon. Recent variants represent a paradigmatic change in the practice of violence.

A DIFFERENT GENRE

It is difficult to recognise the new generation of terrorists as a mere extension of the earlier lot of radical Islamist terrorists who were influenced by the teachings of the Egyptian thinker, Sayyid Qutb, and the Palestinian Islamist preacher, Abdullah Azzam, and adopted the practical theology of the Afghan warlord, Jalaluddin Haqqani. There is less theology today and the new age terrorist seems to belong to an altogether different genre of terrorism.

This is not to say that the 2008 terror attacks in Mumbai were not different in the methodology and the tactics used in the September 11, 2001 attack in New York City. Nevertheless, the spate of recent attacks in Europe and parts of Asia, from 2015 to 2017 — beginning with the attack on the Charlie Hebdo offices in Paris in January 2015, the major incidents at Brussels and Istanbul Ataturk airports as well as the Bastille Day attack in Nice, France, all in 2016, to the string of attacks in London, Stockholm, Barcelona and New York, in 2017 — are very different in structure and the morphology from attacks of an earlier period.

STANDING OUT FROM THE CROWD

A large number of terror attacks in the past three years have been attributed to the handiwork of the Islamic State (IS), and reveal its leaning towards the "nihilism" of Sayyid Qutb. It is this which distinguishes the IS from many of the other radical Islamist groups such as al-Qaeda and its affiliates. The IS's recruitment techniques, especially its ability to proselytise over the Internet, including "direct to home jihad" — as also its more sanguinary brand of violence, set it apart from earlier variants of radical Islamist terror.

Even while the IS has gained a great deal of prominence due to its brand of violence, other terror networks have continued to be no less active. For example, al-Qaeda and its affiliates. The Boko Haram in Africa has been responsible for more killings than most people would realise. Closer home, the Afghan Taliban and the Haqqani network have carried out several spectacular attacks inside Afghanistan. The Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and the Lashkar-e-Jhangvi have carried out several attacks inside Pakistan. Pakistan provides the wherewithal and the support to terror outfits such as the Lashkar-e-Taiba and the Jaish-e-Mohammad to launch well-planned attacks on Indian targets.

Most of these outfits continue to adopt earlier methodologies. These have proved no less effective than those followed by the IS. The terror attack on a mosque in North Sinai, Egypt in November this year, which killed over 230 persons, is one such example. In December, the TTP was responsible for a terror attack on an agricultural training institute in Peshawar, Pakistan. Differences



CBI to probe Rohini ashram sexual assault case

NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court on Thursday asked the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) to probe the case of alleged sexual assault of women and minor girls in the residential facility of an ashram cum meditation centre in Rohini area of Delhi. The high court transferred the case to probe agency in view of its serious nature.

A court-appointed committee informed the court that they recovered around 40 mobile phones, 12 memory cards and a few letters, all of which have been sealed now.

The court was hearing a plea filed by an NGO, Foundation of Social Empowerment, alleging that the girls living in the premises of the educational institution were not allowed

to leave the area or meet their respective families. Taking note of this, the high court had asked the police, Delhi government and Delhi Commission for Women, to visit the place and assess the situation.

Family of one of the victims had alleged that they have not been allowed to meet her since 2015. An alleged victim had stated in the court that the people in the ashram tried to brainwash the resident girls and women, and sexually assaulted them under the pretext of religion.

She further alleged that the victims were brainwashed into believing that no wrong was committed and the aggressors were manifestations of God.

Najeeb disappearance case: CBI submits data report in Delhi HC

NEW DELHI: The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) on Thursday filed a status report on the disappearance of Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) student Najeeb Ahmed in the Delhi High Court.

In its report, the investigative agency stated that the data report of the mobile seized during the raid in connection with the case is still awaited. The court today asked the CBI to submit its forensic report in Ahmed's disappearance as

early as possible.

It has adjourned the hearing to February 27. The matter pertains to the disappearance of Ahmed, who had gone missing from the university's hostel on October 16, 2016, in the wake of an alleged brawl between him and members of the Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad (ABVP) at Delhi's Mahi-Man-davi hostel on the night of October 14. On November 14, the Delhi High Court fixed December 21 as the next date of hearing after the



CBI sought more time to complete its investigation. In a status report submitted before the court, the investigative agency stated that the probe was underway and that it re-

quired more time to complete it. In May, the Delhi High Court transferred the investigation into the case from the police to the CBI, after Najeeb's mother, Fatima Nafees, approached it following the police's failure to trace him.

The CBI registered a First Information Report (FIR) in June and started the investigation.

On June 29, it also declared a reward of Rs 10 lakh for any information about the whereabouts of Najeeb.

Max Hospital case: Father of twins demand CBI enquiry

NEW DELHI: Father of the twins, who were declared dead by Max Hospital in Delhi's Shalimar Bagh, on Thursday demanded for a Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) enquiry to seek justice into the matter.



Speaking to ANI, Ashish, the father of the kids, said, "The police have not taken our statements yet. I request for a CBI inquiry into the case, so that the culprits are punished and I can get justice. I don't want this to happen to others". He added that the family was relieved to hear the Delhi Government's order to cancel the license of Max Hospital, but again the institution was given its license. "My question is, if Section

304 under the Indian Penal Code (IPC) has been applied on the doctors, then why they aren't getting arrested. It is a non-bailable

offence," he asserted.

Earlier in the day, the relatives of the twins, who were declared dead with one of them later found to be alive, staged a protest outside the Shalimar Bagh Max Hospital after the hospital resumed operations a day before. The hospital had obtained a stay order on cancellation of its licence. The incident of falsely declaring a newborn dead and giving it away to the parents in a packet by the Max Hospital had earlier created an uproar. This had led to the state government cancelling the licence of the hospital on Friday, through a four-page order on December 10. While few of the rela-

tives of the patients claimed the hospital had always given them the best treatment for free, others were concerned about the consequences that shutting of the hospital would lead to.

The father of the children accused the hospital of deliberately declaring the baby dead and trying to get rid of him after he told the authorities he would not be able to pay Rs. 1 lakh per day for their treatment.

India Medical Association (IMA) President KK Aggarwal on Thursday blamed the concerned doctors of committing a gross mistake. They were later terminated from their services by the hospital.

For India, Mali, terrorism and radicalisation are common challenges: Naidu

Vice President M Venkaiah Naidu today said terrorism and radicalisation remain common challenges for India and Mali, besides other parts of the world. He was interacting with a three-member delegation led by Mr. Abdrahmane Niang, the President of the High Court of Justice. Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha, Dr. P.J. Kurien, the Secretary General of the Rajya Sabha, Desh Deepak Verma and other dignitaries were present on the occasion. Vice President Naidu said India stands ready to extend Lines of Credit in projects of renewable energy sector in Mali, adding that India has already extended the Duty Free Tariff Preference Scheme

to Mali. Indian importers are availing the benefits. India is committed to further strengthen its developmental cooperation partnership with Mali, he added. He said the world heritage site of Timbuktu with its repository of invaluable Islamic scriptures and manuscripts is a unique cultural asset for the entire world. He further said that India shall keenly look forward to the early inauguration and opening of the Exhibition "Taj Mahal meets Timbuktu" in India. Naidu congratulated the Government of Mali on the establishment of G-5 Sahel Joint Force which will contribute to unity, peace, development and prosperity of Mali and the region.

