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News Digest

Heart Attack Kills Soldier In Poonch

Srinagar: An Army man on Monday died of heart attack in Mendhar area of the frontier Rajouri district. Naik Surendra Singh of army's 8 Garhwal was performing his duty in Baloni sector of Mendhar on Monday morning when he suffered a heart attack and collapsed on the ground, reports said. The soldier was removed to the nearby hospital in an unconscious state. However, the doctors there declared him brought dead. "The body will be handed over to family after conducting medico-legal formalities," a police official told GNS.

Stranded Kashmir is In Pak Set To Return

Jammu: The Jammu and Kashmir residents who are stranded in Pakistan due to the coronavirus outbreak will return by road via the Attari-Wagah border in Punjab starting June 25, officials said on Monday. The J&K government will send two senior officers to Attari to coordinate with the local Amritsar administration in making arrangements for their return, they said. After J&K Chief Secretary BVR Subramaniam wrote to the foreign secretary for facilitating the return of Kashmiris stranded in Bangladesh and other countries, many of them have been ferried home. ● P-02

3-Day Wet Spell In J&K From Wednesday

Srinagar: Weatherman on Monday predicted scattered widespread rains in Jammu and Kashmir this week. "There would be light rainfall on tomorrow but widespread rains on June 24 and 25 besides fairly widespread rains on June 26 and scattered rains for subsequent few days," an official of the Met department said. The official said that Srinagar recorded maximum of 32.2 degree Celsius against 29.2 degree Celsius during this time of the year while Jammu recorded 37.1 against ● P-02

Army Officer Injured In Accidental Fire

Srinagar: An army officer was injured when his rifle went off during a cordon and search operation (CASO) in central Kashmir's Budgam district, reports said Monday. Army Major Vivek Tiwari received injuries in his foot when his rifle went off during a search operation in Watimagam village of Budgam on Sunday night. Tiwari was part of the search team of army 2RR who laid a siege around the village. "The bullet hit his foot and he was immediately shifted" ● P-02

...Chinese Incursion In Ladakh

Army Chief To Visit Srinagar, Leh To Review Situation

NEW DELHI: Indian Army Chief General Manoj Mukund Naravane will visit Leh and Srinagar today (Tuesday) to take stock of the ground situation in the region.

General Naravane's visit comes amid the heightened threat in eastern Ladakh region where thousands of Indian Army men have been deployed a few metres away from the Line of Actual Control (LAC), following the bloody clash with the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) a week ago.

The Army Chief will review the force preparedness as well the deployment across the Line of Actual Control with China and Line of Control (LoC) with Pakistan. He is likely to visit on Tuesday.

As military build-up on both sides of the LAC in Ladakh continues, a constant stream of IAF heavy lift aircraft have airlifted dozens of additional tanks and armoured personnel carriers to the Himalayan heights for beefing up Indian firepower, media reports said on Monday.

Amidst carrying out combat air patrols over Ladakh and maintaining operational readiness platforms at various airbases to scramble fighters, the IAF is using its American C-17s and Russian IL-76s freighters for carrying out multiple sorties out of Chandigarh and other places ● PAGE 02



Army Chief Naravane (left) in a file picture

India, China Hold Second Round Of Talks At LAC

Indian and Chinese militaries on Monday held a second round of Lt General-level talks in an attempt to ease tensions between the two countries following the violent clashes in Galwan Valley that left 20 Indian Army personnel dead. The meeting began at around 11:30 am at Moldo on the Chinese side of Chushul sector in eastern Ladakh and continued till night. ● P-02

Govt To Speed Up 32 Road Projects Along China Border

Amidst the continuing standoff between the Indian Army and China's PLA, the Centre on Monday reviewed ongoing road projects along the Sino-Indian border, and decided to expedite work on 32 of them, officials said. The decision was taken at a high-level meeting convened by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), and attended by the Central Public Works Department ● P-02

Army Top Brass Reviews Ladakh Situation

The apex leadership of the Indian Army on Monday held detailed deliberations on the eastern Ladakh standoff and the situation along the Line of Actual Control with China after the Galwan Valley clashes that left 20 Indian soldiers dead, official sources said. On the opening day of a two-day conference, the commanders carried out a comprehensive review of India's security preparedness along the LAC in Ladakh. ● P-02

Why Is China Praising Modi: Rahul

Firing a fresh salvo at Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Monday asked as to why China is praising Mr Modi during this conflict. "China killed our soldiers. China took our land. Then, why is China praising Mr Modi during this conflict," he asked on Twitter. In his tweet, Gandhi tagged a news report that said the Chinese media has ● P-02

Militants Flee After Gunfight In Anantnag



Soldiers walking towards encounter spot in Verinag forests on Monday. Pic Shah Junaid

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Government forces on Monday launched a massive search operation in south Kashmir's Anantnag district after militants managed to flee from a forested area after a brief encounter. State forces launched a cordon and search operation in Verinag forests after receiving specific information about the presence of militants in the area, a police official said. ● PAGE 02

Militants Attack CRPF Camp In Tral

Militants hurled a grenade at a Central Reserve Police Force camp in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district on Monday night, but there was no casualty, officials here said. The grenade exploded near the camp, they said. "Militants hurled a grenade at the CRPF camp at" ● P-02

Pro-Govt Gunman Injured In Firing

A Dhok Defence Committee (DDC) member was injured in firing in a remote village in Jammu and Kashmir's Doda district, a police official said on Monday. Gopal Nath (35), a resident of village Duggi-Dandi, suffered injury in the right leg when unidentified gunmen opened fire at a dhok (mudhouse) in Jhompari Dal, 16 km from Bhadervah town, around 11.30 pm on Sunday, Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) Aadil Rishu said. The injured was taken to the Government ● P-02

Pak Firing Kills Soldier In Rajouri

JAMMU: A soldier was killed on Monday in cross-border firing along the Line of Control (LoC) in Rajouri district of Jammu region, officials said.

"At about 0530 hours Pakistani army initiated ceasefire violation in Nowshera sector of district Rajouri, which was retaliated by Indian army" the officials said.

They said a soldier, guarding a forward post, was critically injured during the firing and succumbed to his injuries later.

He is the fourth Army soldier to be killed in cross-border firing along the LoC in Rajouri and Poonch this month. Two soldiers were killed in cross-border firing in Rajouri district on June 4 and 10, while another soldier fell to cross-border firing in ● P-02

Two More Die Of Covid-19 In Kashmir, J&K Toll Reaches 85

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Covid-19 on Monday claimed two more lives in Kashmir, taking the number of fatalities due to the novel Coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir to 85, officials said.

A 65-year-old Covid-19 patient from South Kashmir's Pulwama district died at the SMHS hospital here, officials said.

The patient, hailing from Kakapora area of Pulwama, was suffering from bilateral pneumonia, hypertension and diabetes. He died at the SMHS hospital here on Sunday night, the officials said. "His COVID-19 test results

Covid-19 Crosses 6,000 Mark, 132 More Positive

Coronavirus cases in Jammu and Kashmir crossed six thousand mark on Monday after 132 more people tested positive for virus, officials said.

132 more people tested positive for COVID-19 in Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday, taking the number of cases in J&K to 6,088, officials said. "132 new Covid-19 cases were detected in J&K. While 122 of them are from Kashmir, 10 are from" ● P-02

came positive on Monday morning," they added.

Later in the day, the Chest Diseases hospital confirmed death of a middle-aged man at the hospital.

A 58-year-old Covid-19 patient from south Kashmir's Anantnag district died at a hospital here, taking the number of fatalities due to the novel Coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir to 85, officials said. The Covid-19 patient, hailing from Kokernag area of Anantnag district died at CD hospital Srinagar on Monday afternoon, the officials said. ● PAGE 02

Delhi Police Opposes Safoora's Plea In HC Says Pregnancy No Ground For Bail

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The Delhi Police Monday opposed in the Delhi High Court the bail plea of Jamia student Safoora Zargar, arrested under the anti-terror law --UAPA-- in a case related to communal violence in northeast Delhi during protests against the Citizenship Amendment Act, saying the severity of offence is in no manner mitigated by the factum of her pregnancy.

The Delhi Police, in its status report opposing Zargar's bail plea, said a clear and cogent case has been made out against the accused woman and as such she is not entitled for bail for the grave and



serious offences which have been meticulously and surreptitiously planned and executed by her. It said there is strong, cogent, reliable and sufficient material available proving the direct involvement of Zargar, M Phil student of Jamia Millia Islamia University, who is 23 weeks pregnant. The police said she has been lodged in a separate ● PAGE 02

Refrain From Changing Kashmir's Demography, OIC Tells New Delhi

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Amid the tense stand-off between India and China along the Line of Control (LAC) in Ladakh, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on Monday asked New Delhi to refrain from changing the demographic structure of Jammu and Kashmir and settle the dispute according to the resolutions passed by the United Nations.

In a virtual meeting held on Monday, OIC's Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir reaffirmed the continued support for the people of J&K and called on the United Nations Secretary-Gener-



al to use his good offices to make India abide by the United Nations Security Council's (UNSC) resolutions and engage in dialogue to calm the situation in the region, a statement issued by the Muslim body on its website said. "The Contact Group called on India to halt security operations against the people of Jammu and Kashmir immediately, respect basic" ● PAGE 02

LG Launches E-Application Process For Domicile Certificates

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor Girish Chandra Murmu on Monday launched the e-application-cum-issuance of domicile certificate in Jammu and Kashmir, paving way for the first domicile certificate to be granted through online mode to Aaliya Tariq, a girl hailing from north Kashmir's Sopore town.

The e-application-cum-issuance of domicile certificate has been developed by Jammu and Kashmir e-Governance Agency

(JaKeGA). With the launch of this service, there are now 27 government to citizen (G2C) online services, a government spokesman said.

"It is an addition to the Union Territory government's e-governance initiatives to speed up public delivery mechanism through minimal human intervention, besides ensuring efficiency, transparency and reliability of such services," he added.

B V R Subrahmanyam, Chief Secretary; Bipul Pathak, Principal Secretary to ● PAGE 02

TOWARDS SELF-RELIANT INDIA

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From Front page...

Airtel to Pay May Salaries To Support Staff Of Distributors, Retail Franchises



CHANDIGARH: Telecom operator BhartiAirtel is paying the basic income for the May month to the employees of its distribution partners and retail franchise network across the country. It also paid the basic income for the April month to tide over the impact of lockdown which got extended till the end of May. "We understand that this extended lockdown has also reduced your returns during May, as it was for the month of April. In order to help you tide over this tough time, like in the month of April, we are extending a one-time support for the month of May as well," said Manu Sood, Hub CEO - Upper North, BhartiAirtel Ltd in a letter to partners. Sood said that the lockdown

extension for the months of April and May impacted and resulted in a drop in business across many other sectors and categories in much worse ways. "We all are going through an unprecedented situation." "We are absolutely confident that things shall normalize soon and we will spring back and win in the market place," Sood said. "...the May salary is being paid to ensure that your FSE, franchisee team and other such front line resources get their basic income and hence you are requested to pass the base monthly pay to all your staff for the month of May," Sood added. Airtel has recently covered all FSEs under the Covid-19 medical insurance program as a gesture of gratitude towards them.

PM Cannot Allow Chinese To Use His Words As Vindication: Manmohan Singh

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI- In his first remarks on the Ladakh face-off, former prime minister Manmohan Singh on Monday said PM Narendra Modi must be mindful of the implications of his words and cannot allow China to use them as a vindication of its position.

Noting that disinformation is no substitute for diplomacy or decisive leadership, Singh called upon the prime minister to ensure justice for soldiers who died defending India's territorial integrity.

