



Maximum : 29°C
Minum : 17°C
Humidity : 54%

SUNSET
Today 07:46 PM
SUNRISE
Tomorrow 05:21 AM



News Digest

Six Feared Dead In Kishtwar Mishap

Srinagar: At least six persons are feared dead when a vehicle they were travelling in skidded off the road and fell into the Budh Nallah in Kishtwar district, officials said Thursday. An Alto car heading towards MassutehPadder fell into the Budh Nallah near Garh. They said the vehicle of the driver identified as Mulkh Raj, son of Ram Nath of GarhPadder is head Constable in Armed Police and was travelling along with five family members ● P-02

Minor Dies of Snake Bite InPoonch

Poonch: A 3-year-old girl died of snakebite in Bhatidhar Mendhar area of this mountainous district on Thursday, officials said. They said the girl, SyedaKoser, daughter of Halder-Qasam, was found unconscious by the family at her home. The family immediately rushed her to the nearby government Sub District hospital Mendhar where doctors declared her brought dead on arrival. BMO Mendhar DrParvaiz Ahmed Khan said the girl died due to the snake bite. (GNS)

DGP Promotes 99 Police Personnel

Jammu: Director General of Police J&K ShriDilbag Singh on Thursday issued in-situ promotion orders in respect of 99 personnel of different ranks under different orders having lien and seniority in their respective units. Under Police Headquarters Order No.1845 of 2020 three Sub-Inspectors(M) and ten Sub-Inspectors(S) have been granted In-situ Promotion, a police spokesperson said. Vide PHQ Order No. 1844 of 2020, six head Constables, fifty-three Selection Grade Constables and four Constables have been granted In-Situ Promotion. ● P-02

3 Gamblers Held In Nowhatta Raid: Police

Srinagar: Police on Thursday claimed to have arrested three gamblers in a raid in Old City of Nowhatta here. A police team carried out a raid near Sheeshbagh graveyard in Nowhatta following an input and apprehended three gamblers from the spot, a police spokesperson said. He said an amount of Rs 12020 besides a set of playing cards were recovered from the spot. The police spokesperson identified the accused as Farooq Ahmad Masoodi of Eidgah, Farooq Ahmad Ganie and Nisar Ahmad Ganie of Narwara. ● P-02

9 Patients Cured For Covid-19, Discharged

Srinagar: Nine COVID-19 patients on Thursday were discharged from SKIMS Hospital Bermana after successful completion of treatment. With this the number of COVID-19 recovered patient's moves to 436 out of total COVID positive admitted patients numbering 581 till date, officials said. The recovery rate at present is more than 75% and with four fatalities the mortality rate is 0.6%, they said. "The treated patients include COVID positive patients admitted for maternity care wherein till date 39 deliveries of COVID positive pregnant ladies ● P-02

2 Militants Killed In Sopore Encounter



File Pic, Abid Bhat

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR- Two militants were killed in a pre-dawn encounter with government forces in Hardshiva area of north Kashmir's Sopore on Thursday, police said.

A joint team of special operations group (SOG) of police, army's 22 RR and the personnel of CRPF 179 battalion cordoned off Hardshiva locality Sopore town after receiving 'specific' information about the presence of militants in the area, a police spokesperson said.

He said an encounter broke out after the militants rejected the sur-

Gunfight Rages In Tral

An encounter broke out between militants and state forces in Chewa Ular area of south Kashmir's Tral on Thursday, police said. State forces launched a cordon and search operation in Chewa Ular area of Tral after ● P-02

render offer and opened fire at the search party of the forces. In the ensuing encounter, the police ● PAGE 02

5 OGWs Arrested In Budgam: Police

Five militant associates linked to Lashkar-e-Taiba have been arrested in Budgam district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said on Thursday.

A police official said the five were arrested from Narbal area of the district. Incriminating documents, arms and ammunition have been seized from them. A case has been registered and an investigation is on, the official added.

Govt Orders 7 Police Units To Tighten South Kashmir Security Grid

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir administration has ordered strengthening of the security setup in south Kashmir by establishing seven new police units and upgrading three other with the deployment of over 271 additional police personnel.

South Kashmir has become a hotbed of militancy in the past few years and has seen large-scale recruitment by militant outfits as well as militant strikes including the Pulwama attack in 2019 in which 40 CRPF personnel were killed. "Sanction is accorded to the

establishment of the office of Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP), highway, with headquarters at Qazigund in Kulgam district," an order issued by the Home department on Thursday, said.

It also gave sanction to setting up an office of Sub-Divisional Police Officer (SDPO) at Pampore. The department gave nod for upgrading the police post at Behibagh in Kulgam district to police station and regularisation of the police posts at DK Pora and Sangam.

It also ordered setting up of the five new police posts at Hillar and Dakshum in Anantnag district, Hatipora and Nillow in ● PAGE 02

OIC Has No Locus Standi On Kashmir: MEA

NEW DELHI: India on Thursday hit out at the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation over one of its contact groups discussing Kashmir, asserting that the grouping has no locus standi on matters strictly internal to the country.

Pakistan had on Monday urged the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to "step up its efforts" to resolve the Kashmir issue.

Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mehmood Qureshi had made the remarks during a virtual meeting of the OIC Contact Group on Jammu and Kashmir held "on the request of Pakistan", according to the Pakistan Foreign Office. ● PAGE 02

LADAKH FACE-OFF China Amassing Troops, Armaments At LAC Since Early May: MEA

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: China has been amassing a large contingent of troops and armaments along the Line of Actual Control since early May and conduct of the Chinese forces has been in complete disregard of all mutually agreed norms, India on Thursday said holding Beijing responsible for the eastern Ladakh standoff.

At an online media briefing, External Affairs Ministry Spokesperson Anurag Srivastava gave a run down of the events along the LAC in the eastern Ladakh region and held China responsible for the Galwan Valley clashes off June 15.

In early May, he said, the Chinese side took action to hinder India's "normal, traditional" patrolling pattern in the Galwan Valley area while it sought to change the status quo in other areas of the Western Sector couple in mid-May. "We had registered our protest on the Chinese actions through both the diplomatic and military channels, and made it clear that any such change was unacceptable to us," he said.

Subsequently, senior commanders met on June 6 and agreed on a process for de-escalation and disengagement along the LAC that involved "reciprocal actions", he said.

Srivastava said both sides had agreed to respect and abide by the LAC and not undertake any activity to alter the status quo. ● PAGE 02



An army convoy moves towards Ladakh. File photo, Abid Bhat

Onus On India To Improve Situation: Chinese Envoy

China on Thursday renewed its allegations that Indian troops were responsible for the Galwan Valley clashes and the onus to improve the situation in eastern Ladakh was on India

"The onus is not on China. The Indian side crossed the LAC (Line of Actual Control) for provocation and attacked the Chinese border troops. The Indian forces seriously violated agreements on border issues between the ● P-02

'Very Serious, Worrying Situation: British PM

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson has called on India and China to engage in dialogue to sort out their border issues as he described the escalation in eastern Ladakh as a very serious and worrying situation which the UK is closely monitoring. The first official statement of Johnson came during his weekly Prime Minister's Questions (PMQs) in the House of Commons here on Wednesday. ● P-02



A NOMAD FAMILY MOVING TOWARDS the green pastures of Sonmarg on Thursday. Pic Abid Bhat

India, Pak Troops Trade Fire In North Kashmir

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: The armies of India and Pakistani troops violated ceasefire along the Line of Control (LoC) in Macchil sector of the frontier Kupwara district.

Army officials said here that Pakistani troops violated ceasefire along the LoC in Macchil sector firing mortar shells towards Indian positions.

They said the Indian Army gave a befitting response to the ceasefire violation. No casualties were reported in the incident.

"On 25 June 2020, Pakistan initiated an unprovoked ceasefire viola-



File Pic

tion (CFV) along the LoC in Macchil sector by firing mortars," the officials said.

There has been a sharp increase in cross-LoC shelling in Jammu and Kashmir past two weeks.

Last week, five civilians, including two minors were injured in cross-LoC shelling in Uri ● PAGE 02

204 J&K Residents Return From Pakistan

SRINAGAR: The administration of union territory of Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday evacuated 204 J&K residents stranded in Pakistan due to lockdown enforced in both the countries in view of Corona-virus pandemic.

Preeti Sharma, Manager J&K House, Amritsar, who is also nodal officer for evacuation of J&K residents stranded in Pakistan, said that 204 J&K residents were evacuated on first day of the evacuation process.

She said all the J&K residents were received in Amritsar at Wagah border under a very smooth atmosphere. She said all the J&K residents were ● P-02

Ex BJP Mantri Lal Singh Under CBI Radar

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The CBI has registered a Preliminary Enquiry (PE) to probe allegations of land grabbing and corruption by an educational trust run by ex-Jammu and Kashmir minister Choudhary Lal Singh, who had quit BJP following a row over the rape and murder of an 8-year-old girl in Kathua, officials said on Thursday.

The officials said that PE has been registered against R B Educational Trust of Kathua and unknown public servants to probe the allegations of illegal gratification and extraneous consideration by the revenue and forest officials of district Kathua in allowing sale and purchase of forest land.

According to the CBI's PE, it is alleged that false certificates that such land comes under exempted category under JK Agrarian Reforms Act were used in its purchase by the educational trust, the officials said.

Singh, when contacted, refused to comment on the developments. The preliminary enquiry by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) alleges that the trust, a beneficiary of such alleged illegal acts, continues to be in possession of huge tracts of land in gross violation of ceiling prescribed under Jammu and Kashmir Agrarian Reforms Act, 1976, they said.

It also alleged that false information was submitted in the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir ● PAGE 02

Ex-JK Bank Chairman Challenges Zubair's Appointment

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Former JK Bank chairman Pervez Ahmad Nengroo on Thursday filed an amended petition in the Jammu and Kashmir High Court challenging the appointment of Zubair Iqbal as the first managing director of the lender.

A bench of Justice Sanjay Dhar after hearing Nengroo's counsel R A Jan and Senior Additional Advocate General B A Dar accepted the amended petition of the former JK Bank chairman.

Nengroo had filed an application before the court seeking amend-



ment to his writ petition challenging his removal as the chairman and CEO of the JK Bank.

Through the application, he sought leave of the court to include a prayer in his ● PAGE 02

Pak Not In Favour Of Escalating Tensions With India

Press Trust Of India

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Thursday said it was not in favour of escalating tensions with India, days after it told Islamabad to reduce the staff in its high commission in New Delhi by half.

The Ministry of External Affairs said on Tuesday the Charge d'Affaires of Pakistan High Commission was summoned and informed about the decision which was based on instances of involvement of Pakistani officials in "acts of espionage" and "dealings with terrorist organisations".

The activities of the two Pakistani mission officials caught red-handed and expelled on May 31 this year was one example, the MEA said in a statement.

India would "reciprocally reduce its own presence in Islamabad to the same proportion. This decision, which is to be implemented in seven days, was conveyed to the Pakistani Charge d'Affaires," the statement said.

Pakistan Foreign Office spokesperson Aisha Farooqui told the media that India's move to reduce the Pakistani High Commission's staff strength by 50 per cent was a part of its desperate attempts to divert attention from Kashmir.

"Pakistan has no desire to escalate the situation. We have always reacted with restraint. However, violation of diplomatic norms by Indian officials in Islamabad and India's continued belligerent attitude is a threat to regional peace and security," she said. ● PAGE 02

From Front page...

BJP, Congress in war of words on Emergency anniversary

NEW DELHI: The Congress continues to suffer from the 'Emergency mindset' and puts interests of a family above those of the party and the nation, the BJP said on Thursday, drawing a sharp retort from the opposition party which claimed the saffron party runs a government of two people with all others as mere "sidekicks".

The two parties traded barbs on the 45th anniversary of Emergency, with Home Minister Amit Shah launching a frontal assault on the Gandhi family of the Congress, saying "the interests of

one family prevailed over party's interests and national interests, and this sorry state of affairs thrives in today's Congress too!".

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who has often slammed the Congress for the Emergency, on Thursday paid his tributes to people who fought against it but did not directly attack the opposition party.

Shah was joined by several senior BJP leaders, including party president J P Nadda and Union ministers PrakashJavadekar and Ravi Shankar Prasad, in attacking the Congress.

Shah said the "Emergency mindset" still remained in the Congress and that the "sad truth" was that leaders were feeling suffocated in the party.

"On this day, 45 years ago one family's greed for power led to the imposition of the Emergency. Overnight the nation was turned into a prison. The press, courts, free speech... all were trampled over. Atrocities were committed on the poor and downtrodden," he said in his tweets.

Hitting back at Shah, the Congress asked why the BJP-led Centre that runs a "majoritarian

rule" is described as a "government of two people".

Congress chief spokesperson RandeepSurjewala said the country's ruling party needs to answer, "Why is horse trading, mass defections and institution capture its only legacy? Why is it obsessed in its vile hatred of Nehru-Gandhi's (sic)."

Why is its majoritarian rule described as a government of two people only and all others as sidekicks, he added.

In his attack, Shah referred to the recent Congress Working Committee (CWC) meeting and

said many members raised a few issues but they were shouted down. He said a Congress spokesperson was unceremoniously sacked.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Javadekar said the conduct of the Congress even now is to save "one family".

"I wonder, those who killed democracy 45 years ago are questioning the government today. The party that suppressed the entire system, ended the freedom of all and jailed scores of people, particularly from the opposition, is now raising slo-

gans of freedom," he asked.

Such politics will not work, Javadekar said.

Lambasting the Congress, Nadda said its government in 1975 imposed Emergency for selfish political reasons and jailed its rivals, suspended people's fundamental rights and muzzled media.

He offered his tributes to people who fought against it successfully while suffering atrocities from the then government.

Union minister Prasad said let the new generations draw the right lessons from Emergency,

as he attacked the Congress for its "grossly undemocratic" behaviour which he claimed still continues.

In a series of tweets, he said today is the day "to recall the heroic sacrifices of people of India against the grossly undemocratic behaviour of the Congress party".

Lashing out at Shah for targeting the Congress, Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot claimed that Modi and Shah have "high-jacked" the BJP and NDA government with no space left for other leaders.

2 Militants Killed In Sopore...

spokesperson said that two militants were killed and their bodies were retrieved from the site of encounter.

"The identification and affiliation of the killed militants is being ascertained. However as per credible sources the killed militants belonged to proscribed LeT outfit," the police spokesperson said. "Incriminating materials including arms and ammunition were recovered from the site of encounter. All the recovered materials have been taken into case records for further investigation and to probe their role and complicity in other crimes," he added. The police spokesperson further said that the bodies of the militants have been sent to Baramulla for their last rites after conducting medico-legal formalities including collection of their DNA. "In case any family claims the killed militants to be their kith or kin, they can come forward for their identification and participation in last rites at Baramulla," the police spokesperson said. He said a case under relevant sections of law has been registered in Police Station Bomie and investigations have been initiated. Meanwhile, the authorities suspended mobile internet services in entire police district Sopore following the encounter. According to reports, minor protests broke out in the area after the encounter concluded.

Gunfight Rages In Tral...

receiving specific information about the presence of militants in the area, a police official said.

