



Maximum : 32°C
Minimum : 17°C
Humidity : 49%

SUNSET
Today 07:41 PM
SUNRISE
Tomorrow 05:32 AM

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News Digest

CRPF Trooper Shoots Self In Dalgate

Srinagar: A paramilitary Central Reserve Police Force trooper was critically injured after he allegedly shoot himself with his service rifle at Dalgate in Central Kashmir's Srinagar district on Friday morning. A senior police officer said that the CRPF trooper from 61 Battalion fired upon himself with his service rifle at Dalgate, leaving him critically wounded. Identifying him as constable Parveen Munda, the officer said that he was immediately shifted to 92 base Hospital for treatment. Asked about the reasons for the trooper to take such an extreme step, the officer said the investigations have been started in this regard. (GNS)

HC Srinagar Wing Shut Over Covid-19

Srinagar: The Srinagar wing of the Jammu and Kashmir remained closed on Friday after some officials there tested positive for the novel coronavirus. The court premises have been closed on the orders by Chief Justice Gita Mittal in light of SOP issued by the government. "As informed by the Registry, some officials in Srinagar Wing of the High Court of Jammu and Kashmir have tested COVID positive. As per the SoPs issued by the Government access to the High Court Premises in Srinagar Wing of the High Court has to remain closed for two days for sanitization purpose," reads an order issued by the Chief Justice. "No person except the sanitization workers will be permitted entry into the High Court premises on 17th and 18th of July," adds the order. (P-02)

Landslide Closes Srinagar-Leh Highway

Srinagar: Two residential houses and a shopping complex were damaged after coming underneath a massive landslide in Kangan area of central Kashmir's Ganderbal district on Friday. The landslide also blocked the Srinagar-Leh highway, resulting in the suspension of the traffic on the strategic thoroughfare. Reports reaching here said that a major landslide ripped through the shops and residential houses in Bunibagh Kangan area along the Highway early morning. In the incident, as per reports, a chopping complex comprising of at least sixteen shops belonging to one Ali Mohammad Mir and two residential houses (P-02)

Aga Hasan Tests Positive For Covid Infection

Budgam: Senior Hurriyat leader and president Anjuman-e-Shariae Shiayani Aga Syed Hasan Almosvi Alsafy has been admitted to Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Science Soura after he was tested positive for Covid-19 infection. Family sources said that Aga Syed Hasan was not feeling well and he developed complications during the intervening night of July 16 and 17 at his Budgam home, after which he was shifted to SKIMS Srinagar. Doctors said Aga Syed Hasan has been tested positive and he has been admitted for Pneumonia and heart ailment in the hospital. He said that the condition of Aga was stable. Earlier, Aga Muntazir, the son of Aga Syed Hasan was (P-02)

Army, IAF Showcase Combat Readiness In Ladakh

Defence Minister, Army Top Brass Witness War Games Near LAC

Press Trust of India

STAKNA (LADAKH)- On his first visit to eastern Ladakh since the border row with China broke out, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Friday witnessed an intense military drill featuring attack helicopters, T-90 tanks, infantry combat vehicles and ground commandos here at a high-altitude forward base, seen as a message to Beijing that India will maintain a high-level of combat readiness to deal with any eventualities.



Singh Reviews Security In Srinagar

All the security agencies are doing a commendable job in Kashmir especially on the anti-militancy front but it is high time to use all technical support to plug infiltration completely and to clean Kashmir from the remaining militants, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh told top army, police and other officers from the security grid of Kashmir during a high (P-02)

ALSO, I GOT THE OPPORTUNITY TO INTERACT WITH THEM. I am proud of these brave and courageous soldiers," he said and posted pictures of his interaction with the military personnel.

2 Boys Drown While Swimming In Anantnag

ANANTNAG: Two minor boys drowned to death in Dadi Canal Khiram area of South Kashmir's Anantnag district on Friday afternoon.

Officials said that two boys identified as Waseem Ahmad Bajard (12) son of Mohammad Ashraf Bajard, a resident of Galan Khiram and Abrar Ahmad Khatana (12) son of Mohammad Ashraf Khatana, a resident of Achdhar Khiram drowned in Sirhama following which locals tried to rescue them, but couldn't save their lives.

They said soon after the news spread, the locals gathered at the spot while teams of (P-02)

Jaish Commander Among 3 Militants Killed In Kulgam

3 Soldiers Sustain Received Injuries; US Made M-4 Carbine Recovered From Slain Militants

Observer News Service

KULGAM: A Jaish-e-Muhammad commander was among three militants killed in an encounter with armed forces in Nagard village of Damhal Hanjipora belt of South Kashmir's Kulgam district on Friday. A joint team of Police, army's 9 RR and CRPF launched a cordon and search operation on specific information about the presence of militants in the area early this morning at around 4:30 am, police said.



upon them triggering an encounter. "In the initial assault, two militants were killed and one more was later killed after civilians were evacuated from the house," officials said. Among the slain was JeM commander and IED expert, Waleed Bhai, who, according to police was active since past 16 months in southern districts, a police officer said. From his possession a US made M-4 Carbine was recovered. (P-02)

'Strategic Areas' For Armed Forces In J&K Get Govt Nod

Special Dispensation Approved For Regulating Construction In 'Strategic Areas'

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Administrative Council (AC) which met here under the chairmanship of Lieutenant Governor, G C Murmu, gave its nod to the proposal of amending the Control of Building Operations Act, 1988 and the J&K Development Act, 1970 to provide for special dispensation for carrying out construction activities in Strategic Areas.

The amendments proposed by Housing & Urban Development Department will pave way for notifying certain areas as "strategic areas" in terms of the requirement of armed forces and in such areas, the regulation of construction activity shall be through a special dispensation. The move is aimed at simplifying the procedures (P-02)

Roll Out Of Excise Policy 2020-21 Approved Annual License Fee, Additional License Fee Introduced

SRINAGAR: The Administrative Council (AC), which met here under the chairmanship of Lieutenant Governor, G C Murmu, approved the roll out of Excise Policy for the year 2020-21 and implementation of policy measures to improve transparency and objectivity related to renewal, cancellation, transfer of licenses and penalties.

The new policy aims to rationalize the number of taxes, duties and other levies to optimize revenues for common good, and bring about greater social consciousness about the harmful effects of consumption of liquor and alcoholic beverages.

JKAC Okay's Housing Policy-2020

2 Lakh Houses In Next Few Years

The Jammu and Kashmir Administrative Council (AC), which met here under the chairmanship of Lieutenant Governor G C Murmu on Friday, accorded sanction to a policy on affordable housing, including slum development, in the Union territory. The Council approved adoption and notification of the J&K Housing, Affordable Housing, Slum Redevelopment and Rehabilitation and Township Policy, 2020.

"The policy envisages seven models of housing, ranging from in-situ slum redevelopment to integrated township. (P-02)

Kashmir Inc No More Backs Govt On PSU Privatisation

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCC&I) on Friday expressed concern at press reports about the closure and privatization of Public Sector Undertakings (PSU) and Government owned Corporations.

A KCC&I spokesperson said that the privatization of PSUs was a long pending demand of the Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry prior to the constitutional changes to Jammu and Kashmir.

"The demand of the KCC&I was based on the wanton waste of assets, nepotism, mismanagement which had resulted in the raking up of liabilities of around 15,000 Crores and locked up critical economic assets of Kashmir in the shape of infrastructure, land, manpower and sectoral

potential of key areas," he said. "In normal conditions, the KCC&I would have welcomed the step towards privatization but post the constitutional changes made to Jammu and Kashmir in August, 2019, it has instead become a cause of concern. After August 2019 the Government of Jammu and Kashmir has made changes to the mining policy which opened up the sector for non-locals. Earlier the rights were exclusively reserved for the local stakeholders only," he said. The spokesperson further stated that the subsequent auction of mineral blocks in Kashmir showed an alarming take-over of the business by a non-local syndicate. "Local contractors and other persons associated with the business since decades stand deprived of their only source of income. The prices of construction material like (P-02)

Stamp Duty On Fresh Loans; Surcharge On Fixed Charge For Power Waived Amnesty Scheme/Filing Of GST Returns Extended

SRINAGAR: To tackle the slowdown of economy due to COVID-19 pandemic, the Administrative Council (AC) which met here under the chairmanship of Lieutenant Governor, G C Murmu, in a focused policy intervention aimed to address concerns amongst various stake holders, approved a relief package to revive the economy.