"To do any less would be a historic betrayal of people's faith," he said in a statement.

The Congress has been attacking the government on Prime Minister Modi's remarks at an all-party meeting that no one has entered Indian territory or captured any military post while referring to the eastern Ladakh standoff.

The government has, however, said that attempts are being made to give a "mischievous interpretation" to the prime minister's remarks.

Singh said this is a moment where we must stand together as a nation and be united in our response to this brazen threat.

Twenty Indian soldiers, including a colonel, were



killed in the violent face-off with Chinese troops on the night of June 15/16 in eastern Ladakh's Galwan Valley.

Noting that the country is standing at the historic crossroads, Singh said the government's decisions and actions will have serious bearings on how the future generations perceive us.

"Those who lead us bear the weight of a solemn duty. And in our democracy that responsibility rests with the office of the prime minister," he said.

"The prime minister must always be mindful of the implications of his words and declarations on our nation's security as also strategic and territorial interests," he said.

The Congress veteran said China is "brazenly and illegally" seeking to claim parts of Indian territory such as the Galwan Valley and the

Pangong Tso Lake by committing multiple incursions from April 2020 till date.

"We cannot and will not be cowed down by threats and intimidation nor permit a compromise with our territorial integrity."

"The Prime Minister cannot allow them to use his words as a vindication of their position and must ensure that all organs of the Government work together to tackle this crisis and prevent it from escalating further," he said.

"We remind the Government that disinformation is no substitute for diplomacy or decisive leadership. The truth cannot be suppressed by having pliant allies spout comforting but false statements," he said.

Singh also said that the sacrifice of soldiers cannot be allowed to go in vain.

Rajnath Leaves For Russia; To Press For Timely Delivery Of S-400 Missile Defence Systems

NEW DELHI: In the midst of India's escalating border row with China, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Monday left for Russia on a three-day visit during which he is likely to press for the timely delivery of the S-400 missile defence systems and discuss ways to further expand bilateral military ties.

Singh is primarily visiting Russia to attend a grand military parade in Moscow on June 24 to mark the 75th anniversary of the Soviet victory over Germany in the Second World War. However, it is learnt that the minister will also discuss with Russian leaders regional security scenario and bolstering of overall defence cooperation.

It is the first visit abroad by a senior union minister in four months as foreign travels were restricted in view of the coronavirus pandemic.

Singh travelled by an Indian Air Force aircraft, while strictly following all laid precautions against the coronavirus infection, officials said. The last foreign trip abroad by a senior member of the union cabinet was by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman when she visited Riyadh from Feb 22-24 to attend a meeting of G-20 finance ministers. Days before Sitharaman's trip, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar visited Germany from February 18 to 19. The defence minister's visit to Russia comes in the midst of the escalating border standoff

between India and China, particularly after the killing of 20 Indian Army personnel by Chinese troops in eastern Ladakh's Galwan Valley on June 15. Russia has been in touch with both India and China following their border row and officials did not rule out discussion on the matter during Singh's meetings in Moscow. "Leaving for Moscow on a three-day visit. The visit to Russia will give me an opportunity to hold talks on ways to further deepen the India-Russia defence and strategic partnership. I shall also be attending the 75th Victory Day Parade in Moscow," Singh tweeted before leaving for Moscow. Officials said Singh went ahead with the visit, notwithstanding the border row with China, due to India's decades-old military ties with Russia. They said the defence minister in his talks with top Russian military brass is expected to request for the timely delivery of the S-400 missile systems. Russian Deputy Chief of Mission Roman Babushkin recently told PTI that there could be some delays in implementation of military contracts including the S-400 one in view of the coronavirus pandemic. In October 2018, India had signed a USD 5 billion deal with Russia to buy five units of the S-400 air defence missile systems, notwithstanding warning from the Trump administration that going ahead with the contract may invite US sanctions.

Army Chief To Visit Srinagar.

over the past weeks for the purpose. Some elements of armoured formations based in the Western Sector, which include the newer T-90s, have been earmarked for the Ladakh frontier.

India, China Hold Second Round Of Talks at LAC

The focus of the deliberations was on finalising modalities for disengagement of troops in eastern Ladakh, people familiar with the issue said.

The first round of the Lt Gen talks was held on June 6 at the same venue during which both sides finalised an agreement to disengage gradually from all standoff points beginning with Galwan Valley.

However, the situation along the border deteriorated following the violent clashes on June 15 as the two sides significantly bolstered their deployments in most areas along the 3,500-km de-facto border.

Though China has not revealed its casualty figure, there were reports that a commanding officer of the Chinese army was among those killed in the clashes. There is no official confirmation about it.

Govt To Speed Up 32 Road ...

(CPWD), Border Roads Organisation (BRO) and the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP) among others.

"Works will be expedited on 32 road projects along the border with China and all concerned agencies will extend cooperation to fast-track the projects," an official privy to the meeting told PTI. A total of 73 roads are being constructed along the Sino-Indian border. Of these, the CPWD is working on 12 and the BRO on 61, under the direct supervision of the MHA, which is the nodal authority for all border infrastructure-related projects.

The move comes amidst the ongoing row between the Indian Army and China's People's Liberation Army (PLA) in Ladakh sector. Twenty Indian Army personnel were killed in a clash with the PLA in the night of June 15-16 in the Galwan Valley in Ladakh.

At least three vital roads are being constructed by the BRO in Ladakh, another official said.

Apart from the roads, priority will also be given to projects related to development of other border infrastructure like power, health, telecom and education.

According to the MHA officials, there has been a surge in works related to roads along the Sino-Indian border in recent years. The formation-cutting works were completed for 470 km roads along the border in 2017-20, in comparison to just 230 km in 2008-17, the officials said.

Surface-clearing has been done for 380 km of roads in 2017-20, in comparison to just 170 km in 2008-17, they added.

Six road tunnels were constructed in 2014-20 in comparison to just one in 2008-14. Besides, additional 19 road tunnels are under planning stage, they said, adding a total of 14,450 metres of border road bridges were completed in 2014-20 in comparison to 7,270 metres in 2008-18.

A total of 4,764 kms of roads were constructed in 2014-20 in comparison to 3,610 kms in 2008-14.

Similarly, the budget for the road projects has also been increased in recent years.

Budget for road projects per year between 2008 and 2016 was in the range of Rs 3,300 crore to Rs 4,600 crore.

In 2017-18, Rs 5,450 crore were earmarked for road projects for the border areas, Rs 6,700 crore in 2018-19, Rs 8,050 crore in 2019-20, Rs 11,800 crore in 2020-21

Army Top Brass Reviews...

Arunachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh, they said.

In his initial remarks, Army Chief Gen MM Naravane briefed the commanders about the overall situation following which detailed discussions on the matter took place, the sources said.

The commanders also deliberated on the situation in Jammu and Kashmir, the sources said.

It is the second phase of the biannual commanders conference. The first phase had taken place last month.

Twenty Indian Army personnel were killed in the violent hand-to-hand clashes with Chinese troops in Galwan Valley on June 15, in the biggest ever confrontation between the two sides after a gap of 45 years.

Following the incident, the government has given the armed forces "full freedom" to give a "befitting" response to any Chinese misadventure along the 3,500-km de-facto border.

The Army has sent thousands of additional troops to forward locations along the border in the last one week. The IAF has also moved a sizeable number of its frontline Sukhoi 30 MKI, Jaguar, Mirage 2000 aircraft and Apache attack helicopters to several key air bases including Leh and Srinagar following the clashes.

The two armies were engaged in a standoff in Galwan and sev-

eral other areas of eastern Ladakh since May 5 when their troops clashed on the banks of the Pangong Tso. The situation in eastern Ladakh deteriorated after around 250 Chinese and Indian soldiers were engaged in a violent face-off on May 5 and 6. The incident in Pangong Tso was followed by a similar incident in north Sikkim on May 9.

Prior to the clashes, both sides had been asserting that pending the final resolution of the boundary issue, it was necessary to maintain peace and tranquillity in the border areas.

Why Is China Praising Modi...

lauded Prime Minister Modi's speech during an all-party meeting on the Ladakh situation.

Before this tweet, in another post, Gandhi shared Manmohan Singh's statement on the ongoing Ladakh standoff with China, saying the former PM has given an important advice. Gandhi expressed hope that Modi would accept it "politely" in the interest of the country.

Gandhi has been attacking Modi over his statement on the Ladakh standoff with China and even accused him of "surrendering" Indian territory to the neighbouring country.

Militants Flee After...

He said a gunfight broke out after the militants opened fire at a search party of the forces.

The exchange of fire, he said continued for some time before the guns fell silent.

Later, additional forces were rushed to the woods to prevent militants from fleeing.

According to reports, forces also used choppers and drones to track the fleeing militants. The search operation was later called off, reports said.

Militants Attack CRPF Camp

Batagan in Tral area at around 8.30 pm," police officials said.

The CRPF personnel fired a few rounds in the air following the blast. No loss of life or injury to anyone was reported in the incident, they said.

Pro-Govt Gunman Injured...

Medical College (GMC) Hospital in Jammu.

He said Nath and another DDC member, Firoz Din, were present inside the dhok (mudhouse) with their sheep when they reportedly came under fire.

Police have recovered a 12-bore gun from the area, Rishu said. The officer said the preliminary investigation did not point towards involvement of militants.

Further investigation into the firing incident is on.

Delhi Police Opposes...

cell and chances of her contracting coronavirus from any other person does not arise.

Further, it maintained that there is no exception carved out for pregnant inmate, who is accused of such heinous crime, to be released on bail merely because of pregnancy and said that 39 deliveries have taken place in Delhi prisons in the last 10 years.

Jamia Coordination Committee member Zargar, who was arrested by the Special Cell of Delhi Police on April 10, has challenged in the high court the June 4 order of the trial court denying her bail in the case.

The report, filed through DCP of special cell, said statements of witnesses and co-accused clearly implicate Zargar as being a leading co-conspirator in commissioning of serious offence of causing large-scale disruption and riots, not only in the national capital but also in other parts of the country.

The present case pertains to grave offence against the society and nation. The investigation is at a very crucial juncture, and therefore, considering the sensitivity and the broad nefarious conspectus of present case, it would not be in the interest of justice as well as in public interest to grant bail to the accused at the present stage, it said.

The report said the motive and the idea behind this conspiracy was to go to any extent possible, be it a small scuffle with the police during blockage or instigation of riots between two communities or to advocate and execute a secessionist movement in the country by propagating an armed rebellion against the lawfully constituted government of the day.

It added funds were used and supplied to organise the protest sites and fake vouchers were manufactured/ forged. Acid bombs, iron rods, swords, nailed sticks, knives, sling shots, stones were used in the Delhi riots which were pre-planned in a systematic and organiser manner.

It said that protests were organised following the Shaheen Bagh Chakka-Jaam' model and 21 protest sites were organised and con-

verted to chakka jaam resulting in tensions being heightened and riots in North East, Shahdara and South Districts of Delhi. It was decided that the "anti-government feeling of Muslims" will be used at an appropriate time to destabilise the government, the police claimed, adding that the protests were carried out during the visit of US President Donald Trump to India "to attract international media attention to propagate a narrative that the Government of the day was anti-Muslim," the report said.

"This sinister and nefarious conspiracy was designed in various levels according to which the facade of a civil disobedience or protest was to be maintained to buckle the government to agree to the illegitimate demands of the accused, it said.

During the hearing, Solicitor General Tushar Mehta and Additional Solicitor General Aman Lekhi urged Justice Rajiv Shukdhakar to grant them a day's more time for seeking instructions on the issue, saying it will be in larger interest if they are given indulgence.