He said an encounter broke out after the militants opened fire at a search party of the forces. The exchange of fire is going on and further details are awaited, the official said.

China Amassing Troops...

"The Chinese side departed from these understandings in respect of the LAC in the Galwan Valley area and sought to erect structures just across the LAC," he said.

"When this attempt was foiled, Chinese troops took violent actions on June 15 that directly resulted in casualties. Thereafter, both sides remain deployed in large numbers in the region, while military and diplomatic contacts are continuing," he added. Srivastava said the Chinese side has been amassing a large contingent of troops and armaments along the LAC since early May. It was not in accordance with the provisions of various bilateral agreements, especially the key 1993 Agreement on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquillity along the border, he said. "Obviously, the Indian side had to undertake counter deployments and the resulting tension has thereafter expressed itself," he said.

Onus On India To Improve...

two countries," Chinese Ambassador Sun Weidon said in an interview to PTI.

After the killing of 20 Indian soldiers in Galwan clashes, India called it "a premeditated and planned action by China" and sent a veiled warning to China saying "India wants peace but if provoked, India is capable of giving a befitting reply".

Sun said China would not like to see a similar situation like the Galwan clashes, repeating Chinese foreign ministry's allegations that India was responsible for it.

The Ambassador said the two sides kept peace for decades in Galwan Valley, adding since the beginning of 2020, the Indian side has built facilities at or the crossing of the LAC in the Galwan Valley, "constantly changing the status quo of ground control. On May 6, he claimed the Indian troops crossed the LAC in the Galwan Valley by night and trespassed into Chinese territory. "They resorted to violent means to create a standoff between the two sides and built infrastructures in an attempt to maintain a permanent presence," he alleged.

India has been maintaining that Galwan Valley belongs to it and has strongly rejected China's claim of sovereignty over it. Sun said Chinese side lodged representations on multiple occasions to the Indian side through military and diplomatic channels following the incident and that India agreed to withdraw its personnel from the area.

The two sides held Lt General-level talks on June 6 during which they agreed on disengagement of troops from all the standoff areas.

The ambassador said the Indian side promised in the talks that they would not cross the estuary of the Galwan river to patrol and build facilities, adding the two sides agreed to build observation posts on either side of the Galwan river mouth.

"However, after the commander-level meeting, when the situation on the ground was already easing, the Indian border troops copped out on the consensus reached at the commander-level meeting, demanded that China dismantle its observation post," he said.

India has been consistently maintaining that Galwan Valley clashes had taken place on the Indian side of the LAC. The envoy said actions taken by the Indian side are not in consonance with the spirit of several agreements signed by the two countries.

Sun said India and China are able to properly manage their differences, and called upon New Delhi to avoid taking actions that may "complicate" the situation in eastern Ladakh. He went on to add that at present, the overall situation in the China-India border areas is "stable and controllable."

"We hope the Indian side meets the Chinese side halfway, avoids taking actions that may complicate the border situation and takes concrete actions to maintain stability in the border areas," he said. The Indian and Chinese armies are locked in a bitter standoff in multiple locations in eastern Ladakh for the last six weeks, and the tension escalated manifold after 20 Indian soldiers were killed in a violent clash in Galwan Valley on June 15. The Chinese ambassador said "mutual respect and support" is a sure way and meets the long-term interests of both countries, but at the same time, largely put the onus on India to ease tension in the region.

"China and India are both large developing countries and emerging economies with more than one billion people, and both have the historic mission of realising our own development and revitalisation," he said.

He further said: "China and India are willing and able to properly manage differences. In the last few weeks, both sides have held a series of diplomatic and military talks to cool down temperature even as Chinese military has increased its presence in all sensitive areas along the 3,500 km Line of Actual Control (LAC), the de-facto border. At a weekly media briefing, External Affairs Ministry Spokesper-

son Anurag Srivastava on Thursday said Chinese side departed from previously agreed understanding in respect the Galwan Valley area and sought to erect structures just across the LAC. "When this attempt was foiled, Chinese troops took violent actions on June 15 that directly resulted in casualties," the spokesperson asserted.

He said the conduct of Chinese forces this year has been in complete disregard of all mutually agreed norms.

The ambassador said: "Mutual respect and support is a sure way and meets the long-term interests of both countries; suspicion and friction is a wrong path and goes against the fundamental aspiration of the two peoples."

"Under the guidance of the important consensus reached by the leaders of the two countries, we are ready to work with the Indian side to properly deal with the current situation, jointly uphold peace and stability in the border areas, and ensure a sound and steady development of bilateral relations," Sun said.

In their historic informal summit in Chinese city of Wuhan in 2018, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping underscored the importance of maintaining peace and tranquillity in all areas of the India-China border region in the interest of the development of bilateral relations.

The summit had taken place months after a 73-day military face-off between the two armies in Doklam that raised fears of a war between the two Asian giants.

Referring to talks between foreign ministers of the two countries on June 17, the envoy said both sides agreed to "fairly address" the serious situation caused by the Galwan conflict and vowed to jointly follow the consensus reached at the commander-level meeting on June 6 to ease the situation as soon as possible.

‘Very Serious, Worrying...

Responding to Conservative Party MP Flick Drummond on the implications for British interests of a dispute between a Commonwealth member and the world's largest democracy on the one side, and a state that challenges our notion of democracy on the other, he described the escalation in eastern Ladakh as a very serious and worrying situation , which the UK is "monitoring closely". Perhaps the best thing I can say is that we are encouraging both parties to engage in dialogue on the issues on the border and sort it out between them, the Prime Minister said.

In a statement in New Delhi on Wednesday, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) said India and China have agreed that expeditious implementation of the previously agreed understanding on disengagement of troops from standoff points in eastern Ladakh would help ensure peace and tranquillity in the border areas. During the diplomatic talks between India and China, the situation in the region was discussed in detail and the Indian side conveyed its concerns over the violent face-off in Galwan Valley on June 15. Twenty Indian Army personnel were killed in the clash. The talks were held in the midst of escalating tension between the two countries following the violent clashes in Galwan Valley on June 15.

The Indian and Chinese armies are engaged in the standoff in Pangong Tso, Galwan Valley, Demchok and Daulat Beg Oldie in eastern Ladakh. A sizable number of Chinese Army personnel even transgressed into the Indian side of the de-facto border in several areas including Pangong Tso.

Unprovoked Aggression...

till the meeting day, took place amidst tensions between China and the US on a range of issues.

"I met with Yang Jiechi last week in Hawaii. We had a very frank discussion about the Chinese Communist Party's unprovoked aggression on a number of fronts and I pressed him for more transparency on COVID for the good of the world," Pompeo told reporters at a press conference on Wednesday.

"We're concerned by Beijing's behaviour and we're not the only ones. And he and I talked about that. Our friends and partners are finding their voice and taking action to counter China's malign activities, particularly in Europe," he said.

President Donald Trump has announced a number of retaliatory measures against China last month, slamming China for imposing a controversial national security law on Hong Kong that undermines the autonomy of the former British territory.

The top US diplomat has led Trump administration officials in criticising Beijing for a lack of transparency and disinformation campaign on the coronavirus since it emerged in the central Chinese city of Wuhan.

American officials have indicated that Washington intends to punish Beijing over the spread of the pandemic that has hit America, making it the worst affected country with over one lakh deaths.

Last week Pompeo criticised the Chinese Army for "escalating" the border tension with India and militarising the strategic South China Sea. He also described the ruling Communist Party of China (CPC) as a "rogue actor."

In a scathing attack on the Chinese government, Pompeo said that the Communist Party of China wants to undo all the progress the free world has made through institutions like the NATO and adopt a new set of rules and norms that accommodate Beijing.

"The PLA (People's Liberation Army) has escalated border tensions with India, the world's most populous democracy. It's militarising the South China Sea and illegally claiming more territory there, threatening vital sea lanes," Pompeo said, a day after he expressed deep condolences to India on the death of 20 soldiers in violent clashes with the PLA troops at the Galwan Valley in Ladakh on June 15.

China's official Xinhua news agency reported last week that Yang and Pompeo agreed to take action to implement in earnest the consensus reached by the heads of state of the two countries and maintain contact and communication.

Yang conducted in-depth exchanges with Pompeo on China-US relations as well as global and regional issues of mutual concern, the report said.

Both sides fully expounded their respective stances and deemed the dialogue to be constructive. They agreed to take action to implement in earnest the consensus reached by the heads of state of the two countries and maintain contact and communication, the report added.

Yang is a member of the Politburo of the CPC Central Committee and director of the Office of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the CPC Central Committee.

China's government-controlled media has attacked Pompeo as "evil," "insane" and an "enemy of mankind" for accusing Beijing for trying to mislead the world about the severity of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Cong Seeks Parliament...

to discuss it and then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru accepted his demand.

"A session of Parliament should be convened to discuss important issues. The Parliamentary Committees are also not meeting, even when there are key issues to be discussed," Khera said at a press conference.

The Congress leader said Parliament is the only medium where everyone can discuss the key issues and together work out a strategy to deal with them.

Party spokesperson Manish Tewari on Wednesday accused the government of hiding behind rules to escape parliamentary oversight and demanded that a session be held soon to answer key queries of opposition parties.

"This government has walked the extra mile to hide behind rules, to escape parliamentary oversight. This is nothing short of the emasculating of Parliament," he said.

"Unfortunately, presiding officers of both the Houses should have walked the extra mile to prevail upon the government, not should try to subvert Parliament in this manner and escape parliamentary oversight," he said.

His colleague and party spokesperson Gaurav Gogoi cited the government's experience of having conducted a bilateral summit between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his Australian counterpart. "Surely we can have a special session of Parliament to discuss important issues, keeping in mind both social distancing and the importance of national security," Gogoi said.

"It is a sign of authoritarianism and only an effort by the BJP government to buy time so that it can escape the questions which have been asked by the people of India through the major opposition parties," Gogoi alleged.

Tewari said it is extremely unfortunate and regretful that while one can have a Russia, India, China trilateral summit virtually, the G-20 can be held and an all-party meeting on China can be held virtually, "why can't this government hold a virtual session of Parliament".

Opposition members, especially from the Congress, have been demanding a Parliament session to discuss key issues confronting the country like the coronavirus pandemic and the "Chinese intrusions into India at Ladakh".

Govt Orders 7 Police Units...

Kulgam district and a toll plaza at Chursoo in Awantipora, it said. For the strengthening of the security grid, the government has ordered the deployment of one ASP, one deputy SP, an inspector, 19 sub-inspectors and nine ASIs among 272 police personnel at these security units.

OIC Has No Locus Standi...

Asked about the discussion by the OIC contact group, Ministry of External Affairs Spokesperson Anurag Srivastava said, "Our position is consistent on this matter and has no ambiguity. OIC has no locus standi in matters strictly internal to India, including that of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

"We have in the past also reiterated that OIC should refrain from making unwarranted references on India."

The Jeddah-headquartered bloc, which is the second-largest intergovernmental body after the UN, has usually been supportive of Pakistan and often sided with Islamabad on the Kashmir issue. Pakistan has been unsuccessfully trying to drum up international support against India for withdrawing Jammu and Kashmir's special status on August 5 last year and bifurcating it into two Union territories.

India has categorically told the international community that the scrapping of Article 370 of the Constitution was its internal matter.

3 More Covid-19 Deaths Take

They said the septuagenarian was admitted to SMHS Hospital on Monday. His swab sample for Covid-19 was taken on same day. The patient died on Tuesday.

"The family had taken the body forcibly and buried it later," they added.

The third fatality was that of a 57-year-old Covid-19 positive man from Poonch, who died at GMC Jammu on Wednesday night, the officials said.

The quinquagenarian was admitted to the hospital on June 19 and was suffering from diabetes and acute renal failure, they said.

With these deaths, the number of COVID-19 related fatalities in Jammu and Kashmir has risen to 91 – 80 in Valley and 11 in Jammu division.

Srinagar, with 22 deaths tops the list of Covid-19 fatalities followed by 14 in Baramulla, 11 in Kulgam, 10 in Shopian, seven each in Budgam & Jammu, six in Anantnag, five in Kupwara, four in Pulwama and one each in Bandipora, Udhampur, Doda, Poonch and Rajouri districts. (with GNS inputs)

10 CRPF Men, 2 Cops Among

reported from Kulgam followed by 33 from Srinagar, 15 from Baramulla, 12 from Shopian, nine from Kupwara, six from Ganderbal, four from Jammu, three each from Bandipora, Kathua & Rajouri, two from Samba and one each from Doda & Reasi, they said. The ten CRPF personnel who tested Covid-19 positive today are from 186, 167 and 08 battalion. Besides it, two policemen, one from district police lines (DPL) Baramulla and one from Police Complex Zewan were also reported coronavirus positive by hospital authorities today. A 23-year-old soldier from Badamibagh cantonment here was also reported Covid-19 by the officials at the Chest Diseases hospital. Officials also said that 149 more patients recovered and were discharged from different hospitals. The number of confirmed cases has now reached 6,549 out of which 5,111 are in Kashmir, while 1,438 are in Jammu, the officials said. There are 2,492 active cases of the coronavirus disease in J&K – 2,022 in Kashmir and 470 in Jammu – and 3,967 (3,010 from Kashmir and 957 from Jammu) patients have recovered, according to officials.

The J&K has witnessed 91 Covid-19 (80 from Kashmir, 11 from Jammu) deaths so far.

India, Pak Troops Trade Fire

sector of Baramulla district. A few unexploded shells were diffused a day after the two armies traded gunfire.

204 J&K Residents Return...

sent to their respective districts in state road transport corporation (SRTC) buses.

"Initially the medical screening was done at border security forces (BSF) checkpoint and now the thermal screening will be again conducted at Lakhampur and the COVID-19 samples will be collected in their respective districts," she said.

The Nodal officer said that the expected batch for tomorrow was around 152 but at least 48 who didn't arrive today will be part of 2nd batch on Friday that takes the entire 2nd lot to at least 200.

She said that entry and all other arrangements were made appropriately for the process and the execution was done in the proper manner and everything as planned went normally.

Pertinently, Preeti Sharma nodal officer for evacuation process earlier had said that at least 500 J&K residents stranded in Pakistan were being brought back via Wagah border

Ex BJP Mantri Lal Singh...

on June 9, 2015 vide an affidavit filed on a public interest litigation to favour this trust, the officials said.

The CBI in some cases does a Secret Information Report (SIR) which is converted into a PE only after verification of facts. During the preliminary enquiry, the agency tries to find if prima facie material exists to move ahead with a formal registration of a case also known as a Regular Case or FIR to start investigation.

During the preliminary enquiry no searches can be conducted or no one can be summoned for recording statements without consent.

Singh had last year quit the BJP and floated Dogra Swabhiman Sangathan (DSS).

He and the then industries minister Chander Prakash Ganga had resigned from the PDP-BJP led dispensation in 2018 after questions were raised over their participation in Hindu Ekta Manch rally organized in support of those arrested in connection with the rape and murder of the eight-year-old girl in Kathua that year.