Earlier, the Union Government rolled out a 20 lakh crore package under the umbrella of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan', sharply focusing MSMEs, priority sectors and vulnerable segments. However, the Jammu and Kashmir Government felt a need to consider similar hand holding measures for sectors/borrowers not covered under the Central Government package.

In order to clear the backlog of sales tax/VAT arrears under the relief package, the Amnesty scheme



has been extended upto 31st, October, 2020. Whereas, the date of filing of re-imbursalment claims (GST returns/claims) for the period from January to March, 2020 has been extended to 15th October, 2020 and for the period April to June, 2020 to 15th November, 2020. In a normal course, the Industrial units claiming GST re-imbursalment on supply of goods during interstate movement were required to get the relevant electronic way bills stamped and verified by the consignee. However, considering the

issues due to COVID-19 pandemic, self attestation of claimants has been enabled and scanned copies of such documents verified by the consignee and attested by the claimants with a post dated cheque shall be accepted for re-imbursalment for a period of 6 months. To enable smooth transition out of the pandemic driven economic shock, under the relief package, the surcharge leviable on the fixed charges of all the industrial/commercial establishments in J&K for the period 31st March, 2020 to 31st October, 2020 shall be borne by the government.

Stamp duty on fresh lending under the GoI's J&K Government's package shall also be waived off under the relief package so that the cost of lending is reduced. Moreover, the Administrative Council directed Finance (P-02)

Covid-19: 601 More Test Positive

Cases In Kashmir Cross 10K-Mark, Active Cases Around 6,000 In J&K

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir witnessed biggest spike of 601 positive cases of Novel Coronavirus on Friday and with this the number mounted to 12,757 in J&K. The fresh positive cases included 86 persons who had returned to J&K from outside in last 24 hours.

Of the 601 new cases, 644 belong to Kashmir division while as 137 are from Jammu division, officials said, adding that the total number of positive cases in Kashmir division has reached to 10,113 including 4893 recoveries and 213 deaths while as total num-

ber of positive cases in Jammu division have reached to 2644 including 1665 recoveries and 18 deaths.

They added that a total number of active cases in Jammu and Kashmir are 5,968 including 5,007 from Kashmir division and 961 from Jammu division.

With 112 more recoveries, the tally of recovered patients in Jammu and Kashmir has mounted to 6,558 which is 51.40 per cent of the total cases. "The cases tested positive in J&K include 152 from Srinagar, 10 from Kulgam, 62 from Baramulla, 82 from Shopian, 51 from Anantnag, 12 from Kupwara, 19 from Pulwama, 46 from Budgam, one from Bandipora and 29 from Ganderbal in Kashmir division while as 137 from Jammu (P-02)

J&K Records 9 More Deaths

SRINAGAR: Nine more patients, who were tested positive for Covid-19 lost their battle to the deadly virus on Friday, taking the total number of people who died of the novel virus in J&K to 231.

Officials said that nine patients who died include a 65-year-old man from Parigam, Pulwama, a 58-year-old male from Alnoor Colony Hyderpora, Srinagar, a 50-year old male from Soibugh, Budgam, a 55-year old wom-

an from Sumbal Bandipora, a 65-year old male from Pampore Pulwama, a 75-year old man from Batamallo Srinagar, a 62-year old man from Hazratbal Srinagar, a 75-year old woman from Sonwar Srinagar and a 60-year old woman from Taing Mohalla Shopian. They said that four deaths were reported from SKIMS, two each from JVC (P-02)

J&K Bank Staffers Test Positive, Hqrs Shut

Corporate Headquarters of the Jammu and Kashmir Bank in Srinagar was on Friday closed by the authorities to carry out a massive sanitisation drive for two days. The corporate office, situated near Tourist Reception (P-02)

Dean Academic Affairs KU Tests Positive

Authorities at Kashmir University have closed one of the gates after Dean Academic Affairs was tested positive for Covid-19 infection. Deputy Registrar Administration has issued an order asking Dean College (P-02)

DAK Warns Of Possible Covid-19 Mutation In Kashmir

SRINAGAR: Doctors Association Kashmir (DAK) on Friday warned of possible mutation of the Novel Coronavirus.

"Covid-19 is now behaving aggressively which gives us to understand that the virus has mutated," said DAK President and influenza expert Dr Nisar ul Hassan in a statement.

"Initially when the outbreak arrived at Kashmir valley, Covid-19 behaved very mildly and most patients who tested positive were asymptomatic," he said.

"But, over the past few weeks

the situation has taken a serious turn with a large number of seriously-ill patients getting admitted in hospitals," he added.

Dr Nisar said the sudden rise in cases and deaths could be because of a new strain of Covid-19 that might have undergone mutation.

"Covid-19 like other viruses tend to mutate," he said adding that "mutation is a change in virus that occurs when the virus replicates inside cells and mistakes are made in copying its genetic code."

Dr Nisar said scientists (P-02)



A policeman enforcing lockdown which was reimposed in Srinagar on Friday- KO photo Abid Bhat

Labour Dept Notifies J&K 'Self Certification Scheme'

Certificate would authenticate that units don't compromise on safety, health, other welfare measures of workers: Bhagat

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR, JULY 17: The Jammu and Kashmir government has framed the 'Self Certification Scheme' for industries and other establishments in order to liberalize the enforcement of labour laws in Jammu and Kashmir and to facilitate the employers and entrepreneurs.

The scheme, according to Labour and Employment, would also create conducive environment-cum-relationship between the government and the employers or entrepreneurs.

In this regard, Commissioner Secretary Labour & Employment Department (L&E), Saurabh Bhagat in a statement here explained that the objective of this scheme is to reduce the visits of government officials for inspection to those units who opt for this scheme without compromising on the safety, health, social security and welfare of the workers.

"This certificate would hold testimony to the fact that these units do not compromise on safety, health, social security and welfare of the workers," he added.

Following are the highlights of the Self Certification Scheme:

The Scheme is optional and any employer or entrepreneur can opt for this scheme after depositing a security of Rs 5000 for small scale industries, Rs 10,000 for medium scale industries and Rs 20,000 for large scale industries by way of ac-

count payee bank draft in favour of concerned district/divisional authorities of L&E Department.

They can apply online and submit the application at the department's website - www.jklabour.com

According to the scheme the discrepancies in the application or enclosures will be communicated to the applicant

This certificate would hold testimony to the fact that these units do not compromise on safety, health, social security and welfare of the workers

within 30 days from the receipt of the application. The applicant would be considered as enrolled under the scheme, if no discrepancies were communicated. Once opted for the Scheme, the same will be valid for five years.

Also, the scheme would be valid for The Factories Act, 1948, Minimum Wages Act, 1948, Payment of Wages Act, 1936, Contract Labour (Regulation & Abolition) Act, 1970, Payment of Bonus Act 1965, Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972, Maternity Benefit Act, 1961, Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986, Jammu and Kashmir Shops & Establishments Act, 1966, Inter-State Migrant Workmen (RECS) Act, 1979, Equal Remuneration Act, 1976, Motor Transport Workers Act, 1961, Jammu & Kashmir Industrial Establishments (National & Festival) Holiday Act, 1974 and all the respective Rules

framed there under.

After enrollment, the employer or entrepreneur shall file the Self Certification Return as per the Proforma prescribed in Annexure IV along with relevant documents and information. The Return can be filed between 1st of April & 30th of April every year on any working day between 10:30 am to 4:30 pm.

Premature withdrawal from the scheme i.e., before five years or in case of detection of any violations by the employer/entrepreneur shall result in forfeiture of the security deposit.

Not more than twenty percent of the units that are covered under the scheme are picked up randomly for inspection per year. (Once inspected, the same unit is not likely to be inspected in the same year or in the next three years).

However, on specific complaints, ac-

idents, dangerous occurrences and violation of Labour Laws, inspection may be conducted only with prior approval of Labour Commissioner-cum-Chief Inspector of Factories, Jammu & Kashmir.

The copy of the Scheme and all prescribed application forms and inspection procedure shall be available on www.jklabour.com.

Any application shall be submitted against payment of Application Fee (Rs 1000 for small scale industries, Rs 2000 for medium scale industries and Rs 5000 for large scale industries) by way of demand draft pledged to the concerned authority of the department.

Only the units having valid license/ registration under the Factories Act, 1948 and J&K Shops and Establishment Act, 1966 are eligible for this scheme.

Besides, Major Accident Hazard units and factories involving Hazardous processes or High Risk Industries under Section 2 (cb) of the Factories Act, 1948 shall not be covered under the self certification scheme.

