



Maximum : 30°C SUNSET
Today 06:36 PM
Minimum : 15°C SUNRISE
Humidity : 43% Tomorrow 06:15 AM



News Digest

Two OGWs Held With Rs 6L Cash: Police

Srinagar- State forces on Tuesday arrested two overground workers (OGWs) of militants from Awantipora area of Pulwama district of south Kashmir and seized Rs 6 lakh from their possession meant for funding the Al-Badr militant outfit, police said. "Acting on a specific information, police and security forces today morning arrested two militant associates at Ladhoo Crossing when the duo was travelling on a scooter from Shopian district to Khrew area in Pulwama," a police official said. He said the arrested persons have been identified as Rayees: **● P-02**

Infiltration Bid Foiled In Gurez Sector: Army

Srinagar: The army on Tuesday claimed to have foiled an infiltration bid along the Line of Control (LoC) in Gurez sector of Bandipora district in Jammu and Kashmir and recovered a cache of arms and ammunition. "Acting on specific @JmuKmrPolice inputs, suspicious movement was detected by alert troops along LoC on 14 September. Contact was established & the suspected militants were fired upon by Security forces. Aggressive & timely action by SF foiled an infiltration bid," Srinagar-based Chinara Corps of the army said in a tweet. The army said a cache of **● P-02**

Stray Dogs Injure Four In Sopore

Srinagar: Four persons, including a woman and her two daughters were attacked and injured by stray dogs in Sopore area of Baramulla district, reports said Tuesday. A pack of stray dogs attacked and injured four people, including a woman and her two daughters in Boiteengoo village of Sopore, news agency KNO reported. All the injured were shifted to Sopore Hospital for treatment. They were identified the injured as Poshabegum, wife of Fayaz Ahmad and her two daughters Arfatand Khushboo, while the fourth injured was identified Haseena wife of Mushtaq Ahmad.

SDA Seals Two-Storey Building At Nowgam

Srinagar: The officials of Srinagar Development Authority (SDA) on Tuesday sealed a two storied building constructed in violation of building rules Nowgam area of the city outskirts. According to an official spokesperson, the SDA's Enforcement Wing assisted by police today sealed a two storied building built in violation of building rules in Pohroo Chowk, Nowgam Bypass here. Vice Chairman, SDA Dr. Bashir Ahmad Lone said that the **● P-02**

COVID Toll Rises To 41 In Ladakh

Leh: The novel coronavirus toll in Ladakh rose to 41 on Tuesday with another death, while the number of cases climbed to 3,419 with 74 new infections, officials said. There are 903 active cases of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19), out of which 486 are in Leh and 417 in Kargil. As many as 2,475 patients have recovered, the officials said. A patient succumbed to the disease in Kargil on Monday, taking the toll in the district to 24, while 17 out of the total 41 deaths were in Leh, according to the officials. Out of the 74 new cases, 56 were in Leh and 18 in Kargil, taking the total to 3,419, the officials added.

LG Launches Career Education Platform For Students



Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Tuesday e-inaugurated an online process-based, standardised and scalable career education platform for students here.

The initiative is a step towards transforming the way in which our youth look at building their future in the world of possibilities, an official spokesman.

"The online, process-based, standardised and scalable, globally certified, career education platform, under career education initiative of J-K government in partnership with Transform Foundation aims to harness the energy, enthusiasm, and exuberant dreams of the youth of J&K," the spokesman said.

The overall intent is to enable curiosity, creative thinking, **►PAGE 02**

LADAKH FACE-OFF

India Facing A Challenge In Ladakh: Rajnath Singh

Says Armed Forces Ready To Deal With All Contingencies



Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Firmly articulating the country's position on the tense border row with China in eastern Ladakh, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Tuesday said Beijing has been very clearly conveyed that any attempt to "unilaterally" change the status quo along the Line of Actual Control is not at all acceptable, and that India's armed forces are ready to deal with "all contingencies" in the high-altitude region.

Army Prepares For Long Winter In Ladakh

From heating appliances and climate appropriate clothing to rations, fuel and tents that protect from the biting cold, all necessary supplies have reached the forward areas for the Army to gear up for the long, freezing winter in Ladakh region, officials asserted amid **● P-02**

Making a statement in Lok Sabha, Singh said he would not hesitate to share that India is facing a "challenge" in Ladakh but at the same time added that the House should have "full confidence" that the armed forces will always rise to the challenge and make the country proud.

"I will not hesitate to share with this august House that we are facing a challenge in Ladakh and I urge the House to pass a resolution in support **►PAGE 02**

Soldier Killed, Major Among 2 Injured In Pak Firing

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: An army man on Tuesday was killed while two others, including a Major injured as India and Pakistan troops on Tuesday traded heavy gunfire along the Line of Control (LoC) in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir.

Major Kambley, Havaldar Mahender and Rifleman A Thomas of army's 17 Madras were injured when Pakistani troops breached ceasefire agreement and opened fire upon Indian posts along the LoC in Mala area of Sunderbani Sector, official sources said.

The army officer and the Havaldar were shifted to Military Hospital Akhnoor for advanced treatment. However, Rifleman Thomas, who was admitted locally, succumbed to his injuries.

BSF Shoots Dead 'Intruder' In Uri

The Border Security Force (BSF) personnel on Tuesday shot dead an alleged intruder in Uri area of north Kashmir's Baramulla district. Around 2:15 pm, the personnel of BSF 70 battalion observed an individual **● P-02**

Official sources said that Indian army retaliated to Pakistan's unprovoked ceasefire violation in a "befitting manner"

Pertinently, a JCO was killed in a ceasefire violation by the Pakistan Army along the LoC in Keri sector of the district on September 2. (With GNS inputs)

Art-370 Revocation Fully Integrated JK, Ladakh With Country: Govt

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh have been fully integrated into the mainstream of the nation after the abrogation of Article 370, the government told Lok Sabha Tuesday.

Union Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy also said the benefits of all central laws that were being enjoyed by other citizens of the country are now available to the people of Jammu and Kashmir too.

After the constitutional changes and reorganisation of the erst-

'138 Militants Killed In Last 6 Months'

As many as 138 militants were killed by security forces between March and August this year, the Lok Sabha was informed on Tuesday. Union Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy said Jammu and Kashmir has been **● P-02**

'223 People Under Detention In J&K'

The government on Tuesday said 223 people are currently under detention in Jammu and Kashmir and no one is under house arrest. Union Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy said the government of Jammu and Kashmir **● P-02**

while state of J&K, the two union territories have been fully integrated into the mainstream of the nation, he said **►PAGE 02**

J&K Govt Issues

1.7 Million Domicile Certificates

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir government said on Tuesday that it has issued over 16.79 lakh domicile certificates to the people across twenty districts of the Union Territory.

In a statement issued here, an official spokesperson said that till Tuesday, out of total 2113879 lakh applications for domicile certificates, 1679520 people across the Union Territory have been issued the same till yesterday. In Kashmir division, he said 4.16 lakh have been issued while in Jammu, 12.44 lakh people have received domicile certificates.

"Of the total Domicile certificates issued in the UT, over 14.32 lakh were issued to the PRC holders (clause 1(a) and Clause 1(b)), 1.38 lakh under clause 2(a) and Clause 2(b) (to state subject applicants and non-state subject applicants and their children), including 1.01 lakh to state subjects and 45794 to non-state subject; 34045 to the students under (clause3) including 24455 state subjects and 9590 non-state subjects; and 18612 to Kashmiri Migrants/ children (Clause 4)," the official spokesperson said.

He said that the certificates issued under clause 2 include 28468 in Kashmir division and 1.09 lakh in Jammu division.

"The domicile **►PAGE 02**

19 More Coronavirus Deaths In J&K, Toll 916

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: At least nineteen people succumbed to coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday, taking the number of fatalities due to the virus in Union Territory to 916.

While Jammu division reported 14 more fatalities due to the deadly infection, five more deaths due to Covid-19 were reported from Kashmir Valley, officials said Tuesday. Among the victims of the deadly disease in Valley, they said included a 60-year-old woman from Ganderbal, a 70-year-old woman from Bheri Kadal, a 55-year-

New 1329 Cases Include 47 Security Men

Jammu and Kashmir reported on Tuesday 1329 new cases of coronavirus, including 47 security personnel and 69 travelers, taking the total number **● P-02**

old from Hawal, a 65-year-old from HMT Srinagar and a 52-year-old woman from Tangdar Kupwara.

Officials said that two among the 14 persons from Jammu division **►PAGE 02**

THE DOMICILE CERTIFICATES issued to the PRC holders include over 10.75 lakh in Jammu division and around 3.57 lakh in Kashmir division," the official spokesperson said.

32 Test Positive In Uri After Attending Funeral

At least thirty-two people from a village in the border town of Uri tested positive for coronavirus on Tuesday after attending funeral of a Covid-19 deceased woman. According to the doctors, 32 people, including 21 females, 11 males and six children **● P-02**

Militants Escape Army Dragnet In Pulwama After Injuring 2 Soldiers

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: Unidentified militants on Tuesday managed to give slip to the state after injuring two soldiers in a brief encounter in south Kashmir's Pulwama district.

A senior police officer said that a search operation was launched by joint team of forces including 50 RR, CRPF and Pulwama Police on specific inputs about the presence of militants in Marwal area of the district.

He said that the search operation turned into an encounter after the militants opened fire upon the joint team of state forces. The search team, he said retaliated the fire triggering an encounter in which two



No File Pic Andh Bhat

army soldiers were injured. However, the official said that militants managed to flee from the spot.

"Search operation which continued for many hours has been called off," the senior police officer said.