Ex-JK Bank Chairman...

petition against bifurcation of the post of the Chairman-cum-CEO into the Chairman and the Managing Director, as also against the appointment of Iqbal as managing director of the JK Bank. These two decisions had been taken by the government post the filing of his petition.

Nengroo was removed as the Chairman-cum-CEO of the JK Bank by the government in June last year. He approached the court and sought a direction for his reinstatement.

During the pendency of his petition, the government appointed R K Chibber as Chairman of the JK Bank for three more years and Zubair Iqbal as its first full-fledged managing director.

Pak Not In Favour Of ...

"Pakistan has been consistently sensitising the world community that irresponsible policies of the BJP government are increasingly imperiling regional peace and stability," she said.

When asked about the possibility of cooperation with India to contain the COVID-19 and locusts, she said the "global pandemic is a common challenge demanding international cooperation among all the countries."

Farooqui also said that Pakistan under the aegis of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) was participating in meetings with India, Afghanistan, and Iran on a weekly basis and having a fruitful exchange of information regarding the border areas of Pakistan and India.

"We believe that the respective Technical Teams have been coordinating appropriately through FAO," she said.

Farooqui claimed that India had committed 1,440 ceasefire violations along the Line of Control in six months, resulting in 13 deaths and serious injuries to 104 innocent civilians.

"We condemn the targeting of innocent civilians by the Indian forces, which are in clear violation of the 2003 Ceasefire Understanding and in complete disregard for international human rights and international norms," she said.

The spokesperson also said that the Afghan peace process had reached a critical stage following the signing of the landmark US-Taliban Peace Agreement. "We hope that the release of prisoners will be completed as agreed in the US-Taliban Peace Agreement at the earliest to pave the way for the start of Intra-Afghan Negotiations, she said.

Farooquis said it was up to the Afghan parties to decide the venue for Intra-Afghan negotiations.

To another question on a new US law which calls for "Uyghur Human Rights Policy Act of 2020", she said the issue of Xinjiang was an internal matter of China.

"Pakistan's position is clear and consistent. We believe matters related to Xinjiang are China's internal affairs, she said.

Six Feared Dead In Kishtwar

The other persons who were in the vehicle WITH him and are feared dead include Muni Devi , daughter of Mulkh Raj, Kailasha Devi, daughter Mulkh Raj, Anamika Devi, 16, daughter of ChuniLal, Sushalni @ Shallu, 13, daughter of Narinder Kumar and Sonakshi @ Kaki, 11, daughter of Narinder Kumar. Police Party and Gref party along with crane have reached the spot and have started search and rescue operation.

DDC KishtawarRanjeet Singh said that the rescue operation has been launched while efforts are on to locate the persons. (KNO)

DGP Promotes 99 Police...

Vide PHQ Order No. 1846 of 2020 Twenty-three Nursing Orderlies have also been promoted to the Higher Standard Pay Scale, the police spokesperson added.

3 Gamblers Held In Nowhatta

"They have been shifted to Police Station Nowhatta where they remain in custody. An FIR No. 28/2020 under relevant sections of law stands registered against them," the police spokesperson said.

9 Patients Cured For...

including 22 major surgeries (LSCS) for child birth have been done," the officials added.

Gupta reviews progress of various activities being undertaken for conservation, rejuvenation of Dal Lake

SRINAGAR JUNE 25: Principal Secretary Housing and Urban Development Department, Dheeraj Gupta today hold a meeting through video Conference with Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole to review the progress of various activities being undertaken for conservation and rejuvenation of world famous Dal Lake.

Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Dr. Shahid Iqbal Chowdhury, Vice Chairman LAWDA, Chief Engineer R&B, Kashmir and other concerned officers also participated in the meeting.

During the meeting detailed deliberations were held on various issues and progress made on

directions of Lieutenant Governor, High Court and Committee of Experts on Dal Lake.

On the occasion, The Principal Secretary was briefed about the action taken on the above directions.

The Principal Secretary urged for time bound completion of all developmental works including drugging, dewatering, face-lifting/beautification of Dal Lake. He also asked the concerned to expedite the process of shifting of Dal dwellers.

Regarding illegal constructions and encroachments in dal lake, Dheeraj Gupta directed for removing such enchantments at an earliest, besides taking strict action on illegal constructions.



Govt mulling to macadamize 1000 kms road stretch this year

Agencies

Srinagar: The government is mulling to macadamize 1000 kilometers road length in Kashmir Valley in this season while 90 kilometers road stretch have already been macadamized so far, officials said on Thursday.

Talking to news agency—Kashmir News Observer (KNO), Chief Engineer Roads and Building (R&B) department, Sami Arif said that the department has started the process of macadamization of roads in Kashmir, saying that in past nine days, 90 kilometers road length have been macadamized.

The process to macadamize the roads has been started amid the complaints that pour in from different areas regarding the potholed roads due to which the commuters are facing tough times.

Many of the roads in Srinagar City too have developed potholes and were demanding the early macadamization of roads.

In the meantime, the Chief Engineer R&B told KNO that the department has already made assessment and have identified the roads, which will be macadamized soon. He said as per the assessment, one thousand (1000) kilometers road length will be macadamized this year.

“We have already up our work and will complete the process in a shortest possible time,” he said, adding that the officials on ground have been directed to ensure the high-quality material is used during the process.

Organic foods for healthy life promote organic farming: Andrabi

Day long training program on organic farming held

Srinagar: A day long training program on Organic Farming was held at Agriculture Complex Lalmandi, the program was organized by Joint Directorate of Agriculture Extension Kashmir.

The training camp was inaugurated by Director Agriculture Kashmir Altaf Aijaz Andrabi. While reiterating the importance regarding organic farming Director said “Organic farming will be the future trend and this trend will be from Kashmir”. Director in a message to masses said consume organic foods and promote organic farming.

Andrabi said, organic farming is being acknowledged as crop production system which can sustain health of soils, eco system and people by combining tradition, innovation and improved farm technology. He said organic farming is aimed to provide employment opportunities for rural populace.

Regarding overall demand of organic products he added that food quality and safety are the two important factors that have gained increasing attention in general consumers

likewise the demand for organically grown foods has increased during the last decade due to health benefits and food safety concerns. Organic farming protects environment and has a greater socio economic impact on the nation.

While highlighting the importance of organizing training programmes on organic farming Andrabi said that such programs will acquaint the officers of the department regarding the parameters to be taken for consideration for implementing the organic cultivation programs and more and more area of Kashmir Division will be earmarked for adoption of organic farming in near future.

The training program was attended by Joint Director Agriculture Extension Chowdhary Mohammad Iqbal, Joint Director Engineering, M.I.Khatteeb, Project Coordinator Mushrooms Farrooq Ahmad Shah, Director Rakhs and Farms Subash Chander Sharmma, Senior Entomologist SPEDA Dr.M.A.AnsarAli, senior officers and field level officers of the department.

Police Posts Withdrawn Anti-Hijacking Staff To Strengthen Its Set Up In South Kashmir

Srinagar: Almost four months after calling back its men including gazetted officers posted at the Srinagar airport, the Jammu and Kashmir police have transferred 271 posts of various ranks from the Anti Hijacking Unit and one post of Superintendent of Police from Special Security Group (SSG) to strengthen its set up in south Kashmir.

In this regard, the Home department has accorded sanction to the establishment of the Office of Additional SP (Highway) with headquarters at Qazigund in Kulgam district. Also, the Office of SDPO at Pampore, Police District Awantipora, has been ordered to be established along with up-gradation of Police Post Behibagh to Police Station Behibagh in Kulgam besides regularization of various Police Units in District Anantnag including Police Post D.K.Pora, Police Post Sangam. Apart from it, the Home department has also ordered the creation of various Police Units including Police Posts at Hiller, Daksum, Hatipora, Nillow and Toll Plaza Chursoo.

The jurisdiction of the Police Units has also been delineated in the order, a copy of which lies with GNS. For example, the jurisdiction of Office of the ASP (Highway) shall include SDPO Qazigund, police stations of Qazigund, Qaimoh, Jawahar Tunnel and police post Mirbazaar. Similarly, Police Station Behibagh will have jurisdiction in area of Behibagh, Hanjan, Chake Hanjan, Zeban, Palnoo, Hanger, Matipora, Kheejogipora, Shuganpora, Turigam, Parigam, Kutibrari, Sehpora Rampathri, Noonmai, Sampora, , Durpora, Kadder, Akipora and Daderkote.

Burgeoning menace of drug abuse in J&K dangerous: NC

Srinagar, 25 June (GNS): Jammu and Kashmir National Conference President and member Parliament Dr Farooq Abdullah on Thursday said the burgeoning menace of drug addiction in J&K is dangerous and that the fight against drug abuse should not be relinquished due to the

prevailing COVID-19 crises.

On International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking party president Dr Farooq Abdullah in his message said that substance abuse and drug addiction has emerged as one of the biggest threats to our future generation. “Unfortunately Jammu and Kashmir continues to grapple with

the menace of drug and substance abuse. Reports about the prevalence of drug abuse among youngsters particularly the school going children in Kashmir is alarming. If something substantial is not done to tackle it, then I am afraid we are going to lose a whole new generation to this menace,” Dr Farooq said.

Office of the Executive Engineer Mechanical Division Baramulla

Tele fax 01952234426 e-mail. Id, executiveengineermdb@gmail.com

Short Term Notice Inviting Tender

No. MDB/Tech/319-24

Dated: -23-06-2020.

Sealed tenders affixed with Four Rupees Revenue stamps are invited on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor of J&K from registered / approved firms / suppliers / agencies having experience in similar nature of work / supplies for below mentioned supplies / Work.

NIT No / Date	Description of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs)	Earnest Money (Rs)	Cost of Tender Documents	Time of completion
MDB/ Tech / 09 of 2020-21	Repair Works to Snow Clearance Machine No. 21 TATA (LPT-713) of Workshop Sub Division Baramulla.	89,000/=	1800/=	200/=	10 days
MDB/ Tech / 10 of 2020-21	Repair Works to Snow Cat New by way of modification to variable blade assembly of Workshop Sub Division Baramulla.	86,900/=	1740/=	200/=	10 days
MDB/ Tech / 11 of 2020-21	Repair Works to Tendum Vibratory Roller (HD-85) of Field Sub Division Pattan.	60,000/=	1200/=	200/=	10 days

Complete details along with other terms & conditions are given in the tender document which can be had from the office of the Executive Engineer Mechanical Division, Baramulla against payment (Cost of tender documents) **as mentioned above (Non refundable / Non transferable)** in the shape of demand Draft drawn in favour of **Executive Engineer Mechanical Division Baramulla** or in cash to be remitted in Divisional Chest against proper G.R.

The tender documents shall be issued to the intending tenders on producing of following certificates / documents.

- Registration Certificate of Sales Tax Department quoting GST No.
- Sales Tax Clearance Certificate.

Last date of sale of tender documents is **08-07-2020** upto **03:30 P.M.**

The tenders shall be received in the office of the **Executive Engineer, Mechanical Division Baramulla** by or before **10-07-2020** upto **02:00 P.M.** Each tender shall be accompanied with the earnest money in shape of CDR / FDR pledged to **Executive Engineer, Mechanical Division Baramulla**, without which tender cannot be entertained. The tenders can be opened on the same date or any other day as convenient to the tender opening authority in presence of the tenderers who may wish to be present. In case of the holiday / otherwise, the tenders shall be received on the next working day upto scheduled time.

All other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in **PWD Form: 25.**

DIPK-2125/20

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Mechanical Division
Baramulla

Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PHE DIVISION KULGAM

E-mail:xenphekgm@gmail.com.Phone/Fax: 01931-295109

NOTICE INVITING E-TENDERS

E-NIT No:08/PHEK/2020-21

For & on behalf of President of India , e-tenders are invited (in single cover system) **“on item rate basis”** from Registered contractors /SHGs whose registration cards are valid in terms of standing rules for the following works:-

SNo	Name of work	Advt. Cost (Rs.in lacs)	Earnest Money	Class of Contract	Time for Compl.	Cost of TD	MH of Account
1	L/F of distt. System to various uncovered projects at village Gudder WSS Gudder under NABARD	1.46	2920/=	DEE	10days	200/=	NABARD
2	Desilting of 02 No SRs and 02 No SSFPs at village Ashmuji for WSS Chakpora Bhan under Bhan Matalhama	0.52	520/=	SHG	10days	100/=	M&R

Position of AA : **Accorded** **Position of funds: Demanded**

1. The bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings (if any), Bill of quantities (BOQ), set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the website:

WWW.jktenders.gov.in

As per the Schedule of dates given below:

I	Publishing date of NIT	23-06-2020	4.00 P.M
II	Download start date	24-06-2020	4.00 P.M
III	Bid submission start date	24-06-2020	4.00 P.M
IV	Bid submission end date	01-07-2020	5.00 P.M
IV	Bid opening date	02-07-2020	10.00 A.M

2. Bids must be accompanied by with cost of tender document in the shape of Treasury Challan shown against the each item advertised and credited to MH 0215 –PHE Government Account as per the devised format attached with the NIT and earnest money in the shape of CDR /FDR pledged to the Executive Engineer Spl.PHE Division Kulgam.