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
26 Zu al-Qa'dah
1441

PRAYERS

FAJR	3: 51
ZUHR	12: 37
ASR	5:34
Magrib	7:45
ISHA	9:22

This Day In History

- 1922 - German-Russian treaty signed in Italy, Soviet Union recognized - 1925 - Adolf Hitler publishes Mein Kampf (original title was the catchy "Four and a Half Years (of Struggle) Against Lies, Stupidity and Cowardice")
- 1929 - NY Yankees become 1st team to wear uniform numbers
- 1932 Belgium, Luxembourg & Netherlands sign Ouchy Convention, a customs treaty
- 1932 - US & Canada sign a treaty to develop St Lawrence Seaway
- 1936 - Spanish Civil War : General Francisco Franco issues manifesto and leads uprising with army in Morocco .
- 1938 - Great Britain recognizes Italian annexation of Abyssinia Agreement Treaty of Interest
- 1939 - Stalin requests British, French & Russian anti-nazi pact
- 1942 - Japanese occupying army on Java installs film censorship 1943 - Swiss scientist Dr. Albert Hofmann discovers the psychedelic effects of LSD
- 1944 - British air raid on German convoy SW of Heligoland
- 1944 - British troops occupy Bourquebus hill range, Normandy
- 1945 - German troops in Groningen surrender
- 1945 - Red Army begins Battle of Berlin
- 1945 - US troops enter Nuremberg, Germany
- 1945 - US troops land on He Shima, Okinawa 1946 - 1st US launch
- 1955 - 1st electric power generated from atomic energy sold commercially
- 1963 - Failed military coup in Syria
- 1963 - The United Nations Special Committee on Apartheid releases its second interim report pressing for international sanctions against South Africa, particularly the supply of arms, ammunition and petroleum
- 1965 - Zond 3 launched to fly by Moon, enters solar orbit
- 1974 - World's tallest structure, 646 metre Polish radio mast, completed
- 1977 - Vietnam becomes member of UN
- 1978 - Egyptian & Israeli officials begin 2 days of talks
- 1980 - Rohini 1, 1st Indian satellite, launches into orbit
- 1986 - Videotapes released showing Titanic's sunken remains
- 1993 - Afghan president Ishaq Khan & prime minister Nawaz Sharif resign
- 1994 - Bomb attack on Jewish center AMIA in Buenos Aires, 86 killed
- 1994 - Comet Shoemaker-Levy's largest collision with Jupiter leaves black spot 12,000 km across
- 1996 - The UN approves an Iraqi aid distribution plan, a major step forward in the direction of allowing Iraq to sell oil under Resolution 986
- 2012 - 14 people are killed after a bomb explosion at Pakistan's Orakzai Agency
- 2012 - Violence across Syria results in 97 deaths
- 2012 - Syrian suicide bombing kills three high profile government officials, including Syria's Minister of Defence
- 2012 - 24 people are killed after a ferry sinks off the coast of Zanzibar
- 2012 - Kim Jong-un is officially appointed Supreme Leader of North Korea and given the rank of Marshal in the Korean People's Army
- 2014 - The Israeli Defense Force (IDF) call 18,000 additional reserves soldiers in campaign against Gaza
- 2015 - PayPal is spun off from eBay as a separate publicly traded company on the NASDAQ

From KO Archives

Australia frees Kashmiri detainee after 7 years

SYDNEY - A Kashmiri youth, freed yesterday after spending a record of almost seven years in an Australian immigration detention, thanked the Prime Minister, John Howard, and the Immigration Minister, Amanda Vanstone, for "showing me compassion".

Peter Qasim; was 24 when he arrived on Thursday Island via Papua New Guinea, in September 1998.

He is still in the Adelaide psychiatric hospital to which he was admitted five weeks ago, but will leave early this week after being granted a visa to live in the community, with full health benefits and employment rights. A Christian couple from Adelaide's southern suburbs, Faye and David, who have visited him in Baxter detention centre near Port Augusta many times, were at his side yesterday, excited to be taking him home.

He calls them Mum and Dad, and thanked them and the Liberal backbenchers who made his plight public, and other "loving, caring supporters" including the Sydney entrepreneur Dick Smith.

"I have been living for almost seven years in a very hard situation," said Qasim, looking relaxed as he read slowly from a prepared statement. "I don't know what my future is now, but I am happy to have the chance to live a normal life. I never wanted to be a burden on Australia." Although his application for asylum was rejected, Qasim can live as an Australian citizen pending deportation. In reality, he has tried unsuccessfully to be deported for the past two years, and it is unlikely this will happen. Although he asserts he is a Kashmiri national, an orphan who fled the country after becoming involved with the separatist Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front, no government will accept him and he is effectively stateless.

He has also applied for a permanent visa under a section of the Immigration Act that allows the minister to grant visas on humanitarian grounds.

(Kashmir Observer, 18 July, 2005)

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PWD DIVISION VAILOO NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

24/1380 of R&B/Vailoo/ tendering/ DATED 14.07.2020

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor of Union Territory J&K from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K State Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following work

concrete drain / Edge wall at including Zalamang Govhard									
--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below

Date of Issue of Tender Notice	
Period of downloading of bidding documents	
Date & time of opening of Bids	at 11.00 A.M in the Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Division vailoo

Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of R&B Division vailoo (tender inviting authority) Executive Engineer R&B Division vailoo (tender receiving authority). bids are necessary to decide L case of Self Help Groups/

The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e mail message on their bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division vailoo (tender receiving authority).

The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids

DIPK-3025/20

Government of Union Territory Jammu & Kashmir Executive Engineer PWD () Division Bandipora
: ee_rmb_bandipora@yahoo.com

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

For and on behalf of the from approved and eligible Civil registered with Governments for the following works

In single cover system Railways and other State/ Central

	Time of completion	Time & Date of opening of bids	Class of contract	Major Head of Account
Upgradation of Patushay Road by way of P/L 75 mm Thick Wet Mix in Patches/Stretches, 50 mm Thick Bituminous Macadem, 25 mm thick Semi Dense with 6 mm thick Seal Coat, Earthen Drain and P/L of Pipes at spots (Aggr				

The bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, (B.O.Q), set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/ downloaded from the as per schedule of dates given below:

Period of downloading of bidding	
----------------------------------	--

Hard Copy shall be obtained only from the Bidder who is declared as Lowest Bidder (L1) at the time of opening of Tenders. The cost of tender documents will be collected through e hallan / Receipt. However the successful bidders will submit the same separately after the opening of

NOTE: The bidders whose bid is greater than 15% below the Adv.Cost must upload Addl.Security performance in shape of CDR/FDR pledged to utive Engineer (R&B) Division Bandipora,besides Earnest Money

Date & time of opening of Bids	0 A.M in the Office of the Executive Engineer (R&B)
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Note: The Bidder will mention the Contact No. and Bidder Name in the BoQ

(R&B) Division Bandipora

DIPK-3023/20

Office Of The Chief Accounts Officer District Fund Office Anantnag

TENDER NOTICE

Dasti Quotations affixed with revenue stamps of Rs 5/- are invited from stationary dealer for supply of computer paper/stationary as per details given here under which should reach to this office by or before 20 July-2020 up to 03:00 PM. The rates quoted should be F.O.R inclusive of all taxes and duties District Fund Office Anantnag and should be fresh from cuttings & over writings. The element of GST should be shown distinctly in the tender. The rates quoted & approved by this office shall remain in force up to end of financial year 2020-21. The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any Quotation without assigning the reasons thereof. The Quotations will be opened on 21st July-2020 in this Office in presence of the Quotationers if they like to be present.

Specifications:
1. Computer Paper 80 Column 1000 Sheets Pack.
2. Computer Paper 132 Column 1000 Sheets Pack.

NO. CAO/DFO/Adm/134
Dated:-11/07/2020

Chief Accounts Officer,
District Fund Office,
Anantnag.