Photojournalists Thrashed By Forces Near Pampore

KEG, KPC Condemn Use Of Force Against Scribes

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: A photojournalist was injured on Tuesday after he was allegedly beaten up by security forces near the site of an encounter in Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir.

Kamran Yousuf claimed to have sustained leg injuries when he was thrashed by security forces while he was discharging his professional duties at Marwal in Pulwama where an encounter with militants was on.

While police did not deny the allegations levelled by the photojournalist, it said the mediapersons were stopped at they were moving close to the cordoned area.

"Today an exchange of fire took place at village Marwal between militants and SFs. Cordon was placed to prevent people from venturing inside as that would have endangered their security. However some media persons tried to move close who were duly stopped," police said in a tweet.

Meanwhile, Kashmir Editors' Guild (KEG) and Kashmir Press Club (KPC) on Tuesday condemned the use of force against the scribes who were covering the gun battle at Marwal Pampore.

At least one of them, Kamran Yousuf, was injured in the attack by the cops. Kamran works for **►PAGE 02**

Engineer Held For Siphoning Off Rs 2.67 Cr

SRINAGAR: The Anti-Corruption Bureau (ACB) on Tuesday arrested a Junior Engineer of Roads and buildings department for allegedly siphoning off an amount of over Rs 2.67 crore paid as penalty by cellular companies for damaging roads.

In a handout issued here, aAn ACB spokesperson said the Junior Engineer, Hakeem Imtiyaz, posted in R&B Shopian was arrested for misappropriation of funds deposited by cellular company in lieu of damages caused to roads for laying of telephone cables.

"On the basis of a verification, ACB registered a case FIR No. 06/2020 (U/s 5(1) (c), 5 (d) (2) PC Act Svt. 2006 & 420, 468, 471 RPC r/w section 120-B RP) in Police Station ACB Anantnag. The instant case was registered by ACB during the verification on the allegations of **● P-02**

Man Held For Posing As Police Officer

JAMMU: A man has been arrested on Tuesday for allegedly impersonating as a police sub-inspector in Doda district of Jammu and Kashmir, police said.

Neeraj Kumar, a resident of Arnora village, was arrested after he was found posing himself as a newly-posted sub-inspector to the public, a police official said.

He said Kumar was seen wearing a uniform in a public place.

He was booked under relevant sections of law and further investigation is on," the official said.

CBI Files Case Against Trust Run By Ex-Minister Lal Singh's Wife

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The CBI has registered a case against a Kathua-based educational trust, run by former Jammu and Kashmir minister Lal Singh's wife, and some government officials to probe encroachment on a huge tract of government land.

When contacted, Singh told PTI, "The CBI is doing its work."

The CBI said in a statement, Searches were conducted today at 10 locations including Jammu and Kathua at the premises of said educational trust/its Chairperson and residential premises of other accused which led to recovery of documents related to movable/immovable property etc.

The case has been registered against RB Educational Trust through its chair-

person and Singh's wife Kanta Andotra, former deputy commissioner of Kathua Ajay Singh Jamwal and former Tehsildar of Marheeh Avatar Singh.

Besides, the then Naib Tehsildar Chann Rorian (Marheeh Tehsil) Des Raj, the then Girdawar Ram Pal, the then Patwari Sudesh Kumar and other unknown persons have also been booked, the statement said.

The Central Bureau of Investigation had in June registered a Preliminary Enquiry (PE) on the allegations of encroachment on a huge tract of public/government/forest land in Kathua by certain persons in violation of J&K Agrarian Reforms Act in connivance with revenue and forest officials, the statement said.

It was further alleged that the accused were involved in the **►PAGE 02**

Sajjad Haider Elected KEG President, Masood Hussain Secretary General

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Kashmir Editors Guild (KEG) Monday elected its new body for a 2-year mandate. The media body elected Sajjad Haider as its President, Masood Hussain as Secretary-General, Shafat Kira and Manzoor Anjum as its Vice Presidents and Haji Mohammad Hayat as its new Treasurer.

The elections were held after a gap of more than two years as its former body had completed its term in office. The elections were held after due nominations were filed with all its members participating in the election exercise.



The voting was held after the completion of nominations for which papers were submitted in advance. The members who participated in Tuesday polling include Fayaz Ahmad Kaloo (Greater Kashmir), Bashir Manzar (Kashmir

Images), Bashir Ahmad Bashir (Srinagar Times), Sajjad Haider (Kashmir Observer), Haji Hayat (Kashmir Reader), Tahir Mohiuddin (Chattan), Manzoor Anjum (Uqab), Jeelani Qadri (Daily Afaag), Haroon Rashid (Nida-je-Mashriq), **►PAGE 02**

28 Killed In Lightning Strikes In Bihar, UP; Northern India Experiences Sultry Weather

NEW DELHI: At least 28 people were killed in separate incidents of lightning strike in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh on Tuesday as rains lashed several parts of the country while most places in northern India experienced sultry and dry weather.

According to the India Meteorological Department (IMD), most parts of the country are likely to get rainfall over the next three to four days and there will be no significant change in the maximum and minimum temperatures.

In the national capital, lack of

rain will likely push the mercury further up over the next two days, the weather department said.

There has been no rain in the city for the past five days.

According to the India Meteorological Department, the maximum temperature will likely touch the 38-degrees Celsius mark over the next two days amid lack of rain. It, however, forecast light rainfall on the weekend.

There has been 75 per cent less rainfall in September in the city so far, according to the Met department data.

In Bihar, 15 people died in six districts after being struck by lightning.

Gopalganj, Bhojpur and Rohtas districts reported three deaths each, while two deaths each were reported from Saran, Kaimur and Vaishali, officials said.

Chief Minister Nitish Kumar announced that the next of kin of those killed would be given Rs 4 lakh each as ex-gratia amount.

Meanwhile, light to moderate rain occurred at isolated places in Uttar Pradesh on Tuesday even as at least 13 people were killed due to

lightning strike at different places.

Four people died in Ghazipur, three in Kaushambi, two each in Kushinagar and Chitrakoot, one each in Jaunpur and Chandauli, Relief commissioner Sanjay Goel said in a statement.

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath directed the concerned District Magistrates to provide Rs 4 lakh financial assistance to family members of those killed, he said.

Goel also said that due to floods, 28 villages of Lakhimpur Kheri, Sitapur and Azamgarh are affected.

Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning is very likely at isolated places over eastern Uttar Pradesh, while the weather is most likely to remain dry over the western part of the state on Wednesday.

Light thunderstorm accompanied with lightning is very likely at isolated places over the state on September 17 and 18, the Met office said.

In Haryana and Punjab, sultry weather conditions persisted with the maximum temperatures hovering two to four notches above the normal limits.

Bhiwani in Haryana was the hot

test place in the state recording a maximum of 38 degrees Celsius, up two degrees against normal limits while Hisar too experienced sultry weather recording a high of 37.8 degrees Celsius and Ambala recording a maximum temperature of 35.2 degrees Celsius.

Chandigarh, the common capital of the two states, recorded a high of 35.1 degrees Celsius.

In Punjab, Patiala recorded a high of 36.7 degrees Celsius, four notches above normal limits while Amritsar and Ludhiana also recorded above normal maximum

temperatures of 35.8 degrees Celsius and 35.8 degrees Celsius.

According to the Met department forecast, mainly dry weather is likely to prevail at most places in Haryana and Punjab over the next two days.

Rain/thundershowers were recorded in several parts of the country including Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Karnataka, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Gujarat, Goa, Maharashtra.

India Facing A Challenge...

of our armed forces who have been defending our motherland at great heights and most inclement weather conditions," he said.

Referring to the Galwan Valley clashes of June 15, the defence minister said Indian soldiers "inflicted costs including casualties on the Chinese side." Singh also referred to his talks with the Chinese defence minister on the sidelines of a multilateral meet in Moscow recently, and said it was made clear to him that though India wants to resolve the row peacefully, there should be no doubt about its determination to protect its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

"I conveyed in clear terms our concerns related to the actions of the Chinese side, including amassing of large number of troops, their aggressive behavior and attempts to unilaterally alter the status quo that were in violation of the bilateral agreements," he said.

The defence minister said amassing of the troops by China and violent conduct of Chinese military were in violation of all mutually agreed norms and pacts.

"A key element of both the 1993 and the 1996 Agreements is that the two sides will keep their military forces in the areas along the Line of Actual Control to a minimum level," he added.

Singh also talked about the five-point agreement reached between External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and his Chinese counterpart Wang Yi in Moscow on September 10 and said: "If implemented sincerely and faithfully by the Chinese side, it could lead to complete disengagement and restoration of peace and tranquility in the border areas."

On Galwan Valley clashes, he also said the Chinese side "created" a violent face off and "our brave soldiers laid down their lives and also inflicted costs including casualties on the Chinese side."

Twenty Indian Army personnel were killed in the clashes which have significantly escalated the tensions between the two countries.

"I want to tell you that I have felt their indomitable courage, gallant and valor. As you are aware that Col Santosh Babu, along with his 19 brave soldiers, made the supreme sacrifice in the cause of defending the territorial integrity of India," he said.The Chinese side too suffered casualties, but it is yet to give out the details.

"The conduct of our armed forces throughout these incidents shows that while they maintained 'Sayam' (self-control) in the face of provocative actions, they also equally displayed 'Shaurya' (courage) when required to protect the territorial integrity of India," he said.

The defence minister said the Chinese side had taken action to "hinder" the normal, traditional patrolling pattern of Indian troops in the Galwan Valley area which resulted in the face-off.

"Even as this situation was being addressed by the Ground Commanders as per the provisions of our bilateral agreements and protocol, in mid-May the Chinese side made several attempts to transgress the LAC in other parts of the Western Sector," he said.