The court, which conducted the hearing through video conferencing, allowed the request after Zargar's counsel said she has no objection to it and listed the matter for Tuesday.

Advocate Nitya Ramakrishnan, appearing for Zargar, said the woman is in a delicate state and is in a fairly advanced stage of pregnancy and if the police need time to respond to the plea, she be granted interim bail for the time being.

In the status report filed through advocates Amit Mahajan and Rajat Nair, the police said Zargar is also being provided with complete care to prevent any COVID-19 infection and she has been lodged in a separate cell and chances of her contracting coronavirus from any other person does not arise.

"There is no exception carved out for pregnant inmate, who is accused of such heinous crime, to be released on bail merely because of pregnancy. To the contrary, the law provides for adequate safeguards and medical attention during their custody in jail," it said, adding that 39 deliveries have taken place in Delhi prisons in the last 10 years.

...the health status of the accused (both mental and physical) is satisfactory and normal. Further all medical care and prescribed medication is being provided to her to ensure the well being of the accused and her foetus, as such on this ground also no case for bail has been made out by her, the police said and prayed for dismissing the bail plea.

The hearing also witnessed exchange of words between Mehta, Lekhi on one side and Delhi government standing counsel Rahul Mehra who objected to the appearance of the two senior law officers on behalf of Delhi Police in the case.

Two More Die Of Covid-19 ...

They said the Patient was shifted to the hospital from GMC Anantnag on Friday and was suffering from thyroid and pneumonia. "The patient was on ventilator and died at around 4 p.m.," the officials said.

With two more fatalities, the death toll due to the pathogen has risen in Jammu and Kashmir to 85- 75 in Valley and 10 in Jammu division.

Srinagar, with 19 deaths tops the list of Covid-19 fatalities followed by 14 in Baramulla, 10 each in Shopian & Kulgam, seven in Jammu, six each in Budgam & Anantnag, five in Kupwara, four in Pulwama and one each in Bandipora, Udhampur, Doda and Rajouri districts

Covid-19 Crosses 6,000...

Jammu," the officials said.

Among fresh cases, 22 each cases were reported from Srinagar & Shopian followed by 20 from Budgam, 18 from Baramulla, 13 from Kupwara, 12 from Kulgam, 10 from Pulwama, five from Poonch, three from Bandipora, two each from Anantnag & Kathua and one each from Jammu, Rajouri & Doda they said.

They said that 149 more patients recovered and were discharged from different hospitals.

The number of confirmed cases has now reached 6,088 out of which 4,712 are in Kashmir, while 1,376 are in Jammu, the officials said.

There are 2,472 active cases of the coronavirus disease in J&K - 1,928 in Kashmir and 544 in Jammu - and 3,531 (2,709 from Kashmir and 822 from Jammu) patients have recovered, according to officials.

The J&K has witnessed 85 Covid-19 (75 from Kashmir, 10 from Jammu) deaths so far.

Pak Firing Kills Soldier...

Poonch on June 14. The cross-border firing was also reported along the LoC in Poonch district's Krishna Ghati sector and along the IB in Kathua district, the officials said.

Refrain From Changing...

human rights, refrain from changing the demographic structure of the disputed territory, and settle the conflict under the relevant UNSC resolutions," the statement added.

The meeting was attended by Foreign Ministers of Azerbaijan, Niger, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey.

According to the statement, Secretary General Dr. Yousef A. Al-Othaimeen inaugurated the meeting and stressed the OIC's commitment to finding a peaceful settlement for the Jammu and Kashmir issue as per the relevant resolutions of the Islamic Summit, the Council of Foreign Ministers, and the international legitimacy.

"At the same time, I call on the international community to strengthen its efforts to assist the people of Kashmir to decisively practice their legitimate rights denied for decades," said Othaimen.

The statement further said that the Contact Group appreciated the efforts made by the OIC General Secretariat through its Special Envoy to Jammu and Kashmir who visited the region in March 2020.

"After the meeting, the OIC Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir issued a statement on the recent developments in Jammu and Kashmir region in which it welcomed the efforts made by some Member States to calm the situation between India and Pakistan," it added.

LG Launches E-Application..

Lieutenant Governor and Administrative Secretary of Information Technology department; G N Ittoo, Deputy Commissioner, Baramulla and other senior officers were present, in person and through video conferencing.

Aaliya, daughter of Tariq Ahmad Langoo from Sopore, Baramulla became the first recipient of domicile certificate through online mode, the spokesman said.

The permanent resident certificate (PRC) holders and other applicants can apply for issuance of domicile certificate online by providing their Aadhaar number and receive the certificate through online mode. PRC holders will be able to receive their domicile certificate through this application without having to visit any office, he said.

The L-G observed that the UT government has taken this people friendly initiative to provide domicile certificate through online mode across the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Domicile certificates must be issued within a stipulated time frame and any laxity or malpractice on the part of the issuing authority shall invite strict administrative action, Murmu added.

He directed for upgrading of IT connectivity in all districts, particularly the border and hilly districts, for hassle free issuance of domicile certificate in the UT.

Murmu advised for updating and customising of the application in future with services like SMS alert and further directed for utilising services of Community Information Centres (CICs) and Common Service Centres (CSCs) across the UT to assist the applicants as a nodal point for filling up the e-application form and provide them with necessary technical support.

The Lt Governor also called for opening of more Aadhaar registration counters in the underserved areas and rural pockets to ensure hassle free Aadhaar generation and updating in these areas so that people without Aadhaar number get it along with domicile certificate quickly.

Principal Secretary to Lieutenant Governor, Bipul Pathak, briefed the Lt Governor about the salient features of the application and informed that the necessary training has been imparted to the officers concerned.

Stranded Kashmir is In Pak...

The process to bring others is underway. Also, special teams were deployed to various states to facilitate the return of Kashmiris in special trains and buses.

3-Day Wet Spell In J&K From

38.1 degree Celsius normal.

Meanwhile, the weatherman also issued a "yellow warning" for isolated thunder squalls with lightning and gusty winds (30-40 Kmph) in Jammu from tomorrow till June 26. For Valley, it issued similar warning from June 24 till June 26.

There are four types colour codes signifying the level of caution: green (which means no action), yellow (situation to be watched), amber (government agencies need to be prepared for severe weather), and red (action needed by the agencies). (GNS)

Army Officer Injured In...

to nearby hospital. The search operation concluded peacefully," official sources told KNT.

Family of missing Phd Scholar stages protest, seeking his whereabouts

Agencies

Srinagar: Family members and the relatives of a young Srinagar youth, who was pursuing doctorate in Kashmir University and went missing during trekking on June 13, staged a peaceful protest and appealed to all the security agencies and Lieutenant Governor administration and police to take concrete steps to trace their son.

Amid slogans of "we want justice", "no connection with militancy" the family members of Hilal Ahmed Dar son of Late Ghulam Mohiudin Dar, a resident of Bemina, Srinagar assembled at press colony Srinagar for the third time since their son went missing while trekking at Naranag area of Ganderbal district of Central Kashmir.

"Our son is innocent. He has no militant connection or any other link. We make a fervent appeal to the heads of all security agencies in Kashmir to help trace our son," Nisar Ahmed, Hilal's uncle, told the news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO). "Check his phone records of 20 years. He has nothing offensive against him. He was working in private company in Gurgawon and had come home in the wake of virus."

He urged the government to question the other five youths, who were part of the trekking group, whether they had



any authorized guide with them. "How come they went for trekking on a huge mountain range of Naranag," Nisar said, adding that the "fake news" was circulated yesterday, that Hilal was killed in an encounter at Zoonimar-Kadikadal. We are grief stricken since then. We have not been able to eat a single morsel of food. We condemn the fake news and

news channels, whosoever spread the fake news about Hilal getting killed in gunfight."

Hilal's brother, Yasir, who was also part of the protest, said that he has been trying to get the whereabouts of his brother since past many days. "We have been camping in Naranag. Yesterday, we got news that my brother was killed

in an encounter, but that was fake news. The fact is that my brother was part of a six member group who went for trekking on June 13. Five youth returned and my brother didn't," he said.

Yasir said that if any security agency has picked his brother, they should release him for the "sake of humanity."

Other family members of missing Hilal said that the LG led administration must direct all the security agencies to trace their son on humanitarian grounds. "He is an orphan. His parents died long back and has been brought up by his uncles. He has no connection with militancy. We urge the government to put in best efforts to trace him out," they said, while hold pla-cards displaying, "Our son is innocent, trace him out," and "our son a scholar not a militant."

The family members of missing scholar have been moving from pillar to post since June 13 but so far there is no clue or whereabouts of Hilal. A police officer said that they have not been able to find Hilal so far neither is any militancy link coming to fore. "The five other youth who were along with Hilal are also being questioned. They are cooperating with the police and even helped to take police to the exact spot where the 26-year-old scholar was last seen," the officer said.

DIAL-EMMA



- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,2452222,2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 ✈

RAILWAYS



- SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259
- ANANTNAG: 01932-228243
- BARAMULLA: 0194-102029
- BUBHERA: 01932-228243
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

HIGHWAY STATUS



- Sgr-Jammu highway - (Open)
- Mughal Road - (Open)
- Srinagar- Leh- (Open)



HIJRI CALENDAR
01 Zu al-Qa'dah
1441

PRAYERS

FAJR	3: 35
ZUHR	12: 33
ASR	5:33
Magrib	7:49
ISHA	9:31

Srinagar police seeks help of the general public to trace missing youth

Srinagar: Srinagar police on Monday, sought the help of the general public in tracing a 19-year-old boy, who is missing since 20-06-2020.

As reported by one Haseeb Hassan son of Ghulam Hassan Sheikh resident of Shalimar Srinagar that his domestic servant namely, said an official.

Tariq Ahmad Mir son of Mohammad Shafi Mir, a resident of Gulnad Dard Pora Kupwara, who is missing from 20th June is about 19 years of, with a height 5.4 inches, and his color is wheatish, the officials.

The officials said the any-one having any information regarding the said missing person may kindly inform Police Station Harwan on 7051854641, 9596770855, or PCR Srinagar on 9596222550, 9596222551, or Police Control Room Kashmir on " Dial 100 .

Death of a pregnant woman in LD Hospital triggers protest

Family accuses hospital admin of negligence

Srinagar: Massive protests rocked the lone maternity hospital of Srinagar—Lal Ded—against the alleged negligence of a pregnant woman resulting in her death. The hospital administration, however, refuted the allegations of medical negligence stating that the deceased was a "high risk patient" and died of a cardiac arrest and that her samples for COVID testing have already been taken.

Witnesses told news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), that family members and other attendants of the deceased woman assembled in the premises of LD hospital and alleged that Rubena, wife of Mushtaq Ahmed Bhat of Lolpora, Tangmarg in north Kashmir's Baramulla district died for want of blood. "Hospital administration failed to arrange blood for our patient despite our all cooperation. Had the hospital administration arranged blood in time, our patient would have been saved," alleged the family members of deceased woman.

The woman was shifted to LD hospital on the intervening night of June 21 and 22. "The doctors at LD told us that she needs blood. We volunteered to give our blood in exchange of the group our patient had, but all efforts failed. The hospital administration said they would arrange the blood but they couldn't with the result our patient died for want of blood," the family members of the woman told KNO

Advisor Baseer Khan tours Srinagar city, inspects key tourism dev projects

SRINAGAR, JUNE 22: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor, Baseer Khan today visited several locations of Srinagar city to assess the ongoing development and renovation initiatives launched by the Tourism Department.