Jaya Bachchan disappointed over uproar in RS during Sachin's speech

NEW DELHI: Rajya Sabha MP Jaya Bachchan on Thursday expressed disappointment over the uproar by the politicians in the house, when MP Sachin Tendulkar was about to deliver his debut speech, and said it is a matter of shame that the latter was not allowed to speak. "Sachin Tendulkar has earned name for India at the world stage.

It is a matter of shame that he was not allowed to speak, even when everyone knew it was on today's agenda. Are only politicians allowed to speak?" she asked.

"If a person is treated like this, why would he come to the house?" she added, in a reply to the allegations that the master blaster rarely attends the sessions of the Parliament.



Earlier in the house, Sachin did not get a chance to speak as the uproar over Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent remarks on Dr. Manmohan Singh forced an adjournment of the house.

Manipur students call on Rijiju

NEW DELHI: Eighteen students from Manipur's Bishnupur district called on Minister of State for Home Kiren Rijiju here today.

The students are taking part in a national integration tour organised by the 42nd Assam Rifles from December 14 to 26. Rijiju complimented the Assam Rifles for organising the tour under "Operation Sadbhavna".

Rijiju called upon the children to share their experiences with family and friends back home after the tour ends. The tour is aimed at promoting the concept of unity in diversity. The



students are visiting landmarks like the Taj Mahal, Fatehpur Sikri, forts in Agra and Delhi, Rajghat, India Gate, National Museum, Pragati Maidan and the Delhi Metro.

JUSTICE PREVAILS, SAYS KANIMOZHI

NEW DELHI: Hours after getting acquitted in the 2G spectrum allocation scam case, Rajya Sabha Member of Parliament (MP) and Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) leader Kanimozhi on Thursday welcomed the court's judgement and said it was an answer to all the allegations made against her. An elated Kanimozhi told ANI: "We are very happy as justice is prevailed.

It's a big day for DMK and my family too. This verdict is an answer to all the allegations and problems that we went through."

Earlier in the day, the special Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) court acquitted all the accused, including former telecom minister A Raja and Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) MP Kanimozhi, involved in the scam.

Further showing confidence on the RK Nagar bypoll held today in Tamil Nadu, Kanimozhi stated: "DMK is going to win this time no doubt on that." Voting in RK Nagar Assembly constituency, which was left vacant after the death of former chief minister of Tamil Nadu J Jayalalitha, has begun. While, counting of votes will be held on December 24. The court's verdict had come nearly seven years after the first arrest made by the CBI in 2011. The alleged scam relates to the granting of 2G spectrum licence allocations in 2007-08 which caused, according to a report by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India, a loss of Rs 1.76 lakh crore to the public exchequer.

The scam was among the major corruption scandals that came to light during the second term of the UPA government headed by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

The bypolls were earlier scheduled for April 12 earlier this year, but were cancelled following allegations that sums of money were distributed in a vote-for-cash scam.

ASEAN-INDIA COMPLETE 25 YEARS OF PARTNERSHIP

NEW DELHI: Leaders from 10 member states of Association of South East Asian Nation (ASEAN) met in the recently held India-ASEAN partnership summit to commemorate 25 glorious years of ASEAN-India relationship.

The summit focused on strengthening India-ASEAN multi-faceted relationship and bringing out significant changes in world's economic and political scenario. ASEAN-India share a decade long friendly relationship and over the years all the south East Asian Nations, along with India, have played a pivotal role in bringing significant changes in the economic, social and political scenario of the world.

Consolidating mutual cooperation, promoting trade and business and strengthening bilateral ties between nations remained one of the major highlights of the summit.

Development of eastern borders in order to simplify the implementation of Act East Policy was also stressed during the summit.

Minister of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) Jitendra Singh said that in last few years, the north-east region has witnessed increased impetus as it remained India's pivot to its pragmatic and realistic policy of 'Act East'.

Stressing upon the need of mutual cooperation, he said, "If we have to promote trade and business, then

we have to promote mutual cooperation to the countries across these borders, we have to produce from this region (north-east), because of our common lifestyle, traditions and eating habits, we would be able to send what is produced here."

Reaffirming the fact that 98 per cent of the north-eastern states share their borders with South Asian neighbours, Minister of State for Home Affairs Kiren Rijiju shed light on the central government's keenness to improve border infrastructure. He also stressed on the basic requirements such as road, power and schools in the region for betterment. Addressing the summit, Rijiju said there was a need to explore

the region's potentialities, keeping aside the negative aspects and focus on the idea to improve the connectivity to boost bilateral trade and cultural ties. The summit also highlighted the need to enhance skill development of the youth for the betterment of the country and government is also targeting to improve social perception of technical and vocational education and training. Making intelligible about the importance of India's Act East Policy, Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas, Dharmendra Pradhan said, "India embark on the policy of look east for a long time. However, PM has given further importance by initiating the policy of Act East to

reinforce relation with the economical vibrant Asian region." He went on to say, "The upgrade from the Look East to Act East policy with Asian as the core was the earliest initiative of the Modi government. The ASEAN region is considered as our extended neighbourhood and enhancing connectivity is crucial to improve India's diplomatic, economic and cultural ties with the countries." "The Act East Policy can be significantly supported by India's northeastern region. It is becoming a bridge head for India to booming Asian markets," he concluded.

The partnership summit was attended by delegates of both India and ASEAN member states.

PM MODI LOOKS TOWARDS EAST AHEAD OF ASSEMBLY POLLS

NEW DELHI: Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated various developmental projects in north-eastern states of Mizoram and Meghalaya, concerning the region's overall growth in various sectors including rail, road, tourism and improvement in power transmission. The North-east has topped the agenda of development for the current central government as it is considered as one of the important regions where strategic growth of New Delhi is based.

The region is acknowledged as the eastern gateway of India's 'Look East Policy'. During his visit to the hilly states, Prime Minister Modi visited capital Aizawl in Mizoram and inaugurated the Turrial Hydro Power Project in the state that will produce 251 million units of electrical energy every year and boost the socio-economic development of the state. It is the first ever central project that has been successfully commissioned in the state of Mizoram. After inaugurating the

long awaited project, he said, "With the commissioning of the project, Mizoram becomes the third power surplus state in the northeast after Sikkim and Tripura."

Blaming the previous government, he added, "The project was first declared at Mizoram by Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee way back in the year 1998, but got delayed." Besides generating electricity, the reservoir water is also going to open new avenues for navigation which will provide connectivity to remote villages.

People from all walks of life from the landlocked state of Mizoram gathered in number to witness the developmental strategies put forth by PM Modi for the region's economic growth.