This included Kongka La, Gogra and North Bank of Pangong Lake and that the attempts were detected early and consequently responded to appropriately by the armed forces.

"I would like the House to join me in recognizing the courage and valour of our soldiers, who undergo immense hardship in the most difficult conditions to keep us all safe and secure," Singh said.

The defence minister said India made it clear to the Chinese side both through diplomatic and military channels that attempting to unilaterally alter the status quo was unacceptable.

He also said that China continues to be in "illegal occupation" of approximately 38,000 sq. kms in the Union Territory of Ladakh.

In addition, under the so-called Sino-Pakistan 'Boundary Agreement' of 1963, Pakistan illegally ceded 5,180 sq. km. of Indian territory in Pakistan-occupied- Kashmir to China.

He said China also claims approximately 90,000 sq. kms. of Indian territory in the eastern Sector of the India-China boundary in Arunachal Pradesh.

The defence minister said the Chinese side has mobilised a large number of troops and armaments along the LAC as well as in the depth areas, adding there are several friction areas in eastern Ladakh including Gogra, Kongka La and North and South Banks of the Pangong Lake.

"In response to China's actions, our armed forces have also made appropriate counter deployments in these areas to ensure that India's security interests are fully protected," he said.

The defence minister also provided a historical perspective of the dispute, noting that China does not accept the customary and traditional alignment of the boundary between the two countries.

"We believe that this alignment is based on well-established geographical principles confirmed by treaties and agreements, as well as historical usage and practice, well-known for centuries to both sides," he said.

"The Chinese position, however, is that the boundary between the two countries has not been formally delimited, that there exists a traditional customary line formed by the extent of jurisdiction that they claim was exercised historically by each side, and that the two sides have different interpretations of the position of the traditional customary line," he said.

Singh said the two countries had engaged in discussions during the 1950s-60s but these efforts could not yield a mutually acceptable solution.

After the defence minister's statement, the Congress wanted to raise certain issues which was not allowed by Speaker Om Birla. Unhappy with this, Congress walked out of the House.

Army Prepares For Long...

the tensions on the Line of Actual Control. The Ladakh region witnesses sub-zero temperatures and is mostly cut off from the rest of the country for months during the winters. As tensions between the armies of India and China at the LAC show no sign of ebbing, both sides have significantly ramped up the presence of their troops.

Accordingly, India's Army has been beefing up its stocks of food, ammunition, fuel and more importantly the winter gear.

Major General Arvind Kapoor, Chief of Staff of the Fire and Fury Corps — also known as the XIV Corps which has the mandate of securing the frontiers along the China and Pakistan borders from Kargil to Ladakh — said the unit takes pride in its advance winter stocking.

Our stocking levels, be it rations, fuel, oils and lubricants, tentage and heating appliances which includes bukharis (heaters) or kero-heaters, or be it ammunition, are in good numbers," Kapoor told reporters here.

Wherever these things need to be supplied, they have already been supplied. We are confident that the system has become so well-oiled that in the coming days, it will give an excellent result, he said.

Kapoor said the entire Ladakh region has been connected to two main highways — the Manali-Leh axis and the Jammu-Srinagar-Leh axis.

These axes are shut for nearly six months. But in the last few months, we have brought this down to 120 days. In the coming days, the Atal Tunnel will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Darcha-Nimu-Padam link is also ready and in the immediate future, the Ladakh region will get round-the-year connectivity, he said.

Fuel also plays a critical role for the armed forces, especially in the Ladakh region where it is used by soldiers in forward areas to keep themselves warm in low temperatures.

The corps also operates one of the highest altitude fuel, oil and lubricants depot.

We supply fuel both for our vehicles as also for our men, for the bukharis to keep them warm in the bitterly cold weather on the frontline, said Brigadier Rakesh Manocha, in-charge of the logistics.

On tentage, officials said the indigenously developed Arctic tents can sustain

temperatures up to minus 20 degrees, while the high-altitude tents have the capacity to sustain temperatures anywhere between minus 40 to minus 50 degrees.

Both tentages and adequate winter clothing have also been supplied to the forward areas, an official said.

The ration too has been stocked adequately, ranging from pre-cooked, packaged and canned items to food grains, they added.

Brigadier A S Rathore said, We hold complete requirements of supplies for all troops which are deployed in the Ladakh sector. All warehouses are completely full to the brim.

J&K Govt Issues 1.7 Million...

certificates issued to the PRC holders include over 10.75 lakh in Jammu division and around 3.57 lakh in Kashmir division," the official spokesperson said.

"Of the total 2113879 applications received till September 14, 2020 across the UT, over 2.70 lakh are pending, including 1.44 lakh in Jammu division and around 1.00 lakh in Kashmir Division," he added.

He further said that the figures also revealed that 19571 West Pakistani Refugees, 2424 Balmiki community members and 765 Gorkha Community members were also issued domicile certificates under clause 2.

The process of issuing domicile certificates in the Union Territory was started in the last week of June, 2020.

19 More Coronavirus Deaths...

died in Srinagar hospitals and included a 68-year-old from Banihal, who succumbed at CD hospital, a day after he was admitted in one of the exclusive facilities for the management of covid-19 patients.

"The another victim, a 45-year-old man from Batawote Ramban died at SKIMS Soura where he was admitted on August 8 as a case of Diagnosis a case of "CA Esophagus with Metastasis with Severe Covid Pneumonia with encephalopathy with sepsis with shock," the officials said.

The fatalities from Jammu division includes an 82-year-old man and a 52-year-old man from Nanak Nagar besides 5 other victims from winter capital of J&K as well as two persons each from Udhampur and Doda and one from Kathua. With these deaths, the death count has reached 916 in J&K (With GNS inputs)

New 1329 Cases Include 47...

of people infected by the virus in the Union Territory to 56654.

While 741 fresh cases of Covid-19 were reported from Jammu division, the remaining 588 were confirmed by the officials from Kashmir Valley, officials said Tuesday.

Giving district wise breakup of the cases, the officials said that Srinagar recorded 148 cases, Budgam 127, Baramulla 20, Pulwama 70, Anantmag 57, Kupwara 43, Bandipora 38, Kulgam 15, Ganderbal 59, Shopian 11, Jammu 254, Udhampur 51, Rajouri 105, Kathua 62, Samba 31, Poonch 38, Ramban 26, Doda 114, Reasi 15 and Kishtwar 45.

Moreover, 681 more COVID-19 patients have recovered and were discharged from various hospitals— 214 from Jammu Division and 467 from Kashmir Valley.

32 Test Positive In Uri...

in Kholan village of Boniyar in Uri tested Covid-19 positive after antigen rapid tests were conducted on over 100 villagers on Tuesday.

"Among them, 75 samples were taken from the Kholan village alone while 35 others are from different villages of Boniyar," Dr. Parvaiz Masoodi, Block Medical Officer (BMO) Boniyar said.

"We have the inputs that many people have attended the last rites of a woman following which we decided to carry out the rapid antigen testing and 32 people from Kholan village tested positive," he added.

Masoodi further said that he has taken up the matter with the DC Baramulla and CMO Baramulla and requested them to declare the village as Red Zone as there was not adequate space to keep the positive cases in isolation.

A 60-year-old woman from the village had died on 6th September due to the coronavirus at SKIMS Soura and was later buried in the village in which locals have participated. Panic has gripped the villagers after the COVID cases surfaced forcing the residents to stay indoors.

Meanwhile, seven persons also tested positive for coronavirus today in medical block Uri.

"Five are from a same family hailing from Jabla, Uri while two are from Nambala," a doctor told local news agency GNS.

BSF Shoots Dead 'Intruder'...

moving suspiciously across the fence ahead of Post at Dhulanja, news agency GNS reported quoting official sources. The report said that the intruder was challenged on which he hide behind a tree.

"On warning that he will be fired upon if he didn't come out with hands above. The intruder came out and was asked to walk towards the fence, with due caution. Subsequently the intruder came close to the fence and threw some papers across the fence. The same were being checked," sources said.

"The intruder was asked to strip for closer search. He ran back and after repeated verbal warnings the intruder was shot by the BSF sentry. The intruder had fallen on the ground across fence and likely to be fatal," they added.

Meanwhile, the BSF also claimed to have foiled a major infiltration bid by five heavily-armed militants along the International Border in Jammu and Kashmir's Samba district, a spokesperson said on Tuesday.

The militants fled back to the Pakistani side after being confronted by the border guarding force, the BSF spokesman said. He said a strong protest note is being lodged with the Pakistan Rangers for helping the infiltrating militants.

The spokesperson said alert troops observed movement of militants on the Pakistani side in Samba sector during the intervening night of Monday and Tuesday.

"Their movement was tracked by BSF troops and at about 0030 hours, the group was seen close to the International Boundary where they reached taking advantage of the undulating ground and thick wild growth," the spokesperson said.

He said the five militants took refuge in a depression having dense wild growth.

"The BSF troops challenged them to stop but they opened fired on the party," the spokesperson said.

The BSF troops fired on the militants with coordinated effective fire and foiled a possible infiltration bid from the Pakistani side, he said.

He said the area was illuminated by the help of parabomb and BSF troops saw the militants fleeing.

"The area was searched but nothing was recovered as the militants could not cross the IB. A strong protest note is being lodged with Pakistan Rangers for their help in facilitating militants infiltrate towards the Indian side," the spokesperson added.

Engineer Held For Siphoning ...

misappropriation of funds received by the R & B Department in Shopian/ Handwara Districts," the spokesperson said.

During the course of verification conducted prior to the registration of the case, the ACB spokesperson said that a huge amount of money to the tune of Rs 2,67,31,411/- was deposited by the Private cellular companies in the Arhama (Shopian) Branch of Axis Bank in the fake name of Assistant Engineer R&B Division Shopian opened by Imtiyaz in furtherance of a criminal conspiracy with Airtel/Reliance authorities and contractors.

