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NEWS DIGEST

GOC 16 Corps, LG Discuss Situation

JAMMU: A senior army commander on Thursday briefed Lt Governor Manoj Sinha on the overall security situation in the Union Territory, including the Line of Control (LoC) and on the anti-militancy front.

General Officer Commanding, GOC, 16 Corps Lieutenant General MV Suchindra Kumar called on LG at the Raj Bhavan here and discussed important security issues and the overall security management in the Union Territory with him, an official spokesperson said. The army commander, he said briefed the LG about the prevailing scenario along the forward areas including the LoC.

"Anti-militancy operations and matters pertaining to coordination with other state forces were also briefed by the GOC," he said.

The LG, he said appreciating the government forces for their operational synergy and their success in recent counter-militancy operations said that sustained coordination between security forces and the civil administration is crucial to meet security challenges in Jammu and Kashmir.

Tral Shuts Down Against Power 'Hike'

SRINAGAR: The residents in Tral town of south Kashmir's Pulwama district on Thursday observed a token half-day strike against what they termed unprecedented 'hike' in the electricity tariff by the Kashmir Power Development Corporation Limited (KPDCL).

According to local news gathering agency KNT, all shops in Tral town remained shut for half-day while the public transport was also off the roads in response to the call given by Citizen's Council Tral against the alleged power hike by the KPDCL. The report also said that a protest was also led by Chairman Citizens Council Farooq Tral.

"The protesters decried the hike in electricity charges and asked department not to over-charge consumers," the report said, adding "They said the issue about power-hike was raised on numerous occasions but no action has come so far and hence they are forced to stage this protest."

The report quoted MD Kashmir Power Discom, Aijaz Asad as saying that no hike in Power Tariff has been done by the Regulator.

"In fact, tariff levels in Jammu and Kashmir remain unchanged for the past 4 years," he said.

ANC Sarpanch Candidate Wins Unopposed

SRINAGAR: Awami National Conference (ANC) has bagged the Sarpanch seat from Kijpara block of central Kashmir's Kangan town.

Shabir Ahmed Mir who was fielded by ANC for the constituency was declared victorious after BJP candidate withdrew his nomination form.

ANC has termed this as the victory of people and hoped that people will participate in coming DDC elections in large numbers and will defeat the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP).

Cab Driver Killed In Gurez Accident

SRINAGAR: A cab driver on Thursday was killed while six passengers were injured in a road accident in Gurez valley of north Kashmir's Bandipora district on Thursday evening.

Sub division police officer (SDPO) Gurez, Peerzada Ajaz said that a passenger cab (JK15-2335), skidded off the road at Check-Nallah village in Gurez, resulting in on spot death of the driver.

He identified the deceased as Muhammad Najmudin of Gujran, Tulail.

He also said that six persons, who were also travelling in the vehicle were injured and have been shifted to Sub district hospital Dawar for special treatment.

The police officer identified them as Rehmatulla Lone, Abdul Gafar Lone, Zahoor Khan, Farooq Ahmad Lone, Zameer Ahmad Khan, Abdul Majeed Khan, all residents of Gujraan and Mohammad Sultan Lone of Muzgund Tulail. (KNO)

4 Militants Killed In Pre-Dawn Highway Shootout

JAMMU: Four militants were killed and two policemen injured in a gun-battle on the Jammu-Srinagar highway after a truck carrying them was intercepted on the outskirts of Jammu city on Thursday, top police officials said.

The militants had come to execute a "big plan" which has now been foiled, Inspector General of Police (IGP), Jammu, Mukesh Singh, said.

In Srinagar, IGP, Kashmir, Vijay Kumar said the four militants were on their way to the Kashmir Valley to disturb the District Development Council (DDC) polls scheduled later this month, as Pakistan has been trying to cause trouble in the political process.

Giving details of the encounter, IGP Mukesh Singh told a press conference in Jammu that ever since the announcement of DDC polls, police have been receiving inputs about a possible infiltration bid by militants in Jammu.

"We had kept our all teams deployed at check points. There were intelligence inputs that militants may sneak in with large quantities of arms and ammunition," the IGP Jammu said.

A truck was stopped at Ban toll plaza in Nagrota area at 5 am for checking, but the driver left the vehicle and fled. **More On P2**

2 Militants Escape From Army Dragnet In Pulwama

SRINAGAR: The militants, one of them purportedly a top Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) commander, have managed to escape after a brief encounter with a state forces in Parigam area of south Kashmir's Pulwama district on Thursday, officials said.

A police senior officer said that as per specific inputs two militants including JeM commander with code name "Lambu Bhai" were trapped. The officer said that the militants "seem to have fled soon after the encounter broke out." However, the officer said that the searches in the area are continuing, reported news agency GNS.

The encounter which lasted for a brief span of time had ensued after a joint team of Police, Army and CRPF launched a cordon and search operation in Parigam village this afternoon.

As the joint team approached towards the suspected spot, the hiding militants had fired upon the forces, triggering off the brief encounter.

Outside Forces Can't Derail Peace Mission: LG

JAMMU: No outside force can derail the mission of peace and progress of the Jammu and Kashmir administration, Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha said on Thursday as he paid a visit to a hospital here to enquire about the well-being of policemen injured in an encounter. **More On P2**

Measures Being Taken To Check Infiltration: BSF DG

SRINAGAR: Amid a spike in infiltration attempts by militants along the Line of Control (LoC), the BSF chief on Thursday said the period before very heavy snowfall in Kashmir is "very suitable" for militants to cross over to this side and that security forces were prepared to tackle the situation. **More On P2**

PIL For Guidelines On Admission Of CWSN HC Grants Govt 4 Weeks To File Reply

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir High Court has granted government four weeks more time to file response to a Public Interest Litigation, seeking issuance of the appropriate guidelines for admission of Children with Special Needs (CWSN) under Right To Education Act.

A division bench of Chief Justice Gita Mittal and Justice Puneet Gupta granted the time after NH Shah, Sr. AAG, representing the authorities, sought further time to file the reply.

"Let him file the same within four weeks," the court said, adding, "Rest of the respondents who have not filed the reply shall also file the same within the aforesaid period."

The PIL also seeks directions from the court to ensure the admission, attendance and free education of Children with bench mark disability free from cost and any other barriers preventing them from getting quality

education in the Recognized unaided private schools of Jammu and Kashmir.

The PIL has been filed by three persons, two of whom—Zaheer Abbas Jan of Bemina and Mudasir Shaban Dar of Bandipora—have stated that they are two social workers while another—Dr. Chitanjeet Kour of Nanak Nagar Jammu, a physiotherapist doctor by profession.

The petitioners said that Indian Parliament amended part 4 of the Constitution of India and incorporated Article 21 A, a new article in the constitution to incorporate Right to Education of a child between 6 to 14 years as their fundamental right. They said that a duty was imposed on the appropriate government to protect their fundamental right.

In 2009, they said, the Indian parliament enacted the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, a follow up legislation

for implementing the provision of Article 21A of the Constitution of India.

The special provision for the EWS/DG/CWSN children, they said, has been incorporated in the Act itself to address the practical difficulty.

In 2012, they said, the provisions of right of children to free and compulsory Education Act was interpreted by Supreme Court that each and every child between 6 to 14 years has their fundamental right of not only education but quality education. The top Court not only upheld the provision regarding destitute children but also appreciated the provisions of Act which addresses the specific problems faced by the children belonging to under-privileged category, they said.

The petitioners submitted that they time and again approached the concerned authorities including Chief Secretary and **More On P2**



WINTER WOES: An elderly man bargains with a 'Kangri' (firepot) seller in an uptown area of Srinagar on Thursday.

Indira Faced Sharp Criticism For Signing Simla Pact: New Book

NEW DELHI: Former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi emerged as the greatest and much-celebrated heroine after India's victory in 1971 war with Pakistan that led to the creation of Bangladesh but faced widespread criticism for signing the Simla Agreement without sorting out the Kashmir issue, says a new book.

The book 'Reporting India: My Seventy-Year Journey as a Journalist' by veteran journalist Prem Prakash, also says that Indira Gandhi "faced huge problems from day one when she took charge of the party and of the country" after the death of Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri.

The book, which has been released recently, notes that Indira Gandhi did not stop her son Sanjay Gandhi from turning into "an extra-constitutional centre of power" during the Emergency and that his "whims and fancies were a law unto themselves".

It provides a glimpse into her personality, noting how she was "very much her own person", "very lonely person" and "a global leader in her own right".

"Indira Gandhi faced huge problems from day one when she took charge of the party and of the country after Shastriji's death. The Bihar drought, food shortages, the upheavals in East Pakistan and over a million refugees

coming into India...She faced this last problem with so much fortitude and success that perhaps nowhere in the world could so many refugees have been sent back to their homes so successfully," says the author, who is Chairman of ANI.

The book says Indira Gandhi took steps to ensure that the army continued to grow stronger with the Army finishing the Bangladesh war in barely eight days and she dashed Pakistan's hopes of becoming militarily equal to or more powerful than India.

"On December 6, 1971, Indian forces moved into East Pakistan. By December 14, General Manekshaw **More On P2**



File Photo: Abid Bhat

More Snowfall, Rain In Valley Today

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Another spell of rain and snowfall is likely to occur in Jammu and Kashmir in the next 24 hours by Friday, the MET office said on Thursday.

"Scattered to fairly widespread light to moderate rain/snow in Kashmir division. Isolated light rain/snow in Jammu and Ladakh," an official of the local MET department said.

Jammu and Kashmir received its first major snowfall of the season recently which broke a nearly 4-month long dry spell. The minimum temperature was 0.1 degrees Celsius in Srinagar on Thursday while it was minus 0.7 in Pahalgam and minus 5.4 at the Gulmarg ski resort.

Jammu city recorded 9.8, Banihal 1.0, Batote 4.2, Katra 9.5 and Baderwah 1.6 as the minimum temperatures.

Woman Injured In LoC Firing

JAMMU: Pakistani Rangers opened fire and shelled border out posts (BoPs) and hamlets along the International Border in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district, leaving a woman injured, officials said on Thursday.

The Pakistani troops targeted several BoPs and few hamlets in Manyari, Sapwal and Karol Krishna on late Wednesday night, prompting an effective retaliation by the BSF, the officials said.

In the exchange of fire, which continued till this morning, one woman suffered injuries at Manyari village, they said. The shelling has triggered panic among border residents.

"We have been facing heavy firing and shelling each night. It has become a regular feature", Manyari resident Kuldeep said.

"Two shells exploded in our compound and one woman family member suffered splinter injuries", Kuldeep said. Several houses and structures have suffered damage in the shelling, he added. (PTI)

11th Class Exams From Dec 12

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Board of School Education on Thursday issued the date sheet for conducting annual examinations of Class 11th in Kashmir division.

According to the date sheet, the examination will begin on December 12 and will conclude on January 06, 2021.

As per the notification issued by the BOSE, all the concerned heads of the institutions have been advised to ensure proper heating and sitting arrangements for the candidates appearing in the aforesaid examinations.

They have been also advised to ensure proper sanitization of the exam centers before the commencement of these examinations.

Students appearing in the examinations have been advised to adhere to Covid-19 SOPs such as wearing face masks, ensuring proper social distancing and use of hand sanitizers. (KDC)

Hafiz Saeed Gets 10 Years Jail

LAHORE: Jamat-ud-Dawa (JuD) chief Hafiz Saeed was on Thursday sentenced to 10 years in jail by an anti-terrorism court in Pakistan in two more terror financing cases.

Saeed, a UN designated terrorist whom the US has placed a USD 10 million bounty on, was arrested on July 17 last year in the terror financing cases. He was sentenced to 11 years in jail by an anti-terrorism court in February this year in two terror financing cases.

The 70-year-old JuD chief is lodged at Lahore's high-security Kot Lakhpat jail.

"The Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) of Lahore on Thursday sentenced four JuD leaders, including its chief Hafiz Saeed, in two more cases," a court official told PTI.

Saeed and his two close aides - Zafar Iqbal and Yahya Mujahid - have been sentenced to 10 and a half years each, while JuD chief's brother-in-law Abdul Rehman Makki was sentenced to six months imprisonment. **More On P2**

J&K Reports 5 More Corona Deaths, Toll 1618

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: Five more people in Jammu and Kashmir succumbed to coronavirus infection on Thursday, taking the total number of fatalities since the outbreak of pandemic in the Union Territory to 1618.

In Kashmir Valley, two more people died of coronavirus on Thursday, while three other deaths caused by the virus were reported from Jammu division. In Valley, the two victims were a 70-year-old woman from Nichama Kupwara and a 73-year-old man from Dalgate here. **More On P2**

560 New Cases Include 50 Travelers

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir reported on Thursday 560 fresh cases of novel coronavirus, including 50 travelers thus taking the total number of people infected by the virus across the Union Territory to 104715.

While Kashmir valley detected 313 new cases of Covid-19 on Thursday, the remaining 247 were confirmed by officials from Jammu division.

SMC To Hold Mayoral Elections On Nov 25

SRINAGAR: After deferring the polls in wake of COVID-19 pandemic, the authorities have finally decided to hold the mayoral elections for Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) on November 25.

According to a notification, issued by Secretary SMC under number SMC/CS/5027-5116, dated 19-11-2020, the polls will be conducted on November 25 while forms of nomination paper will be obtained from the office of the Secretary, SMC from 20th of November.