DIPK-3031/20

خانوادہ ہمدانیہ کو صدمہ

تمام متعلقین کو مطلع کیا جاتا ہے کہ جمعرات 16 جولائی 2020 مطابق 24 ذیقعدہ 1441ھ اہلیہ الحاج سید حسین شاہ ہمدانی (سورہ ٹینگ رعناواری) حال نابدی پورہ جڈی بل داعی اجمل کو لیک کہہ گئیں۔ اِنَّا لِلّٰہِ وَاِنَّا اِلَیْہِ رَاجِعُونَ۔ تدفین اور اجتماعی فاتحہ خوانی بعد از نماز مغرب گلستان باپامزار واقع جڈی بل میں ہوئی۔ اس کے بعد مقبرہ مذکور یا گھر پر کوئی اجتماعی فاتحہ خوانی نہیں ہوگی۔ سوگواروں کی سبھی اعزہ، اقارب اور احباب سے گزارش ہے کہ مرحومہ کے ایصال ثواب کیلئے فاتحہ پڑھیں۔

ملتمس

اعزہ واقارب مرحومہ

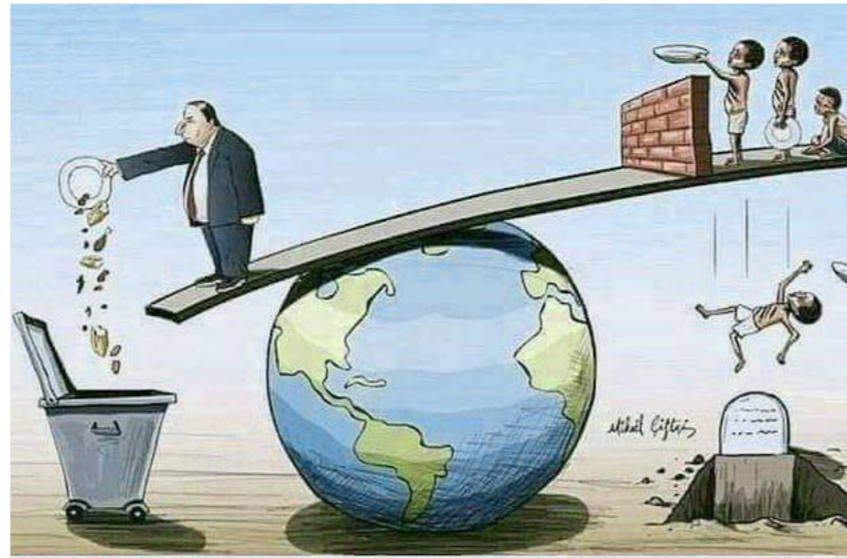
بذریعہ ڈاکٹر سید ریاض ہمدانی

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KASHMIR
OBSERVER

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NO HOLDS BARRED



During the 2009 swine flu pandemic, a few countries cornered the vaccine market, leaving the vast majority of the global population with no vaccine at all until the outbreak was effectively over. This scenario must be avoided at all costs during the current crisis,

Your Savings Are At Peril

The new FSDR Bill 2019 may wipe out your entire life savings

ASAD MIRZA

The common man is who is still reeling under the after shocks of digitisation, demonetisation and GST and now Corona's economic meltdown, is at his wits ends on where to keep his money safe from the very same people who are supposed to safeguard his money and financial interests.

While the common man is trying to cope with daily financial woes for survival, due to the continued pandemic conditions affecting the overall economic situation of the country and previous economic decisions, there are some forces, which are working covertly against his financial survival.

We Indians have a very peculiar and praiseworthy trait amongst all of us, whether educated or uneducated. We strongly believe in savings and hoarding for the future, which most economists would agree is a very good financial habit, for the individual and his country too. India's household-sector savings are the biggest source of investment for the economy. The country's savings rate, or the share of gross domestic savings in the gross domestic product (GDP), has come down to 30.5% in 2018, as per available official data, as compared to nearly 37% in 2008.

Now, to invest these small savings, the small investors look towards either the nationalised banks or NBFCs or personal holdings. In fact a large number of these investors park their money with nationalised banks and now a days with private sector banks too. Thus, they are putting their trust in that financial entity, assured that they'd be able to access these savings when they need it or perhaps in their old age, besides getting an attractive or minimum rate of return.

However, according to economists and financial experts, as per some financial proposals termed as economic reforms, this is tend to change as some of these proposals are quite detrimental to the interests of the small investors and depositors.

New proposals

The government since 2017 has been trying to give the authority to regulate the country's banks to a new entity, a task, which so far has been performed very well by the RBI.

In an interview to a web channel, Thomas Franco former General Secretary of the All India Banks Officers Confederation (AIBOA), said that the government

introduced the Financial Resolution and Deposit Insurance Bill (FRDI) in 2017, and it was presented before the parliament in 2017, 2018 and later withdrawn in 2019, but was rechristened as Financial Sector Development, Regulation and Resolution Bill 2019 and it may be introduced in the monsoon or winter session of the parliament, later this year for its approval.

Economists say that this bill did not come into being on its own but owes its genesis to the global financial upheavals. The process of saving commercial banks started with the 2008 US economic meltdown, when the US administration through the US Federal Reserve infused huge funds to save the American banking system. Subsequently, the US prevailed over the G-7 group to include more countries including India to constitute a Financial Stability Board, and circulated a note related to future bailout of the commercial banks. One recommendation was that no government will bail out the commercial banks but it will be done using the depositor's money.

One big difference between US, European and Indian banks is that in India public sector banks dominate the banking sector. And the trust or commitment to provide security to the depositors is through a sovereign guarantee. Besides these banks have to comply with various financial and regulatory laws, which have worked quite well so far.

FSDR 2019

But the new FSDR bill will change all this, it has some major recommendations related to the bailing of the ailing banks, according to which a new Resolution Authority will issue rules relating to the bailout. According to Mr Franco as per the proposals, the depositors money will be used for the bailout instead of government's or financial institutions' support, which in itself is wrong, further the authority can issue orders to write off big corporate loans but not small depositors' loans, thus putting small depositors in a precarious situation. This according to him is indeed dangerous and against the principle of safeguarding the interests of the small depositors, as the bill modi-

fies repaying liabilities at the expense of small depositors. And this small depositors base is not small, Mr Franco stated adding that 68% of country's small depositors are senior citizens who have deposited their life savings with these banks for financial security.

Moreover, what is the need to constitute a new regulatory authority, when the RBI so far has handled this task quite efficiently? The answer to this according to Mr Franco is that as per the prevailing laws every bailout package recommended by the RBI is to be approved by the parliament. But the FSDR 2019 do away with this provision and empowers the new Regulatory Authority to recommend the future course of action for salvaging the ailing bank.

Experts say that this bill will practically take away the government's and RBI's control over nationalised banks besides eroding customer's faith in country's banks. First, everyone was asked to have a bank account, inducing them with transferring government's doles through the banks, in the name of digitalisation, and then new banking charges were thrust down the throat of new small depositors, imposing an unnecessary service burden and curtailed access to their own money. Mr Franco is of the view that what may happen is that this new constituted regulatory authority might one fine day decide that Bank A is not doing good, so it may put it on block and transfer it to corporate entity X, who himself might be a bigger defaulter of the same bank in the past, but due to its financial clout becomes the new owner instead of the public.

Policy framework in banking sector

Till 1990 we had no problem with our banking sector minus one or two small scams. Mr Franco asserts that it was only after 1990, when we went to the IMF and WB and changed our financial policies, assured by our leaders that within 3 years things will be right and we will be one of the strongest and developed economies of the world. But instead our spending was injudicious and priorities have shifted; we are not addressing it in the manner in which it should be done.

We still have 28% of our population living below poverty line; but we are not orienting our policies and programmes towards their upliftment because only a 1% minority which controls country's financial institutions and money, is increasing their assets by taking advantage of cheap loans by public sector banks. One of the country's biggest conglomerate owes Rs 275000 crores in outstanding to various PSBs but instead of evolving a mechanism to recover it or chasing other big-ticket defaulters, our regulatory bodies harass a common man who may have a small loan of Rs 10 lakhs only. And now plans are being put in motion to sell off the PSBs to those very corporates who owe these banks a large sum of money.

The common man is who is still reeling under the after shocks of digitisation, demonetisation and GST and now Corona's economic meltdown, is at his wits ends on where to keep his money safe from the very same people who are supposed to safeguard his money and financial interests.

The sum total is that instead of strengthening the present public sector banks through infusion of funds and evolving a rigorous mechanism to recover big ticket bad loans through strong regulations or recovery plans, the plans are afoot to handover the country's banking sector to the private sector through the back door, and what happened in countries like Chile and Peru, which adopted such machinations, might happen in India too, and its economy might crash so badly that it will not be able to recover, but may become dependent on dole outs from the IMF or the World Bank, as per their diktats.