"The amount was subsequently withdrawn by Junior Engineer Hakeem Imtiyaz and transferred it to his own personal account and into the account of one Niamat Ali (Niamat Electricals)," the ACB spokesperson said.

"It was revealed during probe that the R&B Department Shopian does not have any account in Axis Bank, and the said department operates only through J&K Bank. In the course of probe it was further revealed that these fraudulent transactions have been handiwork of the Junior Engineer, who in conspiracy with private cellar companies and contractors have inflicted huge loss to state exchequer," he added.

The Bureau spokesperson further said that searches were conducted in the house of accused Junior Engineer at Pinglan Pulwama, Contractor Niamat Ali at Chattabal Srinagar and the residence of the then Junior Engineer in Airtel Company Shahnawaz of Eidgah, during which various incriminating documents having bearing on the case were seized, the spokesperson said. "Hakeem Imtiyaz, Junior Engineer was subsequently arrested by ACB. Further investigation of the case is going on," he added.

Art-370 Revocation Fully...

a written reply to a question. Reddy said the change has brought about socioeconomic development in both the new UTs.

These changes empowered people, removed unjust laws, brought in equity and fairness to those discriminated against for ages.

These changes are ushering both the new Union Territories towards the path of peace and progress, he said.

'138 Militants Killed In Last...

affected by militancy, which is sponsored and supported from across the border, for more than the last three decades.

Reddy said that the government has adopted a policy of zero tolerance towards terrorism and the security forces are taking effective and continuous action in countering militancy

"As a result, 138 (militants) have been neutralised in Jammu and Kashmir from March 1, 2020 to August 31, 2020. During this period of six months, 50 security force personnel have been killed in militancy-related incidents and ceasefire violations, cross border firings in Jammu and Kashmir," he said replying to a written question.

There were 176 attempts of infiltration from across the border from August 2019 to July 2020 and 111 were successful, he added.

'223 People Under Detention...

has reported that after the abrogation of Article 370 in August last year various measures were taken to maintain public order which included preventive detention of certain persons.

"As on September 11, 2020, 223 persons are under detention. No person is under house arrest in the UT of Jammu and Kashmir," he said in a written reply to a question in Lok Sabha.

Reddy also said after the bifurcation of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir on August 5, 2019, the number of terrorist incidents have reduced significantly.

From June 29, 2018 to August 4, 2019 (402 days), there were 455 militancy incidents in Jammu and Kashmir and from August 5, 2019 to September 9 (402 days), a total of 211 such incidents took place in the newly created Union Territory.

Photojournalists Thrashed...

a Delhi based news portal. Kamran told reporters that he had gone to cover the encounter and well before he could start work, paramilitary men asked him to go away. As he was moving away from the spot, the security detail of a DySP rank police officer pounced upon him without any reason and beat him ruthlessly. He somehow fled and reached the hospital with the help of his colleagues where the doctors treated him. He will have to stay bed-ridden for many days owing to his leg injury.

Condemning the use of force against the media persons, the editors' body asked the authorities to permit media in delivering their professional duties. KEG also demanded the police leadership in Kashmir to sensitise the field staff about the operations of the media and investigate the Marwal assault. "Worth mentioning here the Marwal attack is not the first incident of its kind. In fact, it has emerged as a routine for the police and security forces to assault the journalists while covering the happenings on the ground," the KEG said.

The Guild demanded the LG Jammu and Kashmir to personally look into the assault.

The Kashmir Press Club (KPC) also condemned the thrashing of three journalists by police near the encounter site in Pulwama district. In a statement, KPC said the journalists were beaten by the police while they were covering an encounter between militants and state forces in Marwal Kakapora village in south Kashmir today morning.

"One multimedia journalist Kamran Yousuf received injuries due to the thrashing by the police and was rushed to SMHS Hospital in Srinagar for treatment," the statement said.

"Kamran told the Press Club that he was at the encounter site along with a few more photojournalists today morning, when a group of Policemen caught hold of him and started beating him with lathis without any reason. He said that he somehow managed to run away. He has received injuries with doctors having detected fracture in his leg," the statement added KPC said that going by the account of Kamran, it is clear that the police has targeted the journalists to stop them from carrying out their professional work which is reprehensible.

"The Club wants to make it clear that this is not the first incident where journalists have been targeted by the forces and stopped from carrying out their professional work. In the past too many such incidents of harassment, thrashing and summons to media persons have been brought to the notice of the authorities at the highest level."

The management of the Club while demanding strong action against the policemen involved in today's incident urges the top brass of the J&K police and Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha to take note of such difficulties media persons face while delivering their duties on the ground.

"The Club urges the authorities particularly the police to sensitise their ranks about respecting and upholding the press freedom in Kashmir."

CBI Files Case Against Trust...

conspiracy with the said Educational Trust through its chairperson to allow the trust to retain the land beyond the permissible ceiling limit of 100 standard kanal fixed in the Agrarian Reforms Act by deliberately giving the wrong exemption of 32 kanals of grazing land as per said Act and showing the land as orchard" which was not an orchard as per revenue record, it said. It was also alleged that the educational trust, in connivance with the other accused, got done wrong calculation of standard kanal of the land measuring 316 Kanal and 17 Marlas to escape the ceiling imposed by the J&K Agrarian Reforms Act, the statement said.

Kanal and Marlas are traditional land measurement units.

It was further alleged that a false information was submitted in the affidavit filed by one of the accused during June, 2015 before the court in a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) so as to save the Trust from any adverse order, the CBI said.

The trust runs a school, B.Ed. (Bachelor of Education) and nursing colleges on the land, officials said, adding its transactions are being probed by the central agency for alleged irregularities in its purchase.

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

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

Sajjad Haider Elected KEG ...

Shafat Kira (Kashmir Vision), Aakash Amin (Tameel-e-Irshad), Masood Hussain (Kashmir Life) Zahoor Malik (Kashmir Times) and Shameem Me'raj (Kashmir Monitor).

KEG's new President Sajjad Haider, a journalist of repute, studied engineering in Chennai and later journalism at Tehran University began his career in 1990 during Gulf War, which he covered for Tehran Times. He subsequently took up an assignment for National Iranian Radio and Television and moved to New Delhi. In 1994 he returned to Kashmir and contributed to various international media organizations including BBC online, Deutsche Welle, IRNA and IRIB from Srinagar. In 1997 Sajjad Haider founded the daily Kashmir Observer.

In 2006, Sajjad Haider was awarded the prestigious Chevening Fellowship by Great Britain. He studied at the Centre for Security & Diplomacy, Birmingham University. As an expert on South Asian and Middle Eastern affairs, he has been invited to global events including the ones organized by the Arab Thought Foundation in Dubai and the World Editors Forum in Gothenburg. His views have been aired internationally by Al-Jazeera, the BBC, CBC, the Voice of America and published extensively in international journals.

Masood Hussain, who was elected the Secretary-General is a journalist since 1987. After working for the Kashmir Times for over a decade, he moved to The Economic Times, which he left in 2015. He took over Kashmir Life as editor in 2018.

The newly elected Vice President, Shafat Kira, is a postgraduate in Mass Communication and Journalism who was associated with various media organizations like NDTV, Amar Ujala, Indian Express, Daily Excelsior and Deutsche Welle (Voice of Germany-Radio). Shafat Kira has been active in the field since the last 19 years and during his stint as a journalist has been associated with various other media outlets including some local news organizations also. His participation in various talk shows and programmes on diverse issues on various news platforms have earned him accolades from his colleagues in the field.

Kira later started 'Daily Kashmir Vision' in 2009 and since then has been heading the news organization which has been providing a strong and a viable platform for the young and budding Journalists and Mass Communication pass outs in Kashmir.

KEG, Vice President Manzoor Ajnum, one of the senior-most Journalists had decades of experience behind his back. He has been in the field of journalism since the early 70s and his write-ups were quite a hit during the days he was associated with Daily 'Hamdard' published from Srinagar.

Manzoor Anjum, a poet and a story writer was a regular contributor to 'Khaatoni Mashrif' and various other well-read magazines and journals. It was during 1976 that Manzoor Anjum started 'Daily Uqab' and has since then been its Editor. His regular columns like 'Namak Paray' have been an apt description of the daily happenings in Kashmir.

KEG Treasurer, Haji Mohammad Hayat is a post-graduate in Sociology from Aligarh Muslim University who has been involved with various media brands launched by his group.

Mohammad Hayat started a multilingual news agency (Press Bureau of India) in 2007. The news agency became an instant hit because of its bold and up to date coverage. Later Mohammad Hayat started 'Kashmir Conveyor' a monthly magazine in 2009 and 'Kashmir Reader' a daily newspaper, was launched by the group in 2011.

Haji Mohammad Hayat is also credited with starting the first outdoor media publicity company 'Helpline' advertising services.

LG Launches Career Education...

and awareness in youth along with decision-making skills which will lead to continuous, lifelong learning and career development, he said.

The initiative was e-inaugurated in the presence of advisor to the Lt Governor, K K Sharma, Chief Secretary B V R Subrahmanyam, Principal Secretary, School Education, Asgar Hassan Samoon, Principal Secretary Information Department Rohit Kansal, and Principal Secretary to Lt Governor Nitishwar Kumar.

The unique initiative will be implemented for students in Ganderbal and Udhampur districts of Jammu and Kashmir in the first phase and would be providing career education guidance to the students so that they can at a very early stage of their studies choose their academic preferences and their future career goals, the spokesman said.

The initiative is in line with the New Education Policy 2020, he added.