10. Other terms and conditions shall be the same as laid down in the PWD form-25 double/tender document.

11. In event of any disruption of any water supply scheme as a consequence of any damage the concerned AEEs shall submit requisite damage report to the Divisional office within 24 hours alongwith geo-tag photographic evidence

12. No action at site shall be initiated prior to information and subject to approval of Executive engineer.

No: PHEK/579-93
Dated: 23-06-2020

DIPK-2113/20

Executive Engineer
Spl.PHE Division Kulgam

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**

04 Zu al-Qa'dah
1441

PRAYERS

FAJR	3: 36
ZUHR	12: 33
ASR	5:33
Magrib	7:50
ISHA	9:31

This Day In History

- 363 - Roman Emperor Julian is killed during retreat from the Sassanid Empire. General Jovian is proclaimed Emperor by troops on the battlefield.
- 684 - St Benedict II begins his reign as Catholic Pope
- 1409 - Council of Pisa selects Petros Philargi as 3rd Pope: Alexander V
- 1483 - Duke of Gloucester succeeds as King Richard III of England after Parliament declared Edward V illegitimate
- 1498 - Toothbrush invented in China using boar bristles
- 1630 - Swedish troops under Gustaf II Adolf lands at Peenemunde
- 1714 - Spain & Netherlands sign peace/trade agreement
- 1794 - Battle of Fleurus: major victory by forces of the First French Republic under General Jean-Baptiste Jourdan over the Coalition Army (Great Britain, Hanover, Dutch Republic, and Habsburgs) first use of reconnaissance balloon
- 1843- Hong Kong proclaimed a British Crown Colony.
- 1879- Ismael Pasha resigns as khedive of Egypt
- 1894- Karl Benz of Germany receives US patent for gasoline-driven auto
- 1900 -Japan mobilizes 20,000 troops to help put down the Boxer uprising - but also advance long-term interest in gaining land and power in mainland Asia
- 1900 - The Russian Tsar orders that Russian must be the official language of Finland, despite growing unrest within Finland and increasing international concern over Russia's behavior there
- 1902 - Aga Khan III is appointed Knight Grand Commander of the Order of the Indian Empire
- 1911- Nieuport sets an aircraft speed record of 83 mph (133 kph)
- 1914-The Indian Relief Act, passes after a protracted period of Passive Resistance led by Gandhi; it abolishes a £3 tax imposed on Indians who had not renewed their indentures and recognizes "the validity of Indian customary marriages"
- 1917- 1st US Expeditionary Force arrive in France during WW I
- 1924- After 8 years of occupation, US troops leave Dominican Republic
- 1927- Comet 7P/Pons-Winnecke approaches within 0.0394 AU of Earth
- 1934- Germany & Poland sign non-aggression treaty
- 1941- Finland enters WW II against Russia
- 1945- United Nations Charter signed by 50 nations in San Francisco
- 1960- Madagascar (formerly Malagasy Rep) declares independence from France
- 1974- The Universal Product Code is scanned for the first time to sell a package of Wrigley's chewing gum at the Marsh Supermarket in Troy, Ohio
- 1975 -Indian PM Indira Gandhi declares a state of emergency
- 1978- First dedicated oceanographic satellite, SEASAT I, launched
- 1992- India leases Tin Bigha corridor to Bangladesh
- 1993 -The U.S. launches a cruise missile attack targeting Baghdad intelligence headquarters in retaliation for a thwarted assassination attempt against former President George H.W. Bush in April in Kuwait.
- 1994- PLO leader Yasser Arafat returns to Gaza after 27 years
- 1995 - Gunmen ambush Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak who escapes unharmed
- 1995 - Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani deposes his father Khalifa bin Hamad al-Thani, the Emir of Qatar, in a bloodless coup.
- 1997 - Galileo, Ganymede Observations (Orbit 9)
- 1997 - The U.S. Supreme Court upholds doctor-assisted suicide ban
- 2013 - 20 people are killed after a rescue helicopter crashes in Uttarakhand
- 2013 - Kevin Rudd defeats Julia Gillard in a leadership battle to become Australian Prime Minister
- 2014 Luis Suárez is expelled from the 2014 FIFA World Cup following his biting incident
- 2014 - Following the military coup in Thailand, people are warned that anyone calling for protest on social media will be prosecuted for sedition
- 2014 NBA Draft: Kansas small forward Andrew Wiggins first pick by Cleveland Cavaliers
- 2015 - US Supreme Court rules 5-4 same-sex marriage is a legal right across all US states

From KO Archives

Kashmir talks progressing well, says Musharraf

Islamabad - Observing that the Indo-Pak peace was “proceeding well” and there was harmony” between the leadership of both the countries, Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf today said his country sees “light at the end of the tunnel” on efforts to resolve the Kashmir issue.

“It is proceeding well. We have made progress.

There is understanding and there is harmony between the leadership that is best. There are good intentions on both sides to resolve dispute peacefully,” he said referring to talks on the Kashmir issue.

“We are moving forward and flexibility is shown by both sides, which is a good omen. Therefore we see light at the end of the tunnel.” he told reporters before emplaning on a two-day visit to Saudi Arabia, Musharraf said he planned to discuss the Palestinian issue with the leaders of Saudi Arabia.

“When we talk of regional issues, the most important issue is the Palestinian dispute. We would like discuss and coordinate our stand on this.” he said. (Kashmir Observer, 26 June, 2005)

KASHMIR OBSERVER

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Galwan's global fallout

In the recent India-China stand-off, the US has clearly sided with India. Though the US president Donald Trump has talked of being in touch with both the countries and helping them out in his recent tweet, Washington has left no one in doubt as to where its sympathies lie. The US Secretary of State, Mike Pompeo, has on two separate occasions attacked China and blamed it for "escalating the border tension with India." He even described the Chinese Communist Party as a "rogue actor." What is more, he extended his deepest condolences to the people of India for the loss of 20 soldiers as a result of the recent confrontation with China. The US has also offered to help India in the confrontation with China but New Delhi has been restrained in receiving it for fear that it may further complicate the ongoing stand-off. Beijing has also warned India against involving the US, which it increasingly sees as an implacable rival on the global stage. In a sense, China's intrusions in Ladakh has brought into sharp relief the evolving geopolitics.

It announces to one and all, the new strategic alliance between India and US and more or less waning relationship with the cold war partner Pakistan, the recent warmth in the ties notwithstanding. For all its improvement in the recent weeks, the truth remains that the US has been forced to work with Pakistan more by compulsion than by choice. Washington no longer sees Pakistan as important for its strategic goals in South Asia.

America desperately needs to enlist India as an ally given its need to check the impending rise of China as a global power and a US rival on the world stage. China throws down gauntlet to US dominance of world affairs that is not only military and economic in nature but also ideological. China offers the world a system of national and international governance that is fundamentally opposed to the US-led order. This makes India, the world's largest democracy, critically important to US. This bolsters US-led international order.

This makes for a compulsive strategic rationale for US-India closeness. There is an equally compelling transactional rationale too. India offers a vast market to US economy, so vital for the job creation in US. More so, following the Coronavirus pandemic that has sent the world economy into a tailspin. On the contrary, Pakistan remains important as long as it aids US goals in Afghanistan. And once that objective is served, Washington can once again be expected to turn its back on Islamabad and get more close to India. This state of affairs presages a new cold war like situation developing in the region, and this hardly bodes well for the peace and stability. Far from any progress towards the settlement of the long running disputes, these are likely to continue and worsen further. And Kashmir will be one of them.

OTHER OPINION

The shrinking

On Monday, US president Donald Trump signed an order to temporarily suspend new work visas, including the H1-B visa for highly skilled workers, in order to bar the entry of new immigrants into the country — the suspension will be effective till the end of the year. The decision has ostensibly been taken to help American workers during this extraordinary upheaval in the labour market caused by the disruption in economic activities due to the spread of COVID-19.

However, the move, as well as its timing, suggest that Trump is using the COVID pandemic as an opportunity to harden immigration laws — an issue that has been a cornerstone of his administration's agenda, which blames "outsiders" for a range of problems ranging from unemployment to crime — in the run-up to the US presidential polls in November.

A recovery in the labour market, he calculates, could strengthen his chances of reelection. That may or may not be true, but decisions driven by narrow and short-term political considerations often ignore the larger costs over the long run. For a country that has long championed the cause of globalisation, and the benefits that flow from embracing diversity and the free movement of capital and labour, a halt to immigration, even if temporary, marks a reversal of long cherished ideals. Even as it thickens the shadow over the "American dream", it is likely to hurt innovation and delay the recovery of the US economy. The economic arguments most often made against immigration in the US are straightforward, and simple-minded: Immigrants take away jobs from American workers, their influx leads to lower wages, and they take advantage of the generous welfare benefits. The evidence, however, suggests overwhelmingly that immigrants have contributed to the country's economic success.

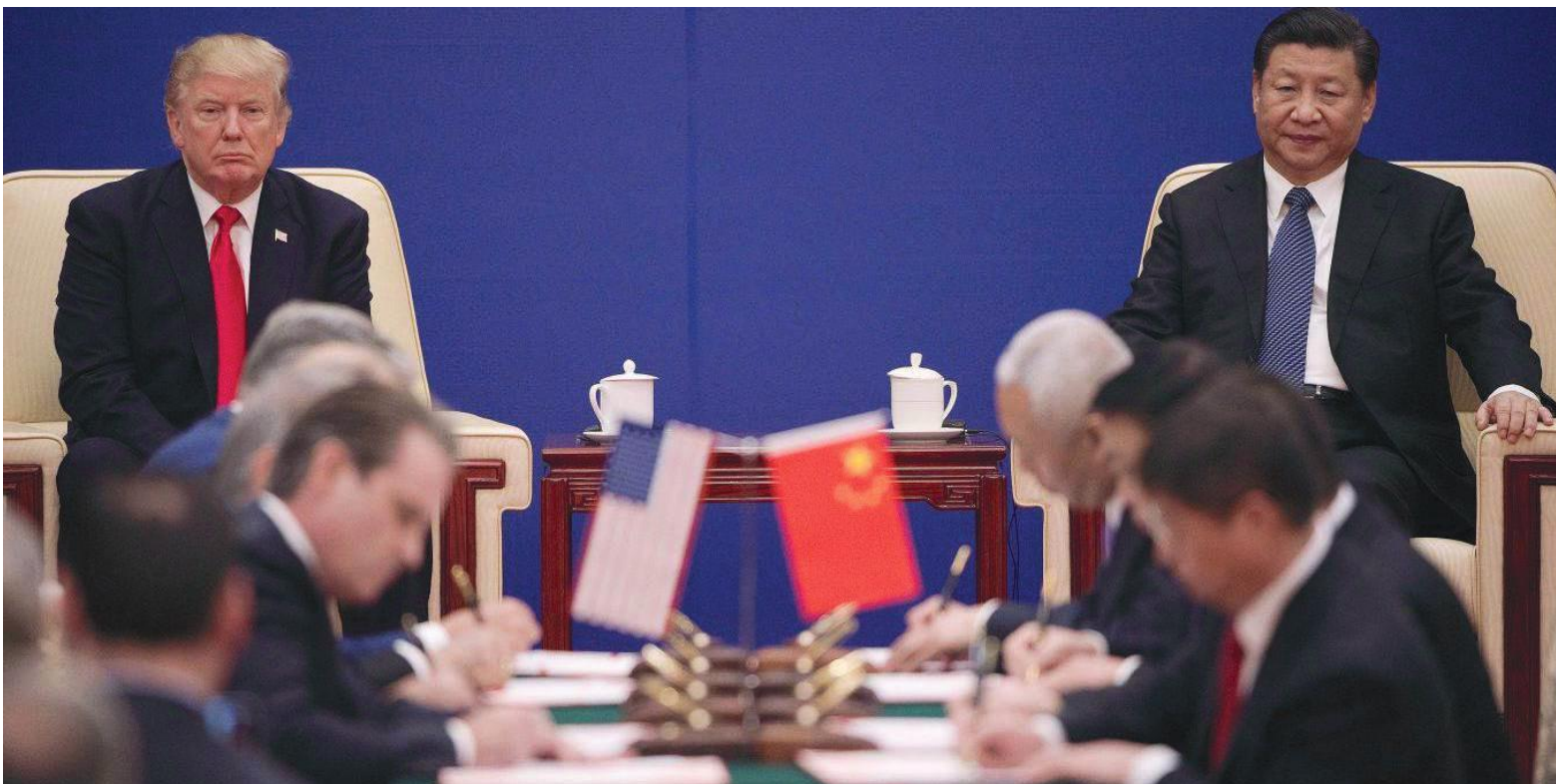
As a major recipient of the best and the brightest from across the world, the US tech industry is likely to bear the brunt of the new restrictions. Not surprisingly, major US tech firms have already begun to speak out against the visa policy. "Immigration has contributed immensely to America's economic success, making it a global leader in tech, and also Google the company it is today," said Alphabet CEO, Sundar Pichai, himself an immigrant, on Twitter. "Very much disagree with this action. In my experience, these skillsets are net job creators," said Elon Musk.

Suspending work visas may not even help American workers in the labour market. As some have argued, these visas are needed to recruit workers for jobs that local American workers are either unwilling or unable to do. US-based firms may face difficulties in filling up positions that require specific skills in sectors that drive economic activity and which in turn contribute to expanding employment opportunities for local labour.

Thus, these restrictions are neither good for America, nor for India, which is likely to suffer disproportionately — Indians had applied for as many as 1.84 lakh, or 67 per cent of the total H-1B work visas, for the current financial year ending March 2021. India must put forth its concerns, Trump administration must reconsider its decision.

A New Cold War

One thing is crystal clear: a Sino-American "cold war" would be a war of choice, not necessity. And what a dreadful choice it would be



JAVIER SOLANA, ÓSCAR FERNÁNDEZ

Although the COVID-19 crisis has further fueled talk of a looming Sino-American confrontation, it is not too late to salvage the situation. De-escalation is undoubtedly in every country's long-term interest, not least that of the United States and China.

Western societies are currently gripped by the ominous idea that we are entering a new cold war, this time between the United States and China. This narrative started coming to the fore as a result of the Sino-American trade dispute, and now the COVID-19 crisis has given it the final nudge to center stage. Better to brace ourselves, the argument goes, than naively to ignore the hegemonic clash that will define the "new normal."

But these intended wake-up calls disguise fatalism as realism, and choices as facts. America and China may be rival superpowers, but they are not necessarily re-enacting the Cold War between the US and the Soviet Union.

Today, however, even official documents contain implicit cold-war references. United States Strategic Approach to the People's Republic of China, a report issued by US President Donald Trump's administration in May, states that, "Beijing openly acknowledges that it seeks to transform the international order to align with CCP [Chinese Communist Party] interests and ideology." The Chinese system, adds the report, "is rooted in Beijing's interpretation of Marxist-Leninist ideology and combines a nationalistic, single-party dictatorship; a state-directed economy; deployment of science and technology in the service of the state; and the subordination of individual rights to serve CCP ends."

This misleading characterization of China is liable to induce overreactions and false comparisons. For starters, despite its leaders' socialist rhetoric, China has long embraced capitalism — as the economist Branko Milanovic has convincingly argued.

China's evolution has by no means erased all the differences between the more liberal Western model and the more statist Chinese one, and does not preclude competition between them. But ideological influence has flowed mostly from the West to China ever since Deng Xiaoping launched his reform and opening-up policy in 1978. The Soviet Union's ideological footprint, by contrast, was much larger.

Like any major rising power, China will seek to shape the global landscape according to its interests. It will also seek the favor of certain population groups beyond its borders. But it will not attempt to reshape other countries in its own image, as the Soviet Union did, and as the US still often does.

China prides itself on being inimitable, and its history of subjugation at the hands of foreign imperial powers has predisposed it to reject unbridled interference in other countries' domestic affairs. Moreover, while some traits of the Chinese system may appeal to proponents of illiberalism in the West and elsewhere, China's soft power in fact remains relatively limited.

Indeed, China also differs fundamentally from the Soviet Union in lacking a sphere of influence; North Korea and Pakistan are arguably its only current allies. True, China's rise may well induce other countries to jump on its bandwagon. But Asian governments are generally wary of their increasingly nationalistic and powerful neighbor and its involvement in myriad territorial disputes, and thus prefer to strike a balance between China and the US.

Furthermore, viewing today's international order in bipolar terms fails to take account of the European Union, which is a pole in its own right. Although the EU is of course not a sovereign state, and has suffered in recent years from serious internal upheavals such as Brexit, the European project has made significant strides since the Cold War, including the final establishment of the single market.

Today, the EU is the world's largest trading bloc and 80 countries' top trading partner. And despite its flaws and shortcomings, the EU is a global beacon of human rights, individual privacy, social welfare, and environmental awareness. Although the political scientist Andrew Moravcsik has a point when he calls the EU the "invisible superpower," its influence on many major issues and in many parts of the world is actually highly visible.

The EU will therefore not resign itself to being the rope in a Sino-American tug of war, and will remain focused on exploring synergies with both powers. This spirit of openness should drive the post-pandemic world more generally.