"In terms of Section 36 of the J&K Municipal Corporation Act, 2000 read with Regulation 6 of J&K Municipal Corporation (Procedure and Conduct of Business) Regulations, 2005, notice is hereby given that the Election of Mayor, Municipal Corporation, Srinagar will be conducted as per the given schedule," reads a notification.

"Forms of Nomination Paper may be obtained from the office of the Secretary, Srinagar Municipal Corporation from 20th of November **More On P2**

Government Orders Celebrations On Nov 26

SRINAGAR: The authorities on Thursday asked various departments and establishments in Jammu and Kashmir to organize ceremonies of reading of the Preamble to the Constitution on November 26.

"On 26th of November, 1949 the Constitution for the Country was adopted, making the day very sacrosanct for the Country as a whole. To celebrate this auspicious day and sensitize people to the values enshrined in it, it has been decided that the ceremonies of reading **More On P2**

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FROM FRONT PAGE

4 Militants Killed ...

the police official said. Immediately, CRPF and police personnel moved to search the vehicle and came under fire from the militants hiding in the truck.

According to the IGP Jammu, the militants were asked to surrender but they ignored the announcement leading to a gunbattle.

Other security forces also joined in resulting in a fierce gunbattle in which militants lobbed grenades and fired arms, he said.

In the three-hour-long gunbattle, four militants were killed and two policemen injured, the police officer said.

The truck, loaded with rice sacks, caught fire during the encounter. The bodies of the militants, hiding in a cavity within the truck, were recovered.

The two injured policemen, Kuldeep Raj and Mohammad Ishaq Malik, were admitted to Government Medical College (GMC) hospital in Jammu. They were out of danger, officials said.

A huge cache of arms, ammunition and explosive material, including 11 AK rifles, three pistols, 24 magazines, 29 grenades and six UBGL grenades, was recovered, the IGP, Jammu, said.

Besides, medicines, explosive material, bundle of wires, electronic circuits and bags in huge quantities were recovered from them.

"This is for the first in the last few years that such a large quantity of weapons were recovered from slain militants," Mukesh Singh said.

Asked about the motive of the militants, Singh said given the quantity of weapons recovered from the slain militants, it seems that the group had infiltrated recently and were "planning something very big".

"But their plan stands foiled," he said, adding the operation was carried out jointly by the police, CRPF and the Army.

The recovered weapons indicate that the militants belong to JeM. They had a big error plan, Singh said, adding efforts were on to track down the truck driver.

A senior police officer said, it seems the militants infiltrated from across the International Border (IB) in Jammu region before boarding a Kashmir-bound truck.

Speaking on the sidelines of a function in Srinagar, IGP Vijay Kumar said, "For the last few days, Pakistan has increased attempts to infiltrate militants into this side and to disturb the elections for which the process is on."

"In this context, Jammu Police and security forces have done a good job by neutralising four Pakistanis (militants). Their (militants') aim was to come to Kashmir to disturb the election process".

On January 31, a group of militants had opened fire at a police tent near Ban Toll Plaza, triggering a gunfight in which three militants were killed and a policeman got injured.

Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) is exploiting the International Boundary area in Punjab Jammu sector to push in maximum number of militants, officials said.

Outside Forces ...

The Lieutenant Governor, who was flanked by advisor and financial commissioner health and medical education Atal Dulloo during his visit to Government Medical College, complimented the injured policemen for their bravery and assured them of all possible assistance.

Sinha hailed the valour and quick reaction of the state forces in foiling the nefarious design of the militants.

I salute the exemplary courage and bravery displayed by our forces. The nation is proud of your professionalism and commitment to protect its sovereignty and integrity, the Lt Governor said.

Sinha said the administration and the state forces were working day and night to lay the foundation of a progressive and peaceful future for the people of Jammu and Kashmir. "No outside forces can derail us from our mission of peace and progress," he said.

Earlier, advisor to Lt Governor Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar also visited the hospital and met the injured policemen.

He directed the hospital medical superintendent to ensure that the injured jawans are given the best medical care.

Four militants were killed and two policemen were injured in a gunbattle on the Jammu-Srinagar national highway on the outskirts of Jammu city on Thursday, police said.

Measures Being ...

Director General of Border Security Force (BSF) Rakesh Ashtana said the forces were fully prepared to face any challenges on this front.

"We are the first line of defence and we are committed and determined to protect the country..." he said when asked about the continuous infiltration attempts along the LoC.

He was speaking to reporters on the sidelines of the flagging off ceremony of the 6th edition of 'Infinity Ride 2020' from Kashmir to Kanyakumari to support para-athletes.

Ashtana said Pakistan was making increased attempts to infiltrate more militants before the heavy snowfall, but the BSF and all other agencies and forces are prepared and are tackling the situation as best as they can.

"There are attempts to push militants into our country and particularly this period is very suitable for such activities, so all the counter-measures we are taking are very effective and as DG BSF I can tell you we are committed to foil such attempts and we will tackle the situation effectively.

"It is a situation which requires a lot of attention, lot of alertness. This situation is there, no doubt about it and we are facing it, he said.

Referring to the killing of four militants in an encounter in Jammu earlier in the morning, the BSF DG said it was because the forces were alert to the attempts of infiltration from across the border.

The inputs about militants present at launch pads keep on coming. We are alert and prepared to counter that. Today's encounter also signifies that all our security agencies and police force are alert and ready to counter that (infiltration), he said. He said the BSF is committed to the civilians living near border areas and will provide them all sorts of assistance in their difficult times.

The officer said the force was organising a medical camp under its civic action plan to help the people affected by the recent shelling during the ceasefire violations by Pakistan.

Hafiz Saeed ...

"Judge Arshad Hussain Bhutta of ATC Court No. 1 heard the case filed by the Counter Terrorism Department in which the verdict has been announced after the statements of witnesses were cross-examined," the official said.

A total of 41 cases have been registered by the CTD against the JuD leaders, out of which 24 have been decided while the rest are pending in the ATC courts. Four cases have been decided against Saeed so far.

Thursday's sentencing comes weeks after Paris-based global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog - the Financial Action Task Force retained Pakistan on its grey list till February 2021 as Islamabad failed to fulfil the agency's six key obligations, including failure to take action against two of India's most wanted militants -- Saeed and Maulana Masood Azhar.

Saeed-led JuD is the front organisation for the Lashkar-e-Toiba (LeT) which has been accused by India of carrying out the 2008 Mumbai attack that killed 166 people, including six Americans.

The US Department of the Treasury has designated Saeed as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist. He was listed under the UN Security Council Resolution 1267 in December 2008.

The FATF had placed Pakistan on the grey list in June 2018 and asked Islamabad to implement a plan of action to curb money laundering and terror financing by the end of 2019 but the deadline was extended later on due to COVID-19 pandemic.

With Pakistan's continuation in the 'grey list', the country may find it difficult to get financial aid from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the European Union, thus further enhancing problems for the cash-strapped nation.

HC Grants ...

Director School Education Kashmir for redressal of their appeal for providing inclusive education to CWSN in top private schools. However they said their representation was never replied by the authorities. "The petitioners also personally met the concerned authorities but all in vain," they said.

They also submitted that the PIL was for the benefit of thousands of Children with special need who are not able to have access of quality education in their neighborhood schools as per their rights and entitlements under Right of Children to free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009. (GNS)

J&K Reports 5 ...

Those who succumbed to the virus in Jammu division included one resident each from Rajouri, Kathua and Reasi districts.

With these deaths, the total fatality count in the Valley has reached 1070 and 548 in the Jammu region.

Srinagar district with 402 deaths tops the list followed by Jammu (285), Baramulla (159), Budgam (98), Pulwama (86), Kupwara (79), Anantnag (76), Doda (52), Bandipora (49), Rajouri (49), Kulgam (48), Ganderbal (37), Shopian (36), Udhampur (36), Kathua (35), Samba (26), Poonch (22), Ramban (18), Kishtwar (16), and Reasi (9). (With GNS inputs)

SMC To Hold ...

2020 between the hours of Ten O'clock in the forenoon and Four O'clock in the afternoon," it said.

"Nomination forms can be delivered to the Secretary, Srinagar Municipal Corporation between the hours of ten O'clock in the forenoon and four O'clock in the afternoon not later than 21st of November 2020 by a candidate or his proposer," it added.

"Notice of withdrawal of candidature be delivered by a candidate at any time by or before 25th of November 2020 before the election is proceeded within the meeting. In the event of election being contested, the poll will take

place on 25th of November 2020 from 1100 hours onwards," the notification added--(KNO)

Government Orders ...

of the Preamble to the Constitution shall be organized within the Government offices and institutions and other establishments in the Jammu and Kashmir," reads an order issued by the government.

"The reading out activity shall be held alongwith the live telecast of the recital of same by the Prime Minister of India on 26th of November, 2020 at 11:00 am," reads the order, adding, "Divisional Commissioners/ Heads of the Departments/ Deputy Commissioners and Managing Directors of all PSUs/Corporations are directed to organize Preamble reading ceremonies on similar lines in their respective offices/locations, adhering to all SOPs in view of COVID-19 Pandemic."

It directed the Home Department, Department of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj and Housing & Urban Development Department to issue necessary instructions in this regard to their subordinate offices, organizations--Police Department, Block Offices, Panchayats and Municipal Corporations, Councils, Committees to organize the event on similar pattern on the scheduled date and time. (GNS)

Indira Faced Sharp ...

had issued a warning to the commander of Pakistani forces to surrender. This, despite very heavy opposition from America. In dashing Pakistan's hopes of becoming militarily equal to or more powerful than India, Indira Gandhi delivered a body blow to that country. By facilitating the break up of Pakistan into two parts, she did yeoman service to India for all time to come," it says.

The book says India moved the Pakistan Army into cantonments where some 93,000 soldiers laid down their weapons - the biggest surrender since World War II.

"Indira Gandhi was now the greatest, much-celebrated heroine of India. The prime minister received a standing ovation in Parliament following the unconditional surrender by Pakistan army."

It says Pakistan attacked India first on December 3, 1971 and its President General Yahya Khan had hoped his pre-emptive strike would destroy India's air capability - not knowing that Indians were waiting for him.

"Mrs Gandhi had devoted further resources to India's external intelligence and that paid handsome dividends."

The author says India lost a major opportunity to resolve the Kashmir issue at the Shimla summit in July 1972.

"The talks did not proceed well. India was looking for a solution to the Kashmir issue through talks so as to end hostilities with Pakistan for all time. It is my view that India lost all the advantages it had gained through its victory in December 1971 because our negotiators failed in the game of brinkmanship...India lost a major opportunity to resolve the Kashmir issue because it fell for promises made by Bhutto.

"Pakistan recognised Bangladesh, which it would have done sooner or later. But more importantly, it got back its POWs without addressing the Kashmir issue. Bhutto and his delegation were not willing to concede anything, but I believe to this day that he would not have gone back without ensuring the release of Pakistani POWs. The families back home in Pakistan wanted them back.

"Once its POWs were back in Pakistan, the Pakistan Army again began its nefarious activities against Bangladesh and India...And at home, Indira Gandhi faced widespread criticism for signing the Simla Agreement without sorting out Kashmir issue," says the author.

Referring to the beginning of Indira Gandhi's first tenure as Prime Minister, the book says she assumed prime ministership at a "very difficult time".

"She had to handle the fallout resulting from Lal Bahadur Shastri's agreement in Tashkent. The nation was angry at the withdrawal of its forces from areas such as Haji Pir pass and the mountaintops of Kargil that the army had captured with great sacrifice. The mystery surrounding Shastri's death added to the general anguish."

The book describes how the old guard went against her after the 1967 election, which the Congress won with a small majority, and how she asserted her control over the party by encouraging VV Giri to contest as an independent candidate for the office of country's President against the official nominee of Congress.

"This is the only instance in the country's history since Independence that an independent candidate contested and won the presidential election. This election could have been the undoing of Mrs Gandhi. She had taken a huge gamble," says the book.

The author recalls that in an interview Indira Gandhi had termed parliamentary democracy as moribund and not suitable for India.

"Years later she toyed with the idea of introducing a presidential system. The idea was dropped but the fact that it was floated at all suggested she was always looking to consolidate power," he says.

Referring to the events leading up

to Emergency in which Indira Gandhi's election to Lok Sabha was set aside in 1975, the author says that the verdict was like "pronouncing a death sentence on someone for jaywalking".

"It is a pity that a tiny technical fault in 1971 election should have led to her election victory being set aside and the horror of Emergency and dictatorship imposed on India, with Sanjay Gandhi, an extra-constitutional centre of power, taking virtual control of the government. There had been no corruption in Indira Gandhi getting elected in 1971," the book says.

Referring to the atrocities during Emergency in Delhi, the book notes that these took place just a few kilometres from her residence.

"And yet she went about her daily work without any evidence of being affected by the events. In truth, the government was being run by her son Sanjay and the close group around him...Sanjay Gandhi became the virtual prime minister of India. It was clear to most of us journalists that fond, as she was of Sanjay, Mrs Gandhi allowed him to stay in active politics. Soon officials and ministers began taking orders from him. He suddenly turned into an extra-constitutional centre of power.