Speaking on the occasion, Sinha emphasised the need for enabling the students with the capacity to question and inculcating the spirit of scientific inquiry and humanism.

"Such quality educational initiatives can transform the landscape of union territory of Jammu and Kashmir," he said.

Referring to the initiatives of the prime minister, the LG said the mantra of engagement is the key to success in every field, be it administration, education, as it can bring quality results.

He said the youth should get quality education so that they can create a niche for themselves in different fields and the latest initiative is a step in this regard.

The advisor to LG, K K Sharma, while explaining the nuances of the platform, expressed the desire that after the review of the pilot project, the initiative be rolled out in the remaining districts of the UT.

Two OGWs Held With Rs 6L ...

ul-Hassan and Mushtaq Ahmad Mir, both residents of the Awantipora area in the district.

"Incriminating material of proscribed outfit Al-Badr has been recovered from their possession which includes Rs 6 lakh Indian currency, he said. The two-wheeler, bearing registration number JK01AC- 4035, used for the commission of the crime has also been seized, the official added.

A case under relevant sections of the Unlawful Activities Act has been registered in police station Khrew in this connection, he said.

Meanwhile, three militant associates of Hizbul Mujahideen were arrested from Ganderbal district during the intervening night of Monday and Tuesday.

The official said the arrested persons of the module were instructed by their Pakistani handler to join militancy and undertake attacks on

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Unethical practice

As a story in our paper has revealed so many private school teachers have lost their jobs over the past year, while the salaries of those who have been retained have been halved. This despite the fact that the schools are charging full fees from the parents and also 50 percent of the transportation fees. That too, at a time when the logistical cost of running a school has come down to zero. It is true that many parents may not be paying in time as a result of the economic difficulties triggered by the ongoing pandemic. But that hardly means they will not pay in near future. More so, when many schools, some of them very reputed, are almost blackmailing parents into paying the fees by not letting their wards sit in examinations. And while the schools receive the full tuition fees, they are either firing their teachers to reduce their staff, or paying only half the salary to them.

How does one deal with such a situation? It is time the government intervenes in the matter. And to start with, hold an audit of the finances of these institutions as AsgharSamoon has rightly said. This will certainly clear the air as to the ability of these schools to pay to their staff.

As things stand, the private schools in the Valley have created a business model that is least affected by any disruption to the economy. No matter the scale of disruption they charge their fees and as is the case now also fire their staff to make the most of the worst times.

It is nobody's case that private schools shouldn't get their fees. They depend on the fees to run their affairs and pay their staff. But it is also true that other than a brief period of a fortnight or so, the schools have been shut. And during this prolonged closure, they have saved on all the expenditures other than the salary of their staff, which some reports have pointed out has often been delayed or reduced. The teachers have delivered online classes and which too haven't been up to the mark considering the lingering curbs on the internet and the lack of the training of their staff to deliver online lectures. So, the schools can't charge a full tuition fees, let alone transportation fees for a service they have largely been unable to offer over the past year. Or resort to blackmail to extract it like some elite schools are doing. They are holding online exams and not allowing some students to appear unless their parents pay up. And to top it all, they are also firing their staff. It is time that the government holds them to account.

OTHER OPINION

Violence and rowdyism in universities

Rowdyism and violence have no place in centres of learning. Indian universities, unfortunately, have been witness to such excesses in campuses, time and again. Political animosities have, more often than not, transformed universities into turfs of violent rivalries. Such contestations, often between the ascendant rightwing groups and their leftist opponents, have been reported from Delhi University, Himachal Pradesh University, Jawaharlal Nehru University, among other institutions, in recent years. So there is some merit to the recent deliberations among premier Central universities on the issue of deviant campus behaviour. Most of the participants — JamiaMilliaIslamia, Banaras Hindu University, Aligarh Muslim University, JamiaHamdard, JNU — reiterated the need to desist from imposing rigid rules. Nonetheless, there were some disquieting views. There was some talk of maintaining 'files' on students with differing views. The JNU proctor, astoundingly, called for segregation among learners after complaining that the campus had become the launching pad for political agenda. Even the vice-chancellor of JamiaMilliaIslamia, who had been critical of police depredations on the campus, apparently conceded that the responsibility of maintaining peace inside universities was now being jointly shared by the administrators and the police.

The presence of police on the campus is not acceptable in any democratic polity. The proposal of maintaining dossiers on students with dissenting views is equally preposterous: it amounts to institutional surveillance on students. Taken together, these remarks amplify concerns that university officials are increasingly using campus violence as an excuse to curb independent thought. Such a suspicion is not unwarranted. The right to debate as well as the freedom of thought is integral to the idea of the university as an institution. Yet, be it the targeted intrusion into JNU over alleged sedition or the crackdown against students in JamiaMilliaIslamia and AMU in the wake of the protests against the Citizenship (Amendment) Act, the record of this government in safeguarding the sanctity of diverse opinion has remained exceedingly shoddy. This makes it difficult to believe that the endeavour to separate 'students' interests' from 'vested interests' is as honourable as it is being made out to be.

The Telegraph, India

Any adventure into Pakistan Administered Kashmir will place India into direct conflict with China given the magnitude of investment in Gilgit-Baltistan and its strategic location for the country.

Syed Suhail Yaqoob

China-India and the String of Pearls

With the Defence Minister's address to parliament about Chinese territorial transgressions, it has become all the more important to understand the status of India's foreign and diplomatic positions.



The world is in a bad shape. The spread of Covid-19 has halted the progress of every economic and social system. India is still grappling the migrant crisis, high levels of unemployment in addition to inefficient health care system. The country, however, has to brace for one more issue which is likely going to cause more trouble to the policy makers. The issue is, 'String of Pearls'.

The string of pearls is a Chinese geopolitical strategy which implies encircling a country through enemy neighbourhood. This policy is used to choke a country's economic growth, make it insecure and pressurise its armed forces. India is facing the brunt of it.

Yesterday, in his address to the Lok Sabha, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh echoed this concern in his condemnation of Chinese transgressions in India's territories since April.

There had been a renewed fight across Indian-Chinese borders especially along Ladakh region since April of this year. Many reports have confirmed Chinese intrusion in Indian areas. The Chinese intrusion should not be seen as an isolated event but a consistent policy to contain India. China's containment policy of India relies on foreign investment, economic dominance, nurturing friends and exploiting India's faulty foreign policy.

Perhaps, China-Pakistan Corridor is one of the major investment project funded by China. The total investment is around 60 billion dollars. The corridor has a strategic location and virtually encircles India in the north. Also, it makes it easier for China to have access to hot waters of Arabian Sea.

Initially, the sea trade route passed close to India in the south; thus increasing the vulnerability of China. Not only has India's position been reduced visa viz China but the project has also provided leverage to Pakistan visa viz India. Any adventure into Pakistan Administered Kashmir will place India into direct conflict with China given the magnitude of investment in Gilgit-Baltistan and its strategic

location for the country.

Amit Shah's speech in the parliament, where he referred to "taking back" both Aksai-Chin and PAK-administered Kashmir (including Gilgit-Baltistan) has been taken seriously by China. Both these regions are the life-lines of China. Aksai-chin leads to internal connectivity while Pakistan-China Economic Corridor provides it external connectivity in the west.

China will react to whatever increases its vulnerability in these two areas. And it has reacted to Surgical Strikes in Pakistan-Administered Kashmir as well as its intrusion in Ladakh. Although, a China and India war is impossible but China has tried to secure a strategic psychological position — and has managed to do so.

It is not that India has not tried to break this noose in its north. The country tried through investment and good-will in Afghanistan. However, there seems little arena available for India to meddle into its affairs. Reports suggest that USA relies heavily on Pakistan in its Afghanistan policy. The Doha Talks about the future of Afghanistan have clearly revealed that India is on the wrong side of curve. USA wants a face-saving in Afghanistan and without Pakistan, it is impossible. Although India may want to have some say in its future but Pakistan-Taliban nexus will surely not make this happen.

Moreover India also tried to create Buddhist encirclement around China. It created first Buddhist majority in Ladakh and tactically supported Myanmar. It might have messaged Buddhist anger for China, but given the countries sheer economic size the policy is likely to reach a dead end.

It is pertinent to mention that the policy of Indian government has provided opportunities for China to tighten its noose around the country. The government has passed certain laws that are likely to create diplomatic huddles with Bangladesh as well. The Citizen Amendment Act and National Register for Citizens law has to been seen in this context. The government has made clear that 'foreigners' will be pushed into their

respective countries. Since most of the people belong to Bangladesh it is likely to strain its relationship with India. No wonder then that there have been violent clashes in Bangladesh regarding this issue.

As if this was not enough, Nepal was a surprise in this spectrum. The government in Nepal has accused India of violating its sovereignty. Both governments have published conflicting maps of its borders. Many have accused Nepal of working at the behest of China and this possibility cannot be ruled out.

Yet another issue that should concern the policy makers is BJP's relationship with USA particularly with president Donald Trump. BJP has used Donald Trump either for boosting image of Mr.Modi or as a trump card in elections. We have had 'Howdy-Modi' event in USA and also 'Namaste Trump' event in India. Russia is likely to frown upon this relationship and will fall like an apple into the laps of both China and Pakistan. History knows that USA and Russia are always in the opposite camps. The closer a country is to USA the farther it's to Russia.

So, why did China choose this timing to intrude into India? The answer lies in its culture and history. China believes in the 'Wait and watch Policy', and acts only when its enemy is at its weakest point. Indian economy, which was its ultimate weapon to counter any foreign diplomatic offensive, is in shambles. Many reports have suggested that the economic growth is likely to be negative in the current fiscal. The unemployment rate is highest in the last 45 years and migrant crisis is deepening day by day. The spread of Covid-19 has laid bare the fault-lines in the Indian economic, social and political condition as well. Further, China wants to kill three birds with a single arrow. It wants to put India into imbalance, reduce its criticism of being silent on spread of Covid-19 and deflect its attention from happenings in Hong-Kong.