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The Fastest Way Out of the Pandemic

As it stands, over 160 vaccine candidates are in preclinical or clinical development. There is no way to know which will pass clinical trials and be licensed

SETH BERKLEY, RICHARD HATCHETT,
SOUMYA SWAMINATHAN

Every day, the COVID-19 pandemic costs the world thousands more lives and billions more dollars. The most efficient way to bring this crisis to an end – possibly as early as next year – is with a safe and effective vaccine, manufactured in large quantities and distributed globally. To avoid any unnecessary delays, governments should take this moment, while researchers work to develop the right formula, to prepare the ground for rapid production and broad, equitable deployment.

This is the principle on which the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) Facility is based. Created by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, the World Health Organization, and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations, this innovative platform aims to distribute at least two billion doses of COVID-19 vaccine by the end of 2021.

That many doses – which will be divided equitably among participating countries, regardless of their ability to pay – would cover some 20% of populations in participating countries. It would thus be sufficient to protect high-risk and vulnerable people and frontline health-care workers worldwide. (Additional doses would also be stockpiled, so that any future outbreak could be tackled before it spun out of control.)

As it stands, over 160 vaccine candidates are in preclinical or clinical development. There is no way to know which will pass clinical trials and be licensed

(failure rates of vaccines in early development are high). But we can ensure that, by the time one does, an effective framework for manufacture and deployment is in place. To that end, governments must invest in COVAX as soon as possible.

The problem is that governments may feel compelled to eschew cooperation, in favor of negotiating directly with vaccine manufacturers to claim the doses they need. Yes, governments are duty-bound to protect their own citizens above all. But this national approach carries serious risks, beginning with the possibility that a government may back the wrong vaccines.

Even if a government secures enough doses of an effective vaccine for its own population, some of its people – such as those who are immunocompromised and may not be able to be vaccinated – would be left exposed if other countries are unable to obtain enough vaccine. And this leaves aside the moral imperative of ensuring that people are not cut off from lifesaving drugs.

During the 2009 swine flu pandemic, a few countries cornered the vaccine market, leaving the vast majority of the global population with no vaccine at all until the outbreak was effectively over. This scenario must be avoided at all costs during the current crisis, not least because COVID-19 has a much higher infection and mortality rate.

By collaborating with global health agencies through COVAX, governments can ensure that everyone has equal access to COVID-19 vaccines. For countries that have secured bilateral deals with manufacturers, COVAX amounts to an insurance policy, in

case they bet on the wrong candidates. For countries that haven't secured any deals – the vast majority of the world – COVAX is the only way to avoid being pushed to the back of the line.

COVAX ensures that the benefits and risks of vaccine development are broadly shared. With the largest portfolio of vaccine candidates anywhere in the world, it gives participating governments the best odds of receiving a safe and effective vaccine as soon as it becomes available – and ensures that this moment comes much sooner.

When pharmaceutical companies are shouldering all of the financial risks, they will invest in scaling up production only after their vaccine has completed clinical trials and been approved. This approach may make business sense, but it does not make sense in the context of a rapidly moving global pandemic.

COVAX employs a radically different approach. In addition to using “push” financing – direct investment in research, development, and manufacturing – it uses “pull” financing, in the form of advance purchase commitments for large numbers of doses upon licensure. This provides powerful incentives for the private sector to support urgent vaccine development

Moreover, COVAX pools government resources to fund scaling up the most promising candidates even before clinical trials are completed. That way, when approval comes, large quantities of vaccine doses will be ready to go. Already, WHO is working with a range of stakeholders, including member states and civil-society organizations, to develop and implement a mechanism for equitable and fair allocation of vaccine doses, once they become available.

COVAX will support only vaccine candidates that are developed in accordance with the highest possible safety standards. By working with experts around the world to develop target product profiles, share best-practice testing models, facilitate multi-country clinical trials, and promote regulatory harmonization, COVAX will establish a new benchmark for rapid, safe, and efficacious vaccine development and delivery.

We cannot afford to leave our economies on their current path for much longer. As global GDP shrinks – the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank forecast about a 5% contraction in 2020 – poverty and hunger are rising sharply. With the world economy losing more than \$10 billion each day, shortening the pandemic by even a few days would more than offset the costs of COVAX. Global collaboration – where risks and benefits are shared equally – has never been a better value proposition.

Project Syndicate

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In Pandemic, Kashmir's 'Plagued' Past Returns as Folklore

SHOWKAT GANAI

When plague commenced in Kashmir from a crime in early 1900, it created a chain of fascinating twists and turns in valley's epidemic history. Many such stories are now emerging as folktales in the locked down region.

When an 'influential' woman pilgrim bypassed high security vigil at Srinagar Airport and subsequently became the first Covid-19 positive case in Kashmir on March 16, it reminded many of a veiled Kashmiri woman returning from a plague-ridden Rawalpindi on a tonga in 1903, and becoming the epidemic trigger in the valley.

Then, as now, Kashmir witnessed an emergency response to tackle an emergency situation. The contact tracing, quarantine quarters, the fear of community transfer were as much in vogue, as they are today.

But then, there's something more intriguing about Kashmir's plagued past which continues to fascinate people. Most of these stories have become the lockdown folklore in Kashmir now.

That Mythical Spider

As first epidemic record of Kashmir, Kalhana's Rajatarangini talks about Luta, a Sanskrit word for spider during the time of Jayapida (779-810 AD).

Luta-disease, writes Dr MA Stein in his translation of Kalhana's treatise, was "contagious and fatal".

But how did that spider become the epidemic epicenter is something which Rajatarangini doesn't explain beyond a point.

However, Kalhana's claim is being challenged by medical science today, as it believes that spider-bite is unlikely to cause epidemic disease like plague.

The Killer Grass

During the reign Mughal Emperor Jahangir, the outbreak of plague in 1615 had killed many Kashmiris.

One day, Jahangir writes in his Kashmir Memoirs, a dead body was thrown on grass. "It chanced that a cow came and ate some of the grass," the emperor notes. "It died. And some dogs that had eaten its [cow's] flesh also all died."

Things had come to such a pass, Jahangir notes, that due to fear of death, fathers would not approach their children, and children would not go near their fathers.

'A Strong Wind of Destruction'

In the summer of 1892, Kashmir witnessed the worst cholera epidemic, killing 5,781 persons in Srinagar, and 5,931 in villages.

It came to be known as "Wobah" in Kashmiri.

Kashmiri name of cholera, or any other epidemic, is the same what Abul Fazl, the grand vizier of the Mughal emperor Akbar, and author of the Akbarnama, means by his words, "a strong wind of destruction" that had earlier unleashed massive death in "Hindustan".



This fatal wind in the form of the last famine, 1878-79, alone killed three-fifth of the population from the valley.

Circle and Burn

When plague struck Kashmir in 1615, Emperor Jahangir was told that 3000 houses bearing three circles burnt and ended the epidemic.

But the emperor called it a strange affair in his memoirs.

"It certainly does not agree with the canons of reason," he wrote, "and my intellect cannot accept it."

A Tonga Traveller

In 1901, as plague spread, medical examination of all visitors before entering Kashmir was made mandatory by the British Resident in Srinagar.

As nearby Rawalpindi and Jammu had become epidemic hotbeds, the examination was being done to keep plague away from Kashmir Valley.

It kept the valley safe, until a veiled and influential woman came from plague-ridden Rawalpindi on a tonga along with her two servants on November 13, 1903, and passed through the check post.

Five days later, one of her servants, Ghulam Mohammed, was found at the gate of State Hospital in Srinagar with symptoms suggesting plague. He was quickly quarantined in a tent away from city.

"He had been severely ill before coming from Uri and staying at the house of Subhan Bhat, a landlord relative of the

woman, living at Kralpura," Dr. A. Mitra, a Bengali-man, the then Chief Medical Officer Kashmir writes in The Indian Medical Gazette.

At Bhat's place, the servant's health deteriorated and was brought to the hospital by another servant. A day after, Ghulam Mohammed became the first dead case of pneumonia plague in Kashmir.

Torched House

Soon, a group of coolies were vaccinated and engaged for disposal of dead and disinfection work. They buried Ghulam Mohammed's body in a 10 feet deep grave with 2 feet of carbonate of lime surrounding it. All of his articles were burnt.

Soon, Subhan Bhat's house was also burnt along with the grains kept in the compound of the house by various dealers.

An Erring Cop

Four cops posted to guard the tent where the body of patient was kept were strictly instructed not to go inside. But one of them soon died of plague. Despite his family protest, his body was buried in a deep grave.