Shortages of essential material have led many to call for countries to become more economically self-reliant. And a re-escalation of Sino-American trade tensions may ensue. To be sure, global value chains are often not resilient or responsive enough, and economic interdependence can be weaponized.

But, as George Washington University's Henry Farrell and Georgetown University's Abraham Newman have argued, it would be folly for the US and China to pursue

wholesale economic decoupling. Never before have two global superpowers been so mutually dependent and so at risk of harming themselves by trying to hurt the other.

In a way, the notion that co-dependence can be a deterrent was also present throughout the Cold War, underpinning the doctrine of "mutually assured destruction" (MAD). But the Cold War was actually white hot in many regions, and the MAD doctrine failed to prevent a few nuclear close calls.

Nowadays, fortunately, nuclear war appears to be an extremely remote possibility, and we are not in the middle of a Cold War-style arms race. Both US and Chinese military expenditures remain relatively stable, and China's military capabilities — notwithstanding its higher GDP growth rates — still pale in comparison to America's.

Things may change, however, if political leaders and influential commentators start adopting needlessly confrontational rhetoric. Cold War analogies can become a self-fulfilling prophecy and push the world down a slippery slope. Indeed, there are already signs that this November's US presidential election will at least partly revolve around how to confront China, with Democrats and Republicans forcing each other to harden their positions.

Meanwhile, although China has traditionally been averse to cold-war rhetoric, its greater economic weight compared to that of the Soviet Union may lead it to adopt an overly assertive stance. Its approach toward Hong Kong and the South China Sea, for example, does not augur well.

But it is not too late to salvage the situation. De-escalation is undoubtedly in every country's long-term interest, not least that of the US and China. A cold-war mentality is ill-suited to addressing today's most daunting challenges, such as fighting the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, securing a solid economic recovery, and mitigating climate change. Moreover, there is nothing preordained about the evolution of great-power relations: although the US-China rivalry is here to stay, it does not preclude exploring avenues of cooperation.

One thing is crystal clear: a Sino-American "cold war" would be a war of choice, not necessity. And what a dreadful choice it would be. (By arrangement with

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Regularize services of Rehbar Khel teachers

We express our heartfelt regards for your efforts, aimed at highlighting the problems of educated youth in Jammu and Kashmir. We seek your attention to our legitimate demands and request you to report on the injustice faced by us.

We the Rehbar-e-Khel teachers have been serving on meagre remuneration of Rs 3000 a month, with the hope that the government would en-

hance the same and regularise our position, as planned and promised to us time and again.

Almost all of us are highly educated. We have among our ranks post graduates, masters in philosophy and some are PhD too. We have been serving the department with devotion. We have shouldered responsibilities and performed academic, examination and election duties even in unfavourable circumstances, all with a hope

that someday the government will compensate us by regularizing our services. Ironically, all our toil and dedication does not help provide our respective families with two square meals a day. Time and again, the committees were constituted with the objective to regularise our positions but justice has not been done yet.

Depressed and disappointed, we have no other option but to urge the authorities concerned to intervene,

and take steps to regularize our services.

We hope that our longstanding and just demand is accepted without further delay.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Syed Aijaz Ul Haq
Aijaz.tamanna@gmail.com

When a vibrant Kashmir is painted in radical colours

GOWHAR GEELANI

Kashmir is often referred to as ‘Peer Waer’, meaning an ‘Alcove of Sufi Saints’. This description gives an impression to outsiders as if Kashmiri Muslims abhor music, movies, literature, theatre and poetry. The fact is that music is very much a part of Sufi syncretism. With the aim to paint the Kashmiri society as conservative, radical and backward, there have been umpteen flawed propagandist attempts.

Reports of opening 183 liquor shops in Jammu and Kashmir stirred up the proverbial political hornet’s nest in the Valley. Religious and political organisations alleged it was a “cultural aggression” on Kashmir, and were only pacified after the Jammu and Kashmir administration clarified that no such decision will be taken “without the participation of stakeholders”.

The issue of alcohol, just like films and music, has been a hot potato in the Valley’s cultural discourse over the past few decades, stirring controversies. This time too, religious bodies like Mutahida Majlis-e-Ulema, an amalgam of different socio-religious organisations, protested against the proposal, accusing the government of “bringing ordinances and rules to change the demography of the Muslim majority of the state” and assaulting “religious sentiments”.

Interestingly, in 2018, BJP’s current Jammu and Kashmir president and former MLA Ravinder Raina too had demanded a blanket ban on alcohol and bars and the declaring of Jammu and Kashmir a dry state.

Such protests and demands may draw a conservative picture of Kashmir while in reality liquor, movies and music were very much a part of the Valley as they are elsewhere in the 1980s.

How alcohol and cinema were erased from Kashmir’s culture

There is no official ban on manufacture and sale of liquor in Jammu and Kashmir. In Kashmir, liquor is readily available at licensed shops on the outskirts of Srinagar near the Indian Army’s Badami Bagh Cantonment and top five-star hotels, while in Jammu, it can be found in hotels, bars and liquor outlets.

But it remains a private affair, even though the governments over the years have prevented any ban against it.

During the PDP-BJP coalition government, Jammu and Kashmir’s then finance minister Haseeb Drabu had in the now-defunct Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Council ruled out a ban on liquor by asserting that the issue needs to be addressed on the basis of freedom of choice.

“As a state policy, we cannot enforce our decision on others. There is a freedom of choice and let people decide what they want to do,” he said, arguing that “vegetarians can’t ban non-vegetarian food”.

In the Muslim-majority Kashmir and Hindu-dominated Jammu, alcohol consumption lacks social sanction, but no one bothers those who drink and no one mocks teetotalers either. Everyone knows that alcohol is available and people drink, but drinking is not an intrinsic part of the region’s social fabric.

In the early 1970s, veteran pro-Pakistan Hurriyat leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani, who was the then a member of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly as a Jamaat-e-Islami (JeI) politician, had vociferously demanded a ban on sale and consumption of alcohol in his speech inside the assembly.

Afterwards, on August 18, 1989, a militant outfit called the Allah Tigers enforced a ban on cinema halls, bars and liquor shops in the Kashmir Valley through its then chief commander ‘Air Marshal’ Noor Khan. This attempt at enforcing a certain code of conduct and thrusting a particular lifestyle on Kashmiris wasn’t received well by the locals.



Thanks to Bollywood, a Kashmiri in an outsider’s imagination is either a man in a skull cap, rowing a Shikara in Dal or visualised as a gun-toting, bearded angry young man without a cause who needs to be reformed.

The stated aim of the diktat appeared to be to shut popular public hangouts.

But most households in Kashmir own a television and family members watch both Hollywood and Bollywood movies, popular television series and drama serials. Young boys and girls watch all kinds of movies on their smartphones, laptops and tablets.

That is why stereotyping Kashmiris as conservative or radical is neither a fair assessment nor helpful.

Multicultural, vibrant history

Mir Khalid, author of Jaffna Street: Tales of death, betrayal and survival in Kashmir, talks about the vibrancy and multiculturalism of the Srinagar city in the 1980s. In his book, Khalid has described Srinagar’s downtown of his imagination and draws parallels between Steward’s downtown with his own childhood sketch of Srinagar, replete with its own version of ‘Brooklyn’ girls.

“There were many ‘Brooklyn’ girls, whose affections were actively sought or passively fancied. Some were part of the somewhat class conscious crowd, belonging to upmarket areas and schools, many of whom adored Tom Cruise — whose Top Gun was making waves — to the extent of pasting his photos in their notebooks. They crooned the lyrics of songs belted by Cyndi Lauper, Pat Benatar and the recent debutant, Madonna, and wore jeans. A fluency in English, demonstrated similarity in taste in music and expensive jeans were a must to woo this class. Or so we thought, and acted upon,” Khalid wrote in a chapter titled Downtown Train.

Remembering his school days, author Mir Khalid said, “Srinagar City had the choicest blend of movies catering to its movie aficionados. Al Pacino, Robert De Niro, Jack Nicholson, Brooke Shields, Bo Derek, Sylvester Stallone and later Tom Cruise-starrers formed the bulk of conversations in school and college grounds.”

Since 1989, most cinema halls in Kashmir have turned into government forces’ camps or bunkers. Others are in

ruins while a few have been converted into shopping centres.

Obviously, in a hotly-contested place like Kashmir, there are arguments either way. Those opposing the reopening of cinema halls are not necessarily radicals. They see opening of movie halls as the government’s desperate attempt to sell deceptive peace as normalcy.

Kashmir had its share of cinema halls, like Firdous Cinema, Shiraz and Khayam in downtown Srinagar; Regal, Palladium, Neelam, Naaz, Shah and Broadway in the city centre Lal Chowk; and Samad Talkies in north Kashmir and several others across the Valley. In the decade of 1980s, Kashmiri cinema halls screened Hollywood and Bollywood movies. More English films were screened in Srinagar than in New Delhi.

In the late 1990s, Neelam and Broadway were briefly opened under fortified security arrangements, but most of these were turned into paramilitary camps soon after.

Kashmir’s lone Communist leader Mohammad Yusuf Tarigami tells The Federal that during his time in the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly, he never witnessed any serious debate over alcohol. “I have been in the Legislative Assembly since the 1996 elections. I don’t recall any serious debate over alcohol in the house,” Tarigami says, adding, “Our rich history tells us about our vibrant culture, and social and cultural confluence. We have always been ahead of many a counterpart.”

Flawed portrayal of Kashmir in Bollywood

Both movies and liquor are linked to the region’s political discourse than to entertainment, revenue generation and luxury. But there is more to this than meets the eye.

Kashmir is often referred to as ‘Peer Waer’, meaning an ‘Alcove of Sufi Saints’. This description gives an impression to outsiders as if Kashmiri Muslims abhor music, movies, literature, theatre and poetry. The fact is that music is very much a part of Sufi syncretism. With the aim to paint the

Kashmiri society as conservative, radical and backward, there have been umpteen flawed propagandist attempts.

Thanks to Bollywood, a Kashmiri in an outsider’s imagination is either a man wearing a skull cap, with wrinkled forehead, rowing oars of a Shikara while entertaining tourists at the famed Dal Lake or a pheran- (long woolen cloak) clad woman serving kehwa (Kashmiri tea) with kesar (saffron) leaves. Or, a Kashmiri is visualised as a gun-toting and bearded angry young man firing a volley of bullets indiscriminately. A Kashmiri is also portrayed as a misguided element without a cause and radicalised youth who should be sent to a de-radicalisation camp for reform.

This is how Bollywood has usually depicted Kashmir and Kashmiris in movies.

In the romantic Bollywood flick Jab Jab Phool Khile starring the late Shashi Kapoor and Nanda, the story is of a child-like and naïve romantic village boy Raja (Shashi), who owns a houseboat in Srinagar’s Dal Lake, and Rita (Nanda), the only daughter and heiress to a rich Raj Bahadur Chunnail. The lovebirds meet when Rita is holidaying along with her maid Stella (Shammi) in Kashmir. She rents a houseboat owned by Raja and within no time, both fall in love.

Kashmiris are often shown as docile who get easily swayed, but are conservative enough not to watch movies or drink alcohol. But Kashmir is way beyond such tropes and banalities. Nothing can be further from truth than this pigeonholing.

In an effort to boost tourism, the Airport Authority of India (AAI) in 2017 had floated a tender for a duty-paid liquor shop at the Srinagar Airport. The then PDP-BJP government rejected the proposal. According to official data of the Excise Department, of 224 liquor shops in Jammu and Kashmir, 220 shops are in Jammu province, with Jammu district having 135 of them.

Three years ago, the second edition of Kashmir World Film Festival (KWFF) commenced at Srinagar’s Tagore Hall. It had stirred a fresh debate whether it is about time to reopen movie halls in the Valley. During the five-day long film festival, at least 19 documentaries and feature films were screened in English, Persian, Italian, Japanese, Polish, Urdu, Malayalam, Kashmiri, Dogri and Ladakhi languages.

The Jammu and Kashmir government’s then-spokesperson and minister for public works, Naem Akhtar, who had inaugurated the film festival, nostalgically said at the time that “Srinagar’s Residency Road was our Piccadilly”.

Cinema has always attracted some sort of controversy in Kashmir. In the mid-1980s, only a few years before the eruption of militancy in 1989, the Anthony Quinn-starrer, Lion of the Desert, was screened at Regal Cinema in Srinagar. It was an action film based on the life of the Libyan revolutionary, Omar Mukhtar, a Bedouin leader who fought the colonial Italian army in the years leading up to World War-II. Its screening in Kashmir in the mid-1980s had inspired the people to protest against New Delhi. Widespread demonstrations were witnessed in Srinagar. As a result, the then government banned its screening.

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The Federal

Panic Is Good For A Cleaner World

HELEN CLARK

“Our house is on fire,” warned the teenage climate activist Greta Thunberg at last year’s World Economic Forum meeting in Davos. Her pointed words - accusing adults of sitting idly by as the planet burns - quieted a roomful of global leaders, inspired young activists worldwide, and underscored the critical importance of putting children at the centre of global action to build a better future.

Climate change is happening now. That was apparent in Australia’s recent unprecedented bushfires, in which 18 million hectares burned and an estimated one billion animals died. It was also reflected in India’s 2019 heat wave, among its longest and most intense in decades. And a warming planet is contributing to the global spread of dengue, a mosquito-borne viral infection.

Yet, even as the clock runs out on our ability to avert a catastrophe, global climate action is not gaining the needed momentum. As Thunberg and other youth activists have underscored, it is our children who will bear the brunt of this failure, as they inherit an increasingly inhospitable planet.

Climate change is not the only area where we are failing our children. Predatory commercial marketing that targets children and their caretakers is contributing to the widespread consumption of unhealthy products, such as alcohol, tobacco, e-cig-

arettes, and sugar-sweetened beverages. The global economic losses associated with the inappropriate use of breast-milk substitutes - associated with lowered intelligence, obesity, and increased risk of diabetes and other non-communicable diseases - amount to an estimated \$302 billion.

Children are our most precious resource, and they deserve to live long, healthy, and productive lives. To determine how to enable them to do just that, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, and the Lancet recently convened a landmark commission - which I co-chaired, along with Awa Marie Coll-Seck, Minister of State in Senegal - that brought together 40 experts on child health and wellbeing.

As the commission’s report - A Future for the World’s Children? - notes, the key is to invest in people while they are young. Evidence shows that hungry children have poorer health, worse educational outcomes, and earn less as adults. Children who are exposed to violence are more likely to commit violence. Conversely, children who receive proper nutrition, appropriate care, and quality education grow up to be healthy, productive citizens, who are presumably better equipped to raise healthy, productive children of their own.

In short, investing in children today brings lifelong, and even inter-generational benefits. This brings value to all of society. For example, a school-building programme undertaken in Indonesia in 1973-1979 has helped to boost today’s living standards

and tax revenues.

The return on investment in children is remarkably high. In the United States, every dollar invested in a preschool programme was found to bring \$7-12 in societal benefits per person, via reductions in aggressive behaviour and improved educational attainment. In lower-middle-income countries, every \$1 invested in maternal and child health can bring over \$11 in benefits.