During his visit, the Advisor directed the executing agencies to expedite the pace of work on various projects for their timely

completion. He stressed upon the officers for constant monitoring of these projects so that tangible results are achieved on the ground.

He was accompanied by various officers of Tourism and other allied departments. During his visit to monitor the renovation and up-gradation of the stone building at Old Secretari-

at he directed the authorities to fast pace the renovation works and complete the pending works within the stipulated time frame. The overall renovation cost of the building amounts to 1.33 Crore and is being executed by the tourism department.

The monument has been declared as a protected monument and restoration works are being done to

restore it to its pristine glory.

The Advisor also inaugurated 125 KVA Diesel Generator set at the Tourist City Centre at TRC here in presence of Director Tourism Kashmir, Nisar Ahmad Wani. The DG Set would overcome the power peak demand shortages of TRC. He also inspected the high-end tourist bus, parking space at the Centre and bio-toilets.

Power shutdown

SRINAGAR, JUNE 22: According to the Power Controller, Kashmir Province, to execute laying of LT AB cable under PMDP, the shutdown of 33 KV Ahmadpora-Maghar line is being observed.

During the shutdown, the power supply to Receiving Station Magam will remain affected on June 25, from 10 am to 5 pm.

Similarly, in order to carry out branch cutting, preventive and other minor works, shutdown of 33kV lines of STD Sopore shall be observed as per the programme given below.

Power supply from 33 kV line Sheer Baramulla Ist to Receiving Station Baramulla Ist Kanilbagh and 33 kV line Sheer Baramulla IInd to Receiving Station Baramulla IInd Drangbal Sheer shall

remain affected on June 23, 25 and 27 from 5:30 am to 1:00 pm.

Power supply from 33 kV line Sheer Malpora to Receiving Station Chandooza, Malpora, Nowshara shall remain affected on June 29 and 01 July from 9 am to 5 pm.

Power supply from 33 kV line Nihalpora Pattan to Receiving Station Pattan, Palhallan and Hamray shall remain affected on June 23 and 25 from 9 am to 5 pm.

Power supply from 33 kV line Nihalpora HMT to Receiving Station Singhpora shall remain affected on June 26 and 28 from 9 am to 5 pm.

Power supply from 33 kV line Nihalpora Tangmarg to Receiving Station Tangmarg, Gulmarg, Cablecar Gulmarg shall remain affected on June 23 and 25 from 9 am to 5 pm.

DC Sgr inspects progress at selected sites

Project initiated for 10 Model Revenue Offices

SRINAGAR, JUNE 22: The District Administration, Srinagar has initiated an ambitious project for establishment of 10 Model Revenue Offices aimed at hassle-free delivery of revenue related services across the district. The project is aimed to be completed within a period of 2 months.

Deputy Commissioner, Shahid Iqbal Choudhary inspected the sites in Tehsils Panthachowk, Chanpora, South, Shalteng, Eidgah and Khanyar along with officers from PWD and Planning. Work has been started at 6 locations and likely to start on remaining 4 locations later this week.

The buildings for these offices have been planned to be constructed in a short span of time. Meanwhile, the software

for various revenue related services has been developed by the district administration through National Informatics Centre. A test of software was conducted. Citizens will have the option for applying for services online or fixing appointment with revenue officers for various services including revenue extension, income certificate, caste certificate, domicile certificate and other revenue related matters.

The model Revenue Offices are being constructed for Niabats including Kothibagh/Gogjibagh, Chhatabal, Lawaypora, Batamaloo, Zainakote, Sanat Nagar, Nowgam, Khanyar, Buchwara and Khonmoh in Phase-I. Meanwhile, two additional sites at Eidgah Tehsil are also under survey.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
Mechanical Irrigation Division Baramulla

Short-term Tender
NIT No: E- 24 of 2020-21

For and on behalf of Governor of Jammu & Kashmir tenders in two covers, affixed with 6.00 revenue stamps, are invited from experienced, reputed and registered firms/ genuine manufacturer/authorized distributors/dealers/workshop owners/SSI Unit holders the following work:

					2020_IFC_98605_1

The tenders consisting of qualifying/eligibility criteria, technical specifications, general and commercial terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the <https://jktenders.gov.in>
The bids shall be submitted in electronic format on the website <https://jktenders.gov.in>

The bids uploaded on the website up to due date and time will be opened on the time and date, in the office of the _____ in presence of the bidders who wish to attend. In case offices happen sed due to holiday, or any other reason, on the schedule date of opening, the bids will be opened on the next working day at the scheduled time and venue.

The complete bidding shall be online.
Prequalification bids shall be opened online in the office of the Executive Engineer.

of qualifying bidders shall be opened on the same day. The _____ regarding clarification shall be held in the office of the Executive Engineer Mechanical _____

The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of _____ days from the date of opening of _____

Executive Engineer

DIPK-1990/20

ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
AWANTIPORA, KASHMIR.

Tele: 01933-247954/247955. Website: www.islamicuniversity.edu.in.

ADVERTISEMENT NOTICE No: 03 OF 2020
Dated: 22-06-2020

Islamic University of Science and Technology (IUST), Awantipora, Kashmir invites online applications from the eligible candidates for the following posts:

1. Professor, Watson-Crick Centre for Molecular Medicine.
2. Professor, Mantaqi Centre for Science and Society.

General Conditions:

1. Candidates are required to apply online through University website www.islamicuniversity.edu.in.
2. Detailed advertisement notice shall be available on university website www.islamicuniversity.edu.in on 24-06-2020.
3. Mode of appointment: Direct/ Deputation.

Important dates:

Date of availability of online application : 24-06-2020
Last date of submission of online application : 23-07-2020
Last date of submission of hardcopies of the application : 24-07-2020

No. IUST/Reg/Adv/20/E/538
Dated: 22-06-2020.

Sd/
Registrar

This Day In History

- 1942- World War II: Germany's latest fighter, a Focke-Wulf FW190 is captured intact when it mistakenly lands at RAF Pembrey in Wales.
- 1943- RAF discovers Werner von Braun's V1/V2-base in Peenemunde
- 1952- US airplanes bomb energy centers at Yalu Korea
- 1960- Japan signs security treaty with the US
- 1961- The Antarctic Treaty, ensuring that Antarctica is used for peaceful purposes; for international cooperation in scientific research; and does not become the scene or object of international discord, comes into force
- 1972- Hurricane Agnes becomes US's costliest natural disaster, affecting 15 states, with 119 deaths, \$3 billion damage
- 1972- President Nixon & his Chief of Staff H. R. Haldeman agree to use CIA to cover up Watergate
- 1973- World Court condemns French nuclear tests in the Pacific
- 1974- 1st extraterrestrial message sent from Earth into space
- 1980- 1st solar-powered coast-to-coast two-way radio conversation
- 1983- Syria throws out PLO leader Arafat
- 1985- Bomb destroys Air India Boeing 747 in air near Ireland, 329 die
- 1990- African National Congress leader Nelson Mandela, on a US tour, receives a tumultuous welcome in Boston.
- 1991- Mazda becomes 1st Japanese car to capture Le Mans 24 hour race
- 1994- South Africa is readmitted to the United Nations Organisations (UNO)
- 2000- The bulk ore carrier MV Treasure sinks off the western coast of South Africa, sailing more than 19 000 penguins; this resulted in the world's largest ever rescue of birds from an oiling event
- 2013 India defeats England to win the 2013 ICC Champions Trophy in cricket

From KO Archives

Hurriyat's Willingness to talk conveyed to India: Mirwaiz

"Pakistan Visit Meant Formal Inclusion in Peace Process"

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Describing their visit to Pakistan and 'Azad' Kashmir a "small yet positive step", the Hurriyat Conference led by Mirwaiz Umer Farooq today said it signalled formal inclusion of Kashmiris in the dialogue process for the resolution of Kashmir issue.

Asserting that the APHC was trying to consolidate the gains of the talks process Mirwaiz Umer said it has conveyed to New Delhi its willingness to carry forward the dialogue process.

"Yes. We are informally in touch with New Delhi.

"We strongly believe that the dialogue process has to be strengthened and carried forward. We have already conveyed to India our willingness to talk... We are ready. The ball is now in India's court." He told reporters after the joint session of amalgam's Executive Committee, General Council and Working Committee here.

The Mirwaiz said the onus is now on New Delhi to decide, on the date and venue for resuming the stalled talks aimed at resolving the Kashmir issue.

However, he said the Hurriyat Conference favoured an immediate resumption of the dialogue process. "We want to start the talks at the earliest. The date and the time has to be fixed by India," the Hurriyat Chairman said. "He said the onus of resolving the Kashmir is on every-body who wants to contribute to the resolution of the Kashmir issue. Mirwaiz claimed that their fortnight' long visit across LoC "signalled formal inclusion of Kashmiris in the dialogue process for resolution of the Kashmir issue." "The realisation has dawned in Islamabad and Kashmir and hope Delhi as well that issues need to be resolved ill rough negotiations and dialogue," he said.

He also said New Delhi should take more responsibility in improving the situation on the human rights front and releasing all the political detainees in the state

Elaborating the Hurriyat suggestion of triangular talks between India, Pakistan and Kashmiris. Mirwaiz said the mechanism would allow holding talks between the three sides at various levels.

"We have welcomed Indo-Pak talks but Kashmiris can hold talks with Pakistan and India simultaneously to contribute their bit towards resolution of the issue."

The Hurriyat leader also brushed aside representative character saying that elections are meant for administrative purposes which is not our aim at the moment and will be given a thought only after resolution of Kashmir issue "

Asserting that it was for integration of entire Jammu and Kashmir. He said Hurriyat delegations would fan out in the state as part of its people to people contact and make all out efforts to bring back Kashmiri Pundits who fled the valley in early 90's.

(Kashmir Observer, 23 June, 2005)

KASHMIR
OBSERVER

Printed & Published by Sajjad Haider on behalf of the Kashmir Observer LLP
Published from: # 5- Boulevard, Srinagar-190001
Printed at: KT Press Pvt. Ltd, Rangreth Ind Area, Srinagar.
RNI Registration No: 69503/98
Postal Registration No-L/159/KO/SK/2014-16
Editor-in-Chief: Sajjad Haider
Legal Counsel: Tasaduq Khwaja
Switchboard: (0194) 2106304
Editorial: (0194) 2502327
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Militancy In Retreat

Over the past three weeks, the forces in successive operations have killed over 30 militants, most of them at Shopian in South Kashmir. With these, the number of militants killed in less than six months this year in around 140, almost a militant a day. Just three days ago, the forces had killed eight militants in a day. At this rate, it appears that the militancy could very well be wiped out unless there is replenishment, something that has been the case over the past three decades.

According to police estimate there are around 250 militants in the Valley and in the absence of fresh recruitment, around sixty percent of them have already been killed so far. This has given some confidence to the security forces who think they should be able to usher in peace in a matter of few months. In a recent interaction with reporters, the commander of Srinagar-based 15 Corps Lt Gen Baggavalli Somashekhar Raju said that with every operation there was a "palpable change" in the situation in Kashmir.

But if the past is any guide, the militancy may still survive, with the recent killings simultaneously compensated by the new recruitment and the infiltration. Will past replicate in the near future remains to be seen. Meanwhile forces are notching one success after another and not suffering any loss themselves. The killings have raised the level of violence. And, the violence at such a scale has taken place for the first time after the revocation of Article 370 in August last.

