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Cabinet nod to...

levels wane around six months after the primary vaccination with both doses... giving a booster increases the immune response," the official said.

The Union Health Ministry last week reduced the gap between the second and precaution doses of COVID-19 vaccine for all beneficiaries from nine to six months following a recommendation by the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunization (NTAGI).

To accelerate the pace of vaccination and encourage booster shots, the government initiated the second round of the 'Har Ghar Dastak campaign 2.0' across states and union territories on June 1.

The two-month programme is currently underway.

According to government data, 96 per cent of India's population has been administered the first dose of Covid vaccine, while 87 per cent of people have taken both doses.

On April 10 this year, India began administering precaution doses of COVID-19 vaccines to all aged above 18 years.

Currently, all those aged 60 years and above, and health care and frontline workers are being administered precaution doses free of cost at government vaccination centres.

The nationwide vaccination drive was rolled out on January 16 last year with health care workers getting inoculated in the first phase. Vaccination of frontline workers started from February 2 last year.

On March 1 last year, COVID-19 vaccination began for people over 60 years of age and those aged 45 and above with specified comorbid conditions.

Vaccination for all people aged above 45 years began on April 1 last year. The government then decided to expand the ambit of the vaccination drive by allowing everyone above 18 years to be inoculated against Covid from May 1 last year.

Inoculation of those in the age group of 15-18 started on January 3 this year. The country began inoculating children aged 12-14 on March 16.

Revised non-gazetted...

SRO 20 of 1992 dated: 24.02.1992 and have now been revised after 30 years.

Under the able guidance of the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha, the H&ME Department has notified the rules which are progressive and removed long pending stagnation issues in the department.

Principal Secretary, H&ME Department, Manoj Kumar Dwivedi, while deliberating on the issue said that that the decision of revisiting the earlier rules by the Government shall pave a way for speedy recruitment, progression and promotion to the employees of the Department. He added that this step shall also act as morale booster to the employees and help infuse new lease of life to the Para-Medical Services wherein fresh modern day qualified Human Resource shall be made available to run the Health Care System in J&K.

The rules have been revised in view of the fact that over the period of time, several fresh categories of non-gazetted cadre positions have been created/re-designated/upgraded/re-organized under different Government Orders and the method of recruitment of such categories of posts was notified by way of different executive orders.

Moreover, the delay in revisiting the earlier rules had resulted in stagnation of promotion avenues to various categories of Para-Medical positions.

Further, the revised rules have also created promotion avenues for those categories of posts that had no promotion avenues or defined career progression. The introduction of new courses in different fields of the Health Care across the country and availability of manpower with improved qualification and technical expertise also necessitated the update of the existing recruitment rules.

This step of the Government has been largely appreciated by the employees of the Health and Medical Education Department.

25,000 seats added...

of education capacity in 70 years was done with the addition of new 25000 seats in 50 new colleges in one year only.

The focus of the Government has been value-based education; creating an environment for individual growth apart from scientific and technological knowledge. The education sector in UT is being reformed to meet the requirements of the rapidly transforming education system and the changing market dynamics.

The shift in the curriculum at University and Colleges can have a decisive impact on the socio-economic environment of J&K. The department is working to create a perfect balance between students and teachers for shaping the young minds through a value-based knowledge system.

Speaking at a book launch function organised by NAAC in collaboration with the Central University of Kashmir (CUK), Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha said that the Universities and Colleges have immense power and a small shift in curriculum can have a decisive impact on the socio-economic environment.

Highlighting the need to introduce new reforms to meet the requirements of the rapidly transforming education system and the changing market dynamics, the Lieutenant Governor said, "The University and Colleges have immense power and a small shift in the curriculum can have a decisive impact on the socio-economic environment".

Manoj Sinha has said that the administration is paying 'sustained attention' to bring quality education to the underprivileged section of the society who were long deprived of their rights. "With implementation of NEP, national pattern of syllabus followed by other states and Union Territories will be introduced in Jammu and Kashmir. Syllabus and format approved by the University Grants Commission (UGC) will be applicable in the UT," he said.