But we should not pursue such investments only because of the numbers. If we can’t protect our children’s futures, what is the measure of our humanity?

The WHO-UNICEF-Lancet Commission calls upon leaders at every level, from heads of state and government to civil-society and community leaders, to place children at the centre of strategies to achieve sustainable development. This will require long-term vision, with presidents and prime ministers ensuring that sufficient funds are directed toward the needed programmes and supporting effective collaboration among ministries and departments.

Every sector has a role to play in building a world fit for children. For example, traffic accidents are the number-one killer of children and young people aged 5-29, implying an urgent need for interventions to improve road safety. Likewise, with 40 per cent of the world’s children living in informal settlements - characterised by overcrowding, poor access to services, and exposure to hazards like fires and flooding - housing reform is essential.

Some countries recognise the importance of boosting public investment in children. In New Zealand, my home country, Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern’s government has introduced a “world-first” wellbeing budget, which puts people - especially society’s most vulnerable, including children - first. The budget allocates billions of dollars for mental-health services, child poverty, and measures to tackle family violence.

But New Zealand continues to emit far too much carbon dioxide - 183 per cent of the level needed to meet its 2030 target and adhere to the Paris climate agreement, according to our report. Other rich countries - such as Norway and South Korea - are doing similarly well in helping children flourish today, while continuing to emit far too much CO2 to ensure that children tomorrow can do so as well. Meanwhile, some less wealthy countries - such as Armenia, Costa Rica, and Sri Lanka - are on track to reach emissions targets by 2030, and are doing a fair job of ensuring that their children are healthy, educated, and safe.

“I don’t want your hope,” Thunberg told world leaders in Davos. “I want you to panic . and act.” She is right. If we are to bequeath a sustainable future to Thunberg’s generation, and those that follow, our leaders must act courageously - and immediately. This is the stuff legacies are made of.

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-Project Syndicate

Vegetables, Fruits, Nuts: Nutrition Is A Key Ingredient For Cognitive Health Of Midlife

Agencies

A new study, investigating factors associated with verbal fluency among a large sample of English speaking Canadians aged 45-85, found that individuals who consumed more vegetables and fruits and more nuts and pulses (such as lentils and beans) scored higher on tests of verbal fluency.

"These findings are consistent with other research that has found a Mediterranean diet high in fruits, vegetables, nuts, and legumes is protective against cognitive decline," reported co-author Dr. Karen Davison, a nutrition informatics research program director at Kwantlen Polytechnic University, in British Columbia and a North American Primary Care Research Fellow. Kwantlen Polytechnic University, British Columbia, North American Primary Care Research Fellow

"Every increase in average daily fruit and vegetable intake was linked to higher verbal fluency scores, but the best outcomes were found among those who consumed at least 6 servings a day."

Verbal fluency is an important measure of cognitive function. To test it, subjects are asked to list as many words from a given category as they can in one minute. This measures language and executive function and can be used to de-

tect cognitive impairment.

Adults who have an insufficient appetite, face challenges in preparing food or consume low-quality diets, may be at risk of malnourishment, and grip strength can be used to assess under-nutrition. Those in the study who had poor grip strength and/or high nutritional risk scores also had lower verbal fluency.

"Previous research has also indicated that measures of under-nutrition are associated with cognitive decline," said co-author Zahraa Saab, a recent Masters of Public Health graduate of the University of Toronto.

The researchers investigated the relationship between other factors and cognitive health, as well, including immigrant status, age, blood pressure, obesity, and body fat.

Immigration status

Anglophone immigrants who had lived in Canada at least 20 years had higher verbal fluency scores than their Canadian-born peers. The researchers suspect that this protective effect may be partially due to better cognitive reserve among immigrants.

"Our earlier research on a big British cohort of individuals born in 1946 found that those who emigrated from United Kingdom had, on average, 5 points higher IQ than their peers who remained



in the UK," says senior author, Esme Fuller-Thomson, professor at University of Toronto's Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work (FIFSW) and director of the Institute for Life Course & Aging. "We purposively restricted the current study to those whose mother tongue was English, so we could investigate the association between immigrant status and verbal fluency, independent

of bilingualism."

Previous research suggests that those who are bilingual have a lower incidence and delayed onset of dementia. Most of the studies finding a 'bilingualism advantage' have, unfortunately, neglected to account for immigrant status.

"Our findings suggest that this is an important omission, because even immigrants whose

mother tongue is English had significantly higher verbal fluency scores than anglophones born in Canada. Thus, the 'bilingualism advantage' may be at least partially attributable to the 'healthy immigrant effect,' said Fuller-Thomson, who is also cross-appointed to U of T's Department of Family and Community Medicine and the Faculty of Nursing.

Age & Education

"Consistent with other studies, those younger in age had better cognitive functioning scores when compared to older participants," says co-author Hongmei Tong, assistant professor of Social Work at MacEwan University in Edmonton.

The association between cognitive impairment and advanced age may be mediated or moderated by cognitive reserve factors such as high educational levels, which are protective against cognitive decline.

"Respondents who were aged 75-85 with a high school degree had verbal fluency scores comparable to individuals a decade younger who had not completed high school," says co-author Vanessa Taler, associate professor of psychology, University of Ottawa.

Blood Pressure, Obesity & Body Fat

Adults with stage 2 hypertension had lower verbal fluency scores.

"Our findings underline the importance of managing blood pressure for brain health in mid-life and beyond," says co-author Shen (Lamson) Lin, a doctoral student at the FIFSW.

Both obesity and higher percent body fat were associated with worse verbal fluency scores.

"Obesity has been linked in other research to inflammation and to greater insulin resistance, both of which have been associated to

cognitive decline," says co-author Karen Kobayashi, professor in the Department of Sociology and a research fellow at the Institute on Aging & Lifelong Health at the University of Victoria.

The study team analyzed data from the baseline Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging, which included 8,574 anglophone participants aged 45-85, of whom 1,126 were immigrants who had arrived in Canada 20 or more years earlier. All participants were living in the community and were free from dementia. Two verbal fluency tests were examined: the Controlled Oral Word Association Test (COWAT) and the Animal Fluency (AF) task. The article was published this month in the Journal of Nutrition Health and Aging.

"The team's findings suggest that it may be beneficial to design policies and health care practices to reduce nutrition risk, improve diet quality, and address obesity and hypertension among midlife and older citizens in order to improve these potentially modifiable risk factors for lower verbal fluency scores," adds Dr. Fuller-Thomson. "The good news is that the higher levels of education obtained by baby boomers and subsequent birth cohorts may mitigate some of the cognitive decline often observed in previous generations of older adults."

Covid-19: Here's How Teens Are Using Social Media, Technology To Support Each Other Amid Social Distancing

Agencies

According to a recent report based on youth making excessive use of social media, researchers found that with or without physical separation (social-distancing) due to COVID-19, youth are using social media to connect and support each other.

Three leading researchers have published Youth Connections for Wellbeing, an integrative review paper that illuminates how teens support each other through digital media during times of stress and isolation.

Leveraging their expertise across the fields of cultural anthropology, developmental psychology, and clinical psychology, scholars Mimi Ito, Candice Odgers, and Stephen Schueller discuss the potential of digital media to support youth wellbeing.

The work underlying the paper was completed prior to the COVID-19 global pandemic. The physical isolation that has resulted from shelter-in-place orders has yielded a seismic shift, making it even more critical to understand and leverage technology in a way that benefits youth.

The position paper summarises current knowledge and redirects the conversation about adolescent social media use and wellbeing in three ways that are particularly relevant today:

-Refocusing the debate over the relationship between youth social media use and wellbeing to reflect existing evidence, var-



ied youth perspectives and backgrounds.

- Identifying teen vulnerabilities and assets that may influence problematic and healthy social media engagement.

- Suggesting opportunities where youth social engagement might mitigate vulnerabilities and leverage assets.

In the position paper Ito, Odgers, and Schueller highlight the need to move beyond the simple question of whether more time spent using social media causes mental health problems in adolescents.

Instead, people should consider the specific forms of social media engagement that amplify or mitigate mental health risks for different adolescents. The team integrates findings from

existing large-scale reviews, the voices of youth who have grown up on social media, and a systematic review of digital mental health apps available for youth.

The team finds that adolescents' online risks often mirror offline vulnerabilities. They note that it is particularly important for messages, interventions, and strategies to be targeted and tailored to the most vulnerable youth and those underserved by traditional mental health services.

A number of relevant findings, opportunities, and benefits are outlined in the paper, including:

- Evaluating claims about whether social media use is leading to greater vulnerability for mental health problems for youth, including harassment and

bullying, sleep disruption, and exposure to idealized images that may lead to envy.

- Identifying factors such as poverty, discrimination, instability, social marginalisation, and other forms of stress as more significant influences on mental health than technology.

- Revealing that Black and trans youth have reported that online sources of empowerment are sources of support and strategies for coping with and discussing racism and prejudice.

- Offering evidence that extending parental support to online spaces can be more effective in supporting youth wellbeing than restricting technology access, which can create more tension between youth and parents.

-Recognising that youth experience positive social support in many online settings, which may reduce their feelings of social isolation and social anxiety, increase their social skills, and augments their offline friendships.

- Sharing details on how online communication and affinity networks including fandoms, gaming communities, and creative communities can help marginalized young people benefit from unique friendships and forms of social support.

- Highlighting evidence that young people are actively seeking support for mental health information online and using online tools to elicit socio-emotional support. Most teens and tweens say social media helps support social-emotional well-

being, boosting confidence, and alleviating anxiety, loneliness, and depression.

- Describing ways to provide online mental health support to youth, especially those who are difficult to reach through more traditional clinical supports. For example, one student interviewed shared how they experienced a supportive community online, saying: "I think a lot of my mutuals on Instagram, they're very open to being emotionally vulnerable on Instagram, so they'll actually say, 'I'm not doing fine.' I like it because it's a very nice community, just spreading love whether it be through comments or someone will actually say through messages like, 'Are you okay?'"

A freshman adjusting to life away from family shared how online connections made her feel close to them: "My mother just started using Messenger. I taught her how to use it. And so she texts me here and there. She's like, 'Good morning,' or, 'How are you doing?,' and then we FaceTime. Then my siblings, we use Instagram because that's where we're mostly at. We send each other videos and memes, and then we kind of comment just to make our day."

Given the rising rates of mental health concerns among young people in the U.S., Ito, Odgers, and Schueller encourage a sense of urgency in focusing research, investment, and public attention on how digital spaces and tools can be better designed and used to support youth's mental health.

First Open Source All-Atom Models Of Covid-19 'Spike' Protein Produced

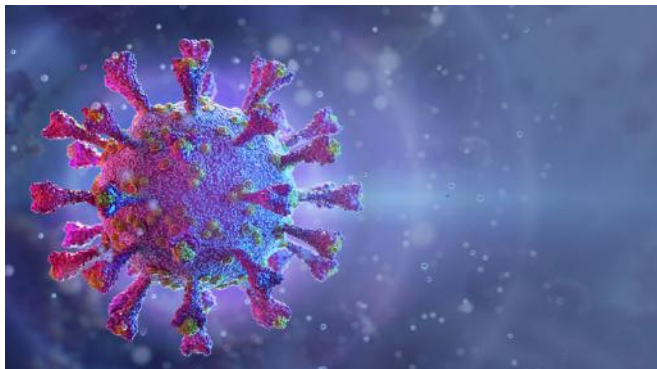
Press Trust Of India

Scientists have produced the first open source all-atom models of full-length spike protein of the novel coronavirus that facilitates its entry into the host cells, an advance that may aid faster COVID-19 vaccine and antiviral drug development. The "spike" or S protein of SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes COVID-19 facilitates viral entry into host cells, ac-

microscope" that enables scientists to understand molecular-level interactions that cannot be observed any other way.

"Our models are the first fully-glycosylated full-length SARS-CoV-2 spike (S) protein models that are available to other scientists," said Im, who developed the programme.

Scientists can use the models to conduct innovative and novel simulation research for the prevention and treatment of CO-



ording to the researchers, including those from the University of Cambridge in the UK.

This makes S protein the main target for vaccine and antiviral drug development, they said.

Described in The Journal of Physical Chemistry B, CHARMM-GUI is a programme that simulates complex biomolecular systems simply, precisely and quickly.

Wonpil Im, a professor at Lehigh University in the US, describes it as a "computational

VID-19, according to Im.

The researchers first modelled the missing amino acid residues, and then other missing domains.

They also modelled all potential glycans (or carbohydrates) attached to the S protein.

These glycans prevent antibody recognition, which makes it difficult to develop a vaccine.

The researchers also built a viral membrane system of an S protein for molecular dynamics simulation.

Study Details Importance Of Having 'Digital Literacy'

Agencies

With the sea of information available online, it is necessary to impart 'digital literacy' tips to people as it will only help them to differentiate fact from highly toxic and even dangerous fiction, suggests a new study.

Researchers studying Facebook's efforts to educate users on how to spot misinformation have found people in the United States and India were less likely to say a false headline was true after they were exposed to tips on how to spot misinformation.

The Princeton University-led study, published in the Pro-

ceedings of the National Academy of Sciences (PNAS), shows people's ability to spot erroneous information weakened over time, so digital literacy needs to be taught with regularity.

"Most people struggle to reliably evaluate the quality of information they encounter online, even under the most ideal conditions," said Andy Guess, assistant professor of politics and public affairs at Princeton University.

"This is because they lack the skills and knowledge required to distinguish between high and low-quality news content. We find that effort to promote digital literacy can improve people's ability to evaluate the



accuracy of online content," Guess added.

This study is among the first to systematically explore the role of digital media literacy shortfalls.

"Digital literacy and media literacy are often proposed as solutions to online misinformation, but these approaches are not evaluated as often as they are proposed. If we want to

develop tools that help people distinguish truth from falsity, it is essential to test the effectiveness of these tools," added Professor Jason Reifler from the University of Exeter.

The team originally set out to explore why people fall victim to misinformation, selecting the United States and India as both countries have struggled with misinformation campaigns, especially during national elections.

The team looked at the effects of Facebook's "Tips to Spot False News," which appeared at the top of users' news feeds in 14 countries in April 2017. The list was also printed as a full-page ad in many U.S. newspapers, and a version appeared in

India as well.

These tips have likely been the most widely distributed digital-media literacy intervention. They also are not overly complex, allowing for quick decision-making. For example, one tip cautions readers to be skeptical of headlines, warning that if claims sound unbelievable, they probably are.

The researchers then employed a "two-wave panel design," studying the same group of people immediately after exposure to the tips, and then again several weeks later, allowing them to see whether the digital media literacy efforts took root over time.

Participants were exposed

to the tips and then presented with the same series of mock headlines, which they rated for accuracy. The headlines were balanced in terms of partisan slant, well-known and lesser-known media outlets, as well as low-quality and mainstream content. While the tips were offered to respondents, they couldn't be forced to read them, so the researchers took this into account in their modeling.

This two-wave design was conducted online in both the U.S. and India, though in-person interviews were also conducted in areas of rural India where there is greater religious polarization and a potentially higher risk of misinformation spread.