"Ultimately, the decision to stop him had to come from the prime minister and the government. But she did not stop him. Why was the modern-day 'Durga' so helpless? No prime minister is ever helpless; they chose to abdicate decision-making. And that is what Indira Gandhi did. She would not be the last Indian PM to do so," the book says.

It says that this span of Indira Gandhi's prime ministership was "to be forever tainted by the stain of Emergency and all the good work she did was overshadowed by dictatorial steps she had taken on her son's behest." The book says Indira Gandhi launched her 1979 election campaign with enormous energy. "Never before had I seen her or anybody else go into a campaign determined to fight it out single-handedly."

It notes that after winning from two seats, she surrendered Rae Bareilly in favour of Sanjay Gandhi.

"It was a clear message to her detractors that she would not punish her son for Emergency. It also, in a way, set precedent for her family, which is given not to admitting to past political mistakes made by their kin."

Recalling how Sanjay Gandhi died in a plane crash in June 1980, the book notes that it was a huge tragedy for Indira Gandhi and she was "shaken, in fact devastated".

"Indira Gandhi was, I don't know why a very lonely person. She had always been a loner but Sanjay's death left her even more isolated. It was at this stage that she managed to convince her other son, Rajiv Gandhi, to stand for Congress."

The book talks about trouble in Punjab, inaptitude of some Congress leaders and describes factors and conditions that led to Operation Blue Star.

Referring to India's first nuclear test in 1974, the book says Indira Gandhi led "the Chinese know that we too had the nuclear capacity".

The book notes that Indira Gandhi "was a recognised world leader" and received immense respect from Commonwealth heads of government when she hosted the Commonwealth meeting in Delhi in November 1983 with Queen Elizabeth opening the meeting as head of the Commonwealth.

"Similarly, she earned a huge and positive reputation from her interest in the Non-Aligned Movement and from the NAM summit in Delhi, with practically all world figures attending, including Fidel Castro. She was a global leader in her own right."

The book has many interesting anecdotes of the author about the historic or tumultuous moments in the long years when Indira Gandhi was the prime minister.

The author recalls his efforts to get government nod to cover its relief efforts in Bihar which was facing near-famine conditions, his courageous foray for coverage into East Pakistan that could have turned very tragic, his forced visit to London during Emergency and sending the first news feed via satellite out of India and scoring a world exclusive as polling started in 1977 elections.

Prem Prakash is a pioneer in Indian journalism and in his long career has covered some of the most important stories of post-Independence India including the 1962 war with China, 1965 and 1971 wars against Pakistan, the assassination of Indira Gandhi and Lal Bahadur Shastri's fateful Tashkent journey. The book provides a detailed account of his professional life and stories he covered from Nehru's demise to rise of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

The 225-page book is available on Amazon and Flipkart. (ANI)

560 New Cases ...

Giving the district wise details, officials said, Srinagar reported 130 cases, Baramulla 35, Budgam 29, Pulwama 18, Kupwara 33, Anantnag 14, Bandipora 23, Ganderbal 20, Kulgam 6, Shopian 5, Jammu 95, Rajouri 5, Udhampur 36, Doda 17, Kathua 12, Poonch 3, Samba 25, Kishtwar 29, Ramban 13 and Reasi 12.

Meanwhile, 565 patients have recovered and were discharged from various hospital in last 24 hours--185 from Jammu and 380 from Kashmir valley.

'Gumrah Gang': Naqvi Coins New Term

SRINAGAR: Senior BJP leader and Union minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi on Thursday said the abolition of Article 370 has demolished the speed breaker of redundant laws which had obstructed the development process in Jammu and Kashmir, and Ladakh.

He also said Gupkar Declaration, an alliance of various mainstream political parties demanding the restoration of special status to Jammu and Kashmir, will prove to be a dying declaration for dynastic and destructive politics of the Congress and other alliance partners in the erstwhile state.

"Abolition of Article 370 has demolished the speed breaker of redundant laws which had obstructed the development process in Jammu and Kashmir, and Leh-Ladakh.

"Now, the people of Jammu-Kashmir and Leh-Ladakh are also getting benefits of various socio-economic-educational empowerment schemes of the central government," Naqvi said while addressing an election rally for District Development Polls (DDC) in north Kashmir's Kupwara district.

He said the Gupkar gang has become gumrahi gang (deceiving gang) which is trying to create fear and confusion among the people just for its narrow-minded political interests.

IGP For Strengthening 'General Security Grid' For Peaceful Polls

SRINAGAR: Inspector General of Police Kashmir Vijay Kumar on Thursday asked officers to strengthen general security grid to ensure upcoming elections are held in a peaceful atmosphere.

He and Divisional Commissioner Kashmir Pandurang Kondbarao Pole on visited North Kashmir's Bandipora and Kupwara districts to review preparedness for forth coming elections.

The meeting at District headquarters Bandipora and Kupwara was attended by respective senior Civil and Police officers.

"The meeting focused on security and other related arrangements pertaining to the forth coming elections," a police spokesman said in a statement. The IGP Kashmir held a detailed security review meeting with the officers of police and CAPF.

He also took extensive review of the security arrangements put in place for ensuring peaceful and smooth forthcoming elections.

IGP Kashmir at both district headquarters was briefed by the concerned Police and CAPF officers about various security measures adopted by them for ensuring peaceful elections. They also presented an overview of the steps initiated by them in the districts to counter the challenges faced at the ground level.

"IGP Kashmir stressed on the officers to

Gupkar Declaration will prove to be a dying declaration for dynastic and destructive politics of the Congress and other alliance partners in Jammu-Kashmir, Naqvi said.

Naqvi said the Congress and dynasty is supporting those people "who want to throw Kashmir back into the quagmire of separatism and militancy".

"The Congress is supporting anti-national activities of Gupkar gang, he alleged.

Naqvi said dynastic and feudal arrogance of those people who were involved in loot of public money sent for development of Jammu-Kashmir and Leh-Ladakh has been shattered.

After several decades, he said, the BJP has made the people of Jammu and Kashmir an equal partner of the democratic process and inclusive development.

"The Congress should make its stand clear on Article 370 which had given only separatism and militancy to Jammu-Kashmir and nothing else during the last seven decades," he said.

Naqvi said steps have been taken to make Jammu-Kashmir and Leh-Ladakh an investment hub.

He claimed that Global Investment Summit has generated an investment worth about Rs 14,000 crore. (PTI)

ensure synergy, better coordination and communication among all the forces and civil administration working at the ground level," the spokesman said.

The top police officer of Kashmir also urged upon the officers to strengthen the general security grid of the area to ensure upcoming elections are held in a peaceful atmosphere. "Both the district SSSP were instructed to keep vigil on anti-national elements besides generating specific intelligences and conducting anti-militancy operations along with security forces."

State Election Commission has already announced an eight-phase poll to 20 District Development Councils (DDCs) and vacant Panchayat and municipal seats, in the first major electoral exercise since the effective nullification of Article 370 in August last year.

The government had in October amended the J&K Panchayati Raj Act to provide for setting up of District Development Councils in each district which will have directly elected members, marking the implementation of the entire 73rd Constitutional Amendment in the J&K.

While voters in first phase would be cast ballot on November 28, the last phase of polling would take place on December 19 and the counting of votes would take place on December 22.

ACB Charges Former Ex-Engineer In Trap Case

OBSERVER NEWS SERVICE

SRINAGAR: The Anti-Corruption Bureau on Thursday filed chargesheet against a former Executive Engineer of roads and buildings (R&B) department who was caught while accepting bribe from a contractor last year.

According to an ACB spokesperson, a case was filed (FIR 08/2019) under section 5(1)(d) r/w 5(2), 4-A of the Prevention of Corruption Act Samvat 2006 against Abdul Aziz Bhat, the then Executive Engineer R&B Division Bandipora. The case, he said, was registered on the basis of a written complaint lodged in Police Station ACB wherein it was alleged that the complainant had executed and completed the works of R&B Division, Bandipora, but the then officer was not releasing the payments.

"The complainant requested him several times but he did not release the payment of Rs.5,18,089 without bribe. Finally the Executive Engineer demanded a bribe of Rs 20,000 for release of the payment of bill," the ACB spokesperson said.

After registration of the case, he said, a trap team was constituted and the services of independent witness were utilized. In April 2019, he said the accused was arrested red handed while demanding and accepting an amount of Rs.20,000 money from the complainant.

"The investigation of the case was concluded as proved against the accused public servant for launching prosecution and the chargesheet was produced in the court of law," the ACB spokesperson added.

Banihal Highway To Remain Closed For Traffic Today

JAMMU: The Jammu-Srinagar national highway will remain closed for vehicular traffic for undertaking repair works on Friday, a traffic department advisory said.

"On Friday, there shall be no traffic movement on the Jammu-Srinagar national highway from either side in view of maintenance and repairing of the highway," it said. The advisory further said that trucks and load carriers may adopt Mughal Road for their journey from Srinagar towards Jammu.

"Commuters are advised to plan their journey accordingly," the advisory said. For the movement of convoys of security forces, it said that security forces are advised and requested not to ply against advisory and traffic plan in view of traffic congestion on the Jammu-Srinagar national highway. "They may ply from Jammu towards Srinagar," it added.

Ladakh Records 60 New Covid-19 Cases

OBSERVER NEWS SERVICE

LEH: Ladakh has reported 60 fresh COVID-19 cases, taking the infection tally to 7,623, while 66 patients have

recovered from the disease during the past 24 hours, officials said on Thursday.

A total of 94 people have died due to COVID-19 in the twin districts of Leh and Kargil.

While 54 deaths had taken place in Leh, 40 others succumbed to the virus in Kargil since the outbreak of the pandemic, the officials said.

Out of 66 new cases, they said 59 patients tested positive for the disease in Leh and one in Kargil.

Sixty-six patients have been cured of the contagion in Leh and subsequently discharged, bringing down the active cases in the region to 796 -- 686 in Leh and 110 in Kargil.

With this, the total number of cured cases in the UT stands at 6,605, which is 87 per cent of the total cases, the officials said.

SAD DEMISE

With profound grief and sorrow, we inform the sad demise of Bashir Ahmed Gujri S/o : Aashur gujri R/o : Sheshyara Habba Kadal, Srinagar, who suddenly left us tearful in his early age after a brief illness. Meanwhile, the Fateh Khwani of the deceased will be observed on 21st of November 2020 (Saturday) at his ancestral graveyard. BEREAVED: 8082458639



Meanwhile, the Fateh Khwani of the deceased will be observed on 21st of November 2020 (Saturday) at his ancestral graveyard. BEREAVED: 8082458639

SDA seals two buildings at Bemina

SRINAGAR, NOVEMBER 19: The Enforcement Wing of Srinagar Development Authority (SDA) today sealed two buildings, built in violation/deviation of the issued building permissions at Housing Colony, Bemina.

It was given out that the permission was granted for two separate buildings for residential purposes only, however the proprietors had built commercial buildings instead.

The drive was successfully executed in coordination with the Station House Officer Bemina, under the directions of Vice Chairman, SDA Dr. Bashir Ahmad Lone.

Meanwhile, as per the statement issued here the SDA has advised the general public not to indulge in any illegal construction whether residential or commercial without obtaining proper building permission from SDA.

It has also warned that any structure built in without obtaining building permission or in violation of building permission/land use or deviations of building permission shall be directly sealed/ demolished as per the provisions of COBO Act 1988.

BJP, NC Functionaries Join Apni Party

SRINAGAR November 19: BJP District Vice President Pulwama Shabir Ahmad Wani and National Conference Publicity Secretary Ganderbal Mohammad Sultan Shaheen on Thursday joined the Apni Party.

Besides the close associates of Wani and Shaheen, a number of prominent political activists from Budgam and Kupwara also joined the Party at its office in Lal Chowk Srinagar.

The new entrants included Arshad Ali Bhat, Shah Younis, Shabir Malik, Bayan ul Furkan, Zubair Majid Bhat, Naseer Ahmad Shah, Adil Ahmad Sofi, Sahil Bashir Dar, Ghulam Hassan Bhat, Mohammad Altif Sheikh, Mohammad Yousuf Laway, Mohammad Shafi Ganie, Umar Farooq Bhat, Ashiq Hussain Tantray, Arshad Ahmad Bhat, Burhan Mehraj Magray, Syed Abdul Latief, Mohammad Shafi Khan, Ghulam Nabi Mir, Mudasir Bashir Magray, Syed Mohammad Mubeen Shah and Irshad Ahmad Malik.

The joining took place in presence of Party president Syed Mohammad Altaf Bukhari, senior vice president Ghulam Hassan Mir, Muntazir Mohi-ud-Din, state secretary and district president Budgam, Noor Mohammad Sheikh district president Srinagar, media advisor Farooq Andrabi, district president Ghulam Mohammad Mir, party coordinator south Kashmir Showkat Gayoor, Dr Samiullah, Peer Mohammad Yousuf, Javid Mir and Bilal Arif.

All the new entrants pledged to carry forward policies and programmes of the Party at the grassroots level.



Kashmir to Kanyakumari para cycling expedition was flagged off by officials at Dal Lake Boulevard on Thursday- KO Photo Abid Bhat

Int'l Outreach Program for Kashmir Saffron Industry Held in NY

Srinagar- The Consulate General of India, New York in association with Jammu & Kashmir Trade Promotion Organisation (JKTPO) and US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) organised a virtual conference to promote the export of Saffron.