"Be it in terms of syllabus, study formats, educational courses, exam pattern etc, Jammu and Kashmir will not only implement the National Education Policy but will become at par with national standards", he added.

With the implementation of National Education Policy (NEP)-2020, more than 2500 kindergartens were established and another 2000 are being established under Capex Budget. 80,000 students are already enrolled in pre-primary classes in 9000 Government primary schools.

In Jammu and Kashmir, 16 colleges have been finalized for option of Skill Development Programme along with Under Graduation courses.

The New Education Policy contains features of equity, quality, affordability, accountability and promotes individual development through experience based education and logical thinking. The policy aims to recognize, identify and foster the unique capabilities of each student by sensitizing teachers as well as parents to promote each student's holistic development in both academic and non-academic spheres.

Charri Mubarak taken...

twin base camps of the 3,880-metre-high holy cave shrine in south Kashmir Himalayas, officials said.

The yatra, which was suspended from Jammu due to bad weather on Sunday, resumed on Monday. A flash flood triggered by a cloudburst near the cave shrine on Friday afternoon has led to the death of at least 16 people. Around 40 are still missing.

A total of 6,415 pilgrims left Bhagwati Nagar Yatri Niwas here in a convoy of 258 vehicles amid heavy security of CRPF, the officials said.

Of these, 4,545 were men, 1,744 women, 43 children, 79 sadhus and four sadhvis, they said.

The officials said 2,428 pilgrims heading for Batalal were the first to leave the Bhagwati Nagar camp in 88 vehicles around 3.30 am, followed by the second convoy of 170 vehicles carrying 3,987 pilgrims for Pahalgam at 4.30 am.

So far, over 1.30 lakh pilgrims have offered their prayers at the cave shrine, housing the naturally formed ice-shivlingam, the officials said.

A total of 83,073 pilgrims have left from the Bhagwati Nagar base camp for the Valley since June 29, the day the first batch of pilgrims was flagged off by Lt Governor Manoj Sinha. The yatra is scheduled to end on August 11, on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan.

J&K policemen 'soft'...

as Army is the last resort, he said.

We are everywhere, we are easy targets. We have to go to our homes, get vegetables from market, drop kids at schools. We are soft targets, he added.

Quite a few of the felled police personnel like Constable Ghulam Hassan, who was martyred on May 7, were unarmed.

Others like Constable Saifullah Qadri were enjoying familial bliss when their lives were cut short by terrorists' bullets. Qadri was martyred outside his home, while his seven-year-old daughter was injured in the attack.

The 27 civilians killed by terrorists included government employees belonging to minority communities like Rahul Bhat and Rajni Bala who were shot dead in their respective places of posting in Budgam and Kulgam districts on May 12 and May 31, respectively.

Officials said stepped up counter-insurgency operations neutralised 133 terrorists across Jammu and Kashmir since January this year with June accounting for the highest 35 terrorist fatalities.

While 66 terrorists were eliminated between March and May, 22 were killed in January and seven others in February, they said, adding three terrorists were gunned down in the first two weeks of the current month.

Shocked at the targeted killings, panic-stricken government employees belonging to the minority community, especially Kashmiri migrant Pandits and Dogras, have been on strike since May in support of their various demands, the foremost being relocation from the Kashmir valley to Jammu division.

Many of them have already fled to Jammu after the killing of their colleague Rajni Bala of Samba and are staging a sit-in at Panama Chowk in the heart of Jammu, unwilling to resume their duties in the valley till normalcy returns.

Kashmiri Pandits are also protesting inside their heavily-guarded camps in different parts of Kashmir and in Jammu since the cold-blooded murder of Rahul Bhat, a clerk, inside his office in central Kashmir's Budgam district.

They insist no place is safe for them in the valley.

For most of these attacks, The Resistance Front (TRF) believed to be an off-shoot of the banned Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) has claimed responsibility. The TRF came into existence after the Centre abrogated Article 370 and divided J-K into two union territories.