Significantly almost all the militants killed this year have been Kashmiris, revealing the presence of the foreign militants has drastically thinned out in the Valley. What would be interesting to see is if more Pakistan based militants join the battle now. Ever since the new wave of the local militancy triggered by the advent of Burhan Wani in 2015, Kashmiri militants have generally outnumbered their foreign counterparts. Any considerable change in the ratio in favour of the foreigners could dramatically change the landscape of violence in Kashmir. As of now, however, much of this scenario is in the realm of speculation. But the altered state of affairs following August 5 move has made this prospect a more realistic proposition than it otherwise would have been. The security establishment appears to be cognizant of this reality and is trying hard to ensure that any such prospect is pre-empted. Will they succeed? It remains to be seen. But it is also true that in the absence of a genuine political outreach that seeks to address disaffection in Kashmir, it will be difficult to maintain peace for long.

OTHER OPINION

Lost In Clarifications

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's comments to an all-party meet on Friday, claiming there had neither been any intrusion by China nor was any intruder present, expectedly caused a political storm. Not only was the violence on the night of June 15 that claimed 20 Indian soldiers triggered by China erecting structures on India's side of the LAC in the Galwan Valley, Chinese troops still remain present on Indian territory elsewhere in Ladakh, including on the northern bank of Pangong Lake. After the problems with his remarks were highlighted by the Opposition, the Prime Minister's Office was moved to issue a much needed clarification on Saturday, stating the PM was only referring to the situation in the Galwan Valley "as a consequence of the bravery of our armed forces" that foiled a Chinese transgression. Even if the PMO attributed the political storm to "a mischievous interpretation", it is more than clear that the PM did not choose his words carefully. In fact, his remarks have already been seized upon by the Chinese state media, and were seen as endorsing Beijing's claims that its troops did not cross the LAC and justifying the People's Liberation Army's recent actions. The MEA issued its own statement on Saturday, reiterating that the Chinese had crossed the LAC and erected structures across the line.

While it should be obvious that any speech that requires no less than two clarifications has serious problems with its messaging, the controversy has only underlined the government's poor communication on the border issue. The tragic loss of lives followed more than six weeks of tensions in the Galwan Valley. During this time, the public was kept in the dark about what was transpiring along the LAC. True, sharing every detail in the public domain is not possible when it comes to negotiating sensitive issues of national security. Indeed, the solution to the current crisis, and the disengagement that is needed urgently at various points along the LAC, can make progress only through diplomacy. At the same time, a blanket of silence hardly serves the government's interests. The absence of timely and credible information will only fuel speculation and alarm. The silence has also triggered unseemly domestic politics and a blame-game, at a time when India is confronting possibly its biggest national security challenge since Kargil. Friday's all-party meet was certainly a step in the right direction, even if it perhaps came a few weeks too late. India's China policy may be approaching as significant an inflection point as 1988, which marked the normalisation of ties after 1962. Crafting the way ahead for the relationship after the worst violence since 1967 will require a measured appraisal of how to purposively engage India's biggest and most powerful neighbour. This cannot happen by being in denial or by attempting to obscure facts. The first step to a solution is a realisation of the nature and the magnitude of the problem.

e for Education

The epidemic is an opportunity to promote educational reform in Kashmir by taking advantage of digitization of education and online teaching

IFTHIKAR BASHIR



I personally think that online teaching needs more investment in courseware production, which is an advantage of the Internet. In recent years, with the progress in data analysis technology, some educational institutions have adopted the evaluation software to assess the effects of teaching

Mohammad, a middle school student, gets up every morning and turns on his mother's mobile phone to receive a list of daily learning tasks and assignments from his teachers on various subjects on WhatsApp and Zoom apps. His school has adapted a teaching practice by recording school-level online courses as a necessary supplement and formulated detailed daily teaching schedules. Every weekend, he receives new learning tasks from the school coordinator for the next week through the school WhatsApp group, which contains class schedules and homework materials. This kind of semi-self-study learning method took students and parents a while to adopt. They had to figure out the way to download learning material and use the new system. But after a few weeks, parents became adept at using it.

In traditional scenario, a class means teaching in brick and mortar environment. Lockdown due to COVID-19 has compelled most of the countries to close their schools and as a result, teaching in traditional scenario has not been possible. As problems create opportunities, lockdown provides incentive to go beyond traditional classroom learning to digital or online learning. COVID-19 outbreak has changed the lives of people around the globe. Governments around the world have encouraged people to stay at home to prevent and control the spread of the coronavirus. However, life has to go on and so has the education of our children.

Students in Kashmir have been the worst sufferers because of back to back lockdowns. One big positive that has come out of the current pandemic is that students have been able to continue their studies via the Internet during the period of in-person class suspension. Fortunately, this has become achievable thanks to the rapid development of networking technology and Internet. Millions of teachers and students across the globe are congregated online, and online teaching has become the only choice for both educators and students during the epidemic.

The challenges students in Kashmir encounter apart from

extremely slow internet connectivity, stem more from the need of learning self-control without the constraints of school rules and discipline. The timetable and various tasks are what they need to meet and complete through self-discipline. One of the common problems children face while taking online classes is being easily distracted. Regardless of the academic ability of the children, this is the limitation of online teaching. In order to make up for this shortcoming, teachers can devise various methods to keep students' attention, such as holding regular video class meetings and organizing regular online question and answer sessions to strengthen teacher-student communication. In short, goal should be to let the children feel that although they are in a virtual space of learning, teachers and classmates are always together. In fact, the biggest change relates to the teaching plan. The reasoning and calculation of equations on the blackboard used to be a complete presentation of thinking logic underlying the solution. As an existing pen tablet has limited space to write on, it is a far cry from a blackboard in terms of flexibility and presenting details. After class, in addition to normal homework, students need to be provided with corresponding supplementary practice materials to ensure that they achieve the purpose of knowledge consolidation. Whether it is recorded broadcasting or live streaming, both teachers and students are adapting to the new models of education.

Online teaching is demanding on children's self-learning ability and self-control, which is not a uniform characteristic in all students. It will bring about the polarization of students' performance after in-person classes are restored. I personally think that online teaching needs more investment in courseware production, which is an advantage of the Internet. In recent years, with the progress in data analysis technology, some educational institutions have adopted the evaluation software to assess the effects of teaching. After explaining a difficult knowledge point, the teacher will ask students to practice in the classroom. The students' an-

swers are fed back to the teacher through the system, quickly analyzing the correct rate. If the accuracy is high, the teacher will continue the lecture and consolidate the same knowledge points through more exercises; if the accuracy is low, the teacher will explain the relevant knowledge points again. If the analysis software is developed relatively well, the teacher can also see the reason why the students make mistakes.

The effect of online education is directly related to the development level of the teaching system. By taking advantage of digitization of education and online teaching, the epidemic may be an opportunity to promote educational reform in our part of the world. After the epidemic is over, priority will still be given to offline education. But this epidemic has had a positive effect on online teaching.

It is true that technology can change lives. Online teaching was basically inaccessible in the past, with network and equipment problems being real obstacles - by the way it still is a big challenge in Kashmir, courtesy slow internet connectivity and non-affordability of smart-phones by the parents of children studying in Government or small private schools. Parental supervision is the key and a few concerns that need to be addressed are providing low cost smart gadgets to students whose families can't afford it. Students would love using digital learning as a substitute, if they are provided with better internet connectivity.

It is indeed a big hope and a powerful driving force for us Kashmiris in particular. I am sure future education will definitely have a place for online education. Because of the epidemic, online education will be integrated into the current education system more quickly. The many advantages of online education can compliment existing traditional education models. Online education could prove to be a great opportunity for local start-ups as well. Making online classes the new normal in education industry will become indispensable tool in future.

(Ifthikar Bashir is a freelance financial advisor)



OBSERVER MAIL

All letters intended for publication must include the writer's name and address, even if a pseudonym is used. Letters are edited as clarity, space and accuracy of expression require. Our publishing a letter does not mean we agree with everything or even anything in it. -EDITOR

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Radio classes have helped Doda students

The coronavirus has forced the shutdown of schools, colleges and universities throughout the world. As the country eases the lockdown, it must take into consideration an effective plan to re-open schools. No amount of helicopter parenting or video-conferencing can replace real teachers and social skills acquired from interacting with each other. It is quite difficult to manage and provide mobiles or laptops to children in the underdeveloped region like the Indian sub-continent. But, the efforts in this direction are praiseworthy and notable.

Above all, I would like to thank All India Radio (AIR) Bhandarwah through the medium of your esteemed newspaper for broadcasting Radio classes. In the absence of high-speed mobile Internet services from August 5 last year and very few households with access

to smartphones, the initiative of the Directorate of School Education, Jammu to start Radio Classes which aim to help students in Doda district to complete their syllabus despite coronavirus lockdown is a welcome step.

The local Radio Station of AIR, Bhandarwah which covers almost entire geographical area of Doda is airing one and a half-hour educational content since May 29 on frequency 102MHz. Students and their parents, especially those living in the rural areas with little income who could not afford private tuitions were worried after all the schools were shut for a prolonged period due to the nationwide lockdown imposed on March 23. The schools in the hilly district of Doda usually remain closed from December to March for winter vacation due to harsh climatic conditions, while March to

September months is the productive period for the completion of the syllabus before the term-end examinations in October-November.

It is a welcome step that the authorities have started online classes from May 27 and accordingly, all the schools in Doda were linked with it. It is pertinent to mention here that only 55 percent of students in the Doda have access to the internet and smartphones. There are a total of 63,406 students, and out of these, only 37,837 have access to the Internet, according to the data collected by me from the office of Chief Education Officer, Doda. To provide education to the remaining 25,569 students who mostly belong to families living below the poverty line and are residing at far off places of Doda a request was accepted by Prasar Bharti to provide a time slot on AIR Bhandarwah, and

accordingly, virtual Radio classes were started from May 29, 2020, for students of 9th to 12th classes.

These Radio classes have benefited more than 45000 students. To date, only teachers in Bhandarwah are teaching students through the medium of radio, whereas, in Doda, teachers are not allowed to teach, for the reasons best known to the authorities concerned. It is requested to the Director, Prasar Bharti AIR - Bhandarwah to increase the time slot for teaching and more subjects should be taught for board classes from this local Radio Station. These Radio classes are of great help in the absence of regular school classes. Last but not least, I hope this arrangement will continue until the reopening of the schools.

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Philosophy and Education: A Review By Prof Mohi ud Din Hajini

KO WEB DESK

A teacher with no belief or with no personal assumption is a blind teacher, and unfit for the job". To illustrate this theme, he delves deep into modern trends of thought gleaning upto-date information on the subject, re-evaluating contending theories, and subsequently sifting out the practicable in modern Education. He is conscientious enough to admit that in our bewildering era when secular humanism (in contrast to religious humanism) actually makes man the measure of all things, we need philosophy of life not for the chosen few but for an ordinary man as well, otherwise the mass-conditioning tendencies in politics shall choke up the roots of man as a living organism

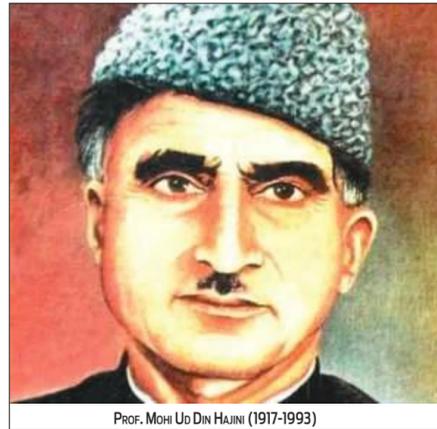
PROFESSOR Mohi-ud-Din Hajini's collection of research papers titled, Discourses of Prof. Mohi-ud-Din Hajini compiled by Dr Ameen Fayaz, is the best illustration of Prof. Hajini's multi-dimensional personality. The book comprises three parts and carries three vibrant themes. The third and the last part of the book carry two papers, including "Philosophy and Education: A Review".