The prime minister also interacted with Self Help Groups of Mizoram who put up a special exhibition of various products ranging from organic to handloom and handicrafts.

From Aizawl, PM Modi arrived



in Meghalaya's capital Shillong and inaugurated the much needed 261-km long two-laning of Shillong Nongstoin section of National highway 106 and Nongstoin Rongdeng section National Highway 127 B.

On the occasion he told that the road would serve as an east-west corridor for Meghalaya.

"It will boost economic activ-

ity in the state. It will also establish our direct link between the two most important towns in the state - Shillong and Tura," he said.

The move of linking the highways will reduce the travel time by almost half to only eight hours instead of the earlier 15-16 hours.

He also told the gathering that his government's motto was 'transformation by transportation'.

Ensuring full-fledged growth of connectivity in the region in the coming years, Prime Minister Modi enlightened the gathering about the government's decision to invest Rs 60,000 crore under Special Accelerated Road Development Programme in the north-east and Rs 30,000 crore under Bharat Mala in the next two to three years to build a network of highways and

roads in the north-east region.

"The Centre will be providing Rs 5,300 crore to NE states under the scheme over the next three years. The lack of connectivity is the biggest hurdle in the part of development of the NE region. We aim for a transformation by transportation through investment in infrastructure in the region," the prime minister informed.

"The Union Government has sanctioned over 3,800 km of NH with an investment of Rs 3,200 crore within the last three years, out of which nearly 1,200 km of road has already been constructed," he added.

PM Modi's visit to the north-eastern states gave momentum to BJP's campaign ahead of the assembly elections in Meghalaya, Nagaland and Tripura early next year. He also opened the new BJP Meghalaya office unit and addressed a public rally in the Polo ground, kick-starting his party's campaign ahead of the assembly

election next year.

People of the region have hopes from the prime minister as they claim that no government has ever reached out to them.

"When Shillong became the capital of Meghalaya there was no such development in the state. Even in the 11 districts, the road infrastructure was really bad. Meghalaya is a hill state and tourism is the only livelihood but if roads are not good, tourism cannot develop further," said a local resident.

"So now the BJP has stepped in the state for the first time and PM Modi has visited for the first time. We have seen and heard that whatever PM Modi promises, he fulfills it and the consequences are seen. So people in the state are hopeful for a change," he said.

To bring north-east in the railway map, Prime Minister Modi also reiterated that the government was executing 15 new rail line projects of 1,325 km length at the cost of Rs 4,700 crore.

Single people with heart disease at higher risk of death than those who are married

If you often get nostalgic thinking about the joys you had when you were single, new research suggests that being married also has its merits. Researchers have found that unmarried heart patients face higher risk of death.

Compared to married heart disease patients, being unmarried was associated with a higher risk of dying, said the study published in the Journal of the American Heart Association. "I was somewhat surprised by

the magnitude of the influence of being married has (on heart patients)," said lead researcher Arshed Quyyumi, Professor of Medicine at Emory University in Atlanta, US. "Social support provided by marriage, and perhaps many other benefits of companionship, are important for people with heart disease," Quyyumi said. The study of 6,051 patients (average age 63) undergoing cardiac catheterisation for coronary artery disease showed poor outcomes specifically

among those who were divorced, separated, widowed or never married.

The researchers followed the patients for nearly four years. The findings showed that compared to married patients, being unmarried was associated with 24% higher risk of death from any cause and 45% higher risk of death from cardiovascular disease.

And specifically, the risk of heart attack was 40% higher for those who were never married, the study said.



This is what antibiotic resistant bacteria are



A research has found that antibiotic resistant bacteria are "sleeper cells" which can survive doses of antibiotics and lie resting in a dormant state, but have the ability to "wake up" and re-infect.

Antibiotic resistance is one of the most pressing public health challenges and threatens the ability to effectively fight infectious diseases including pneumonia and tuberculosis.

In the study, led by Stefano Pagliara, a biophysicist at the University of Exeter, the team used a miniaturised device which enabled them to isolate and study single bacteria over time.

Next, the team dosed bacteria with ampicillin. They found that the vast majority of the 1.3 per cent of cells that survived were live but non-growing.

These are "sleeper cells" because they look dormant and resemble the cells killed by antibiotics, but are potentially dangerous with the ability to "wake up" and re-infect humans or animals, Pagliara said, in the paper published in the journal BMC Biology.

Besides, these "sleeper cells", the researchers also found "persister cells", which accounted for less than one third of surviving cells and started regrowing after the course of antibiotics ended.

Both groups shared similar features suggesting that the two populations of cells are linked. Their unique fluorescence meant they could both be spotted even before being dosed with antibiotics.

But because "sleeper cells" are non-growing, standard detection methods cannot differentiate them from dead cells, giving the false impression that far fewer cells have survived a course of antibiotics.

"Unlike persister cells which quickly resume growth after the antibiotic course ends, 'sleeper cells' remain non-growing for prolonged periods of time, and elude detection using traditional methods.

"Our research should make it easier to develop biomarkers to isolate these cells and open up new ways to map the biochemical makeup of bacteria that can escape antibiotics, so we can find ways of targeting them effectively," Pagliara added.

WEIGHT LOSS: THESE FOUR SIMPLE DIET CHANGES WILL HELP YOU FLATTEN YOUR STOMACH

More and more people are becoming fat and overweight - thanks to their hectic sedentary lifestyle, which can potentially contribute to ill health and many preventable causes of death. And if you are overweight, shedding a few pounds will benefit you in a number of ways. It will reduce your risk of various health conditions, including heart disease, diabetes, stroke, etc. But just as looking good doesn't come easy, dropping weight, doesn't happen overnight - unless you are totally committed to a healthy weight loss plan. Read: New weight loss ideas that became popular in 2017 - Top 10 tips that actually work

In fact, many normal weight people, particularly women, would still try to eliminate belly fat, which is a dangerous risk factor for various conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and some cancers.

Basically, a healthy weight loss programme consists of a reduced calorie, nutritionally-balanced diet and exercise plan. A combination of diet and exercise is best at any stage of weight loss, and this has been proven and supported by a number of research studies.

However, even if you follow a good diet and fitness routine, if you're not getting the sleep your body needs, you won't drop as much fat as you might have expected. The truth is that sleep is a vital driver of every physiological system in the human body, and when we're deprived of shut-eye, health and wellbeing can suffer in many ways. Read: This is the exact amount of SLEEP you need to burn belly fat effectively

Yet, getting adequate sleep can



be difficult to achieve in quality and quantity over the festival period. But it's important that you get enough snooze each night to combat the effect of all those mince pies. That's because a lack of sleep could be adding to your waistline, while enough time in bed could help you trim down.

A recent study suggests that 74 percent of dieters who had a regular sleep routine were able to shift eight pounds, as per a report in the Express.co.uk. The study of 1,000 people by Forza Supplements found that getting between seven and eight hours of sleep was best for the waistline.