The dead cop in connivance with his healthcare worker brother, the investigation later revealed, had gone into the tent to steal things from the body.

Some say he put his mouth on the

finger of the deceased to bring out a ring, biting it with his teeth.

"If this story is correct," writes Mitra in his report, "[then] plague commenced in Kashmir from a crime."

A Plague on Both Your Houses

Soon, news came about death of several persons in two houses in Srinagar.

The first house belonged to the deceased cop, where two persons died. And the second one was the house of another cop who had visited the first house. Five people had died there.

Nobody was sure how did this community transfer began.

"There're two possible explanations here," Mitra writes. "Either the relatives of deceased policeman had exhumed his body and reburied it at native place or they had found his hospital attendant brother who possibly died at Geru village and subsequently buried by the family in their locality."

Death on the Run

The dead cop's health worker brother who had escaped quarantine had somehow reached village Geru. He soon died there, but not before becoming a super-spreader of infection.

Among his victims were the village headman and his three sons. Mourners from many villages participated in their funeral and returned home carrying back infection.

"Till the news reached to me," Dr Mitra writes, "nobody survived in the village to tell the true story."

This year, the dawn chorus sounds different. In the dark hours before sunrise, my yard whistles, chips, hoots, and trills with deafening birdsong.

The birds carolling at my home — robins, mockingbirds, warblers, cardinals, titmice, finches — sound more numerous, boisterous and energetic than in past years, all singing raucously at the same time, like a poetry slam where everyone's reading at once.

Have the lockdowns resulted in more abundant birds? Is our behaviour changing theirs, making them bolder, louder, more present in our yards and parks, or is the birdsong just more audible because there's less ambient roar from cars, overhead jets, construction?

Or is it we who have changed, taking more notice of bird life now that our own lives have slowed?

Birds may have something important to tell us about what it takes to navigate this world, especially under difficult circumstances. In exploring new discoveries in bird science, I'm struck by how birds play, adapt, innovate, and especially, work together in tough times

- Jennifer Ackerman

The studies aren't in on the impact of shifting human patterns on bird activity during the pandemic. It will most likely take years before we have firm data. But the anecdotes, from all around the world, are intriguing.

My friends in Australia and New Zealand tell me that since the lockdowns began, flocks of spine-tailed swifts have swelled, more fairy-wrens are popping up at their bird baths and kereru — big pigeons that swallow large fruit — are perching on their back fences.

"The lack of people is indeed being noticed by the wildlife," said Darryl Jones, an ecologist at Griffith University specialising in the interaction between humans and wildlife.

He points to the pair of very rare glossy black cockatoos that showed up on the vacant Griffith campus near Brisbane, along with more than 50 koalas in the nearby forest.

When the lockdowns were in full force, birds appeared to be thriving with the dip in noise and light and air pollution, along with emptied-out parks and public gardens that are usually a crush of people and traffic congestion.

In the US, ravens normally on edge around their nests in Yosemite were more relaxed, even playful in the empty parking lots, and endangered piping plo-

Why The Birds Are Singing In This Pandemic

We want to return to our lives and livelihoods, but not by sacrificing the natural world

JENNIFER ACKERMAN



vers had the beaches to themselves.

One friend of mine from New York wrote to say, "There seem to be birds everywhere in the city, more than usual, having parties in the bushes, quarrelling, singing."

Reduction of noise

The reduction in noise may have a more subtle but still beneficial effect. Birds sing in the early morning to mark their territory and attract mates. Their efforts, however, often coincide with the roar of early morning rush hour.

A few years ago, scientists from the University of Florida found that noisy highways prevented tufted

titmice and northern cardinals from hearing alarm calls from fellow birds, warning of dangerous predators in the area, putting them at greater risk of becoming prey.

Now that things are opening up, all of this may be changing. Those ravens in Yosemite parking lots and shorebirds nesting on once empty beaches must now contend with returning crowds. The human din is beginning again.

The more enduring change may be in human behaviour around birds. At the moment, most serious bird-watchers are not sashaying out to distant locations to spot a vagrant species or catch the big waves of migratory species passing through, but rather, observing more bird life close to home.

More spring than ever

A lot of us, even those of us who aren't hard-core birders, are turning more toward our yards and gardens, noting birds and bird activities we've never seen before — not because they're new, necessarily, but because we've just never paid such close attention. One neighbour walking her dog remarked that she's seeing more of spring than ever.

"I just saw an early indigo bunting flying through our yard," wrote a friend. "Ordinarily they don't love my neighbourhood and especially our overgrown yard, so I am ecstatic."

With any luck, this human shift may stick: People noticing the birds around them more and finding entertainment, solace, even wisdom in watching them going about their lives in a regular way, finding mates, building nests, raising young, resilient and persistent.

Birds may have something important to tell us about what it takes to navigate this world, especially under difficult circumstances. In exploring new discoveries in bird science, I'm struck by how birds play, adapt, innovate, and especially, work together in tough times.

Birds cooperate and collaborate in everything from hunting, courting, and migrating, to raising and defending their young, sometimes even across species lines.

We want to return to our lives and livelihoods, but not by sacrificing the natural world that supports us in body and in spirit.

Jennifer Ackerman is a columnist who writes about science, nature, and human biology

The New York Times



PAINTING DEVELOPS CHILDREN'S Cognitive, Artistic Abilities: STUDY

Agencies

A new research, using digital image analysis technology, has shed light on some of the challenges children face when representing their imaginations through the medium of paint.

The research from Japan Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (JAIST), also offered concrete insight into the development of children's psyches, and importantly, offers suggestions for educators to improve children's cognitive, spatial, and artistic abilities.

Painting is a recreational and creative activity enjoyed by children across the world. However, children's paintings also serve as crucial artifacts of their perceptions, as they contain the sum of what children see as "essential." The spatial relationships between objects in paintings represent painters' experiences and technical prowess and tend to indicate shortcomings of either. These are often perceived by viewers of paintings, but until now, detailed evaluation and analysis of children's art have been subjective, relying on the trained eye of an artist or critic.

JAIST researchers Lan Yu and Yukari Nagai have developed and tested a digital analysis process by which children's paintings can be digitised, categorised, and then thoroughly analysed. Content, scale, patterns, details, and the relationships between objects in the paintings are objectively quantified and calculated.

Trends identified among the subjects sampled, 182 girls and 234 boys in the Republic of China, indicate that children who have not received instruction display poor abilities to recognise and emulate spatial relationships.

The younger the painter, the less likely that he or she will have developed these cognitive abilities. Lack of detail and inability to imitate objects is identified as common to children's painting. Statistical analysis of the boys and girls in this study indicated that they have different attitudes toward painting; girls preferred participating in painting more than boys did.

This research has implications in art education, suggesting that art teachers focus on several key elements that are useful to the cognitive development of young painters.

Guiding children to paint objects outside could enhance their awareness of their natural environments. Focusing instruction on object size, and the ability to recognise and control it could remedy this crucial deficit in children's paintings.

Specifically training students to imitate objects could show significant results in the overall quality of children's paintings. And finally, instruction in composition and creative methods is correlated to increasing the enjoyment and reducing children's perception of difficulty toward painting as a creative process.

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Coronavirus: Physical Distancing May Help Ease Burden On Hospitals, But Only To A Point

Press Trust Of India

Scientists have found that longer periods of social distancing alone are not successful when it comes to slowing COVID-19 spread, an advance which may help make better decisions in countries where a second wave of the pandemic is expected.

"Conventional wisdom was, the more intense and long-term the social distancing, the more you will curb the disease spread," said Rajan Chakrabarty, a co-author of the study from Washington University in St. Louis in the US.

According to the study, published in the journal *Chaos*, any strategy that involves social distancing requires other steps be taken in tandem.

"But that is true if you have social distancing implemented with contact tracing, isolation and testing. Without those, you will give rise to a second wave," Chakrabarty said.

Payton Beeler, another co-author of the study, noted that if social distancing is the only measure taken, it must be implemented extremely carefully in order for its benefits to be fully realized.

Their epidemiological model used data gathered by Johns Hopkins University in the US between March 18 and March 29, a period marked by a rapid surge in COVID-19 cases and the onset of social distancing in most US states. Calibrating



the model using these datasets allowed the authors to analyse unbiased results that had not yet been affected by large-scale distancing in place, they said.

The model also included details on how much people of different age groups interact, and how that affects the spread of transmission.