Officials believe LeT perpetrated the attacks but TRF claimed responsibility to put on a facade of indigenous involvement.

By doing so, Pakistan also wants to evade any action by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) which has still kept it on the grey list.

The TRF often releases videos and pictures of an attack. Of late, the militants have been using body cameras to shoot the killings.

After ASI Ahmad's martyrdom, a video released by Amaq news agency the propaganda outlet linked to the ISIS shows a terrorist firing a pistol at a policeman before he goes on to shoot another inside a police vehicle. He then goes around the area and shoots another policeman taking refuge behind a tree, as a burst of gunfire rings in the background.

Eastern Ladakh row...

the outstanding issues in eastern Ladakh.

He also said that the relationship between the two countries should be based on "three mutuals" -- mutual respect, mutual sensitivity and mutual interests.

"Recalling the disengagement achieved in some friction areas, the external affairs minister reiterated the need to sustain the momentum to complete disengagement from all the remaining areas to restore peace and tranquillity in the border areas," the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said in a statement.

The MEA further said that Jaishankar "reaffirmed the importance of fully abiding by bilateral agreements and protocols, and the understandings reached between the two ministers during their previous conversations".

In May, India and China held diplomatic talks on the border row and agreed to hold the next round of the Senior Commanders' meeting at an early date to achieve complete disengagement from all friction points in eastern Ladakh.

The eastern Ladakh border standoff between the Indian and Chinese militaries erupted on May 5, 2020, following a violent clash in the Pangong lake areas.

Both sides gradually enhanced their deployment by rushing in tens of thousands of soldiers as well as heavy weaponry.

As a result of a series of military and diplomatic talks, the two sides completed the disengagement process last year in the north and south banks of the Pangong lake and in the Gogra area.

Each side currently has around 50,000 to 60,000 troops along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in the sensitive sector.

Yasin Malik seeks...

cold storage and was revived after Malik was picked up by the NIA in 2019.

In January last year, the CBI, with help from Special Public Prosecutors Monika Kohli and S K Bhat, framed charges against 10 people, including Malik, in the Rubaiya kidnapping case that turned out to be a turning point in the Valley's volatile history.

After the release of the five JKLF members, terror groups started raising their heads.

Rubaiya was kidnapped by members of JKLF members from Srinagar to ensure the release of their associates lodged in different jails.

Other charged in the case are Ali Mohammed Mir, Mohammed Zaman Mir, Iqbal Ahmad Gandroo, Javed Ahmad Mir, Mohammed Rafiq Pahloo, Manzoor Ahmed Sofi, Wajahat Bashir, Mehraj-ud-Din Sheikh and Showkat Ahmad Bakshi.

During the investigation, accused Ali Mohammad Mir, Zaman Mir and Iqbal Gandroo voluntarily confessed before a magistrate about their and others including Malik's role in the Rubaiya kidnapping. Besides, four others made confessional statements before CBI's Superintendent of Police.

"Since the accused persons besides admitting of their own guilt have also narrated about the participation of other accused persons namely Malik, Javed Ahmed Mir and Mehraj-ud-Din Sheikh, which can also be used against them as one of the pieces of evidence," the court had said in January last year.

The 10 are among the two dozen accused named by the CBI in its charge sheet. Among the others, top JKLF commanders Mohammad Rafiq Dar and Mushtaq Ahmad Lone are dead and 12 are absconding. These are Halima, Javed Iqbal Mir, Mohammad Yaqub Pandit, Riyaz Ahmad Bhat, Khursheed Ahmad Dar, Basharat Rehman Noori, Tariq Ashraf, Shafat Ahmad Shangloo, Manzoor Ahmad, Gulam Mohammad Taploo, Abdul Majeed Bhat and Nissar Ahmad Bhat.

In March 2020, the special court framed charges against the JKLF chief and six others in another case related to the gunning down of four IAF personnel on the outskirts of Srinagar in January 1990.