Talking about the study, Pippa Campbell, nutritionist and weight loss coach, said, "When we sleep we burn most of our fat, so if we don't sleep this can significantly affect weight loss. Interrupted or impaired sleep can cause a pre-diabetic state,

making you feel hungry even if you've already eaten, which can wreak havoc on your weight."

Your food habits can seriously impact your sleep. Here are the four changes to make to your diet to help you achieve deep sleep and lose weight overnight:

Eat Cherries
Health experts say cherries have been found to contain small amounts of melatonin, the hormone that regulates our sleep cycles.

"Although all cherries may contain some melatonin, tart Montmorency cherries, in particular, have been found in a clinical trial to increase the body's melatonin levels and increase sleep time," said Cassandra Barns, a nutritionist. Read: Seven foods to avoid if you want to lose weight, stay disease-free

No starchy carbs before bed

Avoid starchy carbs and sugars that will raise your blood sugar as well as disrupt your sleep. When blood sugar drops too low, you may wake up and be unable to fall back asleep.

Barns noted, "However, if you are suffering from severe stress you may find that a pre-bedtime small protein or carb snack might help around 10 pm. In these instances, I advise my clients to eat some almond butter on a small rye or gluten-free cracker." Read: Three foods to avoid when trying to lose weight fast

Avoid alcohol

According to experts, alcohol can be a reason for people to wake up throughout the night. While festivals can be a time where people might drink a few more than usual, drinking alcohol before bed can disrupt your sleep.

Dr Marilyn Glenville, author of Natural Alternatives to Sugar, said, "Alcohol has a diuretic effect on the body so it can wake you to go to the toilet but also leave you very thirsty. It also stops the passage of tryptophan into your brain and it this amino acid which is converted into serotonin, the 'feel good' brain chemical." Read: Women, just drinking THIS MUCH alcohol can age your skin for a month

Get enough Vitamin B

Focus on foods rich in B vitamins, which have many health benefits - for example, vitamin B12 encourages healthy levels of melatonin, a hormone that supports healthy sleep. Tuna, chicken breast and yoghurt are all rich in vitamin B.

This holiday season, make simple changes to your eating habits to make weight loss even easier.

Salad consumption may keep your brain younger, healthier

According to a study, eating one to two servings of salad with spinach, lettuce and kale daily may keep your brain 11 years younger as well as prevent dementia.

The study found that people who ate at least one serving of green, leafy vegetables

a day had a slower rate of decline on tests of memory and thinking skills than people who never or rarely ate these vegetables. In people who ate the most of green, leafy vegetables brain ageing slowed by 11 years. "Adding a daily serving of green, leafy vegetables

to your diet may be a simple way to foster your brain health," said Martha Clare Morris, from the Rush University in Chicago. "Projections show sharp increases in the percentage of people with dementia as the oldest age groups continue to grow in

number, so effective strategies to prevent dementia are critical," Morris added.

The study, published in the journal Neurology, involved 960 people with an average age of 81 who did not have dementia and were followed for an average of 4.7

years. Over 10 years of follow-up, the rate of decline for those who ate the most leafy greens was slower by 0.05 standardised units per year than the rate for those who ate the least leafy greens. This difference was equivalent to being 11 years younger in age.

Embryo frozen 24 years ago now delivered as a healthy baby in US

The longest frozen embryo has come to term, say reports. A 26-year-old woman from the US gave birth to a baby from a donated embryo that was frozen for 24 years.

According to the Daily Mail, baby Emma Wren Gibson was conceived and fertilized in 1992. However, she was not implanted but frozen instead.

Due to cystic fibrosis, Tina Gibson - who is a 1991 baby - was unable to conceive naturally with her husband Benjamin.

That is when they decided to go for the frozen embryo option from the National Embryo Donation Centre in Knoxville, Tennessee.



Post its thawing process, the embryo was transferred to Tina in March 2017 in a procedure similar to IVF. However, the couple only learned

of its 'age' on the morning they realised they were pregnant.

"Honestly my I was just really worried that it wouldn't work," Tina told the Daily Mail. Adding, "I was like 'I don't want a world record, I want a baby!' But Ben was completely intrigued by it."

But just moments later, it dawned on her how mind-blowing this was. "I said, 'you know, I'm just 25... me and her, we could've been best friends,'" she said. Tina experienced no complications throughout her pregnancy. On November 25, she gave birth to a healthy baby weighing six pounds and eight ounces.

Conjoined girl twins of Odisha, Ganga and Jamuna, pass away



Ganga and Jamuna, conjoined girl twins of Odisha's Nayagarh district who shared a single heart and liver, died at Sishu Bhawan in Cuttack on Wednesday night, the hospital authorities said on Thursday.

The conjoined twins died during their treatment, despite concerted efforts by a team of specialists, said Saroj Satapathy, superintendent, Sishu Bhawan. "The condition of the twins deteriorated last night. They experienced problem in breathing and died as their heartbeat stopped," he said.

They were born joined at the chest, sharing a single heart, liver and several vital organs except for two individual brains.

Ganga and Jamuna were born to Kishore Dutta and Sumitra Dutta of Sarankul village at a private clinic on December 1 in Nayagarh district. They were later admitted to the Sishu Bhawan for better treatment.

The state government had announced to bear the medical expenses of the conjoined twins.

Unmarried heart disease patients have an increased risk of death: Researchers

The risk of heart attack was 40 percent higher for those who were never married, the study said.

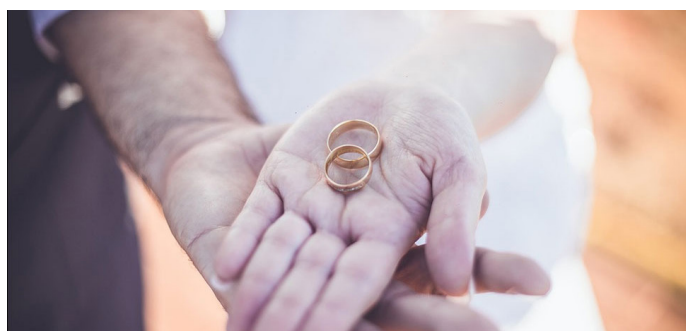
Are you a heart patient and single? You may be at an increased risk of death, researchers have said.

According to a study, in comparison to heart patients who were married,

Their unmarried counterparts were associated with a higher risk of dying.

"I was somewhat surprised by the magnitude of the influ-

ence of being married has (on heart patients)," said lead researcher Arshed Quyyumi, Professor of Medicine at Emory University in Atlanta, US. "Social support provided by marriage, and perhaps many other benefits of companionship, are important for people with heart disease," Quyyumi said. The study of 6,051 patients



(average age 63) undergoing cardiac catheterisation for coronary artery disease showed poor outcomes specifically among those who were divorced, separated, widowed or never married.

The researchers followed the patients for nearly four years.

The findings showed that compared to married patients,

being unmarried was associated with 24 percent higher risk of death from any cause and 45 percent higher risk of death from cardiovascular disease.