The event was aimed to increase the export of this globally renowned spice in the US. The virtual promotion was attended by Manoj Kumar Dwivedi, Commissioner/ Secretary to the Government, Industries & Commerce Department, Randhir Jaiswal, Consul General of India (CGI), New York, Devi Prasad Misra, Consul (Trade), Ankita Kar, Managing Director, J&K Trade Promotion Organization, Celebrity Chef Vikas Khanna, Dr. Nasheeman Ashraf, Sr. Scientist, CSIR IIM, and food columnist Ramin Ganeshram and senior officials from J&K Govt. & CGI, New York along with important members of the Saffron Exporting community of J&K and American Importers.

Manoj Dwivedi, Commissioner Secretary, Department of Industry and Commerce, Jammu & Kashmir commented,

“J&K is the largest producer of the best quality saffron in the world. As we embark on to explore the potential markets, events like these will help us to reach potential buyers in every country and will increase the brand value of our products in the international market.”

“We are thankful to the Government of Jammu & Kashmir for this initiative. We hope that both the markets will be mutually benefited by this association. We want

“J&K is the largest producer of the best quality saffron in the world. As we embark on to explore the potential markets, events like these will help us to reach potential buyers in every country and will increase the brand value of our products in the international market”

to get more of Indian Saffron to the US. India is one of the leading producers of Saffron and we look forward to adding value to trade and the production line.” said Randhir Jaiswal, Consul General of India (CGI), New York.

The event also served as a knowledge dissemination about various aspects of Saffron. Celebrity Chef Vikas Khanna shared insights about the culinary story of saffron; Dr. Nasheeman Ashraf introduced scientific and genetic nature of Indian Saffron to the participants through his session- 'From Farm to Plate'; Ramin Ganeshram talked about the Global History of Saffron and America's First Michelin-Starred Indian Chef, Hemant Mathur spoke about the use of Saffron in Western Cuisine.

The event was targeted to enable the reputed exporters of Saffron to connect with the potential US importers. More than 40 saffron exporters registered with the JKTPO for this event. The event concluded with a Q&A session and the details along with company profiles of the registered exporters from J&K were shared with CGI, New York to connect the buyers and sellers.

DIAL-EMMA

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

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 ✈

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

HIJRI CALENDAR
04 Rabi-us-Sani
1442

PRAYERS

FAJR	5: 40
ZUHR	12: 14
ASR	3: 50
Magrib	5: 30
ISHA	6: 51

This Day In History

- 1815 - 2nd Treaty of Paris: France & her allies agree France pay indemnities after Battle of Waterloo, ending Napoleonic Wars
- 1817 - First Seminole War begins in Florida
- 1917 - 1st successful tank use in battle, at the Battle of Cambrai in World War I as Britain uses the new technology to break through German lines
- 1917 - Ukrainian Republic declared
- 1940 - World War II: Hungary, Romania and Slovakia join the Axis Powers
- 1959 - UN adopts Universal Declaration of Children's Rights
- 1965 - UN Security Council calls for boycott of Rhodesia
- 1977 - Egyptian President Anwar Sadat becomes the 1st Arab leader to address Israeli Knesset.
- 1980 - United Nations Gulf War mediator Olof Palme makes first unsuccessful peace shuttle between Tehran and Baghdad
- 1984 - SETI Institute (Search for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence) is founded.
- 1985 - Microsoft Windows 1.0 is released
- 1990 - British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher fails to defeat Michael Heseltine's bid for leadership of the Conservative Party
- 1990 - US 68th manned space mission STS 38 (Atlantis 7) returns from space
- 1990 - Saddam Hussein announces plans to release German hostages
- 1990 - Soviet Union shows reluctance to endorse the use of force against Iraq
- 1994 - Kosmos 2294/2295/2296 launches
- 1994 - Angolan government and UNITA rebels sign the Lusaka Protocol in Zambia, ending 19 years of civil war.
- 1997 - Iraq's Revolution Command Council formally endorses an agreement, arranged by Russia, that enables UN weapons inspection teams to resume operations in Iraq.
- 1998 - Court in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan declares Osama bin Laden "a man without a sin" in regard to the 1998 U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania
- 2003 - After the November 15 bombings, a second day of the 2003 Istanbul Bombings occurs in Istanbul, Turkey, destroying the Turkish head office of HSBC Bank AS and the British consulate.
- 2008 - After critical failures in the US financial system began to build up after mid-September, the Dow Jones Industrial Average reaches its lowest level since 1997.
- 2009 - The Mexican government declares its economy technically out of recession after 2.93% GDP growth in the third quarter of 2009; Mexico had been in a severe economic crisis for over a year prior to its economic rebound
- 2012 - Toshiba unveils a robot designed to help in nuclear disasters

From KO Archives

2 brothers beheaded

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Two brothers of a slain police officer and a militant were among four people killed and two injured in violence in Jammu and Kashmir since last evening.

Reports said large number of unidentified gunmen raided the house of slain CIK inspector, Ghulam Hassan Wani in Sadrpora locality of Keygam Kandi, Kupwara last night and abducted his brothers Nazir Ahmad and Mushtaq Ahmad. Their beheaded bodies were recovered from the Kaudi this morning.

Ghulam Hassan alias Watali had been killed few months back. Reports said a militant was killed in during an encounter with security forces in their house in May. NAFA agency said the gun-men equipped with machine guns and AK rifles conducted house to house searches before abducting the duo. Mushtaq worked as a clerk in Education department while Nazir Ahmad was an employee of the Forest Department. The agency added that residents had sought army help after the abduction but forces refused to intervene saying they will tackle the matter in the morning.

Gunmen killed a shopkeeper, Abdul Salam Bhat, a butcher by profession, at Qazigund in Anantnag district and injured two persons Idrees Ahmad son of M Shaban Kumhar and Syed Qurban son of Syed Akbar near Raina wari in downtown Sri-nagar last night. In a fierce encounter with security forces a foreign militant of Lashker-e-Taiba, Sadiq Hussain Abad was killed at Larnoo in Anantnag district last night.

A grenade attack on a bunker in Alamgari Bazar left at least six civilians injured. The grenade which reportedly was hurled at the bunker at around 5.30 in the evening missed the target. BSF personnel stationed there later cordoned off the area for searches. Several residents said they were severely thrashed by the angry personnel.

(KASHMIR OBSERVER, 20 NOVEMBER, 2000)

Government of Jammu & Kashmir Union Territory.
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
R&B DIVISION BARAMULLA.**

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS
NIT No:- 109/8775-84/2020-21/RnB/Bla Dated 18.11.2020

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K UT e-tenders (In Single Cover System) are invited on Percentage basis from approved and eligible Contractors Regd. With J&K State Govt. CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for each of the following works:-

S. No	Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rs.)	E./M Bid Security (In Rs.)	Time	Class	MH of Account	Position of AAA/TS	Position of funds
1.	Construction of Lane from gate of Dr shakeeb lone to H/O Ashiq Hussain Dar at Ushkura ward 17	1.99	200/-	4000/-	15 days	DEE	UDS 2020-21 (MC Baramulla)	AAA Accorded	Available
2.	Reconstruction of inner side drain from house of Mohd Shaban Gojree to house of Nisar Ahmad Dar at Dewanbagh Baramulla Ward No 13	0.65	200/-	1300/-	15 days	DEE	UDS 2020-21 (MC Baramulla)	AAA Accorded	Available
3.	Construction of lane from gate of Mohd Altaf Khan to main Link road at Khawaja Bagh Jetty "B" Baramulla in Ward no 21 Baramulla	1.00	200/-	2000/-	15 days	DEE	IDMT 2020-21 (MC Baramulla)	AAA Accorded	Available

Special Condition: The unbalanced successful bidder shall have to furnish the additional performance security amount within 7days failing which an amount of Rs 200/- fine per day shall be levied for a maximum of 7days. Thereafter the work shall be offered to second lowest bidder & CDR shall be forfeited.

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

1	Date of issue of Tender Notice	18.11.2020
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 19.11.2020 to 27.11.2020 4:00PM
3	Bid submission Start date	19.11.2020
4	Bid Submission End Date	27.11.2020 upto 4:00PM
5	Date and time of Opening of Bids (Online)	28.11.2020 upto 4:30PM in the office of the Executive Engineer R&B Division Baramulla

- Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of treasury challan/receipt mentioning therein name of work and NIT No. (copy enclosed) in favour of the Executive Engineer, R&B Division Baramulla (Tender Inviting Authority) and Earnest money /Bid security in shape of CDR/FDR/BG pledged to Executive Engineer, R&B Division Baramulla (Tender receiving Authority).
- The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site at the office of the Executive Engineer, R&B Division Baramulla.
- The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of technical bids.
- The earnest money shall be forfeited, if-
- Any bidder/ tenderer withdraws his bid/ tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid.
 - Failure of Successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within the specified time limit.
 - Failure of successful bidder to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.

No. 8775-84
Dated 18.11.2020

Executive Engineer
R&B Division Baramulla

DIPK-9248/20

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR
INDUSTRIAL TRAINING INSTITUTE
(An ISO 9001:2008 Certified Institute)

CAMPUS 1: Bagh-i-Dilawar Khan, Srinagar CAMPUS 2: Zainakote, Srinagar
E.mail: info@itrsrinagar.org, itrsrinagar@gmail.com Website: www.itrsrinagar.org
No: ITI /Sgr/661-65
Dated:-18-11-2020

ADMISSION NOTIFICATION NO.05 OF 2020 DATED:-18-11-2020

This institution has to fill up the left over seats in the following trades, as such the selected candidates of Round 1, 2 & 3 who have missed the opportunity of completing the admission formalities and the candidates who had applied for online admission and were not selected in Round 1, 2 & 3 are hereby informed to attend this ITI for Admission which will be made purely on first come first serve basis, keeping in view the merit position:

S.No	Name of Trade	No. of Vacant Seats
1	Electrician	06
2	Electronic Mechanic	05
3	Stenographer Secretarial Assistant (English)	05
4	Sewing Technology	07
5	COPA	13
6	Computer Hardware & Network Maintenance	11
7	Digital Photographer	13
8	Health Sanitary Inspector	04
9	Tourist Guide	10
10	Data Entry Operator	10
11	COPA (Self Finance)	07
12	Stenography (Self Finance)	07

Accordingly all the above reflected eligible candidates are required to attend this ITI along with the following documents in original and Xerox copies and five number of passport size Photographs along with requisite fee so that the process of filling up of left over seats is complete strictly on first come first serve basis, keeping in view the merit position:

- Marks Certificate of qualifying Examination
- Date of Birth Certificate
- Category Certificate (SC/ ST/ Ex-Serviceman/ Physically Handicapped/ EWS), if any
- Adhaar Card
- Domicile certificate / Permanent Resident Certificate (PRC).

Mohammad Ashraf Wani
Principal (Senior Scale)

DIPK-9241/20

ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
AWANTIPORA, KASHMIR.
Tele: 01933-247954/247955. Website: www.islamicuniversity.edu.in.

EXTENSION NOTICE

It is notified for information of all the concerned that the last date for submission of online application form alongwith deposition of application fee for admissions to B. Arch. Programme advertised vide Admission Notification No. 3 of 2020 Dated: 05-11-2020 has been extended upto **30-11-2020**. The candidates can apply online for the aforesaid academic programme on the University Website at www.islamicuniversity.edu.in. All other Terms & Conditions including eligibility criteria for admission to the advertised programme shall remain the same. Queries, if any, can be made on (01933) 247252 & can also be mailed on admissions@islamicuniversity.edu.in
No: IUST/Acad/Admissions/20/680
Dated: 19-11-2020

Sd/-
Deputy Registrar, Academics

KASHMIR
OBSERVER

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K O V I E W

Congress pusillanimity

Hours after the home minister Amit Shah attacked the Congress over its tie-up with People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) and asked it to clarify its position on restoration of Article 370, the national party announced its dissociation with Gupkar grouping. Its chief spokesperson Randeep Surjewala said in a statement that the Congress was not a part of the Gupkar alliance and was contesting the district development council elections in Jammu and Kashmir to "expose" the BJP through democratic means.

Earlier, National Conference President, Dr Farooq Abdullah had said that Congress was with Peoples Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) and will also be a part of the group in the upcoming district development council (DDC) polls. He told media that Congress state President Ghulam Ahmad Mir had personally expressed his support for the PAGD and decided to fight elections jointly.

If anything, Congress approach to its alliance with the PAGD mirrors its pusillanimous politics to politics as a whole. Over the past many years now, the party has displayed a stunning lack of conviction in its so called secular ideology. Its strategy has been shaped largely by what the country's rightwing opinion feels. For example, it was so called secular Congress which moved Afzal Guru up the queue to hang him in 2012. To add insult to the injury, Guru's family, his wife and the lone son were not informed before his execution, let alone allowed to meet Guru. The hanging and the indecorous secrecy of the deed only played into the deep cynicism and the sense of alienation in Kashmir.

India needs a robust secular narrative to confront the hardline sectarian narrative with a serious political challenge. The country needs a politics that brings into sharp relief the secular-communal binary and turns it into a fight between good and evil. But Congress so far has not been up to the task. His vision for the country is vague and insipid. It has so far failed to straddle the widened Hindu-Muslim divide. Instead, it has chosen to play second fiddle to the BJP on ideology and ply a soft Hindutva that includes making a beeline to temples during elections and avoiding Muslims. As it is, its election campaign during recent Bihar Assembly polls was bereft of any discourse about Muslims or addressing their concerns. This is why a substantial number of them shifted to the party of Asad-u-din Owaisi and led to Mahagathbandan falling just shy of victory.