Syed Suhail Yaqoob is teaching economics at Cluster University Srinagar and can be contacted at suhail029@gmail.com



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(Un) Happy Engineer's Day

Over the years, Kashmir has produced brilliant Engineers who've worked on various projects within Kashmir and outside of it. Senior engineers employed in Government services have also served Kashmir with their skill and expertise. Perhaps, this has been the reason for the raving preference that this profession still enjoys among youngsters here.

Statistically, India produces a huge chunk of unemployable engineers even as it is the country which outsources them the most. In Kashmir, people are still drawn to this profession without taking into account factors such as unavailability of jobs and obsolete curriculum. Every year, high school graduates choose to pursue engineering. In fact, they have the support of everyone from parents, to

teachers and to the society in general.

This trend, apart from being uncritical, is also deeply detrimental. Students in Kashmir are extremely passionate and well versed. However, by expending their efforts on engineering degrees in absence of jobs; they're only going to get themselves into a circle of Sisyphean labour. This does not imply that those who are passionate for it, must give up on it. On the contrary, such a situation calls for an aware and enlightened planning. Students need to get in touch with seniors working in different roles within and outside Kashmir. This is the only way one can acquaint oneself with the risks and the rewards of pursuing the profession.

Perhaps, outside Kashmir, there are better chances for engineering graduates. But the situation is abso-

lutely dismal within Kashmir. Engineering graduates who wish to stay back have failed to find jobs that pay them well. Exams for government jobs have become an inaccessible dream. Many haven't had the chance to even take a test, let alone qualify it.

There are serious administrative loopholes that have enabled this situation. We've unemployed engineers who are blaming themselves for their failures, when in reality, the situation is purely structural. Little to no efforts have been made to create jobs in Kashmir or to fill up those that open up.

We as a society must also realise that the veneration of permanent jobs that the past generations value so much cannot be possible in today's day and age. In India as well as abroad, switching jobs is the norm and is even considered welcome because of better

salary packages as one moves up the professional ladder. It has also become normal to switch professions according to ones needs and interests. Freelancing is in Vogue.

We need to be aware of these trends as a society and make conscious career choices. Additionally, most part of the responsibility lies with the government to ensure that more and more jobs are created. We cannot let efficient professionals think that they're responsible for their failures. We cannot ignore the huge chunk of unemployed engineers that have been accumulating over the years. As a society, we have to grow financially and our young engineers who stay back in Kashmir should get the chance to earn and serve.

*Tania Shafi
Nawhatta, Srinagar*

The spaces and modes of Resistance Poetry

Huzaifa Pandit

Resistance poetry counters this hierarchization of papers by first creating its own papers: papers that reflect local realities, papers that counter and contest official realities.

What worry is there if pen and slate have been
snatched from me? I have dipped my fingers
in the blood of my broken heart
What if my lips have been sealed? Every
ring in my chain has a fiery tongue ready
to rebel.

-Faiz Ahmed Faiz

Like every art, poetry and resistance poetry in specific is deeply interlinked to the question of space and mode of production. Resistance poetry by its very nature demands the existence of a certain geography which is subjugated, and also presumes that a struggle must exist to control the nature and flow of these narratives. To cite an example, the condition for resistance poetry to exist in Kashmir, is that not only is Kashmir one of the most militarized regions in the world, but that there is a constant contest between the state and the people over how to categorize, and label the events say the August 5 abrogation of Article 370. While the state will tout it as a great equalizer that brings ‘democracy’ in its truest sense to the region, the narrative from Kashmir is that of betrayal, hurt and rage. In the context of this space exists resistance poetry and the conditions that necessitate its production. But in turn, poetry as all art does create new alternate spaces by creating new possibilities of meaning, and perceiving the world. This applies equally well to resistance poetry which must think of new linkages and new rites of fusion between the land and people inhabiting it. What then are these new linkages that resist, how do they resist, and what do they resist?

This is a challenging question, and one of the most pertinent ones that demand an answer. But like with every such question it has no easy answers obviously, nor is it possible to fully outline the answer here. However, broadly, I would think the answer to this question is linked to the production of space by the state, which is rigid and hierarchal. The state functions by marking binaries of acceptability/non-acceptability, accessible/inaccessible, civilian/terrorist, and marks spaces out clearly – camp, road, police station, interrogation center, check point, bunker, road. These spaces are opaque since the general population is not permitted/informed about these spaces as they are imposed on the public without their consent.

Were one to pass by the infamous cargo police station, one can see written in bold letters on the wall: ‘Military Area. Trespassers will be persecuted’. Similarly bunkers and army camps often demarcate spaces by barricades, concertina wires and walls to clearly indicate their disjunction from the landscape, and thus create an aura of intimidation. For what is hidden and inaccessible, man fears most. To quote Faraz: Till you are inaccessible, let us worship you/We call him God that we can’t touch or prove. The bunker similarly lies on the concept of a panopticon – a technology where the soldier inside can observe every activity outside, but those outside cannot figure out which way the soldier is looking. Only the nozzle of the rifle butts out leaving a perpetual reminder of the power of the soldier inside.



The wayfarers are therefore perpetually wary of the gaze of the bunker, and must per force notice it even as they would like not to be reminded of its existence. The bunker, thereof, becomes a space of intimidation, and these routines and spaces of intimidation are perpetuated by issuing papers to regulate these spaces – laws are published on paper, the state issues orders on paper, detention and release orders are paper as are FIRs, and heabus-corporus petitions and charge-sheets are paper.

Resistance poetry counters this hierarchization of papers by first creating its own papers: papers that reflect local realities, papers that counter and contest official realities. Second, in its own papers it refuses these hierarchies by ascribing geographies with meanings and memories such that they act as mnemonic markers of a geography that is accessible only to the collective, and inaccessible to the state that shares no experience/memory of suffering. Moreover, since poetry conflates geographies and times, the contradictions and contests in the text become an articulation of not the fixed space of a nation state, but a vehicle of potentialities – a disruptive and transformative space of contrapuntal trajectories where divergent and distant spaces blend by aid of an imagination. This imagination exists in constant negotiation and tension between routes and roots of subjugation and resistance.

The narrations of collective trauma, thereof, can be employed to generate a greater mutuality and inclusiveness. Such poetry speaks to the moment of their creation, and preserves it as a living testimony of the present and an inalienable component of the future, rather than merely an inert archiving of facts. From these shared histories, can come the language from which one can image different, humane and equitable futures where we can think beyond the nation state. This is a third space of fluidness that runs counter to the specific and popular imaginations of nationalist movements, and responses of the state to them.

So much for the question of space, now for the question of modes of production.

Now that these texts are produced, how are they disseminated? That this question is of equal importance as censorship of poetry is a practice that has been bequeathed to the modern nation state from the ancient world itself. Throughout history, we have precedent from Faiz to Darwish to Hikmet to Lorca of poetry and writing being censored, erased and imprisoned. Resistance Poetry, therefore, has to seek alternate means to articulate itself other than the means normally available to poetry.

In other words, the question is which are the spaces and modes of production that resistance poetry seek to subvert the faculty of benevolence of oppressor that state narratives seeks to promote? One of the ways is dismantling the hierarchy of cultural capital that is deeply ingrained into the world of publishing. An inferior work by a distinguished professor, for example, is more likely to find a publisher than a quality work by a student. Adding to this complexity is the state’s active intervention in gatekeeping narratives, and using its own repressive apparatus or apparatus sponsored by it to repress narratives not favourable to it. Moreover, in the neo-liberal world, profitability is directly related to the popularity and acceptability of a world view in the reading population. In other words, resistance literature and poetry face a threefold challenge: one to find a medium or space where it can be housed, second overcome the adverse subjugating state, third transcend and convert the reading public inherently biased towards the subjugated (or else they would not be complicit in the subjugation which is legitimized by their tacit support and silence, if not outright endorsement).

It is evident then the resisting population is burdened by an additional responsibility in their quest to react – to create avenues that can host its poetry and not judge it by the sensibilities prevailing in the cultural world. This is of course not a carte blanche for bad poetry, but simply an acknowledgement that the idiom of resistance poetry will not conform to the aesthetic hegemonies in vogue, simply because they are

shaped either by cultures of oppression. I am of course drawing on the distinction offered by the Kenyan writer and academic Ngugi WaThiong’o who points to this counter-discursive potential in an article entitled Literature in Schools by suggesting: “literature contains two opposing aesthetics – on one side the aesthetic of oppression and exploitation and of acquiescence with imperials, on the other side the aesthetic of human struggle for total liberation.” Here the full impact of the transformative potential of social media and small presses that it has granted visibility to, is fully realized.

Social media, small presses and online journals like Kashmir Lit, Inverse Journal, Wande Magazine, Mountain Ink, and others on both a national and international level have allowed an expression of Kashmiri subjectivities on a scale never witnessed before. Moreover, access to these journals has been possible only due to the existence of social media where the author is able to network and become aware of call for submissions. It is no surprise that with the advent of social media post 2009, there has been an explosion of imaginaries and narratives concerning Kashmir, and most of it has been made possible by the freedom that social media has offered by means of posts, blogs, pictures and photos, which can not only easily be accessed but redistributed, stored and replicated, thereby attaining the same hydra headed nature that subjugation manifests. More importantly, all this is done at minimum expense to the poet or author.