"Had social distancing been implemented earlier, we probably would've done a better job," Chakrabarty said. Over the short-term, more distancing and less hospital demand go hand in hand, the scientists said, adding that this is only up to two weeks. After that, they said the time spent distancing does not benefit hospital demand as much. Society would have to increase social distancing time exponentially in order to see a linear decrease in hospital demand, the researchers noted.

They said this leads to diminishing returns. Society would see smaller and smaller benefits to hospital demand the longer it spent social distancing, the scientists explained.

According to the researchers, if social distancing "alone" is to be implemented longer than two weeks, a moderate shut down, say between 50-70 per cent, could be more effective for the society than a stricter complete shut-down in yielding the largest reduction in medical demands.

Another strategy for flattening the curve involves acting intermittently, alternating between strict social distancing and no distancing to alleviate the strain on hospitals, the study noted. According to the model, the most efficient distancing-to-no-distancing ratio is five to one, meaning one day of no distancing

for every five days at home. Had society acted in this way, the researchers said the hospital burden could have been reduced by 80 per cent. "Bending the curve using social distancing alone is analogous to slowing down the front of a raging wildfire without extinguishing the glowing embers," said Chakrabarty.

"They are waiting to start their own fires once the wind carries them away," he said, adding however that his team's model cannot inform strategies going forward as it used data collected in March. But Chakrabarty added that it may be able to inform our actions if we find ourselves in a similar situation in the future.

"Next time, we must act faster, and be more aggressive when it comes to contact tracing and testing and isolation," Chakrabarty said.

The Key To Slowing Ageing May Be In Your Genes, Blood Iron Levels

Agencies

A group of scientists has now identified the genes which are linked to ageing. Studying the genes could help explain why some people age at different rates to others.

The international study using genetic data from more than a million people suggests that maintaining healthy levels of iron in the blood could be a key to ageing better and living longer.

The findings could accelerate the development of drugs to reduce age-related diseases, extend healthy years of life, and increase the chances of living to old age free of disease, the researchers say.

Scientists from the University of Edinburgh and the Max Planck Institute for Biology of Ageing in Germany focused on three measures linked to biological ageing



lifespan, years of life lived free of disease (healthspan), and being extremely long-lived (longevity).

Biological ageing - the rate at which our bodies decline over time - varies between people and drives the world's most fatal diseases, including heart disease, dementia and cancers.

The researchers pooled information from three public datasets to enable analysis in unprecedented detail. The combined dataset was equivalent to studying 1.75 million lifespans or more than 60,000 extremely long-lived people.

The team pinpointed ten regions of the genome linked to long lifespan, healthspan, and

longevity. They also found that gene sets linked to iron were overrepresented in their analysis of all three measures of ageing.

The researchers confirmed this using a statistical method - known as Mendelian randomisation - that suggested that genes involved in metabolising iron in the blood are partly responsible for a healthy long life.

Blood iron is affected by diet and abnormally high or low levels are linked to age-related conditions such as Parkinson's disease, liver disease and a decline in the body's ability to fight infection in older age.

The researchers say that designing a drug that could mimic the influence of genetic variation on iron metabolism could be a future step to overcome some of the effects of ageing, but caution that more work is required.

Pregnant Women Living Near Gas Flaring Sites May Be At Higher Risk Of Preterm Birth

Women living near oil and gas production sites where natural gas is flared may be at a higher risk of giving birth preterm, a team of California researchers reported on Wednesday.

Analysis of more than 23,000 birth records from 2012 through 2015 reveals a 50% higher chance of pre-term birth for women living within three miles (5 km) of Texas' Eagle Ford shale basin than for women who lived farther away, according to the study.

"Our study finds that living near flaring is harmful to pregnant women and babies," said



co-author Jill Johnston, an environmental health scientist at the University of Southern California.

The research, published in the journal *Environmental Health Perspectives*, adds to evidence linking pollution with poorer pregnancy outcomes. Another study in June found a correlation between air pollution or higher outdoor temperatures and increased chances of having a pre-

term or stillborn baby. Those findings, in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, resulted from analyzing 70 studies covering 32 million births. It also found that black women were disproportionately at risk. In the new study, by scientists at USC and UCLA, the association between preterm births and flaring proximity was seen only among Hispanic and Latina women, who made up 55% of the study population. No effect was seen among non-Hispanic White women, who comprised 37% of the total. Preterm babies are at higher risk of respiratory and cardiovascular illness, as well as developmental delays.

As India Virus Cases Hit One Million, How Doctors Are Suffering

GREATER NOIDA: In suffocating full protective gear inside an intensive care unit with no air conditioning, doctor Showkat Nazir Wani is risking his life battling brutal heat and treating coronavirus patients.

Almost 100 doctors in India have died since the pandemic began, working punishingly long hours in temperatures that can top 40 degrees Celsius.

"Wearing this PPE kit at the temperature of 40 de-

pitals are highly vulnerable. The Indian Medical Association, a voluntary group of doctors which says 99 physicians have died so far, this week issued a "red alert".

"Doctors need to take charge of the situation and ensure the safety of themselves, their families, their colleagues and staff," it said in a statement.

Nausea and dizziness

Sharda Hospital has been providing free treatment to COVID-19 patients under instructions from the state government, which means facilities are basic and many patients are poor.

Not all patients are in hospital gowns. One was on a bed wearing a bedraggled T-shirt with bloodstains.

Because there is no air conditioning, doctors and nurses are quickly drenched in sweat.

Since they are enveloped head-to-foot in plastic protective gear, the sweat can't evaporate to cool them down.

And as going to the toilet means removing all the gear and then putting a new set, some staff skimp on drinking enough water.

Nausea and dizziness can sometimes ensue, and in the long term the staff can risk serious problems including organ damage.

Abhishek Deshwal, who heads the hospital's intensive care unit, said working in such heat while wearing the body suits was "doubly stressful for the staff".

"But we are trying to do our best, we don't have any other option."



grees, it's very difficult, I can say because you are drenched in sweat. Still, (we try) to do our best to save the lives of patients," Wani, a resident doctor at the private Sharda Hospital in Greater Noida outside New Delhi, said.

"It feels very hot and suffocating. But we have to wear it for our own safety," the 29-year-old said before rushing to attend to a patient battling a lung collapse.

India on Friday hit a million coronavirus cases, the third-highest total in the world, with no sign yet of the infection curve flattening as new cases emerge in rural areas. More than 25,000 people have died.

The country has some of the lowest per capita health care spending in the world and poorly paid staff working in dilapidated state hos-

pital. Earlier, Speaker C P Joshi had written to the court that the notices will not be acted upon till 5 pm on Friday. The counsel agreed to extend this to 5 pm on Tuesday as the court is yet to give an order on the petition.

The petition had challenged the notices based on a Congress complaint that the MLAs should be disqualified from the Rajasthan Assembly for defying a party whip.

The court of Chief Justice Indrajit Mahanty and Justice Prakash Gupta also asked Congress chief whip Mahesh Joshi, who had filed the complaint before the Speaker, to respond to the dissidents' petition by Saturday.

The Pilot camp has argued that a party whip applies only when the Assembly is in session.

In its complaint to the Speaker, the Congress had sought action against Pilot and the other dissidents under paragraph 2 (1) (a) of the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution.

The provision disqualifies MLAs if they "voluntarily" give up the membership of the party which they represent in the House.



LOCKDOWN WAS STRICTLY ENFORCED in various areas of downtown Srinagar on Friday -KO Photo Abid Bhat

Rajasthan Crisis: HC Puts On Hold Speaker Action Against Pilot, 18 Dissident MLAs

JAIPUR: Sachin Pilot and 18 other Congress dissident MLAs on Friday got a four-day reprieve from any action by the Assembly Speaker on the disqualification notices served on them, after the Rajasthan High Court extended its hearing on the issue to next week.

The Division Bench of the court, hearing the dissident MLAs' petition against the Speaker's notices, adjourned on Friday evening. It fixed the next hearing for 10 am on Monday.

The counsel for the Speaker assured the court that no order shall be passed on the notice till 5.30 pm on Tuesday.

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So far, the police have recorded the statements of more than two dozen people, including Chakraborty, filmmaker Sanjay Leela Bhansali, Bollywood casting director Mukesh Chhabra and Rajput's family members, as part of a probe into the suicide, which jolted the Hindi film industry.