Congress' politics in J&K is a reflection of its ambiguous cowardly politics at the national level. It isn't certain about any of its ideological tenet, while as the BJP is.

O T H E R O P I N I O N

Modi-Biden lay out a road map

The one reason India and the US have seen a steady improvement in relations over four administrations is that the list of common interests has kept increasing. Given the chalk and cheese differences between presidents Donald Trump and Joe Biden, this formula will be tested in the coming months.

It is reassuring that Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi's tweet about his phone conversation with Mr Biden immediately laid out three areas with the greatest potential for bilateral cooperation. The first is the Covid-19 pandemic. Much of this already exists at the commercial and scientific level but can be infused with governmental support. The second, and one with considerable long-term potential, is climate. PM Modi is committed to move India to a green energy trajectory but needs international support in terms of finance and technology. Mr Biden has to not only reverse Mr Trump's damage to global climate efforts but also move the US to the vanguard of the battle against carbon. On the multilateral track, there is a smorgasbord of climate policies that the two can work on, including looking beyond the Paris Accord and strengthening Indian initiatives such as the International Solar Alliance. Finally, India and the US need to share notes on their visions of the Indo-Pacific — shorthand for how to handle an openly aggressive China. It is in this policy area where Mr Biden's views are haziest. He and his advisers accept China is a strategic competitor.

Strategic partnerships work best if they generate a return on investment in the policy space.

The Hindustan Times



Revisiting Kashmir Reportage

As friction accelerates between the Centre and Kashmiri leaders in the Kashmir Valley, how I wish two veteran journalists, Nikhil Chakravarty and Ajit Bhattacharjee were still around in our midst

Humra Qureshi

Earlier this month, on Nikhil Chakravarty's birth anniversary – he was born 3 November 1913- I sat reading his features on the Kashmir Valley. He could be termed as one of those journalists who wrote and spoke most fearlessly against the political misrule. His analytical essays/features focusing on the human rights violations in and around the Kashmir Valley were laced with stark facts.

As the friction accelerates between the Centre and the Kashmiri leaders in the Kashmir Valley, how I wish two veteran journalists were still around, in our midst. After all, Nikhil Chakravarty and Ajit Bhattacharjee were probably the first two Indian journalists who had not just spoken out but written extensively about the grave human rights violations and the connected aftermath which had begun to spread out in the Kashmir Valley.

Earlier this month, on Nikhil Chakravarty's birth anniversary – he was born 3 November 1913- I sat reading his features on the Kashmir Valley. He could be termed as one of those journalists who wrote and spoke most fearlessly against the political misrule. His analytical essays/features focusing on the human rights violations in and around the Kashmir Valley were laced with stark facts. He was one of those veteran journalists who had regularly travelled to the Kashmir Valley and believed in delving right into the causes. In fact, his writings on the then situation in the Kashmir Valley should be preserved as they hold out some hard-hitting realities, which paved way for unrest and disasters.

With nostalgia tightening its grip, I'm reminded of my first meeting with Nikhil Chakravarty. It was around the Spring of 1987 when I first met him. I was working as a features editor with a magazine and was assigned to do a feature on 'old men'. He was residing in New Delhi's Kaka Nagar - a typical government colony but his 'D 11 type' apartment which looked 'different'. The outer gate was painted in Post Office red. I still remember that the PO red-painted gate stood out, breaking the monotony, relaying positive vibes. I was left impressed to such an extent that the very next day I went to the nearest market (Khan Market) to buy PO red paint and had all possible doors of my home painted red!

It was a long detailed interview but here it is important to quote him on the significance of travelling especially if one has to report on the

human situation. "How I travel! Well, I catch the bus. No reservations about that. Also, I prefer to travel alone. For my profession traveling is a must as I want to see for myself the situations and ground realities, whether here in our country, or in Iran, Poland, or in Afghanistan... Till date I slog, do a lot of work, as I believe that if an old car is kept in the garage for too long it stops working!" Also stands out his comment on the decay that had already begun to set in and spread out in our country. "In Modern Indian society there could be less taboos and individual freedom is encouraged, but do let me add, with emphasis, that with all our modern living a great amount of insensitivity has crept in. Norms have been shattered. There is no concept of Indian-ness left, and only the RSS views are thriving in this so-called Modern IndiaWe have not developed culturally and that's the root cause of our decay."

And author – journalist, Ajit Bhattacharjee, held the distinction of being the first Indian journalist who started reporting from the Kashmir Valley, right since 1947, he

had witnessed the help the Kashmiris had provided in resisting the invasion by the Pathan tribals, sent in by Pakistan ... Today the essential tragedy of the situation is the very contrast between the Valley of the late 1940s (when the Kashmiris were resisting the Pathan tribals sent in by Pakistan) with what's seen today. Today it's the same Kashmiris who are crying out 'Azaadi' from India."

To the 'whys' inherent in this changed situation, he had detailed, "Then, there was a link between the Valley people with Sheikh Abdullah and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru ... Mind you, that link was secularism together with socialism, since both these leaders believed in secularism and also in socialism. So the Kashmiris were with India and rejected Pakistan because for them it didn't stand for either socialism or secularism ... Also, now, over the years the Hindutva political parties here have exerted their influence over Government of India. With that several other factors came up and all this made the Kashmiris disappointed."

He had further said, "There's a sense of alienation amongst the Kash-

In Modern Indian society there could be less taboos and individual freedom is encouraged, but do let me add, with emphasis, that with all our modern living a great amount of insensitivity has crept in. Norms have been shattered. There is no concept of Indian-ness left, and only the RSS views are thriving in this so-called Modern IndiaWe have not developed culturally and that's the root cause of our decay

wrote for years on the Kashmir situation, travelling in and around the Valley, authored books, including the biography of Sheikh Abdullah.

I would meet Ajit Bhattacharjee regularly here in New Delhi and I'd also met him in Srinagar when we were both in the Valley. And during the course of an interview with me, he had stated – "The first time I had arrived in Srinagar was in 1947, soon after our troops landed there...and I

miris. That sense of alienation had always been there but today its grown and doubled because the way we have handled the situation. We have messed up the situation ... it amounts to a form of occupation, because of our repressive law and order approach. The only way out now is to invite all concerned for discussions on specific, time-bound measures to revive the autonomy the State enjoyed when it joined the Indian Union."



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A 'Meaty' Business

Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) is known for its mouth-watering delicacies, and when it comes to non-vegetarian food, there is no match to the traditional dishes of the erstwhile state. The traditional Wazwan is the epitome of Kashmiri cuisines.

A lesser-known fact about the source of these authentic dishes is the place where meat comes from to J&K. A large amount of meat and livestock are supplied from Haryana to J&K. Not just J&K, Haryana sup-

plies meat and livestock to the Ladakh region as well.

The average yearly consumption of meat in J&K including Ladakh is more than 50 million kilograms. The majority of Kashmiris prefer mutton over chicken, and when it comes to mutton, the demand for lamb meat is always high in J&K. Haryana produces nearly 400 thousand metric tons of poultry meat every year. The availability of live stocks in abundance has proven to be a major booster for Haryana's supply chain of meat.

Ambala district of Haryana is one of the biggest suppliers of livestock and meat to J&K and Ladakh. The district supplies more than 60% of the total supplies to the region. Apart from Ambala, Shahbad division of Kurukshetra district of northern Haryana also supplies a huge quantity of meat to J&K and Ladakh.

Haryana caters to a good number of varieties of livestock, thus creating a diverse market of livestock in the Jammu region, Kashmir and Ladakh as well. Ankit Titoria, a meat dealer

based in Karnal district of Haryana says a large number of consignments in trucks are sent to J&K and Ladakh every week. "Every Tuesday a meat mandi is set up in Ambala, and most of the consignments are sent from there only to cold places such as Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, J&K, and Ladakh," adds Titoria. "Mostly," Titoria says, "sheep meat is sent to J&K."

Mrinal Pathak
mrinalpathak21@gmail.com

Shades and Shadows of Strife: Growing Up Trauma in Kashmir

RAKSHANDA AFRIN

According to a report by Jammu Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society (JKCCS), the fifteen-year period from 2003 to 2017, witnessed not less than 318 killings of children (in the age group of 1 to 17) in various incidents of violence in the valley.

Teary-eyed with blood-stained clothing, the three-year-old child wailing on the chest of his dead grandfather on a roadside in north Kashmir lately transported 20-year-old Gowher Mubeen back to his tormenting childhood.

"I was out on a street just like that kid when I saw bodies falling in early 2000," Mubeen recalled. "The scene continues to haunt me. I could never bury those blood-drenched and bullet-ripped bodies in my head all these years."

Soon after the HMT boy was photographed in a heart-breaking scene in Sopore, commentaries on his unsound future started, with many Kashmiri netizens drawing parallels between their growing up experience in Kashmir during nightmarish nineties and with the child's life ahead.

"The naive heart of the kid will take a few years to make sense of what is a gunfight or bullet that took his grandpa's life, but what can't be undone is the death and trauma he had to endure," Mubeen continued. "Our children don't deserve these recurrent spine-chilling experiences in their own home."

Even as propaganda, whitewashing and blames tried to distort the disturbed image coming out of Sopore recently, what's inevitable, many say, is the protracted conflict regularly plunging the valley into an abyss of agony.

Just nearly two months back, locals in downtown Srinagar lost their homes in the Nawa Kadal gunfight, the same incident which caused a young seven-grader, Basim Aijaz, to lose his life.

According to a report by Jammu Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society (JKCCS), the fifteen-year period from 2003 to 2017, witnessed not less than 318 killings of children (in the age group of 1 to 17) in various incidents of violence in the valley.

In Saffron town Pampore, Labeeb Baig, 22, has spent most of his boyhood battered with instability and street hostility.

"I was just 9, when our neighbour and his father-in-law randomly disappeared one evening and were found to be killed a week later after sustaining critical injuries," Labeeb said.

And when his hometown witnessed raging protests in 2016, his parents decided to send him away to Lucknow, to pursue studies at his maternal uncle's place. "But I refused, as I was really scared to leave my family and younger sister alone amidst the dreaded atmosphere."

Unlike others, Kashmiris have grown habitual of waking up to news of their brethren's killing and tensions in their homeland. "Our families mourn deaths, our mothers become widows overnight," Labeeb, a political science graduate, continued. "There seems no end to our miseries."

As per the report, Structure of Violence, published by JKCCS in 2015, Kashmiris are living in "the most militarized zone of the world", even more than Iraq, Afghanistan and Gaza, where "there's one Indian soldier for every 10 Kashmiris".

Most Kashmiris have firsthand violent lived experiences in the valley, said Jibraan Javid, a PhD researcher at Aligarh Muslim University.

"I remember how in 1994, my father's right arm was shot by the armed forces and a decade later his leg was fired at," Jibraan, who hails from Kashmir's Bandipora, said. "It's not only a personal incident but a microcosm of the violence which is happening at a large scale, almost like a pandemic. Most of us often wonder, as why our bodies are made to bleed, or be at the discourse of violence!"

After joining Aligarh in 2018 for his doctorate degree, the Bandipora boy felt his childhood trauma returning to haunt him. "Especially after the Pulwama attack, when Kashmiris were cornered and targeted with slogans like 'dogs are allowed, Kashmiris are not', I felt like reliving the dreadful past."

Elaborating on the impact of living in a conflict zone, the scholar said, one suffers from structural and systematic violence, "for example, the internet gag", apart from physical violence.

"Since last month, I've been doing my research on 2G and not been able to attend any online lectures or webinars, or be able to download any larger books," Jibraan said.

According to Access Now, an international advocacy group, India's Internet shutdown in Kashmir is "the longest ever in a democracy". While low-speed internet has been allowed after a complete blackout in January this year, it's mostly limited or restricted. In want of high-



speed internet, the mandatory online classes have become a tall order for the lockdown-weary Kashmiri students.

"We've been facing e-curfews and digital restrictions in our homes for a while now," the scholar said. "Today even as academic structure has been shifted from the offline world to an online medium, the frequent internet bans are marring our prospects."

With the result, he said, children in Kashmir get disillusioned with their study in an insecure atmosphere, where their rights, lives and future remain uncertain. "For people like me," Jibraan said, "this sense of disillusionment comes at a later stage in life."

Dr Yasir Hamid Bhat, Assistant Professor at the Department of Psychology in the University of Kashmir, talks about his experiences and the sharp differences he has observed over the years while teaching in restricted and non-restricted areas.

"While teaching at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, the thing which I clearly observed was the sense of security," Prof. Bhat told Kashmir Observer.

"Students there openly share their experiences without any fear of repercussions. There's an academic calendar and routine life. But here in Kashmir, it's patchy. There's always an uncertainty amongst the students about what's going to happen tomorrow, and how they look into their future."

The socio-psychological impact is that, along with the conflict, comes insecurity, Dr Bhat continued. "Not only the physical insecurity, but of survival," he asserted.

Over the years, the professor said, the lived trauma has gone through the roof in the valley. "Unfortunately conflict is impacting different people in different ways. And it culminates into the vulnerability, susceptibility and stressful life, which is rampant and serious issue now."