While poetry has an inherent plasticity permitted to it by metaphor, the easy and unmediated access to the reader offered by social media is an additional boon. The phenomenon of resistance poetry in Kashmir, therefore, relies mostly on social media and the opportunities offered by it to resist the hierarchies of ‘high brow’ culture. This virtual space is the space of transformation and potentialities, where the dystopia of Kashmir is in full view as is its transformative potential for it exhibits two of the fundamental traits of human existence: to be resilient in suffering, and the great power of suffering to generate empathy. I began this essay by quoting Faiz, and I will end it by quoting him to illustrate this maxim:

The mornings of the unfortunate,
and broken-hearted don’t dawn on the horizon.
The dazzling horizon of morning lies right here,
where we stand.
The tree of sorrow has bloomed
here and turned to blossom of the sky.
Axes of murderous sorrows have turned here
into great parades of fiery wreaths woven
from light.
The sorrow gifted by this night has turned into
surest belief
in morning. The belief that is more generous
than sorrow.
The morning which is more supreme
than the night.

Huzaifa Pandit is the author of the recently published ‘Green is the Colour of Memory’, which won the first edition of Rhythm Divine Poets Chapbook Contest 2017

Trauma Informed Pedagogy

Why every teacher needs to know about childhood trauma

Emily Berger and Karen Martin

Mental health issues among children are on the rise due to the impacts of the COVID pandemic, including lockdowns. In this world of uncertainty, as well as the way the pandemic may be increasing instances of family violence and other types of abuse, all school staff would benefit from having an adequate understanding of the impact of trauma and adversity on children.

Teachers and school leaders would also benefit from knowledge about trauma and adversity when responding to children’s challenging behaviours. In education, such understanding and techniques are known as “trauma-informed pedagogy”.

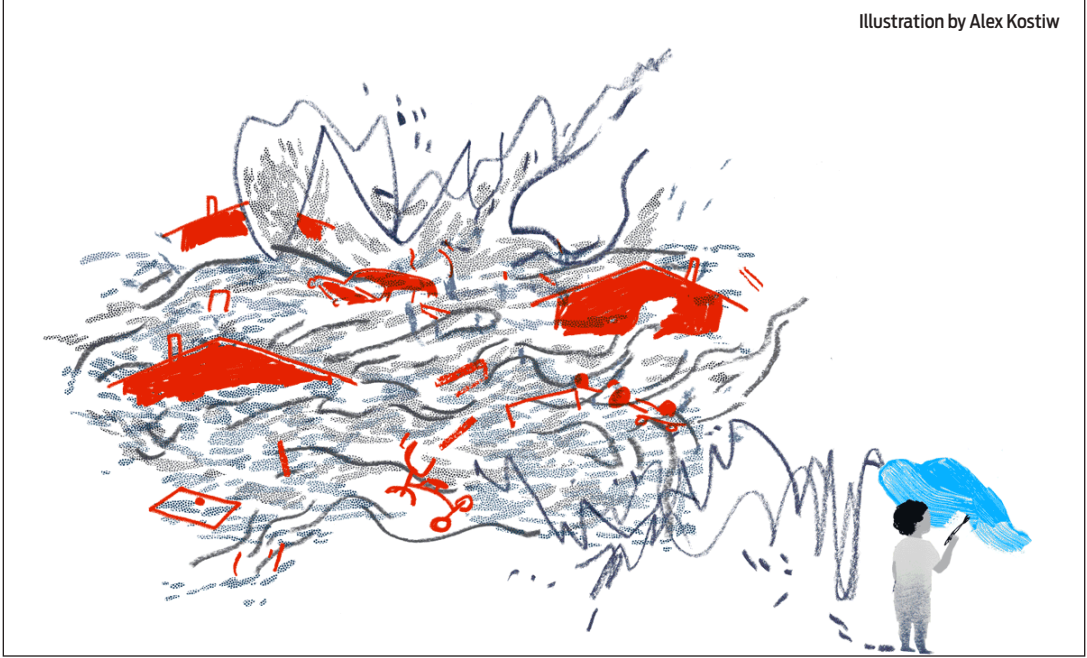
What is childhood trauma?

Trauma is the response to exposure to a stressful or traumatic event, or a series of such events or experiences. Most children have nurturing home environments, but a concerning number experience trauma through abuse or neglect.

Children may also experience trauma or adversity by observing family violence, parent separation, having a parent incarcerated or with a mental illness, or due to grief from the loss of a loved one. Trauma can occur because of conflict or war.

COVID-19 has led to higher amounts of traumatic experiences and adversity in households. For many women, the pandemic has coincided with the beginning of family violence, or an increase in it.

Trauma often has negative effects on children’s development and behaviour. It can increase the risk of depression and suicide attempts, psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia, and alcohol and drug use.



It’s important to note, not all children are negatively impacted by trauma – some even experience posttraumatic growth in which they learn more about themselves and their strengths.

A strong body of evidence shows trauma can affect brain structures linked to learning, and control of emotions and behaviour. These effects can make it difficult for children to learn, make friends and develop positive relationships with teachers.

Trauma and adversity can also disrupt children’s impulse control in the classroom and on the playground.

What trauma-informed practice looks like

The Royal Commission into child sexual abuse recommended schools be “trauma-informed”. Being

trauma-informed does not mean teachers and schools must be trained to treat trauma. Rather they must understand the impact it can have on children’s lives.

So, for schools to be trauma-informed, school staff need to know about the prevalence and consequences of childhood trauma. Increasing the confidence of school staff about how to work with children impacted by trauma and adversity is also important.

Examples of trauma-informed practice include: providing teachers with information about how best to teach and support children to regulate their emotions and build positive relationships. This includes getting children to identify their emotions and check in on themselves and others around them to get acquainted with how they and their peers react to situations. Assessing and revising school policies and practices that may re-traumatise or trigger anxiety or aggression in students (such as student isolation practices). Providing staff with self-care strategies, such as meditation, to help them respond to their experiences working with children impacted by adversity or trauma. Encouraging staff to recognise students’ strengths and help students develop their own learning goals.

Trauma-informed practice can help teachers too

Teachers and school leaders already have high demands on their time, and adding another burden to their work is untenable. But trauma-informed practice is not necessarily an add-on. Rather, it is a different way of working and communicating to improve students’ relationships with school staff, and their school engagement and learning.

In an arrangement with The Conversation

Pakistan reopens schools, universities after 5-month Covid-19 break

Press Trust Of India

Islamabad: After a break of nearly five months, Pakistan on Tuesday began its phased reopening of schools in view of the falling number of new coronavirus cases in the country.

While high schools, colleges and universities reopened on September 15, classes VI to VIII would

All educational institutions in Pakistan were closed on March 16 after the outbreak of the coronavirus. All annual examinations were cancelled.

The number of coronavirus cases reached 3,02,424 on Tuesday after 404 new cases were reported in the past 24 hours. Six patients died in this period, taking the death toll to 6,389, according to the Ministry of National Health Services.



start from September 23. Primary school will start from September 30, officials said.

As per the health protocols, 20 students or less can be seated in a classroom. The students have been divided into groups and will attend schools on alternate days.

Masks are mandatory for teachers and students. The institutions will ensure availability of hand-washing facilities and sanitisers at the entry gates.

So far, 290,261 people have fully recovered from the disease, while 563 are in critical condition.

Sindh has reported 132,250 cases, Punjab 97,817, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa 37,079, Islamabad 15,962, Balochistan 13,621, Gilgit-Baltistan 3,269, and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir 2,426.

The authorities said 29,95,890 COVID-19 tests have been conducted in the country, including 27,277 in the past 24 hours. PTI

Israeli installation of loudspeakers in Al-Aqsa Mosque compound stokes concern

Agencies

Jerusalem: Israeli police installed loudspeakers in the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in occupied East Jerusalem on Wednesday, a move condemned by Palestinians and the mosque's Jordanian custodians as a violation of the holy site.

speakers, Israeli authorities will be able to broadcast to the northern side of the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound from the inside and outside, in parallel with the one run by the Islamic Waqf (endowment) in charge of the religious site.

The speaker system would enable Israeli forces to make an-



The new speakers, set up by the compound's western Ablution Gate are the third instance of Israeli loudspeakers installed in or around the compound since 2017.

The first were installed that year on the roof of the nearby Omariya School, close to the compound's northwestern Bani Ghanim gate. The second were set up on Sunday on top of Al-Aqsa Sharia School near the northeastern Gate of the Tribes.

With the third set of loud-

nouncements and instructions to those present in the mosque, including Muslim worshippers and Jewish settlers who regularly storm the compound in violation of the custodianship agreement limiting non-Muslim prayer on the site.

The Israeli move is seen by Palestinians and Muslim worshippers as the latest attempt to threaten the compound's integrity as a Muslim site of worship, possibly paving the way for further encroachment by Israeli forces.



Trump to preside over historic Arab-Israel recognition deals

Agencies

Washington: In a White House ceremony aimed at showcasing presidential statesmanship, Trump will host more than 700 guests on Tuesday on the South Lawn to witness the sealing of the agreements between Israel, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Bahrain.

Trump and his allies hope the occasion will burnish Trump's credentials as a peacemaker at the height of his re-election campaign.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and the Emirati and Bahraini foreign ministers are to ink the deals before the crowd, which will include representatives of supporting nations from the Washington-based diplomatic corps but few other dignitaries from overseas.

Some congressional Democrats who have offered muted praise have been invited to attend.

In addition to the individual bilateral agreements signed by Israel, the UAE and Bahrain, all three will sign a trilateral document, officials said.

The agreements are dubbed the "Abraham Accords" after the patriarch of the world's three major monotheistic religions. Trump is expected to sign as a witness.

The agreements won't end ac-

tive wars but will rather formalise the normalisation of the Jewish state's already warming relations with the two countries.