The work is divided into two parts covering thirteen chapters, each one a comprehensive unit in itself, surveying various theories interconnecting Philosophy and Education. The contents are coherently interwoven and logically presented; and it appears very difficult to discover a striking incongruity in the thought-process of the author.

He forewarns the reader in the introductory note that "anyone who makes broad statement about Education is philosophizing and on that account "everyone has his own philosophy". Such a philosophy is prone to discuss Philosophy rather than education. He confesses that he himself does not belong to this category. For, according to his approach to the subject "Education is a purposive activity, the direction and shape of which are determined by human beliefs - most of them culturally and religiously quite deep - rooted in human psyche.

A teacher with no belief or with no personal assumption is a blind teacher, and unfit for the job". To illustrate this theme, he delves deep into modern trends of thought gleaning upto-date information on the subject, re-evaluating contending theories, and subsequently sifting out the practicable from the impracticable in modern Education. He is conscientious enough to admit that in our bewildering era when secular humanism (in contrast to religious humanism) actually makes man the measure of all things, we need philosophy of life not for the chosen few but for an ordinary man as well, otherwise the mass-conditioning tendencies in politics shall choke up the roots of man as a living organism. Arguments in such a philosophy and thence in Education, may not prove or demonstrate anything to an average student, nevertheless if these help him to see afresh or rejuvenate interest towards a new vista of thought, the teacher has achieved his aim. How is that possible? Professor Reid begins the reply from the very definition of Philosophy and says that a philosopher, being presumably the lover of wisdom, it is the wisdom that we need, therefore it is not the technique of teaching that should come first, for even an efficient teacher can miseducate; it is the teacher's personal acumen, culture and innate tendencies that keep, to use the author's simile, "the wheels of education oiled".

Postulating these qualities in a teacher, we have further to admit that it is not he alone who guides the immature mind: infact, the society in modern age is equipped with dozens of mechanical devices that contribute towards making or marring the student's career and these agencies commence impressing the mind long before he is admitted in the school. Thus we see that on the one hand, the assimilative nature of each mind grasps "something which just happens to a person", while, on the other hand, it is quite possible that the set pattern of Education in each country may not be conducive to the imprints left on the mind in social contact. The worst situation will spring up when the society, the curriculum and the teacher are at variance with one another, regarding their respective assumptions in Education. To overcome such a "triangular tension", it is the teacher who should come down to the student's mental level till the student is imperceptibly extricated from an unhealthy environment, organized by the society or the state. In this enterprise, says the author, the teacher must be free as is the case in Great Britain; but the author ap-



PROF. MOHI UD DIN HAJINI (1917-1993)

pears to be quite ignorant of the teacher's position in numerous Asian countries, where he has often to sell his soul to the devil for placating an officer, or for getting his book prescribed as a text....

The author clearly distinguishes between "Personality" and "Personal Self", and says that the former, though altogether of a different kind and differentiated in numerous ways, is actually transcended by the "Personal Self". The innate and inherited characteristics sub-consciously operating upon personality should be accepted as subjectively given, whereas the objective part of the Personal Self will come under Biology and Empirical Psychology. The chief aim of philosophical analysis should be to harmonize the subjective and objective constituents of the Personal Self, and to remove the confusion with least possible irritation, suppression or coercion. The compromising teacher can thus let the children go further in the direction which he believes to be right. As for the definition of "rightness", the author says that the question of the rightness of an act "arises through its relation to a larger situation in an indefinitely stretching context of life". This definition being too elastic for application, he later amends it, and says "rightness as experienced is felt by each teacher as part of a larger good to probably a larger number of people". This is tantamount to saying that it is not necessary that the teacher's conception of goodness will be ideally good; it may frequently be the least harmful from amongst the evil ones. This type of exposition gives rise to the relativity of rightness that has confused the European Educationists from Michaelis to Marx. If the author had access to Imam-i-Ghazali's religious humanism or Vina Bave's Sarodaya, he would be spared a lot of his "theorizing". Nevertheless, the striking note of the book is that it does asseverate that evil is let loose by the purely materialistic pattern of education in Europe, and on this observation, the author has independently come to some conclusions (especially in Ethics) that can retard the crisis in faith generated by pure science in our curriculum.

As for the concordance of social ideals within the frame work of education, the author has rightly pointed out that either the teacher's beliefs must be sublime enough to reflect the society's ideals or the state should couch him before he begins his teaching; of course, without chaining his mind for all times, because extreme and perennial form of state's directives can often re-emerge in the behaviourist assumption that Education is entirely dependent on "conditioning", wherein the child (or even the teacher) is pre-

sumed to be more as an object than as a person. The idea of "shaping" and "moulding" a child strictly according to totalitarian, Nazi or, I should add, extremely nationalistic, pattern, is an idea, which leaves out what may be the most important fact about human nature.

The author has lucidly and thoroughly discussed the topic in the ninth chapter of the book under the title "The Need for Roots—in Humanities and Science". Pragmatism, with all its dollar-infection, has been subjected to rational criticism; and contemplative and meditative aspects of education are brought forth into a broader perspective. Ethical values which till recent times were deemed only as "social demands" are now re-evaluated, and admitted to be not only the powerful integrating factors in society, but real deterrents to fiendish tendencies especially in psychotic, neurotic and depressive states of a student. The author classifies "value into three categories": (1) those which are ethically good or bad; (2) those which are intrinsically higher or lower; and (3) those values that merely satisfy desires or "give pleasure" technically called "fact-value". In this last category, there is no distinction of good or bad, higher or lower. The teacher has to see that more satisfaction of desire does not evolve into Epicureanism or Nihilism, nor does this recoil round a perversion that is likely to lead to sadism, or can accelerate the split of personality. In this delicate situation, if the teacher is expected to start, say, with only two maxims, i.e. that moral character is indispensable, and that a sense of responsibility must be developed from the elementary stage of education, he can really be a philosopher, provided he can satisfy all the heterogeneous temperaments in a class; otherwise the conflicting responses to a single stimulus from students will surely distort his appeal and disfigure his image of "character" and "responsibility".

The most unpleasant exigency will crop up when an extroverted teacher may have to couch the majority of students with an introverted bent of mind or vice-versa. Similarly, the contradictory "output" of educational theories, simultaneously believed by the teacher as "apt", can surely disintegrate the personality of the student-class, e.g; one school of educationists believes the moral imperatives are socially derived, and related to social needs, while another school asserts that these are underivative and final. The teacher shall have to find out a via media that can stimulate the inquisitive nature of the student rather than block his independent judgement. In effect, the teacher has to harmonize the contending elements by impressing upon the pupil that "it takes all sorts, to make a world". We may differ here with the author when he feels reluctant to admit some "supreme ordering principle" behind absolute values. It is because of this innate attitude that he seldom makes any reference to the best teachers of the world, i.e. the Founders of all world religions. It is really a pity that European writers on education are often too sluggish to realize that those very precepts which have since time immemorial been taught by Prophets in the east, are now not only hinted at as "principles of education" but taken for guide lines in human behaviour, of course under a new name and after too long an exploration! That is why we find our author too, on the one hand, asserting a statement that does not straightforwardly fall under analytical or empirical classification and does not deserve to be taken seriously, while, on the other hand, imperceptibly proposing a shift from mechanistic to ethical mode of teaching, besides pinning for such a UNESCO that would regulate teaching on an ideal pattern.

The book makes a good reading despite a bit of dryness in style, generated by the author's too much love for analytical exposition of the subject.

When To Wear A Mask And When You Can Skip It

Mask wearing is good in settings where people have to interact in enclosed spaces

FAYE FLAM

Science has a lot to say about the effectiveness of wearing a mask to stop the spread of the coronavirus, but the communication of that science has been corrupted by a combination of partisan divides, sensationalist media stories, distrust, false dichotomies, and letting the perfect be the enemy of the good.

The studies on masks aren't perfectly definitive, but that's typical of many issues involving health risks — from mercury contamination to cancer screenings. It's still better to make decisions based on an incomplete body of evidence than to ignore evidence altogether. In this case, it helps to add a dose of situational awareness and common sense.

The public health community got off on the wrong foot with masks by advising against wearing them and then making a sudden flip-flop and telling us not to leave home without them. Further complicating the picture is a mix of people's individual attitudes. Some members of the public still fear the virus and want to remain safe, and others are at peace with their risk but want some guidance on how to be a good citizen — or at least be perceived as one.

A consensus is finally starting to form that there's a negligible risk outdoors away from other people, and that very brief encounters pose very little risk, such as people walking, running or cycling past you.

There have been reasonably convincing studies showing that masks stop some of the particles that might carry the virus out of people's mouths. That suggests masks' potential to protect others. Then there are observational studies, which look at mask use in the real world.

On June 1, The Lancet published an analysis of 172 such studies, many of them done in health care settings. The authors concluded that mask-wearing combined with eye protection and social distancing could cut down on the spread of the virus, though the authors admitted to a high degree of uncertainty.

Another study came down on the side of mandatory mask-wearing by watching disease trends in Wuhan and New York City. But some other researchers



noted flaws in that study, published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. The one-to-two-week delay between infection and test results would suggest infections in New York City dropped well before masks were made mandatory. Some experts wanted the study retracted.

Potential super-spreading events

When there are multiple changes in behaviour going on at the same time, it can be impossible to connect any one of those changes to rising or falling case numbers. That doesn't mean the information in those studies can't be useful. Physician and infectious disease specialist Muge Cevik, who has been a prescient

guide to relative risks, pointed out to me that mask-wearing should be informed by other studies on how the virus spreads. A consensus is finally starting to form that there's a negligible risk outdoors away from other people, and that very brief encounters pose very little risk, such as people walking, running or cycling past you.

Common sense would suggest that if an activity poses negligible risk, then wearing a mask offers only a negligible benefit, and should be optional.

On the other extreme are potential super-spreading events — anywhere many people are confined indoors, especially if there's close contact. Trump's planned Oklahoma rally is a good example. There,

common sense would dictate that such events should not take place at all.

Then there's the middle ground. Mask wearing is likely to do the most good in settings where people have little choice but to interact in enclosed spaces — grocery shopping, riding public transportation, ride-sharing, getting a haircut, or seeing a doctor.

Also in this middle category is gathering outdoors in large groups — such as at a protest. If most protesters wear a mask at all times, this will likely reduce transmissions.

Cevik, who works at the University of St. Andrews in the UK, pointed out that the six-foot rule applies best outdoors, while in badly ventilated indoor settings, aerosol particles might accumulate and put people at risk even if they never get that close to others. And length of exposure matters a lot, so bus drivers, haircutters and store clerks face a much higher risk than their customers. Their risk very likely goes down if customers wear masks.

Then there's a problematic category of activities, such as eating in restaurants, where masks can't be worn consistently. Would diners be stuck trying to pull masks on and off with every bite? Some experts say such "fiddling" with masks is only going to spread any viruses the mask has captured. As a compromise, many restaurants are seating people outdoors and allowing them to keep masks off while eating. Gyms and yoga studios pose a similar challenge.

The risks associated with close contact and crowds seem obvious and intuitive. And yet Americans have been fixated on the unlikely possibility that infectious doses of virus would fly off cyclists or creep in on packages. In response, some have adopted irrational mask-wearing practices, such as keeping one on while riding or driving, but pulling it down to congregate and chat with groups of people.