And specifically, the risk of heart attack was 40 percent higher for those who were never married, the study said.

The study was published in the Journal of the American Heart Association.

India's first design university 'World University of Design' opens campus

NEW DELHI: India's first and only Design University - World University of Design opens its campus at Sonapat, Haryana. Promoted by Om Parkash Bansal Educational and Social Welfare Trust of Mandi Gobindgarh, Punjab, having more than two decades of presence in higher education, the University is currently located in a sprawling lush green picturesque campus with the state-of-the-art infrastructure and world class facilities.

The campus is situated on NH1 in Rajiv Gandhi Education City (NCR), Sonapat - the largest planned integrated city for education in India.

The University has International Collaborations with foreign Universities like UWS University of West Scotland, VFS the Vancouver Film School, and IAAD the

Italian University of Design. Many other collaborations are in the pipeline including that with Huddersfield University, UK; Oxford Brookes University, UK; Emily Carr University, Canada. Some of the prominent names in the industry are on the Advisory board of the University - AG Krishna Menon, Payal Jain, Peter D'ascoli, Amardeep Behl, Neha Kirpal.

WUD offers country's largest creative course catalogue - 23 specialized UG and PG programs in various Design arenas such as Design, Fashion, Communication, Visual Arts, Design and Retail Management, and Architecture. The University follows a unique curriculum that encourages Research, Academic Excellence, Industry Preparedness and Social Innovation. Experienced faculties

qualified from the best institutions of India & the world such as 'FIT' New York, 'LCF' London, NID, NIFT, SPA and TVB to name a few.

"Contemporary Design education not only creates value and contributes to competitiveness, prosperity, and well-being of a nation but also enables collaboration, hyper-specialization and moving beyond the limits of future thinking and existing technology. We constantly work to empower youth to take ownership of the journey towards a sustainable economy and a future led by innovation. WUD will be a strategically critical platform for providing youth with the tools they need to drive India's future development. Education is changing and as we increasingly face the growing challenges of a complex socio business environ-

ment, high quality trans-disciplinary education with a design foundation and thinking, becomes more critical than ever," said Dr. Sanjay Gupta, Director General of WUD.

WUD is India's first university dedicated to education in the creative domain; WUD underlines the movement of design from being purely vocation-oriented to becoming academic-oriented; and from certificate and diploma stage to degree, postgraduate degrees, research and doctoral programmes. World University of Design (WUD), offers design education through a unique teaching pedagogy, advanced interdisciplinary research and international collaborations in the areas of Architecture, Design, Interior, Textile, Communication, Fashion, Fine Arts, Management and many

others design related courses.

Students have access to facilities including high-tech labs and workshops - model making workshop, Apple/iMac based CAD rooms, fully functional Machine shop, Print making, Pattern making, Garment construction and Sewing workshop; Air-conditioned Studios, well-stocked Library, State of the art Material Museum and an exclusive Art Gallery; A wide range of indoor and outdoor sporting opportunities is available to students at WUD.

The University offers residential campus with air-conditioned, Wifi Hostel facilities. Hostel's Mess facility designed by a Master Chef and managed by a renowned Institutional Caterer. WUD has a 1000 capacity open-air theatre and several smaller venues to host and hold cultural performances.

Samsung, Axis Bank tie-up to offer 'Bill Payments' on Samsung Pay

NEW DELHI: Smartphone manufacturer Samsung on Thursday launched its 'Bill Payments' on its flagship payments service, Samsung Pay in partnership with Axis Bank.

The new feature launched by the company will enable users to pay their utility bills seamlessly via Samsung Pay's secure and convenient platform.

"Since the launch of Samsung Pay, we have constantly innovated and added user-centric features such as UPI, wallets, gift cards and now 'Bill Payments'. With the introduction of 'Bill Payments', consumers will be able to pay their utility bills seamlessly through Samsung Pay, set reminders and search favourite biller based on their current location," said Samsung India Director, Sanjay Razdan.

"Bill Payments' is another 'Make for India' innovation that we believe will greatly benefit our consumers," he added. Currently, users can pay their mobile, landline phone, electricity, gas, water and DTH bills using 'Bill Payments' on Samsung Pay. Bill payment through Samsung Pay comes with a host of unique features.

It will offer users a secure, hassle free, and instant payment option on-the-go.

Consumers can view due amount, details of previous bills and location-based suggested billers while paying bills through Samsung Pay. One can also set 'reminders' for bill payments. "Samsung Pay is a key partner of Axis Bank in driving digital payments. With the addition of Utility Bill Payments in Samsung Pay, powered by Axis Bank, we see our partnership strengthening even further," said President and Head, Transaction Banking, Axis Bank, Himadri Shekhar Chatterjee.

Star studded VIBGYOR Viva-9 culminates on a high note in Mumbai

MUMBAI: VIBGYOR Viva a nationally renowned inter school festival, with involvement of students from all over India celebrated its 9th edition in Mumbai on December 17, 2017.

Viva is designed to enrich and enlighten students by bringing alive their creativity. It provides an opportunity to the students to perform in front of a large audience, which thereby boosts their confidence and helps them overcome stage fear.

The festival witnessed an enthusiastic participation of around 1300 students from 450 Schools across 7 cities, who battled to win the coveted Viva title in five premier categories - Voice of Viva (Indian), Voice of Viva (Western), Swing n Swirl (Solo Dance), Swing n Swirl (Group Dance) and Viva Nova (Personality Contest). Eminent personalities including choreographer Sandip Soparrkar, popular actors Daljeet Kaur, Vaibhav Guray and other prominent faces graced the mega evening making it one of the best occasions. The event also witnessed the presence of renowned personalities from the entertainment industry like Piyush Mishra, Sandeep Rajora, Naveen Saini, Karanuday Jenjani and many more. Rustom Kerwalla, founder chairman, VIBGYOR Group of Schools announced Pune as the hosting city for VIBGYOR Viva's decade celebration next year.



Winners of VIBGYOR Viva 9 were:
Voice of Viva (Indian): Jatin Bidkar from Kolhapur was announced as the Winner of Voice of Viva (Indian)
Voice of Viva (Western): Srishti Pabra from Mumbai was the Winner of Voice of Viva (Western)
Swing n Swirl (Solo Dance): Utsav Patanwadia from Vadodara became the Winner of Swing n Swirl (Solo Dance)
Swing n Swirl (Group Dance): Black Pantherz from Mumbai were the Winners of Swing n Swirl (Group Dance)

Viva Nova - Personality Contest (Boys and Girls): Anoushka Kulkarni from Kolhapur and Ayush Singhal from Surat were crowned the Winners of Viva Nova
"I would like to congratulate the winners and the entire team for putting up such an outstanding show. Our motive is to encourage large number of students to participate and to tap their inherent potential through such activities which helps in their holistic development," said Vice Chairperson, VIBGYOR Group of Schools, Kavita Sahay.