Rajput starred in films such as 'Shuddh Desi Romance', 'Raabta', 'Kedarnath' and 'Sonchiriyaa'. But his most prominent role came as cricketer Mahendra Singh Dhoni in the biopic, 'MS Dhoni: The Untold Story'. PTI



No Need For CBI Probe In Sushant Singh Rajput Death Case: Anil Deshmukh

NAGPUR: There was no need for a CBI probe into the death case of Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput as the Mumbai police were capable of handling the matter, said Maharashtra Home Minister Anil Deshmukh on Friday.

The police were also examining the angle of "business rivalry" in the case, he said.

Rajput, 34, was found dead in his Bandra apartment in Mumbai on June 14 and what the police claimed was a case of suicide. In the initial investigation, the Mumbai police had found that the actor was under medication for depression.

On Thursday, Rajput's friend, actor Rhea Chakraborty, in a tweet, demanded a CBI inquiry to understand what "pressures" prompted Rajput to take the extreme step of suicide.

Chakraborty said though she has "complete faith" in the government, a CBI inquiry would help bring justice to the case.

Talking to PTI, Deshmukh said the Mumbai police were conducting a detailed inquiry into the actor's death and also recording statements of people concerned.

"There was no need to give the case to the CBI. Our police officials are capable and doing the inquiry in right

way. We are also examining the angle of business rivalry," said Deshmukh.

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They Congress claims that this is the inference that can be drawn from the MLAs' conduct. But the dissident camp says Pilot never indicated any intention to leave the party.

Pilot was sacked as Deputy Chief Minister and the president of the state unit of the party after he rebelled against Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot. PTI

BJP's Gajendra Singh Shekhawat Involved In Rajasthan Horse Trading: Congress

JAIPUR: The Congress on Friday demanded that a case be lodged against BJP leader and Union minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, accusing him of being involved in horse trading of Rajasthan MLAs.

The party also suspended rebel MLAs Bhanwarlal Sharma and Vishvendra Singh from the party for allegedly being involved in the conspiracy to topple the government.

AICC spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said that two audio recordings have surfaced in which the MLA Sharma, union minister Shekhawat and a BJP leader Sanjay Jain are purportedly talking about the "conspiracy" to topple the government. He demanded an FIR against the three and their arrest.

Surjewala said chief whip Mahesh Joshi has given a complaint to the Special Operation Group for registra-

tion of FIR in the matter. Sharma has, however, denied the allegations. When the audio tapes surfaced on Thursday, he had termed them as fake and said the voice in it was not his.

Fury Of The Covid-19 Pandemic Provides Context For Un's Rebirth And Reform: Modi

Asserting that only reformed multilateralism can meet the aspirations of humanity, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Friday said the United Nations was originally born from the furies of the Second World War and the fury of the COVID-19 pandemic provides the context for its "rebirth and reform."

Addressing the high-level segment of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) session via a video link, Modi said the 75th Anniversary of the founding of the UN is an opportunity to assess its role and relevance in today's world.

Noting that a lot has changed since its formation, he said the UN now brings together 193 member countries and along with its membership, the expectations from the organisation have also grown.

At the same time, multilateralism is facing many challenges, he said in the address -- his first since India was overwhelmingly elected as a non-permanent member of the powerful Security Council last month.

"India firmly believes that the path to achieve sustainable peace and prosperity is through multilateralism... However, multilateralism needs to represent the reality of the contemporary world."

"Only reformed multilateralism with a reformed United Nations at its centre can meet the aspirations of humanity," Modi said.

The prime minister urged

all nations, while celebrating 75 years of the UN, to pledge to reform the global multilateral system.

He also called for enhancing the UN's relevance, its effectiveness, and to make it the basis of a new type of human-centric globalisation.

"The United Nations was originally born from the furies of the Second World War. Today, the fury of the pandemic provides the context for its rebirth and reform. Let us not lose this chance," he asserted.

Referring the COVID-19

pandemic, Modi said India has always prided itself as the first responder in the region—a friend in need.

"Be it earthquakes, cyclones or any other natural or man-made crisis, India has responded with speed and solidarity. In our joint fight against COVID, we have extended medical and other assistance to over 150 countries. "We also helped create a SAARC COVID emergency fund in our neighbourhood," he said.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has severely tested the resilience of all nations. In India, we have tried to make the fight against the pandemic a people's movement, by combining the efforts of government and society," he said.



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LG Flags Off Mobile Gensets Fleet For Emergency Response & Disaster Relief

SRINAGAR: Lieutenant Governor, Girish Chandra Murmu today flagged off ready to deploy Mobile Genset Fleet for emergency response and disaster relief in case of natural disasters and extreme weather events in Kashmir.

The 10 Gensets would be stationed in each district for any eventuality as a disaster preparedness measure. These gensets will prove to be very useful in other extreme weather conditions when grid supply gets snapped.

Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Pandurang K. Pole; Secretary, Jal Shakti Department, M Raju; IGP Kashmir, Vijay Kumar; Deputy Commissioner Srinagar; Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary; Chief Engineers, and senior officers were present on the occasion at TRC Srinagar.

The Lt Governor directed the Jal Shakti department for immediate procurement of 10 more Mobile Gensets to strengthen the emergency response system in case of any eventuality.

He observed that every possible mechanism shall be explored to improve the water supply position in Jammu & Kashmir so that uninterrupted supply of the service is ensured even in case of natural disasters and

extreme weather situations. As an immediate measure, the Government of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir apportioned an amount of Rs 2,00 cr under SDRF during 2019-20 for purchase of Mobile Gensets to meet the critical demand during power outages in emergency situations, besides providing power backup to a wide range of Lift Water Supply Schemes on a rotational need basis, he added.

Secretary, Jal Shakti Department, M Raju informed the Lt Governor that the new Mobile Gensets from 50 KVA rating to 62.5 KVA are self-standing type provided with essential paraphernalia viz; parking canopies, waterproof camping tents, bedding, Kitchen Sets with LPG cooking arrangements etc. for the operational staff's convenience in order to enable rapid deployment at short notice.

The DG set carrier vehicles are also provided with GPS trackers to enable supervision by controlling officers from headquarter in real time.

Further, the department has created a transformer bank of 20 distribution transformers of varying capacities as an immediate relief in case of breakdown & troubleshooting.

NEWS MAKERS

Man Nabbed While Trying To Sneak Into Pak To Meet Girlfriend

A 20-year-old engineering student from Maharashtra was apprehended by the Border Security Force (BSF) in Gujarat's Rann of Kutch while he was trying to sneak into Pakistan on foot to meet a girl he had befriended on social media, officials said on Friday.

The man, identified as Zishan Mohammad Siddiqui, is a resident of Khwajangar in Maharashtra's Osmanabad town, they said.

"Siddiqui was held by the BSF on Thursday night and later handed over to the local police," Kutch-East Superintendent of Police, Parikshita Rathod, said.

"Police had issued an alert after a motorcycle with the Maharashtra registration number was found abandoned near Dholavira village



in the Rann of Kutch on Thursday evening. The BSF later nabbed the man when he was found walking towards the border in a bid to enter Pakistan," Rathod added.

According to a police official from Maharashtra, Siddiqui had left his home in Osmanabad on a motorcycle on July 11 to meet the girl in Pakistan as no means of public transport was available due

to the lockdown. "He went to Kutch on his motorcycle to cross the border and enter Pakistan," he said.

According to police sources, after his motorcycle got stuck in the sand, he started walking towards Pakistan.

The police official said that Siddiqui was in touch with a Pakistani girl through social media since the last few months and they were in love

with each other. "After his disappearance, his family members had approached the Osmanabad city police station and lodged a missing person's complaint," said Rajtilak Roshan, Superintendent of Police, Osmanabad.

"Police launched a probe and Siddiqui's social media accounts were examined, in which it came to light that he has left home to meet the girl in Pakistan," he said.

Based on his mobile phone records, the cyber wing of the Osmanabad police traced his whereabouts, the official said.

He was traced near Kutch and the details were shared with the Gujarat police, he said.

According to another official, the information about Siddiqui was also shared with the BSF

officials and he was detained on Thursday night, just before he was trying to cross the border and enter Pakistan.

The Osmanabad police said they have obtained some messages exchanged between Siddiqui and the Pakistani girl.

A team of Osmanabad police has left for Kutch to take his custody and bring him back home, the official said.

Meanwhile, a statement issued by the BSF in Gujarat said that after he was caught, Siddiqui told them that he was in love with a Karachi-based girl.

"He wanted to go to Pakistan and had used Google Map for navigation. He was apprehended about 1.5 kms short of Indo-Pak international border when he was attempting to cross

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