Prof Bhat heavily stressed on the quality of life—which depends on the sense of security, access to opportunities, and absence of violence. "But in case of well-being, in a conflict zone, one may find a large population devoid of any stress, anxiety or other mental disorders but still we can see their well-being is deteriorated. When there's no space to express oneself, they become isolated and all the goals shunt to just survival."

A prototype of the professor's personality portrayal, Aqsa Siddiq, a Class 9 student, often finds herself locked in her room. Lack of indoor audience and restricted outdoors have silenced this otherwise chirpy girl ever since lockdown became a dominant feature of life in Kashmir.

"Our curbed life is leaving a little choice for us now," Aqsa said. "You can't go out for normal schooling and routine outing. And back home, your parents keep sulking over the situation in Kashmir. This takes toll on your mind."

For last one year now, ever since New Delhi struck

down JK's special status, Aqsa and her class have been consuming distressing information in the form of communication gags, gunfights, LAC tensions, COVID spike, and other horrid events.

"We aren't coming out of this vicious circle," Jibraan, the Bandipora scholar, continued. "This turmoil seems endless, so do our miseries."

Recalling his childhood dreadful incident, Jibraan said, "My late grandma was once beaten and pushed into a drain when she chased armed forces for taking away my father. I still have all those images and happenings stuck in my mind. My father had been taken for months, and I saw him coming back home from the army camp whimpering and tortured."

Even today, he said, the street hostility is creating deep impressions on the young minds in Kashmir.

"On January 22 this year, we were on our way to SKIMS, Srinagar amid heavy snowfall to get my father treated," he said. "We were stopped a dozen of times before getting caught by a military convoy near Ajas, Bandipora. We were told to come out of the car. Everything was so traumatic. We had left home at around 7.30 am but it was past noon when they had asked us to leave. With the result, we couldn't reach to the hospital on time."

What was more insulting, he said, was when he was asked to unlock his phone pattern and hand over his handset to the forces.

"What to do in a place where you do not even have the basic rights like privacy," Jibraan said. "Each one of us in Kashmir has shuddering tales to tell."

Prof Bhat said that even after war or conflict ends, the impact of it is felt even decades after.

"Society needs to move forward and become progressive, but in conflict zones, the reverse happens. Here, we're moving backward, and seep into regressive times," he said.

"Although there's resilience and coping mechanism among the natives, but we need to understand that much of that has to do with our helplessness. We should not be self-appreciating, as this is not something one would ideally want. If given an option, we would not need to be in a constant state of strife. It takes a huge toll on the population who would want to be free and rather use their potential in better ways and focus on fulfillment of their goals and aspirations."

This article was originally published on July 6, 2020 in Kashmir Observer. It is being reproduced on World Children's Day to highlight how life stories here are essentially a bildungsroman of conflict – an ending saga from childhood to adulthood.

Children Without Childhoods

ANUSHA ISLAM RAHA

The biggest problem in the world right now is that, while we are completely aware that our surroundings and our practices are forcing millions of children to grow up without a childhood, without education and without human rights, we are completely okay with it. Even if we cannot solve the problem, we should at least try to ensure that children who are dying because of our voluntary or involuntary silence are given the rights they are entitled to.

According to the UN, continents like Africa and Asia are notorious for their colossal contribution to the number of children in child labour, while America, Europe, and Arab States account for 5%, 4%, and 3%, respectively.

Developing and under-developed countries are seen to report higher numbers than developed countries, mainly because child labour has a deep connection with poverty, fuelled by lack of education, social backwardness, and, most importantly, the demand for cheap labour.

In many communities, children hired at cheap rates as domestic help are subjected to abuse and even rape while many, out of the 73 million children involved in hazardous activities around the world, die because of the kind of risky work they do. And that is not all; children are also forced into drug trafficking, prostitution/pornography, and other activities which

scar them for life.

However, Covid-19 has made 16 million children in the world's vulnerable countries stop their education with little hope of return. Furthermore, previously poverty-stricken families have also lost their sole breadwinner to Covid-19 or to unemployment. Thus, the jobless now rely on their underaged children to make ends meet.

But how do we end child labour? Merely stopping

Covid-19 has made 16 million children in the world's vulnerable countries stop their education with little hope of return. Furthermore, previously poverty-stricken families have also lost their sole breadwinner to Covid-19 or to unemployment. Thus, the jobless now rely on their underaged children to make ends meet.

children from going to work will not be enough because the causes continue to exist. These causes must be rooted out.

Ending poverty – the primary cause – is not easy job to do, but it can be reduced: NGOs and other organizations that are already working day and night to end child labour can provide free skills training which will increase their people's changes of becoming employed. Ensuring free education for children is

equally imperative.

But most people living in rural areas tend to look into the short-term benefits that can be gained from children. Thus, boys are sent to work and girls are forced into marriages at an early age with middle-aged men claiming to be richer.

Undoubtedly, that seems profitable to most of these parents, leading to girls like Nurunnahar dying at the age of 14. It is so hard to believe that, in the 21st

century, not only are we forcing girls to get married at 14, but we are also letting them die, soaked in their own blood, begging for a life that was theirs to live, and not even labelling the crime done to them as rape.

"Sexual intercourse by a man with his own wife, the wife not being under thirteen years of age, is not rape," states our penal code.

Discernibly, the section disregards marital rape of those above 13, and encourages marriages of girls be-

tween 14-18 years. The Child Marriage (Restraint) Act 1929 further facilitates such marriages as the Act merely mentions the age limit and does not nullify child marriage once it has been "successfully" committed.

Give girl children access to education (which is their right) is likely to increase their future earnings by 20%, benefitting the economy and society.

They will grow up to become well-educated adults will contribute to the stability of nations, reduction in poverty, establishment of gender equality, improvement of physical and mental health, and of course, provide their future generations with a childhood worth remembering.

Schools played an important role in the prevention of child marriage by informing the authorities and by conducting regular meetings with parents to increase their knowledge regarding the negative consequences of child marriage and the importance of girls' education.

Giving children access to education is not a favour – we are complying with national and international laws. Articles 28 and 32 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989, for example, establish the right to education and protection from economic exploitation.

We are duty-bound to provide our children with education and not force them into work or marriage. Otherwise, behind every other closed door, we will find children without childhoods.

Dhaka Times

Can Surgical Masks Be Reused?

Health authorities say the most widespread anti-Covid weapon -- surgical masks -- must be thrown away after a single use, but environmental concerns are pushing some scientists to question this recommendation.

As the coronavirus continues to spread, masks have in many places become mandatory on public transport, in shops and at work.

But cost has become an issue, as has the fact so many disposable plastic masks wind up in waterways and the oceans. One alternative is reusable cloth masks, but many people prefer single-use surgical masks because they are lighter and individually cheaper.

"Medical masks are for single use only," the World Health Organization has said. "Discard the mask immediately, preferably into a closed bin."

But faced with shortages during the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic in March and April, the WHO allowed in a June report for "exceptional procedures" to disinfect throw-away masks for reuse.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) recommends -- in emergency circumstances -- hydrogen peroxide vapour to decontaminate the N95 masks worn by healthcare workers.

Other methods to purify single-use masks include exposing them to high temperatures or ultraviolet radiation.

But these methods are inconvenient for people at home, said French microbiologist and member of Adios Corona, Denis Corpet.

Seven-day method
Adios Corona -- a group of scientists who provide information on Covid-19

to the public -- recommends "placing the mask in a paper envelope with the date clearly marked, and leaving it for seven days."

"Several scientific studies show that viruses are almost all dead on a mask after seven days," said Corpet.



A study published in The Lancet found that only 0.1% of the virus on the outside surface of the mask was still detectable after one week.

This method, however, is not appropriate for healthcare workers exposed to high viral loads. Peter Tsai, the inventor of N95 electrostatically charged filter material, agrees with the seven-day method. But he suggests leaving used masks out in the open for a week before reuse, a cycle he says can be repeated five to 10 times.

Disposable masks can also be placed in the oven, Tsai told AFP, ideally at a temperature between 70°C and 75°C -- not too high to avoid burning the plastic, but sufficiently hot to kill the virus.

Washing masks in a washing machine, however, is not a good idea.

"Washing without detergent may not wash away the virus," Tsai said. "And washing with detergent will

erase the (electrostatic) charges," diminishing its efficiency.

French consumers' rights group UFC-Que Choisir washed surgical masks at 60°C, put them in the dryer, and ironed them. After 10 such cycles, the masks still filtered at least 90% of 3-micron particles.

"Apart from a slight felting, the washed surgical masks were at least as efficient as the best cloth masks," UFC-Que Choisir reported last week.

'Like underwear'
Researcher Philippe Vroman from French engineering university Ensait came to the same conclusion.

After five washes, "there are practically no differences (of filtration) for particles of 3 microns," Vroman said, on the basis of preliminary results not yet published in a peer-reviewed scientific journal.

"And I would rather we swap masks every four hours and wash them, rather than wearing them several days in a row as some people do. It's a bit like underwear," he said.

But not all scientists agree.
"Washing the mask at home could potentially cause a secondary contamination and spread the virus if washing is not set appropriately," said Kaiming Ye, head of the biomedical engineering department at New York's Binghamton University.

Until more research is published on the matter, official advice from health authorities is not set to change.

"Single-use surgical masks must be thrown into the bin after use," said France's health authority DGS, but noted that more studies were underway.

Millennial Money: Financial advice that rarely fits all

Agencies

When I hear financial tips that are unrealistic or shame-inducing, I cringe. Any advice that makes complicated money moves seem like an easy path to profit is downright dangerous. Questionable guidance is all around, oversimplifying important decisions or claiming a one-size-fits-all approach will work. Amid the black-and-white world of advice-giving, there's a lot of gray. Don't ignore your unique needs and circumstances when plotting out your finances.

LACK OF WEALTH DOESN'T MEAN YOU LACK DISCIPLINE

There's a subset of social media dedicated to what I call "hustle worship." These posts will have you believe that if only you'd work harder, wake up earlier and eat the exact same breakfast as Elon Musk does, you'd be a billionaire.

This advice glosses over larger issues that prevent millions of hard-working, disciplined people from attaining financial security -- like crushing student loan debt, job uncertainty and budget-busting child care costs. According to NerdWallet's 2019 American Household Credit Card Debt study, the average U.S. household with student loan debt owes \$46,459. Average annual U.S. child care costs ranged from \$18,442 to \$26,102 in 2019 for two children in full-time care in a child care center, according to a report by Child Care Aware of America.

Discipline is good, but it's also OK to recognize your limitations and obligations.

Start by writing down all of your expenses for a month so you can get a picture of where your money goes. Then, create a budget that leaves room for needs AND wants, like the 50/30/20 budget: 50% of your take-

home pay covers needs like housing and groceries; 30% covers wants like dining and travel; 20% covers savings and debt repayment. This way, you don't stress if you have a moment of weakness. You've built a budget that allows for fun.

AUSTERITY ISN'T ALWAYS A VIRTUE

As your income grows through the years, it's wise to funnel the extra cash into savings and investments without otherwise changing your spending habits. But it's OK to spend money on luxuries or conveniences that will make your life better or easier.

Jonathan Howard, a former visual effects artist who is now a financial adviser, experienced his own spend-or-save decision when he and his family relocated from Los Angeles to Lexington, Kentucky. Howard's salary decreased. But his wife rejoined the workforce, the cost of living was lower in Lexington, and they sold their L.A. home for a profit. His initial impulse was to save the entire profit from the sale, but their new home's kitchen didn't function well, and that's the room where his family spends much of their time.

They opted to spend around 25% of the proceeds from their old home on a kitchen renovation. "It was a sum that, when I looked at it on paper, made me nauseous," he said in an email. "But several months later, we could not be happier with the results."

Melissa Lowe, who lives in St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, recently left her job to blog full time. While she's currently not earning an income from blogging, her family decided to keep their professional house cleaner and cut back in other areas.

"She even folds and puts away my laundry and if that isn't heaven on earth, I'm not sure what is," she said in an email. "I will eat peanut butter

and jelly sandwiches before I give her up."

Living below your means helps you save toward goals, but leave room in your budget for purchases that can make your life easier.

NOT ALL INVESTMENTS ARE 'PAS-SIVE'

Some investments, like 401(k)s and IRAs, are often "set-it-and-forget-it." You can automate contributions and select target-date funds that will adjust your asset allocation for you. But other investments, like real estate, require not only regular effort, but also significant investments of money and time.

I briefly considered buying a duplex until I witnessed how much work my then-landlord had to pour into my last apartment because previous tenants neglected to report some serious maintenance issues. By the second ceiling leak, my dreams of earning rental income faded. Not every landlord has a horror story, but they do acknowledge that it can take time before a property starts paying for itself.

Michaelson Buchanan owns three properties in Richmond, Virginia, and spent \$130,000 on fixing up the first two. "We do a lot of the work ourselves so we can do these things economically," he said. "I would say it's the house that Google built."

Buchanan has dealt with maintenance issues and problem tenants over the years, but ultimately recommends owning a rental property so long as you have the savings to afford major issues. "Don't have unrealistic expectations about what you could get in rent," he says. "You won't get wildly more money because you've fixed a property up."

Investing is key, but it's a space where one old adage does ring true: To make money, be prepared to spend money.