And it's no surprise that politics would infuse the issue, given the moral tone of the mask debate and different messages on mainstream and conservative media. In the US, we have some fraction of people wearing a mask all the time, and some fraction never wearing one. It would be better if everyone wore one when it was likely to help.

— Bloomberg



LOSS OF SMELL, TASTE SYMPTOMS CAN HELP Quarantining Potential Covid-19 Patients: Study

Press Trust Of India

LONDON- COVID-19 could be suspected when patients report severe reduction of taste and smell in the absence of nasal obstruction, according to a study which says the findings can help general physicians identify and quarantine potential infected individuals before confirmation of diagnosis.

In the study, published in the

journal JAMA Otolaryngology Head & Neck Surgery, scientists surveyed 204 COVID-19 patients and found that taste reduction was present in 55 per cent of them, whereas smell reduction was observed in about 41 per cent of the people.

Based on the results of the survey, the researchers, including those from Humanitas University in Italy, said the reduction of taste and/or smell may be a frequent

and early symptom of COVID-19. The telephone survey study investigated patients diagnosed with COVID-19 from March 5 to March 23, 2020, who were hospitalised or discharged from a medical centre.

It said the patients who were unable to answer—intubated, receiving noninvasive ventilation, or deceased, or unreachable by telephone—were excluded from the study.

"Of 359 consecutive patients, 204 fulfilled the inclusion criteria, 76 were unable to answer, 76 were unreachable by telephone, and three refused," the scientists noted in the study.

The study said 116 patients reported reduction of taste and/or smell, while 113 participants noted they had taste reduction and 85 with smell reduction.

"Severe reduction of taste was present in 81 patients (39.7 per

cent), and severe reduction of smell was present in 72 patients (35.3 per cent)," the scientists noted in the study.

They said only 12 patients with severe taste reduction, and 12 patients with severe smell reduction reported severe nasal obstruction.

The researchers said severe reduction of taste and smell was more prevalent in female patients than in male patients, and

in middle aged individuals more than in young people.

"Our results showed a significant difference between reduction of taste and/or smell compared with the other sinonasal manifestations," the study noted.

Citing the limitations of the study, the scientists said the symptoms were self-reported, adding that further research involving more objective as-

essment of the patients for loss of smell and taste sensations may help validate the current findings.

From the research, they believe general practitioners may play a major role in identifying potential COVID-19 cases at an early stage when taste or smell alterations manifest, and in suggesting quarantine for such patients before confirmation or exclusion of the diagnosis.

Decoded: Effect Of Environmental Factors On Coronavirus Outbreak

Press Trust Of India

Environmental conditions affect the stability of the novel coronavirus in human nasal mucus and sputum, according to a study which suggests there might be seasonal outbreaks of COVID-19 in the post-pandemic period if the weather favours the spread of the disease.

Researchers, including Jeremiah Matson from Marshall University in the US, noted that the novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2 is less stable at higher humidity and warmer temperatures. In the study, published in the journal Emerging Infectious Diseases, SARS-CoV-2 was mixed with human nasal mucus and sputum specimens, which were then exposed to three different sets of temperature and humidity for up to seven days. The scientists said samples were collected throughout the study and analysed for the presence of infectious virus as well as the viral genetic material RNA alone, which is not infectious. They said viral RNA was consistently detectable throughout the seven-day study, while infectious virus was detectable for up to nearly 12-48



hours, depending on the environmental conditions.

"The virus is more stable at low temperature and low-humidity conditions, whereas warmer temperature and higher humidity shortened half-life," the scientists noted in the study. Due to the reduced surface stability of SARS-CoV-2 in human nasal mucus and sputum in warmer and more humid conditions, the scientists believe there may be decreased virus transmission in these environmental scenarios. "Climatic influence on SARS-CoV-2 transmission rates might eventually drive seasonal outbreak dynamics in a postpandemic period," the re-

searchers noted.

In another study, published this month in Emerging Infectious Diseases, a team of researchers including Matson evaluated the effectiveness of N95 respirator decontamination and reuse against SARS-CoV-2. They found that vaporised hydrogen peroxide and ultraviolet light were the most effective in decontaminating the masks if proper fit and seal were maintained.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has been a sobering reminder that infectious diseases continue to be a major public health threat and require sustained research commitment," Matson said.

Nutraceuticals: Potential Element To Improve Productivity, Quality Of Life In Elderly

Agencies

Researchers have discovered 'nutraceuticals', as potential elements to slow ageing processes and help in avoiding a host of chronic diseases that comes with the process.

In a recent study, researchers discovered nutraceuticals (products derived from food sources with extra health benefits in addition to the basic nutritional value found in foods) as the potential elements to slow ageing processes and help in avoiding a host of chronic diseases that comes with the process.

Ageing is considered synonymous with the appearance of major diseases and an overall decline in physical and mental performance.

The recent study summarises the main findings on nutraceuticals that are believed to slow



ageing processes by delaying and even preventing the development of multiple chronic diseases.

These nutraceuticals may help improve productivity and quality

of life in the elderly. Researchers from Migal-Galilee Research Institute (Israel), University of Ljubljana (Slovenia), and University of Belgrade (Serbia) have con-

tributed their review after conducting a literature review work published on nutraceuticals.

The research found that the most robust environmental manipulation for extending lifespan is caloric restriction without malnutrition. Some nutraceuticals can mimic caloric restriction effects. Caloric restriction is well established as a strategy to extend lifespan without malnutrition.

A variety of nutraceuticals were reported to mimic the effect of caloric restriction by modulating the activity of insulin-like growth factor 1 receptor signalling and sirtuin activity and consequently promote longevity.

The review, published in Current Nutraceuticals, offers a special focus on the nutraceuticals that impact insulin-like growth factor 1 receptor signalling and sirtuin activity in mediating longevity and healthspan.

Losing Muscle? 8 Ways It May Impact Your Health

Agencies

NEW DELHI- Are you tired by the time you reach the top of the stairs? Have you been ill or hospitalised and lost weight recently? Are you walking slower than normal? These can all be signs of muscle loss, and it's more common than you might think. Advanced muscle loss, or sarcopenia, affects one in three adults aged 50 and older.

"You have more than 600 muscles in your body, which account for up to 40 per cent of your body weight - that's almost half of you," explains Dr Ganesh Kadhe, Associate Director Medical and Scientific Affairs at Abbott Nutrition, adding "While ageing is natural, losing too much muscle is not and can directly impact your mobility, strength and energy levels, immune system, and even organ function." Because muscles are intrinsically linked to so many



systems, research published in 'The Journal of Post- Acute and Long-Term Care Medicine' argues that a person's muscle mass is a far better predictor of health than BMI, or body mass index.

What are the risks of losing too much muscle? While advanced muscle loss is common in older adults or with some chronic diseases, it's also an alert that your health may be at risk: Falls: Falls and fractures are the leading cause of injury and death among older adults.

1 Mobility: Loss of strength can limit mobility and result in loss of independence.

2 Weight: Muscle mass is the single-greatest determinant of metabolic rate, or how many calories you burn per day.

Heart Health: Your heart is a muscle and muscle loss can impact cardiovascular health.

Insulin Resistance: Muscles use blood glucose, or sugar, for fuel. Muscle loss may increase the risk of insulin resistance.

Hospital complications: Patients with low muscle are prone to pressure injury, infection and are often unable to complete physically demanding treatments like chemotherapy.

Breathing problems: For people with respiratory issues, muscle loss can lead to additional complications.

Life expectancy: A higher muscle to fat ratio has been linked to greater longevity in older adults.

Simple diet and exercise strategies to stay active and strong - so you can do the things you love.

Breastfeeding Lowers Risk Of Ovarian Cancer: Study

Agencies

Better management of patients with severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID) can be enabled with the new test developed by the researchers of CHU Sainte-Justine in Montreal.

The results of the study were presented in the medical journal Blood Advances published by the American Society of Hematology.

Routine neonatal screening, although not yet available in Quebec, has led to an increase in the incidence of patients diagnosed with SCID in North America in recent years.

This syndrome, a group of rare hereditary genetic disorders, is characterized by a total absence of immune system function, including an absence of T-lymphocytes, the white blood cells that play a crucial role in the body's immune defence.

Without appropriate treatment, the disorder is fatal during the first months of life in the majority of cases.



Many of the genes involved in SCID have been identified, but clinicians sometimes come across patients who do not have any identified genetic abnormalities.

"It's very frustrating. In about seven per cent of patients, we can't provide optimal care because we don't know the genetic cause," said Dr. Elie Haddad, a pediatric immunologist at CHU Sainte-Justine and expert in the field of SCID.

"Depending on the nature of the mutated gene, there are two treatments for SCID either a bone marrow transplantation or thymus transplantation. We still need to be able to identify the type of disease in order to choose the correct treatment option," added Haddad.

The gene involved can either disrupt hematopoietic stem cells in the bone marrow that consequently cannot naturally become T-cells, or it can af-

fect the function of the thymus. The thymus is an organ in which immature white blood cells from the bone marrow 'learn' to become T-cells.

When doctors are unable to identify the real cause of the disorder, they usually turn to bone marrow transplantation. They do so for two reasons first, transplants are easier to perform, and second, among the known genes, more are responsible for a dysfunction of the hematopoietic cells than for a malfunction of the thymus.

However, knowing the origin of the disease is critical, because if it's the thymus that's not working properly, then the bone marrow transplant will have no effect, and vice versa.

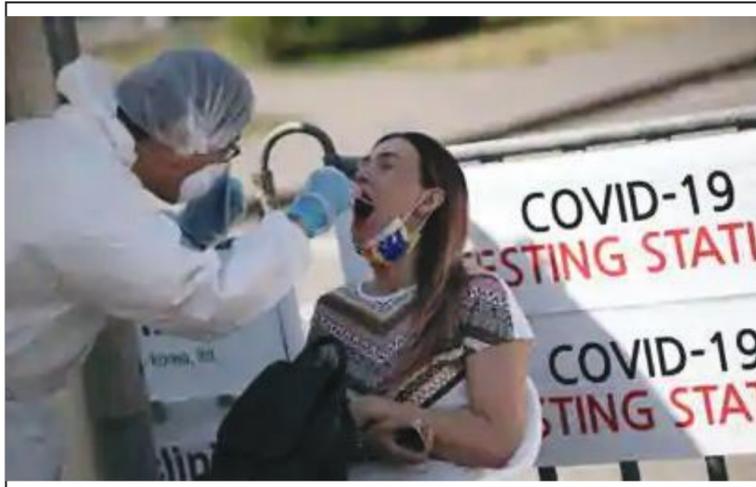
"Given this clinical need, our goal was to create a functional test by taking a very small volume of peripheral blood rather than a bone marrow sample, which is a more complex process to perform in babies and more invasive than a simple blood test," said Panojot Bifsha, first author of the study.

'Life is back once again': Saudi lifts 3-month curfew

Agencies

Riyadh: People in Saudi Arabia ventured out on Sunday night for the first time in three months to celebrate the end of a nationwide coronavirus curfew, dining out, cruising on motorcycles and walking pets after the daytime heat subsided. The kingdom introduced stringent measures in March to halt the spread of the novel coronavirus, including 24-hour curfews in most towns and cities, with most people only allowed out for essential shopping or urgent medical reasons.

the curfew is over, we immediately contacted the guys to go out," said Hesham Mahros, among a group of Harley-Davidson motorcycle riders returning to their city centre haunt in the capital Riyadh. "Life is back once again, it's a different feeling." Some restaurants put on musical performances to mark the occasion. "We were so happy, from the bottom of our hearts. We sang with our customers and we had fun and celebrated the return of normal life in Riyadh and hopefully for the whole world soon, God willing," said Ahmad Moaeed, a waiter at



Britain Starts Trial Of 'No-Swab' Saliva Test For Covid-19

AGENCIES

London: A weekly coronavirus testing regime using a "no-swab" saliva test is being trialled in Southampton, southern England, and could result in a simpler and quicker way to detect outbreaks of the virus, the British government said on Monday.