Tally launches 'Tally Xcelerator for SMEs'; to focus on growth, development

NEW DELHI: Country's premier business software provider Tally Solutions has launched one-of-a-kind program called Tally Xcelerator (TX) to offer consultancy services to small and medium businesses, with an aim to empower SMEs and facilitate their growth. The newly launched program has appointed partners called Tally Xcelerators, who will extend business advisory services playing the role of a coach, mentor and trainer to all of Tally's partners and small businesses across the country. The program aims to help SMEs realize their trade and investment opportunities and become competitive in both the domestic and global market. The revolutionary tax reform that has been introduced, as well as focus on digitization are

promoting entrepreneurship opportunities resulting in a truly competitive business environment.

In order to stay ahead of the competition and get onto the path of sustainable growth, it is imperative for small and emerging businesses to have a guiding light on macro aspects of business which are related to growth and development. Large enterprises and MNCs are inundated with such offerings and are backed by equally strong consulting companies, however there is an abject dearth of similar services for SMEs. With this understanding and insight into the future challenges business may face, the Pan-India program was founded.

"Through the TX program, our aim is to upscale and upskill these

businesses which will eventually contribute towards the development of the country's economy," said India Business Head Tally Solutions Pvt. Ltd, Joyce Ray. "We want to promote overall SME development in the nation by promoting entrepreneurship, fostering individual entrepreneurial capabilities, building institutional capacity, and encourage employment creating investment," added Joyce Ray. Currently, there are TX partners mapped for every state, ensuring businesses from across the country have easy access to the partners. Each of these partners brings with them a wealth of experience in SME focussed roles and are now going to embark on a new journey and impart the guidance and learnings to the emerging businesses.

Venture Catalysts leads funding in online gifting company IGP.com

NEW DELHI: Venture Catalysts has led the recently concluded Pre-Series A funding round for IGP.com, a multi-category gifting e-commerce company.

The funding will be used by IGP.com to enhance its supply chain infrastructure and branding activities. In a previous funding round which took place in 2016, IGP.com had raised USD 2 million from angel investors.

"We are very excited to have Venture Catalysts as our investor and partner in this journey and look forward to the mentorship they can provide us to unlock further possibilities in this promising domain," Tarun Joshi, co-founder and CEO, IGP.com said emphasizing that gifting has emerged as a category with massive potential and great consumer demand.

Dr. Apoorv Ranjan Sharma, co-founder and president, Venture Catalysts also stated that the decision to invest in IGP.com was taken based on the fact that the company has massively scaled its business and established its presence not only in the Indian market but internationally as well in a very short period of time.

IGP has a business model which spans a whole range of gifting solutions, from recommending the right gifts on its discovery platform IGP.com to fulfilling packaged gifts from its own warehouses and partners.

MakeMyTrip launches 'Made for You Holidays' ahead of festive season

MUMBAI: India's leading online travel company MakeMyTrip on Thursday announced the launch of its new product 'Made for You Holidays' for the booming domestic travel sector in India. Launched alongside the Christmas holiday season, these 150 holiday experiences offer a range of handpicked escapades for discerning travellers.

"At MakeMyTrip we are bringing a balance between personalization, authenticity and reach to offer holidays that will resonate with discerning travelers looking beyond cookie-cutter package tourism. By tracking social media, website ana-

lytics, blog comments, search metrics, traveler reviews etc., we want to align our product offerings to match what holiday goers are looking for. It's why we are excited to launch our new offering 'Made For You Holidays' wherein we are offering specially curated experiences that make themed holiday choice for travelers very easy and hassle free," said COO MakeMyTrip, Mohit Gupta. Moving away from run-of-the-mill and homogenized experiences, these domestic travel packages are specially targeted towards those who want to make the most of long and extended weekends



at destinations in Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Maharashtra, Karnataka and others.

"Made for you Holidays" offering

is being rolled out under six themes for holiday-goers including wildlife, romantic, friends and family, once in a life time, rugged getaways, and indulgence.

With the aim to provide travelers with immersive local experience, 'Made For You Holidays' will help travelers connect with places they are traveling to in a more evolved and authentic way.

These holiday offerings will include specially-curated experiences that go beyond the regular inclusions of flights or train ride, comfortable hotel, private car, sightseeing etc.

Ola launches 'Lite App' for easy customer accessibility

NEW DELHI: Taxi aggregator Ola on Thursday announced the launch of 'Ola Lite app', a localized innovation that will enable in doubling the focus on simplified accessibility for anyone and everyone who needs reliable commute. "We are pleased to inform you that Ola, India's largest mobility platform introduces yet another localized innovation - the Ola Lite app. After much success and learning from innovations such as Offline Booking and the Progressive Web App, Ola launches its Lite app to double down the focus on simplified accessibility for anyone and everyone who needs reliable commute," said the statement by the company.

The Ola Lite app, which is fast and super-light with less than 1MB, is the first in the industry to launch a Lite app for personal commute.

The app 'Ola Lite' is truly aimed at simplifying accessibility to reliable commute.

It however, loads within a few seconds and is built to tackle Internet and phone memory challenges.

The app provides a seamless experience even with the lowest Internet connectivity, making it an ideal solution to cater to the needs of millions of Indians residing in tier II and tier III towns.

An extremely quick and nimble app in functioning, the Lite is an obsessive approach by Ola to optimize every little element. "The launch of Ola Lite represents another milestone in Ola's commitment to building made for India technology. Our solutions such as the Progressive Web App and Offline Booking tackling similar challenges have already set the tone for our sharper focus on emerging cities and towns," said VP Product Management at Ola, Rajiv Thondanoor.

He further added that with the launch of Lite app, Ola is confident that it will enable and ensure access to on-demand affordable transportation whenever customers need it. "Building solutions to address hyper-local needs continues to be our priority and this launch takes us one step further in our commitment to providing mobility for a billion Indians," added Rajiv.

Akamai appoints Prasad Mandava as MD for India

NEW DELHI: Largest and most trusted cloud delivery platform Akamai Technologies on Thursday announced appointment of Prasad Mandava as the new Managing Director for India.

In his role, Prasad Mandava will lead business operations for Akamai in India.

He will focus on driving collaboration within the organization, building customer loyalty along with supporting Akamai's strategy and initiatives in the country. "We are excited to have Prasad leading the India market in his new role as Managing Director and look at this as an impetus for higher growth and customer excellence in the region. In his time with Akamai, Prasad has excelled at innovation, engineering, and has also demonstrated excellent people development skills," said MD Akamai APJ, Graeme Beardsell. "We are confident that he is the best fit for this role and will enable Akamai's next stage of growth in India," added Graeme Beardsell.

Mandava has been with Akamai for nine years and was Vice President, Engineering, in his prior role. He is the co-founder of the Akamai Wizards program - a program in Akamai created to foster the spirit of innovation amongst employees, and was instrumental in taking the program global along with being an executive sponsor.