US Poll Speculations Suggest A Leftward Swing

Agencies

New York: Two years after Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez stunned the US political establishment by winning a seat in Congress and becoming one of its best-known members, another upstart New Yorker is gaining attention, one of several likely electoral wins galvanizing the Democratic left ahead of November.

Many mailed ballots remain uncounted but early numbers from Tuesday's primary vote in several states suggest big gains for US progressives, signalling ongoing dissatisfaction among some with the Democratic party's traditional wing that's triggering a

Warren endorsed both Bowman and Jones -- scored a resounding victory against a well-funded primary rival for her seat representing parts of the Bronx and Queens in the House.

All three of the candidates are from overwhelmingly Democratic districts, and primary wins virtually guarantee a congressional seat.

"When I won in 2018, many dismissed our victory as a 'fluke,'" the 30-year-old known as AOC tweeted. "We are proving that the people's movement in NY isn't an accident. It's a mandate."

On the state level, leftist Julia Salazar breezed past opponents to maintain her New York senate seat as fellow Democratic Socialist



leftward swing.

Jamaal Bowman, a black 44-year-old former middle school principal, appears set to topple Eliot Engel -- a 73-year-old white centrist who has spent two decades in Congress -- in a district just north of Manhattan, according to a preliminary count from the New York Board of Elections.

Also in New York, Mondaire Jones, a black 33-year-old who is openly gay and another favourite among progressives, likely will best a crowded field in a neighbouring congressional district.

Ocasio-Cortez -- who along with progressive senators and former presidential candidates Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth

Jabari Brisport appeared poised to join her there.

And in Kentucky a progressive insurgent, Charles Booker, delivered a spirited challenge against a powerhouse fundraiser opponent in hopes of securing the Democratic nomination to take on top Republican Mitch McConnell.

The tilt left comes amid social upheaval and anger over a piecemeal coronavirus response and mass unemployment, as well as a surge of anti-racism protests over police brutality.

Bowman's race in many ways encapsulated the moment: Raised by a single mother, he's lived in public housing and discussed being beaten by police as an 11-year-old.

Social Taboos Hinder Indonesia's Fight Against Coronavirus

Agencies

Jakarta: Indonesian authorities complained on Wednesday that hundreds of people had refused testing for the new coronavirus as social taboos emerge as another obstacle to stopping its spread in the world's fourth-most populous nation.

Indonesia has the highest number of reported infections in Southeast Asia, surpassing 49,000, while at least 2,573 people have died, according to official data, the highest COVID-19 death toll in East Asia outside China.

Despite an acceleration in infections, this week hundreds of traditional traders in Bali and Sumatra refused to get tested, even as bustling, densely packed markets have emerged as common coronavirus infection points, officials said.

In Bali, authorities had aimed to test 2,200 traders in the area of Tabanan but on Tuesday 200 traders failed to turn up.

"They are afraid of the stigma," Klungkung Regent Nyoman Suwarta, told Reuters, "That later if it is discovered they will have to be isolated."

Authorities at Solok market in West Sumatra said 150 there had also refused to be tested.

"Maybe there is fear, maybe there is trauma, we need to explore the reasons why," said Jasman Rizal, the spokesperson of West Sumatra's COVID-19 Taskforce, "The government must take persuasive action and educate."

Indonesia's 270 million people are spread across 18,000 islands that span more than 5,000 km (3,000 miles).

Some villages in Java and Kalimantan have not allowed funerals for those who have died from COVID-19, afraid the burials could spread the disease, while local doctors have reported that some patients exhibiting symptoms have refused to go to designated coronavirus hospitals because of the stigma they might face.



Brazil's former President Fernando Henrique Cardoso

Some Countries Using Coronavirus Curbs To 'Silence Critics', Ex-Leaders Warn

Agencies

London: The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a surge in authoritarian behaviour by governments around the world, posing a growing threat to democracy, hundreds of former prime ministers, presidents, Nobel laureates and lawmakers have warned.

The virus was first identified in the central Chinese city of Wuhan in December and has since spread around the world, prompting countries across Europe, Asia, the Americas and Africa to step in, many limiting free movement, free speech, public assembly and other civic rights. "Authoritarian regimes, not surprisingly, are using the crisis to silence critics and tighten their political grip," wrote some 500 signatories, including more than 60 former leaders, in an open letter organised by the Stockholm-based Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA).

"Even some democratically elected governments are fighting the pandemic by amassing emergency powers that restrict human rights and enhance state surveillance with-

out regard to legal constraints (or parliamentary oversight.)"

More than 80 countries have enacted emergency measures, according to the US-based International Center for Non-Profit Law, ranging from curfews and fines for those who breach the rules to extra surveillance, censorship and increased executive powers.

The overall impact has been a dilution of democratic norms, which has implications for political freedom as well as the ability of governments to handle the crisis and future health emergencies, said IDEA's secretary-general.

Among the countries he cited as having introduced authoritarian measures or having fallen short on accountability were the Philippines, Hungary, El Salvador and Turkey.

"There are legitimate reasons to invoke emergency powers. However, it is always problematic when a government uses emergency powers to clamp down on independent media and other fundamental rights," said Kevin Casas-Zamora, also a former vice-

president and government minister in Costa Rica.

"We want to draw attention to the plight of democracy in the midst of this crisis. It's not protecting democracy for its own sake; it's that democracy has an inherent value in dealing with this pandemic and preparing for the next one."

The outbreak has already led to the postponement or cancellation of 66 elections worldwide, a third of them national polls, according to IDEA. Nearly 50 countries have imposed some form of restriction on press freedom, 21 of them democracies.

For the signatories, including Fernando Henrique Cardoso, the former president of Brazil, and Jeb Bush, the former governor of Florida, a fundamental concern is that citizens begin to accept more authoritarian behaviour.

"Democracy is under threat, and people who care about it must summon the will, the discipline, and the solidarity to defend it. At stake are the freedom, health, and dignity of people everywhere," they wrote. —

Scarce Medical Oxygen Leaves Many Gasping For Life Worldwide

Agencies

Conakry (Guinea): Soaring demand for oxygen prompted by the coronavirus is bringing out a stark global truth: Even the right to breathe depends on money.

In wealthy Europe and North America, hospitals treat oxygen as a fundamental need, much like water or electricity. It is delivered in liquid form by tanker truck and piped directly to the beds of coronavirus patients. Running short is all but unthinkable for a resource that can literally be pulled from the air.

But in poor countries, from Peru to Bangladesh, it is in lethally short supply. Across sub-Saharan Africa, oxygen is a costly challenge for government-funded medical facilities such as Guinea's Donka private hospital in the capital, Conakry.

The hospital's planned oxygen plant has never started up. So instead of piping oxygen directly to beds, a secondhand pickup truck carries cylinders over potholed roads from Guinea's sole source of medical-grade oxygen. Outside the capital, in hospitals and medical centers in remote villages and ma-



jobs towns, doctors say, there is 'no' oxygen at all.

"Oxygen is one of the most important interventions, (but) it's in very short supply," said Dr Tom Frieden, former director of the CDC and current president and CEO of 'Resolve to Save Lives'.

In Bangladesh, the lack of a centralised system for the delivery of oxygen to hospitals has led to a flourishing market in the sale of cylinders to homes. In Peru, the president has ordered industrial plants to ramp up production for medical use or buy oxygen from abroad. He allocated about \$28 million for oxygen tanks and new plants.

But a massive production increase or an impromptu private marketplace are both out of reach in Guinea, where GDP per capita is \$850.

Dr Aboubacar Conté, head of Guinea's health services, said four hospitals in outlying cities will eventually get their own on-site plants to ease what he acknowledged is a need for oxygen outside the capital. — AP

US virus cases surge to highest level

Beijing: New coronavirus cases in the US have surged to their highest level in two months and are now back to where they were at the peak of the outbreak. The US on Tuesday reported 34,700 new cases of the virus, according to a tally compiled by Johns Hopkins University that was published Wednesday. AP

Slovak president quarantined, scraps meetings

Bratislava: Slovakia's President Zuzana Caputova has cancelled her meeting with her Austrian counterpart Alexander Van der Bellen to get quarantined after a member of her office met with a person who tested positive for the coronavirus. The presidential office says Caputova has cancelled all her scheduled appointments. AP

Who hasn't heard of COVID-19 by now? More Than You Think

Agencies

Johannesburg: A half-year into the most momentous pandemic in decades, it's hard to imagine that anyone, anywhere has not heard of the coronavirus. But scores of migrants arriving in Somalia tell United Nations workers every day that they are unaware of COVID-19.

Monitors for the U.N. migration agency interview people at the border in Somalia, a crossroads on one of the world's most dangerous migration routes: across the Red Sea with traffickers, through war-ravaged Yemen and into rich Gulf countries.

The questions for migrants are simple. Origin? Destination? Why are you going? But after the first infections were confirmed in Somalia, a new one was added: How many people in your group are

"We've been interviewing migrants for many years," she said.

In past interviews, many migrants were not even aware that a war was being waged in Yemen, the next step on their journey, she said.

With that in mind, "I'm not super shocked that levels of awareness of the coronavirus are still very low." Instead, she's heartened that the number of those unaware of COVID-19 has been dropping over the dozen weeks that the question has been asked, down from 88% at the start.

Anyone who is unaware of the coronavirus is given a short explanation of the pandemic, including how the virus is contracted and descriptions of the symptoms and preventative measures.

What worries Bean now are the findings of a new project map-



aware of the coronavirus?

In the week ending June 20, just over half — 51% — of the 3,471 people tracked said they had never heard of COVID-19.

"The first time I saw this I was also very shocked," Celeste Sanchez Bean, a program manager with the U.N. agency based in Somalia's capital, Mogadishu, told The Associated Press.

The findings, little more than a line in the agency's reports, are a reminder of the huge challenges in reaching everyone in the world with information about the pandemic, much less getting them to wear face masks.

The migrants are often young men from rural parts of neighbouring Ethiopia. Most have no education, and some are from communities where internet access is low, Bean said. She doubted that anything had been lost in translation.

ping the migrant route through Somalia, a country destabilized by decades of conflict, and merging it with epidemiological data showing coronavirus infections.

"It's very clear to us that migrants are transiting areas with confirmed cases," she said. "When you have migrants with such levels of unawareness, combined with this ... I don't want to say dangerous, but the migrants are putting themselves at risk."

Possibly others, too. Migrants already face stigma in cities like Bosaso, where boats set off for Yemen, as some residents blame them for bringing the virus, the U.N. migration agency has said.

Now with the pandemic hurting the local economy, many migrants cannot find the work that allows them to save money for their onward journey, Bean said. "So they are struggling even more than ever before."

Iran will defy US threats and export weapons: MoD

Agencies

BEIRUT, LEBANON : – Iranian Defense Minister Amir Hatami said that his country will be able to export arms despite U.S. efforts to extend the arms embargo.

The Iranian Minister of Defense said during the ceremony of handing three new Iranian-made "Kawthar" warplanes to the Air Force this morning.

"America has forgotten that Iran, despite its continuous sanctions for 40 years, has managed to reach a deterrent force to be reckoned with," stressing his country will not obtain approval from "America and others regarding the development and expansion of Iran's defense capability."

These statements are in response to the efforts of the United



States to extend the arms embargo imposed on Iran.

The U.S. State Department said earlier that Washington's representative to the United Nations, Kelly Kraft, and the U.S. special envoy on Iran, Brian Hook, briefed the U.N. Security Council on a U.S. draft resolution to extend the arms embargo imposed on Iran before it expires next October.

Police chief in US offers to resign after man dies in custody

New York: The chief of police in Tucson, Arizona, on Wednesday offered to resign after he released a video showing the death of a Latino man who said "he could not breathe" as police handcuffed him and placed him face down on his stomach.

Carlos Ingram-Lopez, 27, died on April 21, police restraining him in a "prone position" with his hands behind his back for about 12 minutes, police chief Chris Magnus told a news briefing.

The video showed Ingram-Lopez repeatedly asking for water, crying out, moaning and breathing heavily until he eventually falls silent.

Three police officers resigned over the incident, Magnus said. An investigation found they committed multiple policy violations during the incident, Magnus said, adding that he had



offered his own resignation.

A source said Tucson's city manager had yet to accept Magnus' resignation.

"The involved officers did not live up to our department's high standards," Magnus said.

The video was released following weeks of protests demanding police departments be overhauled, defunded or dismantled to stop officers killing unarmed people of color. The protests were

sparked by the death of George Floyd in police custody in Minneapolis on May 25.

Police reported Ingram-Lopez died from a sudden cardiac arrest with acute cocaine intoxication and an enlarged heart, according to the Pima County Medical Examiner's report.

Ingram-Lopez had committed domestic violence against a "significant other" two days before his grandmother called police around 1 a.m. on April 21 and told them he was "drunk and yelling," Magnus said.

Ingram-Lopez was acting in a "highly erratic manner" when he was taken into custody, and officers handcuffed him inside the garage of the family home, Magnus said. Officers performed CPR and used Narcan to try to revive him after he became unresponsive, Magnus said. — Reuters

William Dalrymple's bestseller The Anarchy is getting a TV adaptation

The exclusive screen rights for the book have been bought by The Sky is Pink producer Siddharth Roy Kapur

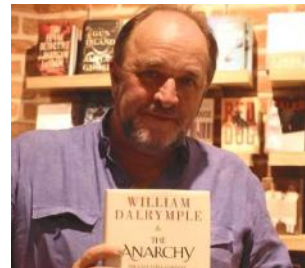
Rights to William Dalrymple's best selling historical epic, The Anarchy: The Relentless Rise Of The East India Company have been bought by former Disney India MD Siddharth Roy Kapur.

The producer, known for Dangal and The Sky is Pink, shared with Deadline he is set to work on a TV adaptation for the book.

"When I read the book, I was so awestruck by the potential in the material. This is an important story to tell around the world," he shared.

"It should be done in the right way, I'm in no hurry to jump in. I want to get the right creative talent associated with the project to give it the heft it needs for a global platform."

According to Kapur, "We're open to discussion across the board



but my instinct is to get a great show-runner to start with, someone with the experience of helming a show of this scale. Both from the magnitude of the production and the intimate, interesting, intense and dramatic characters, which is inherent in the storytelling and needs to be drawn out."

"It would be great to get a collaborative, cross-cultural writers room in place, where you have talent from the U.S. and the UK as well as India, sitting together."

Kosovo president charged with war crimes

THE HAGUE: Kosovo President Hashim Thaci has been charged with 10 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity for his role in the country's conflict in the 1990s, a tribunal in The Hague said on Wednesday.

War-time intelligence chief and former parliamentary speaker Kadri Veseli is also accused of war crimes, the Kosovo Specialist Chambers (KSC) said, adding that the charges against both men were brought on April 24 but not revealed publicly.

"The indictment alleges that Hashim Thaci, Kadri Veseli and the other charged suspects are criminally responsible for nearly 100 murders," the KSC said in a statement.

The accused are also facing other charges such as enforced disappearance of persons, persecution and torture, the tribunal said.

The crimes alleged in the indictment "involved hundreds of known victims of Kosovo Albanian, Serb, Roma, and other ethnicities and include political opponents", it added.