And, while not addressing the longstanding Israeli-Palestinian conflict, they may pave the way for a broader Arab-Israeli rapprochement after decades of enmity, a pair of wars and only two previous peace deals.

Skeptics, including many longtime Mideast observers, analysts, experts and former officials, have expressed doubts about the impact of the deals and lamented that they ignore the Palestinians, who have rejected them as a stab in the back by fellow Arabs.

Yet even the harshest critics have allowed that they could usher in a seismic shift in the region should other Arab nations, particularly Saudi Arabia, follow suit, with implications for Iran, Syria and Lebanon. Other Arab countries believed to be close to recognising Israel include Oman, Sudan and Morocco.

"These agreements are a huge accomplishment for the countries involved and have led to a tremendous sense of hope and optimism in the region," said Trump's son-in-law and senior adviser, Jared Kushner, who led the negotiations.

"Instead of focusing on past conflicts, people are now focused on creating a vibrant future filled with endless possibilities."

Tuesday's ceremony follows months of intricate diplomacy headed by Kushner and Trump's envoy for international negotiations, Avi Berkowitz, that first bore fruit August 13 when the Israel-UAE deal was announced.

That was followed by the first direct commercial flight between the countries, and then the September 11 announcement of the Bahrain-Israel agreement.

The specific contents of the individual documents to be signed Tuesday, however, were not known ahead of the ceremony.

While officials said they would hew closely to the joint statements issued when the deals were first announced, it remained unclear if the agreements would require further action by the three governments or what binding obligations they would commit each to enforcing.

A senior White House official said on Monday that the documents had been completed and that the UAE-Israel agreement would be longer and more detailed than the Bahrain agreement because there had been more time to finalise it.

Qatar rules out normalising relations with Israel

Agencies

Normalising relations with Israel "can't be the answer" to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, a Qatari official has said, adding that Doha will not join other Gulf Arab states in establishing diplomatic ties with Israel.

"We don't think that normalisation was the core of this conflict and hence it can't be the answer," Lolwah al-Khater, Qatar's foreign ministry spokesperson said on Monday in an interview with Bloomberg.

"The core of this conflict is about the drastic conditions that the Palestinians are living under" as "people without a country, living under occupation," she said.

Al-Khater's statement came ahead of Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates signing their normalisation deals with Israel in a cere-

mony scheduled in the White House later on Tuesday.

The deals will normalise diplomatic, commercial, security and other relations between Israel and the Arab states.

Palestinians have slammed the deals as grave betrayals by the Arab states, further undermining their efforts to achieve self-determination.

The Palestinian leadership wants an independent state based on the de facto borders before the 1967 war, in which Israel occupied the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and annexed East Jerusalem.

Arab countries have long called for Israel's withdrawal from illegally occupied land, a just solution for Palestinian refugees and a settlement that leads to the establishment of a viable, independent Palestinian state in exchange for establishing ties with it.

Earlier this month, Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani told White House adviser Jared Kushner that Doha supports a two-state solution, with East Jerusalem as the capital of a Palestinian state, to end the conflict with Israel.

Working towards unity

Prompted by the 'normalisation' of ties between Arab states and Israel, fractured Palestinian political factions are working diligently in multilateral talks to restore unity and mend the division between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank in negotiations far more promising than previous efforts.

On Saturday, Palestinian groups led by Hamas and Fatah agreed on a "unified field leadership" comprising all factions that will lead "comprehensive popular resistance" against the Israeli occupation, a statement said.

Iran Warns US Against "Strategic Mistake" After Donald Trump Threat

Agencies

Tehran: Iran warned the US on Tuesday against making a "strategic mistake" after President Donald Trump threatened Tehran over reports it planned to avenge the killing of top general Qasem Soleimani.

"We hope that they do not make a new strategic mistake and certainly in the case of any strategic mistake, they will witness Iran's decisive response," government spokesman Ali Rabiei told a televised news conference.

A US media report, quoting unnamed officials, said that an alleged Iranian plot to assassinate the US ambassador to South Africa was planned before the US presidential election in November.

"Any attack by Iran, in any form, against the United States will be met with an attack on Iran that will be 1,000 times greater in magnitude," Trump wrote on Twitter on Monday.

Rabiei expressed regret that "the president of a country who has claims to global management and order would make hasty, agenda-fuelled and dubious remarks on such a weak basis."

He warned that reacting to such reports would "achieve nothing but disruption to the

region and to world calm" and advised Trump to "refrain from fresh adventurism... for the sake of winning a new term as president."

On Monday, the foreign ministry denied the report of an assassination plot as "baseless" and part of "repetitive and rotten methods to create an anti-Iranian atmosphere".

Relations between Washington and Tehran have been tense ever since the Islamic revolution of 1979. They have deteriorated sharply since Trump unilaterally pulled out of a landmark international



nuclear deal with Iran in May 2018 and reimposed crippling sanctions.

The Iranian navy said last week that it drove off US aircraft that flew close to an area where naval exercises were underway near the sensitive Strait of Hormuz.

The military said three US aircraft were detected by air defences.

UAE Allows Health Staff To Take Emergency Covid Vaccine Still Under Trial

Agencies

Dubai: The United Arab Emirates on Monday granted emergency approval for use of a coronavirus vaccine, six weeks after human trials in the Gulf Arab state started.

cine, which is still being tested, was granted after a set criteria and after it had been tested on 31,000 volunteers, it said.

Mild and expected side effects occurred but there have been no severe side effects, the agency said without specifying.



A phase III trial of a COVID-19 inactivated vaccine developed by Chinese state-owned pharmaceutical company Sinopharm began in the UAE in July and is yet to be completed.

"The vaccine will be available to our first line of defense heroes who are at the highest risk of contracting the virus," said the National Emergency Crisis and Disaster Management Authority in a tweet.

The announcement comes amid a surge in new COVID-19 cases in the UAE, which reported 1,007 cases on Saturday, its highest since the start of the pandemic. There were 777 new cases on Monday.

Emergency use of the vac-

ing. It added a thousand people suffering from chronic diseases who took part saw no complications.

Sinopharm secured approval for the trial in late June. The experimental vaccine passed Phases I and II of clinical trials with 100% of volunteers generating antibodies after two doses in 28 days, an Abu Dhabi government statement said in July.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, inactivated vaccines - made with either inactivated (killed) viruses or with a protein from the virus - are well known and have been used against diseases such as influenza and measles.

NEWS MAKERS

Running Out Of Names: UN Body As 2020 Hurricanes Breeze Through Alphabet

Geneva : There have been so many Atlantic hurricanes and tropical storms this year that the world is running out of names for them, the United Nations said Tuesday.

The storms are given first names in alphabetical order but this year they are set to run out.

"The 2020 Atlantic hurricane season is so active that it is expected to exhaust the regular list of storm names," Clare Nullis, spokeswoman for the UN's Geneva-based World Meteorological Organization (WMO), told a media briefing.

"If this happens, the Greek alphabet will be used for only the second time on record."

Throughout the annual hurricane season which runs from June 1 to November 30, storms are assigned alternating male and female names, this year beginning



with Arthur and Bertha. Storms are named to make them easier to identify in warning messages.

The names are overseen by the WMO. They are reused every six years, though if the hurricanes are particularly devastating, the name is retired and replaced.

The name lists use 21 of the 26 letters of the alphabet due to the difficulty in finding a balance of six easily recognisable English, Spanish, French and Dutch names starting with Q, U, X, Y and Z - the languages spoken in the Atlantic and Caribbean regions affected.

Former UK Conservative lawmaker jailed for sex crimes

London: A former lawmaker from Britain's governing Conservative Party was sentenced to two years in jail after being found guilty of sexually assaulting two women.

Charlie Elphicke, 49, whose wife Natalie succeeded him last year as the Member of Parliament for Dover in southern England, was convicted in July of assaulting his first victim, his children's nanny, in 2007 and the second, a researcher, in 2016.

"You are a sexual predator who used your success and respectability as a cover," the judge Philippa Whipple said, adding that he had told a pack of lies to the jury, his wife, his party's officials and the police.

"You suggested to each woman that this was something they wanted, that they had encouraged, that they had enjoyed. That was not true. They had not encouraged you or led you on. Your behaviour was also an abuse of power."

She jailed him for two years, saying he would serve up to half behind bars, and he was ordered to pay 35,000 pounds (\$45,160) as costs.

The Southwark Crown Court was told Elphicke, who represented Dover between 2010 and 2019, became sexually suggestive, lunged at the nanny and groped her in 2007 while his wife was away. He paid her in cash to keep it secret from his wife.

Nine years later, he forcibly kissed the parliamentary worker telling her, "I am so naughty sometimes, aren't I?" and on another occasion sexually touched her again despite her having said she had no interest in him.

Elphicke said he did kiss the first woman but stopped when she did not reciprocate, and while he was "besotted" with the second woman, he said he did not touch her.

His wife, who is still the lawmaker for Dover, said her 25-year marriage was over after her husband's conviction.

Suga Tipped as New Japan PM

Tokyo: Japan's ruling party on Monday elected chief cabinet secretary Yoshihide Suga as its new leader, making him all but certain to replace Shinzo Abe as the country's next prime minister.

Suga easily won the ballot, taking 377 of a total of 534 valid votes from Liberal Democratic Party lawmakers and regional representatives.

His rivals, former defence minister Shigeru Ishiba and LDP policy chief Fumio Kishida, trailed far behind.

Given the LDP's legislative majority, Suga is expected to handily win a parliamentary vote Wednesday and become prime minister, taking over from Abe, who is resigning for health reasons.

A powerful government adviser and spokesman, 71-year-old Suga is seen as promising stability and a continuation of Abe's policies.

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