"The internet ecosystem in India is unique with the digital economy aimed at reaching USD four trillion by 2020, thereby making it an important market with Bangalore being a center of excellence for Akamai globally. With my new role within Akamai, it will be my key focus to enable the development of talent from India along with an emphasis on innovation, to benefit all our customers across the globe," said Mandava on his appointment.

Prior to joining Akamai, Mandava served as Managing Director, Mobile Aspects India. Mandava earned his Bachelor of Technology from the Indian Institute of Technology at Chennai; his Master of Science from the University of Minnesota at Minneapolis.

Cyient opens global IoT-enabled Tower Operations Center

NEW DELHI: Cyient has announced on Thursday the opening of its global Tower Operations Center (TOC) at the company's headquarters in Hyderabad, India.

The IoT-enabled TOC will provide 24/7 surveillance and remotely monitors all passive assets in cell towers across multiple locations. Cyient said that the solution architecture enables communication between sensors and an integrated, cloud-based analytics engine to extract and analyze asset data. Thus resulting in increased tower uptime, reduced operational costs, improved site security and intrusion detection, and ensures efficient energy and power management. "This integrated TOC solution facilitates tower and infrastructure companies to perform real-time monitoring of all active information from remote sites. Field engineers can now pro-actively manage network assets by utilizing data analytics and digital technologies, such as IoT, cloud, and mobility," Sanjay Krishnaa, Senior Vice President, Communications, and President, Asia Pacific at Cyient said adding that the solution has garnered significant interest with global Communication Service Providers.

India vs Sri Lanka 1st T20 Stats: MS Dhoni completes 200 dismissals in T20 cricket

MUMBAI: India thumped Sri Lanka by 93 runs in the first T20 International in Cuttack which was their biggest win in the shortest format of the game. India also took a 1-0 in the three-match series and some of the players stacked up a couple of records for the team and at individual level. Apart from India's biggest win in T20s, MS Dhoni became the second wicketkeeper Pakistan's Kamran Akmal to effect more than 200 dismissals in T20I. Yuzvendra Chahal also became the leading wicket-taker in T20Is this year with 19 wickets. Here are more such stats. India's 93-run triumph is their largest in terms of runs in T20Is, outstripping the 90-run victory vs England at Colombo (RPS) on September 23, 2012. India's previous largest victory vs Sri Lanka in terms of runs was by

69 runs at Ranchi on February 12, 2016. Sri Lanka have recorded their biggest defeat in terms of runs in T20Is, eclipsing the 85-run defeat to Australia at Pallekele on September 6, 2016.

Since registering a win by 6 wickets vs Bangladesh at Colombo (RPS) on April 4, 2017, Sri Lanka have lost six consecutive T20Is. They have lost five successive matches vs India since February 2017.

Sri Lanka's 87 is their second lowest total vs India in T20Is – the lowest being 82 at Visakhapatnam on February 14, 2016.

Yuzvendra Chahal (4/23) has registered his second best bowling figures in T20Is next only to the 6 for 25 vs England at Bengaluru on February 1, 2017. Chahal became the third Indian bowler after Ravichandran Ashwin and Ashok



Dinda to take four wickets vs Sri Lanka in a T20I. Chahal has received his second

Man of the Match award in T20Is – his first being for producing a career-best bowling performance.

Chahal has bagged 19 wickets at an average of 14.36 in ten matches – the most by a bowler in T20Is

this year. Mahendra Singh Dhoni (39 not out + 4 dismissals) became the first Indian wicketkeeper to post 35 or more runs and effect four dismissals in the same T20I, joining South Africa's Quinton de Kock (twice) and Pakistan's Kamran Akmal.

Mahendra Singh Dhoni's batting record as number four player has been excellent – his aggregate being 244 in eleven innings (seven times not out), including a half century – 56 vs England at Bengaluru on February 1, 2017. His strike rate of 134.01 is quite impressive at this batting position.

For the third time in a T20I, Dhoni has effected four dismissals – the first two instances were against Afghanistan and Pakistan. Dhoni is the first wicketkeeper to effect four dismissals in T20Is involving India and Sri Lanka.

Dhoni (201 dismissals in 272 matches) has become the second wicketkeeper after Kamran Akmal (207 in 211 matches) to complete 200 dismissals or more in Twenty20. Hardik Pandya (3/29) has recorded his second best bowling figures in T20Is next only to the 3 for 8 vs Pakistan at Dhaka on February 27, 2016.

Rohit Sharma has totalled 1502 runs at an average of 30.04 in 62 innings and became the 14th player overall and the second Indian batsman after Virat Kohli (1956) to race to 1500 runs or more in T20Is. Ten times in his international career, Rohit Sharma has been dismissed by Angelo Matthews – the most occasions a bowler has claimed his wicket.

KLRahul has recorded his third innings of fifty-plus in T20Is – his first against Sri Lanka.

Harmanpreet Kaur, Mithali Raj named in ICC T20I and ODI teams; Ekta Bist in both

NEW DELHI: As the International Cricket Council (ICC) announced its women's ODI and T20I teams of the year the Indian eyes once again made the nation proud. This was after three Indian players found themselves on the elite list. Veteran Mithali Raj features in the list of ODI team of the year while Harmanpreet Kaur features in the T20 side. Noticeably, Ekta Bist is the sole Indian to feature in both the squads. England's Heather Knight was named as captain of the 50-over side and Windies batter Stafanie Taylor was nominated as the captain of the 20-over side.

Left-arm spinner Ekta Bist's selection in both the sides does not



come as a surprise as she enjoyed a successful year in both the formats. The 31-year-old took 34 wickets in 19

matches and 11 wickets in seven T20Is. The ODI side comprises players from five countries, including two

Australians (Meg Lanning and Ellyse Perry), four England players (Tammy Beaumont, Heather Knight, Sarah Taylor and Alex Hartley), two Indians (Mithali Raj and Ekta Bist), one New Zealander (Amy Satterthwaite) and two South Africans (Danevan Niekerk and Marizanne Kapp).

The T20I side is made up of three Australians (Beth Mooney, Megan Schutt, Amanda-Jade Wellington), one from England (Danni Wyatt), two from India (Harmanpreet Kaur and Ekta Bist), two from New Zealand (Sophie Devine and Lea Tahuhu) and three from the Windies (Stafanie Taylor, Deandra Dottin and Hayley Matthews).

Batsmen know I can bowl at 150, hit them in the head, says Dale Steyn



MUMBAI: Before Indian cricket team head to South Africa in January for the all-important away tour, right-arm seamer Dale Steyn has made a remarkable comeback to the longest format of the sport. The bowler, who had been away from all forms of cricket for almost a year, after suffering a serious shoulder injury, was included in the South African squad for the upcoming Test series against Zimbabwe. But before the return to main-team, the 34-year old also got to display his skills in a tour game between South African Invitation XI and Zimbabwe, in which he made a steady start.