Study suggests regular dose of nature may improve mental health during COVID-19 pandemic

Nature around one's home may help mitigate some of the negative mental health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, suggest the findings of a new study published in the journal Ecological Applications.

An online questionnaire survey completed by 3,000 adults in Tokyo, Japan, quantified the link between five mental-health outcomes (depression, life satisfaction, subjective happiness, self-esteem and loneliness) and two measures of nature experiences (frequency of green space use and green view through windows from home).

More frequent greenspace use and the existence of green window views from the home were associated with increased levels of self-esteem, life satisfaction and subjective happiness, as well as decreased levels of depression and loneliness.

"Our results suggest that nearby nature can serve as a buffer in decreasing the adverse impacts of a very stressful event on humans," said lead author Masashi Soga, PhD, of The University of Tokyo. "Protecting natural environments in urban areas is important not only for the conservation of biodiversity but also for the protection of human health." (Agencies)

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The applicant above named has made an application before the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission, New Delhi for determination of tariff of Farakka Super Thermal Power Station, Stage-I&II (1600 MW) for the period from 01.04.2019 to 31.03.2024.

1. The beneficiaries of the generating station are:

- West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Co. Ltd. Vidyut Bhawan, Block-DJ, Sector-II, Salt Lake City, Kolkata - 700 091
- Bihar State Power Holding Company (BSHPCL), erstwhile Bihar State Electricity Board (BSEB) Vidyut Bhawan, Bailey Road, Patna - 800 001
- Jharkhand Bijli Vitran, Nigam Limited, Engineering Bhawan, Heavy Engineering Corporation Dhanuwa, Ranchi - 834 004
- Grid Corporation of Orissa Ltd. Vidyut Bhawan, Janpath, Bhubaneswar - 751 007
- Haryana Power Purchase Centre (HPPC), Shakti Bhawan, Sector - 6, Panchkula, Haryana - 134 109
- Power Department, Govt. of Sikkim, Kazi Road, Gangtok, Sikkim - 737 101
- Tamil Nadu Generation & Distribution, Corporation Ltd. (TANGEDCO), 144, Anna Salai, Chennai - 600002
- Punjab State Power Corporation Limited (PSPCL), THE MALL, PATIALA - 147 001
- Uttar Pradesh Power Corp. Ltd. Shakti Bhawan 14, Ashok Marg, Lucknow - 226 001
- Power Development Department (J&K), Govt. of J&K Secretariat, Srinagar
- Assam Power Distribution Company Limited, Bijlee Bhawan, Paltan Bazar, Guwahati - 782 001
- BSES Rajdhani Power Ltd. BSES Bhawan, Nehru Place, New Delhi - 110019
- BSES Yamuna Power Ltd. Shakti Kiran Bldg., Karkardooma, Delhi
- Tata Power Delhi Distribution Limited, 33 KV Sub Station Bldg. Hudson Lane, Kingsway Camp, New Delhi
- Rajasthan Uja Vikas Nigam Limited, Vidyut Bhawan Janpath, Jaipur - 302 005 (Rajasthan)

2. Capacity of the generating station : 1600 MW
3. Approved capital cost of the project : Rs.196,79Cr (as on 31.03.2019)
4. Authority which has approved the Capital Cost : CERC
5. Date of commercial operation : 01.07.1996
6. Capital cost on the date of Commercial operation: NA
7. Details of tariff:

Particulars	Tariff for the previous Year*	Year-wise tariff sought to be determined				
		2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
1. Capacity Charges (₹Lakh/year)	105482.30	85545.73	98028.62	104549.38	105275.27	104879.45
2. Energy Charges (Paise/kwh)#	272.447		255.40			

*As per petition filed before CERC for fixing up of Tariff for 2014-19 period for the instant station.
ECR is the base energy charge rate at the start of the tariff period. However, the actual energy charge rate for the month shall be based on fuel cost(s) and GCV(s) for the month as per applicable CERC Regulation.
8. A copy of the application made for determination of tariff is posted on the website of NTPC, namely www.ntpc.co.in under the Tab "Notices".
9. The suggestions and objections, if any, on the proposals for determination of tariff contained in the application to be filed by any person, including the beneficiary before the Secretary, Central Electricity Regulatory Commission, 3rd & 4th Floor, Chandertok Building, 36, Janpath, New Delhi - 110001, with a copy to the applicant within 30 days of publication of this notice.
Date : 24.07.2020 (Rohit Chhabra)
Place : New Delhi Add: General Manager (Comm)

Leading the Power Sector

Srinagar Development Authority

Bemina, Bye Pass Near SKI MS Medical College, Srinagar, Kashmir-190018
TEI 0194-2493191, FAX: 01942493180, Email: srinagardevelopmentauthority@gmail.com

Short Term Quotation Notice No 05 of 2020

Srinagar Development Authority invites the sealed premium quotations from the General Insurance Companies of UT of J&K for renewal of insurance of the following departmental vehicles of Srinagar Development Authority. The detail of thereof is shown against each as under

S.NO	Regd. No	Type	Date of Registration	Sum insured
01	JKOIN-7920	Ambassador	03/02/2010	Rs.200000/-
02	JKOIA-3802	City Honda (Zerodep)	13/03/2017	Rs500000/-
03	JKOIL-4246	Innova Toyota	12/01/2008	Rs360000/-
04	JKOIN-7921	Scorpio	17/04/2010	Rs350000/-
05	JKOIX-2427	JCB Dozer (IMT23+ Overtun)	08/07/2013	Rs1250000/-
06	JKOI U-8868	Bolero	23/11/2013	Rs/-360000/-
07	JKOIU-8870	Bolero	02/11/2013	Rs360000/-
08	JKOIU-8869	Bolero	02/11/2013	Rs360000/-
09	JKOIA-4766	Bolero	01/04/2017	Rs560000/-
10	JKOIA-3904	TATA Mobile {IMT23	17/05/2018	Rs340000/-

The insurance should be covered as per motor vehicle Act 1988/ rules. The quotations affixed with revenue stamp Rs 5/- should reach to the Head Office, Srinagar Development Authority, near SKIMS, Hospital Bemina, Bye pass road Srinagar on 23/11/2020 at 2pm. The quotations addressed to Vice Chairman, SDA, will be opened on same day by the tender committee in presence of the participants who may choose to be present. In case of non availability/busy schedule of the members of the committee the same will be opened on some other convenient day. The bidder should enclose the GST registration certificate. Otherwise the tender/quotation will not be accepted.
If any other related information is required same can be obtained from the Office of the Senior Estates Officer, Srinagar Development Authority.

No: SDA/SEO/197-202
Dated 16/11/2020

Senior Estates Officer
Srinagar Development Authority

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

MECHANICAL HOSPITAL & CENTRAL HEATING DIVISION SRINAGAR
(Phone No: 0194-2496089, E-mail id: xenmhchdk@yahoo.in) Website: www.medkmr.or

NIT No: MHCHD/TS/2020-21/197
Dated: 19.11.2020
SHORT TERM NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Date of sale of tender documents.	From 20.11.2020 to 26.11.2020 (2.00 P.M)
Last date of receipt of Tenders.	27.11.2020 upto 2PM.

For & on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Jammu & Kashmir, sealed tenders affixed with Rs.5/- revenue stamps are invited from the registered firms/Govt. Contractors for the below mentioned work:

S. No	Description of work.	Estimated cost in Rupees	Amount of Earnest Money, in Rs.	Cost of Tender document in Rs.	Time of completion	Position of Funds
1	Repairs to Kirloskar make (KDS 2095+), 20 HP Mono block Pumpset at Plumbing Section of Govt. Chest Disease Hospital, Srinagar.	51,300/-	1000/-	200/-	05 Days	Available as communicated by Intending Department

The tender must be accompanied with the requisite earnest money deposit in the shape of CDR/FDR drawn from any scheduled/national bank and pledged in favour of Executive Engineer, MH&CH Division, Srinagar. The tenders found without earnest money shall be rejected outright at the time of opening of tender.
The tender document can be had from the office of the undersigned during working hours against cost mentioned above, in the form of IPO/Demand Draft or Cash Payment. Tender documents shall be issued subject to production of certificates to the following effect:

- Latest Sales tax clearance certificate/or as applicable as per new GST rules.
- J&K State Sales Tax Registration Certificate/ GST registration certificate.
- Documentary proof of similar nature of work in any Govt./Semi-Govt. Department.

The tenders should reach the office of undersigned on 27.11.2020 upto 2 P.M and shall be opened on the same day or any subsequent date convenient to the undersigned in presence of the tenderers who may be present on the spot.
The envelope containing tender should properly be superscripted with Tender Notice no, Name of work and Name of tenderer.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Mechanical Hospital & Central Heating Division,
Srinagar.

No: MHCHD/TS/5960-66
Dated: 19-11-2020
DIPK-9287/20

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

Office of the Sr. Aquaculture Engineer (XEN) Fisheries Deptt Srinagar

Notice Inviting Tenders
ABRIDGED E-NIT No 02 OF 2020-21

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory, e-tenders are invited by Sr.Aquaculture Engineer (XEN), Fisheries Department J&K Srinagar by e-tendering mode on item rate basis from approved and the eligible registered Contractors registered with J&K union territory Lt. Government of the classes mentioned here under in strict accordance with conditions noted below.

S. No	Name of work	Approx. Cost (Rs.in lacs)	Earnest money	Class of Contract	Cost of Tender Document	Time of opening of bid	Time of completion
2	Construction of Brick Walling at Watch & Ward Hut Kharhoor Harwan (Balance work left over items)	Rs 10.40 lacs	Rs 20,800/-	B,C&D	Rs 1500/-	03-12-2020 at 10:00 AM	One Month

Position of AA=Accorded Position of Funds = Available

The bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), set of terms & conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from www.jktenders.gov.in under ASH/Director Fisheries /Engineering Wing as per the schedule of dates given below.

S. No	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	19-11-2020
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	20-11-2020 from 10.00 am to 11-12-2020 upto 4:00 pm
3	Bid submission Start Date	20-11-2020 from 10.00 am
4	Bid submission End Date	01-12-2020 upto 4:00 pm
5	Date & Time of opening Bids (Online)	03-12-2020 at 10:00 AM In the Office of the Sr. Aquaculture Engineer (XEN) Fisheries Deptt Suleiman Complex Dalgate -Srinagar

The detailed NIT/Terms & Conditions can be had from the office of the undersigned on any working day during office hours

DIPK-9286/20
No:SAE/D/2020-21/338-40
Dated:- 19-11-2020

S/d
Sr. Aquaculture Engineer (XEN)
Fisheries Department
Srinagar

US Senators Seek To Stop Trump's \$23 Billion In Arms Sales To UAE

Agencies

Washington: Three US senators said on Wednesday they would introduce legislation seeking to halt the Trump administration's effort to sell more than \$23 billion of drones and other weapons systems to the United Arab Emirates, setting up a showdown with the president just weeks before he is due to leave office.

Democratic Senators Bob Menendez and Chris Murphy and Republican Senator Rand Paul will introduce four separate resolutions of disapproval of President Donald Trump's plan to sell more than \$23 billion worth of Reaper drones, F-35 fighter aircraft and air-to-air missiles and other munitions to the UAE.

The huge sale could alter the balance of power in the Middle East, and members of Congress have chafed at the administration's attempt to rush it through, having sent a formal notice to Congress only last week.

Many lawmakers also worry about whether the UAE would use the weapons in attacks that would harm civil-

ians in Yemen, whose civil war is considered one of the world's worst humanitarian disasters.

When the deal was announced, Amnesty International warned that the weapons would be used for "attacks that violate international humanitarian law and kill, as well as injure, thousands of Yemeni civilians."

The sale includes products from privately held General Atomics, Lockheed Martin Corp F-35s and missiles made by Raytheon.

SALES' FATE UNCERTAIN

While the resolutions bring attention to lawmakers' questions about the massive sales, and could delay them, they are unlikely to stop them.

US law covering major arms deals lets senators force votes on resolutions of disapproval. However, to go into effect the resolutions must pass the Republican-led Senate, which rarely breaks from Trump. They also must pass the Democratic-led House of Representatives and survive Trump vetoes.



UAE Suspends Visit Visas For People From Pakistan, 11 Other Countries

Press Trust Of India

Islamabad: The United Arab Emirates on Wednesday temporarily suspended the issuance of new visas to visitors from Pakistan and 11 other countries until further notice, the Foreign Office said.

The decision by the UAE authorities is "believed to be related to the second wave of COVID-19," Foreign Office spokesperson Zahid Hafeez Chaudhri said in a statement.

"We have learnt that the UAE has temporarily suspended the issuance of new visit visas until further announcement for 12 countries, including Pakistan," he said, adding that the government is seeking official confirmation from the UAE authorities in this matter.

However, the suspension would not apply on already

issued visas, the Foreign Office said.

It was not immediately clear how many categories of visas would be affected by the suspension. The UAE has various visa categories, including business, tourist, transit and student.

The other countries hit by the UAE government's fresh visa directives include Turkey, Iran, Yemen, Syria, Iraq, Somalia, Libya, Kenya and Afghanistan.

In June, when cases in Pakistan were on the rise, UAE airline Emirates had announced temporary suspension of passenger services from Pakistan till July 3. The decision came after around 30 Pakistanis who arrived in Hong Kong on board an Emirates flight tested positive for the virus. The airline resumed its flights in July, the

Dawn News reported.