"Saliva testing could potentially make it even easier for people to take coronavirus tests at home, without having to use swabs," said Health Secretary Matt Hancock. "This trial will also help us learn if routine, at-home test-

ing could pick up cases of the virus earlier."

More than 14,000 doctors and health workers, other essential workers and university staff and their households will participate in the trial, which uses an Optigene test, the government said.

Rather than taking a swab, which some people find uncomfortable, participants will spit into a pot. Test results will be received within 48 hours, the government said.

The pilot will be jointly led by Southampton City Council, the University of Southampton, and the state-run health service, alongside a wider

network of public services in Hampshire.

The government said it was also exploring the potential of other no-swab saliva based coronavirus tests with companies including Chronomics, Avacta, MAP Science and Oxford Nanoimaging (ONI).

It said it was also working with suppliers including DNA Genotek, International Scientific Supplies Ltd, Isohelix and other leading manufacturers, to develop bespoke saliva collection kits and scale up manufacturing for products that can be used with existing PCR tests.

Dubai to allow international travellers from July 7

Agencies

Dubai: Dubai on Monday announced that it would allow international tourists from July 7. The emirate also announced that foreigners with residency visas will be allowed to visit from July 22. The city's residents would be permitted to travel abroad from June 23.

Those travelling to Dubai must provide a certification of being tested negative of COVID-19 at least 96 hours before arriving in Dubai. Travellers will need to undergo a test for coronavirus on arrival and all those who test positive would need to observe 14-day isolation. Emirates authorities were quoted in an ANI report as saying, "Travellers must stringently comply with preventive measures and safety procedures put in place by Dubai and destination countries."

The UAE has as of now reported 42,925 cases and 302 deaths due to the coronavirus. Free movement and activity in Dubai were resumed on May 27. Cinemas, indoor gyms and education and treatment centres for children were reopened, too.

Media office of the Dubai government was quoted as

saying in an ANI report, "Residents holding Dubai-issued visas are permitted to return to the emirate by pre-booking flights on any airline on the condition that they obtain an



approval coordinated between the General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners Affairs (GDRFA) and the airline. Residents must fill a 'health declaration form' before embarking on their journey to confirm they do not have Covid-19 symptoms. The airline has the right to refuse boarding if passengers display any symptoms of Covid-19."

Residents will also need to download the COVID-19 DXB smart app and fill out their complete details.

This comes as a UAE-based company announced that it has developed novel equipment, which enables much faster mass screenings, with test results available in seconds.



Saudi Arabia, which has reported more than 157,000 Covid-19 cases and 1,267 deaths, began a phased easing of restrictions on movement and business activity in May and lifted its curfew rules entirely on Sunday.

Alkofeah restaurant. Some restrictions remain in place, including a ban on social gatherings of more than 50 people. The country's borders are still closed to international travel and Umrah remains suspended.

US threatens UAE with sanctions over Syria rapprochement

Agencies

Washington: The US has threatened to slap sanctions on the United Arab Emirates as Abu Dhabi presses ahead with efforts to normalize ties with the Syrian government.

US Special Representative for Syria Engagement James Jeffrey issued the warning during a press conference on Washington's recently enacted anti-Syria economic measures, known as the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act, which blacklists 39 entities and individuals, including Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and his wife Asma.

Jeffrey said the US would not exclude the UAE from its coercive measures if it violates the Caesar Act.

"Anyone who engages in economic activities, whether in the UAE or in other countries... may be targeted by these sanctions," Jeffrey said.

The US envoy also rebuked Abu Dhabi for its policy of rapprochement with the government of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, calling the re-opening of the UAE embassy in Damascus a "bad idea."

"The UAE knows that we absolutely refuse that countries take such steps," he added.

The Caesar Act came into effect on Wednesday, six months after it was signed into law by US President Donald Trump, targeting individuals and businesses anywhere in the world that operate either directly or indirectly in Syria's economy.

The Syrian Foreign Ministry condemned the American sanctions as "a crime against humanity and a flagrant vio-

lation of the international law that targets the livelihood of the Syrians."

US Secretary of State Mike



Pompeo called the bans "the beginning of what will be a sustained campaign of economic and political pressure to deny the Assad regime revenue."

The measures are meant to "prevent the Assad regime from securing a military victory" in the fight against foreign-backed terrorists, according to US Ambassador to the UN Kelly Craft.

The UAE has long been a supporter of anti-Damascus terrorists, but in recent years it has tried to make overtures to Syria as the national army inches closer to win the counter-terrorism battle.

In late 2018, Abu Dhabi reopened its embassy in Damascus for the first time since an Arab diplomatic boycott of Syria.

In December 2019, Emirati charge d'affaires Abdul-Hakim Naimi praised Assad for his "wise leadership," describing relations between the two Arab countries as "solid and special."

In March 2020, Abu Dhabi's Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan held a phone conversation with Assad and vowed to support the war-torn Arab country during the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic

Iran reveals its capturing 'accurate images' of Israel, US from its satellite

Agencies

BEIRUT, LEBANON (10:40 A.M.) - The Secretary of the Expediency Council for the Diagnosis of the Regime in Iran,



Mohsen Rezaei, said that the Noor military satellite sends daily accurate pictures of the United States and Israel when it passes over them.

He said that his country is monitoring the atmosphere of the two countries, "and that is beyond our monitoring of their movements in Syria and Iraq."

The Revolutionary Guards announced last April the launch of the first satellite for military purposes, adding that it had settled in its orbit 425 km from the surface of the earth, which raised American and European fears and criticism.

In another context, Rezaei revealed during a speech in Tehran, about the friction that took place between the American and Iranian forces last month, against the background of Tehran sending five tankers to Venezuela.

He said: "During the recent sailing of Iranian oil tankers towards Venezuela, the Americans had an intention to impede the movement of our tankers, but we sent reconnaissance planes over American ships, and we issued warnings to them, and thanks to this threat our tankers arrived in Venezuela."

To avoid bad statistics, Trump suggests slow virus testing

Agencies

Tulsa : President Donald Trump said on Saturday that he had asked his administration to slow down Covid testing because robust testing turned up too many cases. He told supporters at his campaign rally at Tulsa that the US had tested 25 million people, far more than any other country, even as six of the staffers who organised the event tested positive for Covid.

The "bad part," Trump said, is that widespread testing leads to logging more cases of the virus. "When you do testing to that extent, you're going to find more people, you're going to find more cases," Trump said. "So I said to my people, 'Slow the testing down, please.' They test and they test," he said.

Trump opted to hold his first rally in 110 days despite concerns from local health officials that it could lead to further spread of the virus in Tulsa. Most of those in attendance declined to wear masks.

The turnout at the rally was lower than the campaign predicted, with a large swath of standing room on the stadium floor and empty seats in the balconies. Trump had been scheduled to appear at a rally outside of the stadium within a perimeter of tall metal barriers, but that event was abruptly cancelled.

The Covid outbreak has



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killed about 120,000 people in the US, and nearly a half-million worldwide, according to a count by Johns Hopkins University, though the real numbers are believed to be higher.

The number of newly confirmed cases per day has risen from about 21,400 two weeks ago to 23,200. — Agencies

'Kung flu': Trump blames China US President Donald Trump has once again

blamed China for the global spread of the deadly Covid, which has killed over 450,000 people and infected more than 8.5 million others, terming the disease as "Kung flu". Trump has repeatedly blamed China for the coronavirus pandemic which originated in the central Chinese city of Wuhan in December last year and accused Beijing of suppressing the details of the contagion. PTI

NEWS MAKERS

China's Annual Dog-Meat Festival Begins Activists Hope It's The Last One

Shanghai: China's notorious dog-meat festival has opened in defiance of a government campaign to improve animal welfare and reduce risks to health highlighted by the novel coronavirus outbreak, but activists are hopeful its days are numbered.

The annual 10-day festival in the southwestern city of Yulin usually attracts thousands of visitors, many of whom buy dogs for the pot that are on display in cramped cages, but campaigners said the numbers this year have dwindled.

The government is drawing up new laws to prohibit the wildlife trade and protect pets, and campaigners are hoping that this year will be the last time the festival is held.

"I do hope Yulin will change not only for the sake of the animals but also for the health and



safety of its people," said Peter Li, China policy specialist with the Humane Society International, an animal rights group.

"Allowing mass gatherings to trade in and consume dog meat in crowded markets and restaurants in the name of a festival poses a significant public health risk," he said.

The coronavirus, which is believed to have originated in horseshoe bats before crossing into humans in a market in the city of Wuhan, has forced China to reassess its relationship with

animals, and it has vowed to ban the wildlife trade.

In April, Shenzhen became the first city in China to ban the consumption of dogs, with others expected to follow.

The agriculture ministry also decided to classify dogs as pets rather than livestock, though it remains unclear how the reclassification will affect Yulin's trade.

Zhang Qianqian, an animal rights activist who was in Yulin on Saturday, said it was only a matter of time before the dog-meat festival was banned.

"From what we understand from our conversations with meat sellers, leaders have said the consumption of dog meat won't be allowed in future," she said.

"But banning dog-meat consumption is going to be hard and will take some time."

Top Pak Orator Talib Jauhari Passes Away

India-born renowned Pakistani Shia scholar and author Talib Jauhari passed away in Karachi after a prolonged illness. He was 80.

Jauhari, who was born on August 27, 1939 in Patna, is survived by his three sons, Dawn News reported on Monday.

He migrated to Pakistan along with his father in 1949, two years after the Partition.

After obtaining early education from his father, he went to Iraq where he studied religion for 10 years under the renowned Shia scholars of that time.

Jauhari, who was on a ventilator in the intensive care unit of a private hospital for the past 15 days, breathed his last on Sunday night. His son Riaz Jauhari confirmed his death and said that the body has been shifted to Anchohi Imambargah for the funeral prayers, The Express Tribune newspaper quoted his son as saying.

Trump Calls Coronavirus "Kung Flu", Blames China For Outbreak

Washington: US President Donald Trump has once again blamed China for the global spread of the deadly coronavirus, which has killed over 450,000 people and infected more than 8.5 million worldwide till now, terming the disease as "Kung Flu".

Donald Trump, addressing his first election rally in three months on Saturday in Tulsa, Oklahoma, said that COVID-19 is a disease which has more names than any other disease in history.

"I can name - Kung flu. I can name 19 different versions of names. Many calls it a virus, which it is. Many calls it a flu. What difference. I think we have 19 or 20 versions of the name," Donald Trump said.

The US President was playing around with the term "Kung Fu"

which refers to the Chinese martial arts practice.

In his remarks, Donald Trump also used terms such as "Chinese virus" to refer to COVID-19.

According to Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Center, the US is the worst affected country with over 2.2 million cases and more than 1,19,000 deaths.

The COVID-19, which originated in China's Wuhan city in December last year, has also battered the world economy with the International Monetary Fund saying that the global economy is bound to suffer a "severe recession". Scientists are trying to find a vaccine or medicine for its treatment.

Donald Trump, 74, is seeking re-election in the November presidential elections this year against former vice-president Joe Biden, 77, who is the Democratic Party's candidate.

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