In 12 overs, Steyn did not manage to get a wicket, but bowled at a considerable pace with a steady line-and-length and gave away just 16 runs. Speaking about his performance, Steyn told reporters that it is not necessary for him to bowl at a fast speed all the time. "Cricket is strange. All you need to do is bowl one ball at 145, 150 kilometres an hour and people see that you can do that, and it's in the back of their mind all the time. When a spinner comes out and rips one big batsmen know one's going to turn somewhere along the line, so they're wary of it," he said.

The seamer went on to add that the batsmen know that he can bowl at a fast speed which gives him an advantage on flat pitches. "I don't have to run in and bowl 150 consistently all day long. I've just got to be able to do it every now and then. The batsmen will know that it's there, and I'm able to take their feet away, hit them in the head, what-

ever. The rest of the time I've always relied on skill: relentless line and length, trying to knock guys over, and just being smart. When it's really flat then you can crank it up," he said. Steyn, who came back to the side after a long rehabilitation form added that he is feeling great at the moment. "I feel good, I don't feel like I am in any pain anywhere," Steyn said. "That's quite strange because I played a career with niggles all over the place, so it is quite nice to bowl now without anything," he added.

On being asked whether he still makes the cut in the team at his age, the bowler said that he is getting better with age. "I like to play cricket. I want to play cricket as long as I can. Age isn't really a factor."

He further added that he is still fitter than some of the younger members of the squad. "I am still fitter than the youngest guys in the side. It was just about getting through this year and trying to decide whether I still wanted to do it. I think most people at 34 start thinking about other things in life like retirement and family and those types of things. I am in a fortunate position that I don't really need to think about that much right now. Cricket is my main focus," he said.

Steyn is likely to be included in the Test squad for the upcoming series against India. In 85 international Tests, the bowler has taken 417 wickets at an average of 22.30.

He just needs 5 more wickets to surpass Shaun Pollock's as South Africa's leading wicket-taker.

Wimbledon champ Bartoli announces comeback



PARIS: Marion Bartoli, the 2013 Wimbledon champion, says she is coming out of retirement and returning to the tennis tour next season.

The 33-year-old Frenchwoman made the announcement via a Twitter post on Tuesday. "Hi, guys. I have something to tell you: I am coming back. ... It's going to be a huge challenge," Bartoli said in a video she put on Twitter. "I have still a lot of practice ahead of me, but I am hoping to be ready for March and the Miami Open." Bartoli mentioned three events she is particularly looking forward to: the French Open, Fed Cup and, of course, Wimbledon.

She surprisingly won her only Grand Slam title while seeded No. 15 at the All England Club four years ago. Less than two months later, after losing a match at another tournament, she abruptly retired from professional tennis.

Bartoli was coached by her father, a doctor, and they came up with other unique elements.

Her first big breakthrough came in 2007, reaching the Wimbledon final before losing to Venus Williams.

Then came the magical two-week run to the championship there six years later. Bartoli never dropped a set and capped her fortnight with a 6-1, 6-4 victory over Sabine Lisicki in the final, closing the match with an ace. A year later, Bartoli became the first woman in 17 years who declined to try to defend her Wimbledon title. At a news conference before the 2014 tournament, Bartoli tugged at the collar of her white top to reveal strips of blue tape providing support for her right shoulder and explained: "Literally, I can't even lift my arm every morning."

That, she said, was why she harboured "definitely no regrets at all" about walking away from tennis back then. She since moved on to other pursuits, including TV commentary, launching a shoe line and designing jewelry.

India vs Sri Lanka: Losing is okay but we have to at least come close, says Upul Tharanga

KOLKATA: India were on top of their in the first T20I against Sri Lanka and completed a thumping win over the visitors. Sri Lanka, apart from their win the first ODI in Dharamsala, have been struggling in the limited-overs encounters and Wednesday was another example how difficult the going has been for them. After yet another batting letdown, Sri Lanka batsman Upul Tharanga said that the main thing was their disappointing batting. "The main thing is that we are disappointed with the batting," Tharanga said after the game. "In the bowling as well, I think we started really well, we did well in the middle period, in the death overs we gave too many boundary balls and then the momentum shifted to their side." Sri Lanka put India into bat after winning the toss and bowled a few loose deliveries towards the end of the innings as India scaled to 180 for the loss of three wickets. This wasn't an out-of-reach total but Sri Lanka did not show any fight in the chase and crumbled to 87 all out which Tharanga admitted was concerning.

"Yes, it's definitely concerning," he noted. "When we came here from Sri Lanka, the main thing was to compete. Very disappoint-



ed with the way we batted, at least we should bat the 20 overs, losing is okay but we have to at least come close to the target."

Tharanga, who made 23 runs, was pleased that he could contribute to the team's total though it came in a defeat. He revealed that he had worked with batting coach Thilan Samaraweera to improve certain aspects of his game. "I've played with Thilan for many years in my career," Tharanga said about Samaraweera's role. "When I came into the side, he was the senior guy and he helped me a lot."

"When he saw me batting first time in the nets, after the session got over, he came to me and asked why I changed my foot movements and he said I didn't bat like this few years ago. I told him I didn't change much but it just happened. Then he worked with me, with my new batting stance. After that, I did well and the credit goes to Thilan," he added.

PERU CAPTAIN PAOLO GUERRERO FREE TO PLAY AT 2018 FIFA WORLD CUP AFTER BAN CUT

ZURICH: Peru captain Paolo Guerrero will be able to play at the World Cup after FIFA's appeal committee cut his ban for failing a doping test from one year to six months on Wednesday. The reprieve for Peru's all-time leading scorer is a huge boost for the South Americans, who have qualified for the World Cup for the first time in 36 years but are short on big-name players.

Guerrero, 33, who plays for Flamengo in Brazil, had been suspended by world governing body FIFA on Dec. 8 after testing positive for

cocaine metabolite benzoylgonine after Peru's 0-0 draw away to Argentina in a World Cup qualifier in October. The ban, backdated to start on Nov. 3, will now finish in May, just over one month before the start of the tournament in Russia.

"The FIFA Appeal Committee after taking into account all the circumstances of the case, in particular the degree of fault of the player, considered a six-month period of ineligibility to be a proportionate sanction," said FIFA. The former Bayern Munich and Hamburg SV forward, who has



scored 42 goals for Flamengo since moving to Brazil in 2015, gives the Peru attack a much-needed physical presence and has a galvanising effect on their less experienced players.

"We have reduced his ban to six months and now we are aiming to get him totally absolved," Guerrero's lawyer Pedro Fida told local television station Canal N. "Guerrero's case is

not about the consumption of cocaine – that has been completely discarded by FIFA. We will keep trying to prove his innocence." Guerrero has scored 32 goals for Peru, including a free kick against Colombia which gave them a 1-1 draw in their final South American group game and kept them in the competition. Guerrero also helped Peru finish third in the 2011 and 2015 Copa Americas, was leading scorer in both tournaments and scored the winning goal when Brazilian club Corinthians beat Chelsea 1-0 in the Club World Cup final in 2012.