J&K reports 140....

the Bulletin informed that Jammu reported 74 cases, Srinagar 41, Udhampur 11, Doda 04, Rajouri 03, Kathua, Ganderbal and Samba reported two cases each, Kulgam district reported one case while as no other district across the Union Territory reported any fresh case.

Meanwhile, Ladakh has reported five fresh Covid cases in the last 24 hours, taking the overall infection tally of the Union territory to 28,578, officials said.

All positive cases were reported in Leh.

So far, 228 people have succumbed to COVID-19 in Ladakh.

Of these, 168 deaths were reported from Leh and 60 from Kargil, according to the officials.

They said there are 51 active cases in Ladakh -- all of them in Leh.

A total of 199 samples were tested in Ladakh, out of which, 161 samples in Leh and 33 samples in Kargil, were found to be negative, they said.

Eight patients were discharged from hospitals in Leh when they were found to be no more infected with the virus, officials said.

With this, the total number of recoveries rose to 28,299, the officials said.

To curb the spread of the virus, authorities screened 1,969 passengers at the Leh Airport, and 1,567 passengers including the drivers and helpers of trucks, and light motor vehicles at Khaltse, they said.

Another 315 people were screened at Upshi check post on the highway, they added.

Terrorism won't end...

them that this will not end till you do not try to win the hearts of the people of Kashmir and seek its solution after talking to our neighbouring country, Abdullah told reporters at party headquarters Nawa-i-Subah's here.

Abdullah, who is the Lok Sabha MP from Srinagar, condemned the killing of Assistant Sub-Inspector Mushtaq Ahmad in the Lal Bazar area of the city.

His son was killed in 2020 by military (in an encounter). It is unfortunate that he (Ahmad) was martyred by terrorists. We do not know who the killer is and who the saviour of the people here is. This is strange. We all condemn it and pray for him. We also pray for the family to bear this loss, he said.

The NC president sought a handsome compensation from the administration for the slain policeman's family so that they live with dignity.

Asked about the situation in Sri Lanka and whether something like that can happen in India, Abdullah said anything can happen.

God save us. We pray that we do not have to face such a situation. We also pray for the people of Sri Lanka that God take them out of these difficult times they are in. Also, may God let this government understand the situation so that they take steps to avoid it here, he said.

In response to a question on family planning, Abdullah said whether the government targets a particular community or anyone else, it should understand that India is a country with diversity.

This is a diverse country. Nothing is similar between Tamil Nadu and Kashmir -- not food, not culture, not language, not even weather -- but what keeps us together is that we have to progress together, and remove poverty, diseases and adversity.

The biggest aim was unity of India. We have to make diversity stronger and then only will there be unity. If we try to break this diversity, then this country will fall into misery and it will be very difficult to take it out from there, he added.

Abdullah took a dig at the administration for not allowing political parties to pay homage to July 13, 1931 'martyrs'.

It is unfortunate that they not only cancelled its holiday but also stopped people from paying their tributes. This is a huge mistake, he said.

Asked about the controversy over the national emblem, the NC president said all this will happen in slavery.

They can even run a road roller tomorrow. Pharaoh (an ancient ruler of Egypt) also did this. What had Pharaoh done? He persecuted people. But what happened then? So, let them do it, how much they want to. God is there and He will remain. He belongs to everyone and He is watching all this. A time will come and He will act, Abdullah said.

Why NC failed...

are the greatest hurdle in the fight against terrorism. Instead of educating youngsters about the futility of violence and terrorism, these self-centred, power-hungry and pursuers of dynastic politics are instigating people by their inciting statements," Raina said.

He said that the NC has been in power in Jammu Kashmir for a long enough period and should have practiced what it is preaching when voted out of power.

"They never explain the reasons behind their failure to win the hearts of the people in the Valley, Raina said.

"The NC and its president must also enlighten countrymen about the result of the umpteen round of talks held between India and Pakistan that began soon after partition," the BJP spokesperson added.