26 Killed In Lightning Strikes In Bihar, Gopalganj Worst-Hit

PATNA: At least 26 people including three children were killed in lightning strikes in five districts of Bihar on Thursday, officials said. Gopalganj district reported the highest number of deaths, at 13, followed by five in Darbhanga, four in Siwan and two each in Madhubani and West Champaran districts, they said. Thirteen people were struck by lightning while working in their fields, in different blocks of Gopalganj district, Gopalganj Sub-Divisional Officer Upendra Pal said. Barauli and Uchkagaon blocks reported four deaths each followed by two in Gopalganj and one each in Ma-



jha, Kateya and Vijay blocks, he said. In Siwan, two persons died in Hussainganj and one each in Siwan and Barharia blocks, district officials said.

Five persons, including three children, were killed and two others injured in lightning strikes in Darbhanga, District Disaster Management Officer Pushpesh Kumar said. The deceased include two boys in Hanuman Nagar block, a girl in Bahadur block, a woman in a village in Biraal police station area and a man in another settlement under the jurisdiction of Baheri police station, he said. A couple was killed while working in their field in Belha village in Phulpara's police station area in Madhubani district, SHO Mahfuz Alam said. Two other farmers were

killed in their respective fields, in two villages under the jurisdiction of Shikarpur police station in West Champaran district, SHO K K Gupta said. PTI

US Declares Jio 'Clean' For Spurning Huawei Gear, Blocking Chinese Intelligence

NEW YORK: US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has declared Reliance Jio a "clean" network for not using the Chinese company Huawei's equipment, keeping it safe from Beijing's intelligence intrusions. Listing Jio among the "world's leading" telecom operators, Pompeo said on Wednesday that it was one of the "Clean Telcos" for spurning Huawei, which he called a part of the "Chinese Communist Party (CCP) infrastructure." Reliance Industries Chairman Mukesh Ambani had told US President Donald Trump during his February visit to India that Jio was the only network in the world to not have a single Chinese component. Jio is reportedly trying the 'swadeshi' route for 5G and has applied to the Department of Telecommunications for permission to carry out lab tests for the technology without third-party participation. Facebook announced a \$5.7 billion investment in Jio in April. Pompeo said that by Jio along with some other Canadian, British and French telecoms was "disconnecting from the Chinese Communist Party infrastructure" by not using Huawei equipment. "They are rejecting doing business with tools of the CCP surveillance state, companies like Huawei," he added while speaking to the media before the release of the State Department's annual terrorism report. The US campaign against



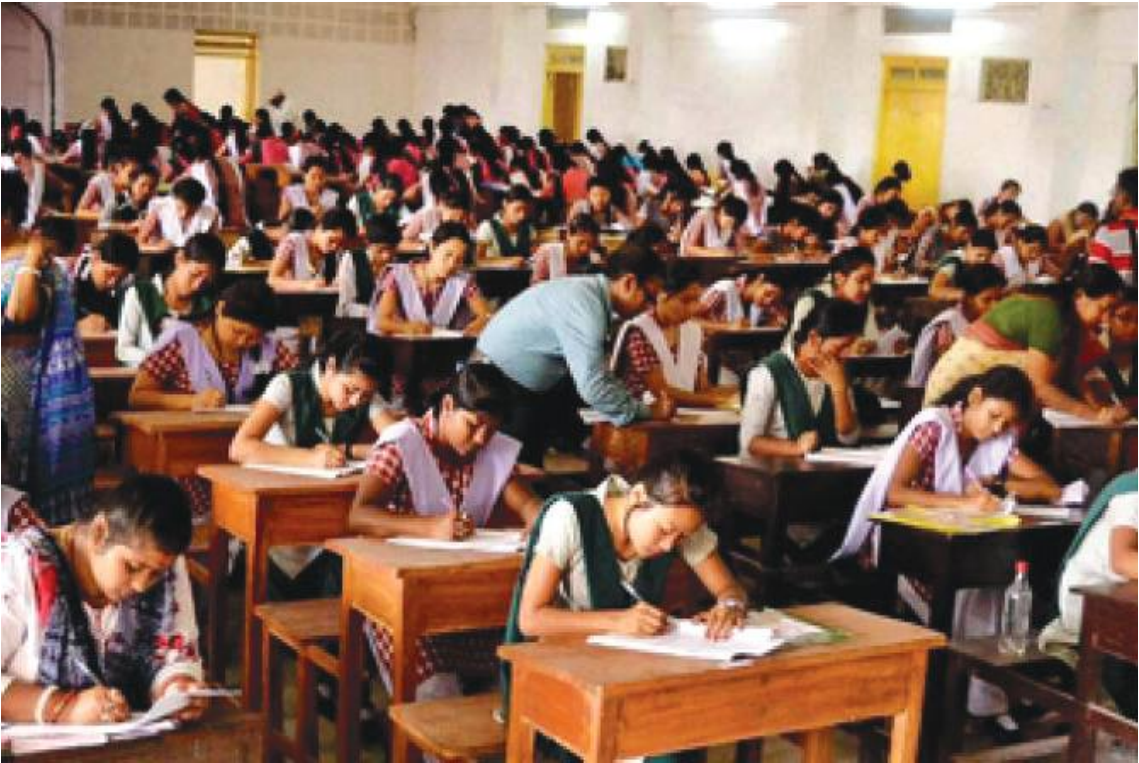
the Chinese telecom equipment manufacturer over fears its gear can be used for espionage has intensified as the company begins its push into the next-generation 5G networks. According to US National Security Adviser Robert O'Brian, Huawei is able to access sensitive and personal information wherever its equipment is installed and "by law, must comply with directives of the Chinese Communist Party" making networks using it vulnerable to Beijing's surveillance. Trump had brought up the security concerns with Prime Minister Narendra Modi during the February visit in a bid to stop Huawei's inroads into India's 5G networks. Trump told reporters after meeting Modi, "We discussed the importance of a secure 5G wireless network and the need for this emerging technology to be a tool for freedom, progress, prosperity, not to do anything with which it could be even conceived as a conduit for suppression and censorship." The Trump administration has put a series of sanctions on Huawei to cut off its access to US technology to develop or manufacture its systems.



"Fair & Lovely" Skin Cream To Lose "Fair" From Name, Says Company

BENGALURU: The Indian unit of Unilever said on Thursday it will drop the word "fair" from its "Fair & Lovely" range of products, which have long been criticised for promoting negative stereotypes against people with darker skin. The move comes as cosmetics companies have seen an increasing amount of backlash on social media in the wake of the Black Lives Matter movement. "We are making our skin care portfolio more inclusive... a more diverse portrayal of beauty," Hindustan Unilever Chairman Sanjiv Mehta said in a statement. The company also sells the popular Dove and Knorr range of products. Sources had told Reuters earlier that the company was considering such changes. Products marketed as skin lightening have a huge market in South Asia due to a societal obsession with fairer skin tones, but those notions are being questioned more frequently. "We recognise that the use of the words 'fair', 'white' and 'light' suggest a singular ideal of beauty that we don't think is right, and we want to address this," Sunny Jain, Unilever's president of its beauty and personal care division, said in a separate statement. Unilever's "Fair & Lovely" brand dominates the market in South Asia. Similar products are also sold by L'Oreal and Procter & Gamble. The "Fair & Lovely" brand name change is subject to regulatory approvals, Hindustan Unilever said. The company did not say what the new brand name would be. Separately, a source within L'Oreal in India said the company was also having discussions in view of the backlash. "Words such as skin brightening, whitening, lightening could soon become a thing of the past on all labels and product sales pitches," the source said. L'Oreal India declined to comment. An email to L'Oreal in France did not elicit an immediate response. Johnson & Johnson said this month it would stop selling skin-whitening creams.

CBSE Class 10 Exams Cancelled, Class 12 Students Will Have An Option: Centre Tells SC



NEW DELHI: The Centre and the CBSE Thursday informed the Supreme Court that they have decided to cancel the Class X and XII examinations scheduled from July 1-15 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and they would be conducted later. A bench headed by Justice A M Khanwilkar was apprised by the Solicitor General Tushar Mehta that a scheme has been formulated to assess the performance of class XII students on the basis of their performance in last examinations. The top court was also informed that the students will have the liber-

ty to opt either for the examinations, to be conducted later, or go with the assessment process based on past performance. The court was hearing pleas seeking scrapping of remaining exams of Class XII scheduled from July 1-15 in view of increasing number of COVID-19 cases.

Why Hasn't India Benefitted From Your 'Strange Bonhomie' With China: Cong Asks PM

NEW DELHI: The Congress on Thursday asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi why had India not gained anything from the "strange bonhomie" which it claimed he shared with China. Seeking to turn the tables on the ruling party, Congress spokesperson Pawan Khera said the BJP also shared bonhomie with the Communist Party of China (CPC) with several party-level exchanges taking place in the past. Also read: China funded Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, says BJP; asks Congress to explain "45th anniversary of Emergency: Modi, BJP launch attack on Cong, Gandhis He sought to know whether India's borders have become safe after these exchanges in the last many years. The Congress leader asked what has the country gained out of these exchange delegations and why were the borders insecure despite the bonds that the two ruling

that bonhomie," he asked at a virtual press conference. Khera said all that the Congress would continue to question is about the political will that just did not get visible when it came to China. "Whatever is happening on the border today, is it despite the bonhomie which you have with China, or is it because of the bonhomie which you have with China. The country needs to know," he asked. "We do want to ask you, if as president of the party, Rajnath Singh, Nitin Gadkari and Amit Shah have been sending delegations, strengthening the bonds between the Communist Party of China and the BJP. What has the country gained out of these bonds? Why are the borders insecure despite these bonds that you have," he added. The ruling has hit out at the Congress for signing an MoU with China's Communist Party and has ques-



parties of India and China shared with each other. "There is a strange kind of bonhomie between Narendra Modi and China, a two-decade-old bonhomie. Why doesn't the country get the benefit of

tioned its "bond" with the ruling party in China. Khera also asked what role did the India Foundation, an organisation run by National Security Adviser Ajit Doval's son has in strengthening the bonds with China.

Chinese Funds For Rajiv Gandhi Foundation: BJP's Latest Political Attack

NEW DELHI: As Congress allegation of the government "surrendering" India to China has intensified, the BJP has hit back with a strong political allegation — that the Chinese are funding the Congress. The BJP has accused the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation of receiving donations from the Chinese embassy in India. The party alleges that these donations were made in 2005-06. Congress chief Sonia Gandhi is the chairperson of the RGF and its board has Dr Manmohan Singh, Rahul Gandhi, P Chidambaram and Priyanka Gandhi. The BJP alleged that according to the annual report of 2005-06, the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation received a donation from the Embassy of the People's Republic of China. The donation was included in the list of general donors. "Did the then UPA government take a bribe from the Chinese? Is it not true that after taking this donation, the foundation recommended a free trade agreement with China, which was heavily tilted in favour of the Chinese," Law Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said. Mr Prasad also accused the then UPA government of not mentioning this donation anywhere in the government records. "The Congress must answer that if they took money from the Chinese embassy, how was this money put to use?" he said. The BJP also targeted the Gandhi family last week for meeting with Chinese officials and "having a secret pact". The party referred to an image that showed Rahul Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi in a meeting with Chinese embassy officials in 2008. It is noteworthy that while in the opposition between 2004-2014, many leaders from the BJP too met with members of the Communist Party of China. A formal meeting between the then party President Rajnath Singh and a delegation of the CPC had even taken place at the BJP headquarters in 2007.



NEWS MAKERS

Americans not allowed into 30+ European countries

BRUSSELS: Americans are unlikely to be allowed into more than 30 European countries for business or tourism when the continent begins next week to open its borders to the world, due to the spread of the coronavirus and President Donald Trump's ban on European visitors. More than 15 million Americans are estimated to travel to Europe each year, and such a decision would underscore flaws in the Trump administration's handling of the pandemic, which has seen the United States record the highest number of infections and virus-related deaths in the world by far. European nations appear on track to reopen their bor-



ders between each other by July 1. Their representatives in Brussels have been debating what virus-related criteria should apply when lifting border restrictions to the outside world, which were imposed in March to stop all non-essential travel to Europe. In recommendations to EU nations on June 11, the European Commission said "travel restrictions should not be lifted as regards third countries where

the situation is worse" than the average in the 27 EU member countries plus Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland. That is likely to rule out people living in the United States, where new coronavirus infections have surged to the highest level in two months, according to figures compiled by Johns Hopkins University. After trending down for well over a month, new U.S. cases have risen for more than a week. The U.S. on Tuesday reported 34,700 new cases of the virus, bringing its total to more than 2.3 million cases and over 121,000 deaths. The virus outbreaks in Brazil, India and Russia are remarkably high too, and it's also unlikely that the EU will let their citizens in.

Court Says It's 'Unbecoming Of Our Women To Sleep After Rape'

BENGALURU: Granting advance bail to rape accused, the Karnataka High Court has expressed its reservations about the genuineness of the complainant's case while observing that her explanation that "after the perpetration of the act she was tired and fell asleep, is unbecoming of an Indian woman." The court also found it difficult to believe at this stage that the complainant was subjected to rape on the false promise of marriage "in the given circumstances of the case." The complainant is the employer of the accused of the past two years, it noted. "Nothing is mentioned by the complainant as to why she went



to her office at 11 pm; she has also not objected to consuming drinks with the petitioner and allowing him to stay with her till morning; the explanation offered by the complainant that after the perpetration of the act she was tired and fell asleep, is unbecoming of an Indian woman," Justice Krishna S Dixit observed. "This is not the way our women react when they are ravished," the judge further observed while al-

lowing the plea on June 22. Agreeing that the charges of rape, cheating and intimidation against the petitioner were serious in nature, the court observed that "seriousness alone is not the criteria to deny liberty to the citizen when there is no prima facie case from the police." The court took note of a letter allegedly written by the complainant that she would withdraw the complaint if a compromise was brought about. "Nothing is stated by the complainant as to why she did not approach the court at the earliest point of time when the petitioner was allegedly forcing her for sexual favours," the court observed.

Google Aasked To Pay For News

SAN FRANCISCO: Google will pay partnered media publishers in three countries and offer some users free access to paywalled news sites, the tech giant said Thursday. The announcement comes after legal battles in France and Australia over Google's refusal to pay news organizations for content. In a blog post the firm said they would launch "a licensing program to pay publishers for high-quality content for a new news experience" due to launch later this year. Brad Bender, Google's vice-president of product management, said they had been in discussions with partnered publishers—including the Spiegel Group in Germany, Schwartz media in Australia and Brazil's Diarios Associados—for several months, "with more to come." "Google will also offer to pay for free access for users to read paywalled articles on a publisher's site," the statement said, without offering any further details. Bender said the program will help publishers "monetize their content through an enhanced storytelling experience." He added it would build on the 2018 Google News Initiative, a \$300 million project that aimed to tackle disinformation online and help news sites grow financially. It comes after growing calls for internet tech titans, notably Google, to pay for content. A number of European and global publications—including AFP—have called on the European Union to adopt laws requiring internet companies to pay for the material they produce.