In August, Kuwait's aviation banned commercial flights to Pakistan and 30 other countries were regarded as "high risk" due to the spread of the coronavirus.

The number of infections has been rising in Pakistan since late last month and authorities have declared that the country was witnessing the second wave of COVID-19. The positivity rate of the disease has increased, especially in major cities including Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Faisalabad and Hyderabad.

On Monday, Prime Minister Imran Khan had urged the people to "act as a nation" in order to curb the spread of the novel coronavirus, which has so far infected 363,380 people and claimed 7,230 lives in the country.

US Embassy In Iraq Hit By Rocket Attack Breaking Month-Long Truce, 1 Dead

Agencies

Tehran: The Iranian government will launch a fresh loan support program to cover 10 million families affected by its restrictions meant to curb the spread of the coronavirus pandemic.

The Governor of the Central Bank of Iran (CBI) Abdolnasser Hemmati said on Tuesday that households will receive 10 million rials, equal to \$238 on official exchange rate, to help them cope economically with two weeks of pandemic-related closures that will begin on November 21.

Hemmati said the government will pay the 12-percent interest that will incur on the loans, saying the aid will target families that are on a payroll

more than 21 million families in late April amid a first wave of the spread of the pandemic that caused businesses and government agencies to close down for nearly a month.

The announcement on new loan support scheme came a day after the government said it would introduce sweeping anti-virus measures in more than 150 Iranian cities and towns to contain an already surging infection rate.

Members of the Iranian parliament on Tuesday urged the government to provide financial support for families that will be affected by the new closures.

Iran's health ministry spokeswoman said on Tuesday that number of positive coro-



navirus cases in the country had increased by a 13,352 to reach a total of 788,473 cases.

Sima Sadat Lari said the number of deaths from the virus had also surged by 482 over the past 24 hours to reach a total of 42,461 in nearly nine months of the spread of the disease in Iran.

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Australia finds evidence of war crimes in Afghanistan inquiry

Agencies

Canberra, Australia: Australia's top general said Thursday there was credible evidence that his special forces unlawfully killed 39 unarmed civilians and prisoners during the

war in Afghanistan, referring to the matter to a special war crimes prosecutor.

Receiving damning findings of a years-long investigation into military misconduct in Afghanistan between 2005 and 2016, Chief of the Defence Force Angus Campbell said a "destructive" culture of impunity among elite troops led to a string of alleged murders and cover-ups spanning almost a decade.

"Some patrols took the law into their own hands, rules were broken, stories concocted, lies told and prisoners killed," Campbell said, apologising "sincerely and unreservedly" to the people of Afghanistan.

"This shameful record includes alleged instances in which new patrol members were coerced to shoot a prison-

er in order to achieve that soldier's first kill, in an appalling practice known as 'blooding'."

The accused junior soldiers would then stage a skirmish to account for the incident, the report found. The military's own inspec-

tor general on Thursday produced a harrowing - and heavily redacted - 465-page official inquiry that detailed dozens of killings "outside the heat of battle".

It recommended 19 individuals be referred to Australian Federal Police and compensation be paid to the victims' families.

Campbell went a step further, saying those involved in the alleged unlawful killing of 39 people had brought a "stain" on their regiment, on the armed forces and on Australia and would be referred to the office of the special investigator for war crimes.

Campbell also moved to revoke some distinguished service medals awarded to special operations forces who served in Afghanistan between 2007 and 2013.



Pfizer Vaccine Delivery Could Start 'Before Christmas, If All Goes Well'

Agencies

Washington: Pfizer Inc and BioNTech could secure emergency US and European authorization for their COVID-19 vaccine next month after final trial results showed it had a 95% success rate and no serious side effects, the drugmakers said on Wednesday.

The vaccine's efficacy was found to be consistent across different ages and ethnicities - a promising sign given the disease has disproportionately hurt the elderly and certain groups including Black people.

The US Food and Drug Administration could grant emergency-use by the middle of December, BioNTech Chief Executive Ugur Sahin told Reuters TV. Conditional approval in the European Union could be secured in the second half of December, he added.

"If all goes well I could imagine that we gain approval in the second half of December and start deliveries before Christmas, but really only if all goes positively," he said.



The success rate of the vaccine developed by the US drugmaker and German partner BioNTech was far higher than what regulators had said would have been acceptable. Experts said it was a significant achievement in the race to end the pandemic.

Of the 170 volunteers

who contracted COVID-19 in Pfizer's trial involving over 43,000 people, 162 had received a placebo and not the vaccine, meaning the vaccine was 95% effective. Of the 10 people who had severe COVID-19, one had received the vaccine.

"A first in the history of mankind: less than a year from the sequence of the virus to the large-scale clinical trial of a vaccine, moreover based on a whole new technique," said Enrico Bucci, a biologist at Temple University in Philadelphia. "Today is a special day."

BioNTech's Sahin said U.S. emergency use authorization (EUA) would be applied for on Friday.

An FDA advisory committee tentatively plans to meet on Dec. 8-10 to discuss the vaccine, a source familiar with the situation said, though the dates could change. The FDA did not respond to requests for comment.

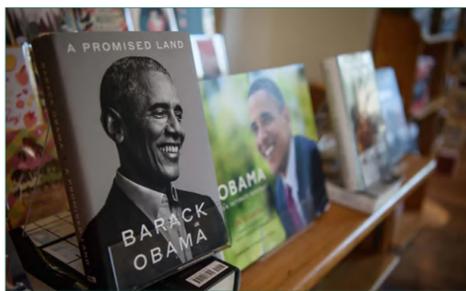
NEWSMAKERS

Obama's Newly-Released Memoir Breaks First-Day Sales Record

Washington: Around 887,000 units were sold in the US and Canada, which includes pre-order sales and first-day sales, CNN reported citing Penguin Random House. The publisher said this sale represented "the largest first-day sales total for any book ever published" by the company.

Another publisher said Obama's new book will be a book of "rare consequence" and will do good business, at par with the likes of the Harry Potter series.

"This will be a book of rare consequence. That it will sell as no other book has done since July 21, 2007 - when Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows came out, is immensely cheering to booksellers," said Barnes



& Noble CEO James Daunt, CNN quoted.

Prior to the opening day, Obama had asked his followers on Twitter to read his memoir to get an insight on events and people that shaped him during his early years.

"My memoir, A Promised Land, is out today.

I hope you'll read it. My goal was to give you some insight into the events and people that shaped me during the early years of my presidency. Most of all, I hope it inspires you to see yourself playing a role in shaping a better world," Obama tweeted on Tuesday.

Man Becomes Millionaire After Meteorite Falls Through His Roof

A coffin maker in Indonesia became a millionaire in a freak occurrence which saw a meteorite worth around £1.4m crashed through the roof of his home.

Josua Hutagalung was working on a coffin outside his house in the town of Kolang when the 2.1kg rock came hurtling through the tin veranda outside his living room.

After recovering from the noise, the 33-year-old found the piece of space debris by digging into the soil in his garden.

"The sound was so loud that parts of the house were shaking too. And after I searched, I saw that the tin roof of the house had broken," he told Indonesia's Kompas newspaper. "When I lifted it, the stone was still warm."

The meteorite is carbonaceous chondrite, an extremely



rare variety estimated to be 4.5 billion years old - and reportedly worth around £645 per gram.

Mr Hutagalung told The Sun he sold the rock to US meteorite expert Jared Collins - who then sold the item to a US collector, currently storing it at the Centre for Meteorite

Studies at Arizona State University.

Although the coffin maker did not give the precise purchase sum, it is understood to be over £1m. Mr Hutagalung said he now had enough to retire and plans to build a church in his community.

"I have also always wanted a daughter, and I hope this is a sign that I will be lucky enough now to have one," he said.

Mr Collins said: "My phone lit up with crazy offers for me to jump on a plane and buy the meteorite. It was in the middle of the Covid crisis and frankly it was a toss-up between buying the rock for myself or working with scientists and collectors in the US."

"I carried as much money as I could muster and went to find Josua, who turned out to be a canny negotiator."

The head of Indonesia's National Aeronautics and Space Agency, Thomas Djarmaluddin, told local media it was rare for such a large piece to fall in a residential community. "Most of the meteorites fall in locations far from settlements, such as oceans, forests, or deserts."

Over 600 NGOs Got Foreign Funds Up To 6 Lakh Per Child In 2018-19: Rights Body

As per the Child Protection Scheme, the expenditure per child per annum including all recurring expenses is about 60,000

NEW DELHI: Over 600 child care institutions, run by NGOs and housing 28,000 children, received up to 6 lakh per child in foreign funds in 2018-19, far more than the estimated average expenditure, the top child rights body NCPDR said as it expressed apprehensions of possible financial irregularities.

In a random analysis of information about 638 NGO-run CCIs in five states, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPDR) found that in 2018-19 the average amount they collected was between 2.12 lakh to 6.60 lakh per child and it is now planning a country-wide exercise to examine the foreign funding and expenditure of such NGOs, according to NCPDR Chairperson Priyanka Kanoongo.

In this exercise, data available on the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) website of the Ministry of Home Affairs (fcrainline.nic.in) for the year 2018-19 was used.

As per the Child Protection Scheme, the expenditure per child per annum including all recurring expenses is about 60,000.

"Such a high amount of money

collected by the NGOs has raised concerns about possible siphoning of funds. We will be carrying out a country-wide exercise and, accordingly, action would be taken," Mr Kanoongo told PTI.

He said a "country-wide analysis" of the foreign funds received by NGOs run child care institutions will be carried out.

The data of child care institutions from the states of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu were analysed.

In Andhra Pradesh, 145 CCIs run by NGOs received 409 crore for 6,202 children. This amounts to annual spending of 6.6 lakh per child.

In Telangana, 67 such CCIs received 145 crore for 3,735 children. It amounts to spending 3.88 lakh per child. In Kerala, 107 CCIs run by NGOs received 85.39 crore for 4,242 children, which means annual spending of 2.01 lakh per child.

In Karnataka, 45 CCIs run by NGOs received 66.62 crore for 3,111 children. This amounts to spending 2.14 lakh per child, the analysis showed.

In Tamil Nadu, 274 such CCIs received 248 crore for 1,17,020 children or 2.12 lakh per child, it said.

India Ranks 77 In Global Bribery Risk Matrix

The list by TRACE, an anti-bribery standard setting organisation, measures business bribery risk in 194 countries, territories, and autonomous and semi-autonomous regions

NEW DELHI: India is at 77th position with a score of 45 in a global list that measures business bribery risks of 2020.

The list by TRACE, an anti-bribery standard setting organisation, measures business bribery risk in 194 countries, territories, and autonomous and semi-autonomous regions.

According to this year's data, North Korea, Turkmenistan, South Sudan, Venezuela and Eritrea present the highest commercial bribery risk, while Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden and New Zealand present the lowest.

In 2019, India's rank stood 78 position with a score of 48 while in 2020 the country was ranked 77 with a score of 45, the data showed.

The score is based on four factors -- business interactions with government, anti-bribery deterrence and enforcement, government and civil service transparency, and capacity for civil society oversight, including the role of the media.

India fared better than its neighbours - Pakistan, China, Nepal and Bangladesh. Bhutan, meanwhile, secured 48th rank with a score of 37, the data showed.

"China has potentially helped to reduce opportunities for bribe demands by public officials by continuing to streamline its bureaucracy," TRACE Bribery Risk Matrix said in a statement.

Apart from India, Peru, Jordan, North Macedonia, Colombia and Montenegro also have a score of 45



in the matrix. Somalia moved out of the bottom ranking, which it held from 2017 to 2019, and is now ranked 187th out of 194.

The TRACE Bribery Risk Matrix said it measures the likelihood of bribe demands in 194 jurisdictions. It was originally published in 2014 to meet a need in the business community for more reliable, nuanced information about the risks of commercial bribery worldwide.

The matrix aggregates relevant data obtained from leading public interest and international organisations, including the United Nations, World Bank, V-Dem Institute at the University of Gothenburg and World Economic Forum.

This data helps companies to assess the likely risk of bribe demands in each country and to design compliance and due diligence programs tailored to that risk, it said.



Kashmir to Kanyakumari para cycling expedition was flagged off by officials at Dal Lake Boulevard on Thursday.

BJP Mantri Says Gupkar Alliance A Conspiracy Against J&K People

Agencies

KUPWARA: Senior BJP leader and Union Minister Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi on Thursday claimed that the People's Alliance for Gupkar Declaration (PAGD) is the conspiracy of political parties against the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Addressing the party workers at the Tourist Reception Center (TRC) in north Kashmir's Kupwara district, Naqvi said that the people were deprived of political rights only because of Article 370 and 35A.

The BJP leader claimed that the dynasty rule in J&K kept people away from the mainstream as well as unaware of constitutional rights.

About the maiden District Development Council (DDC) polls, Naqvi said that all the parties are contesting the elections including those that claimed that they won't contest the polls unless the August 05 decision is reversed.

"DDC election will send a clear and loud message that the people of J&K are now part of dignity, development, rights and all this will be fulfilled by BJP," he said, adding that it was the time when BJP will make people understand that the time and atmosphere has changed and the people at present are happy and are looking forward.

Taking a dig at PAGD, he said that the alliance is the death of politics in Jammu and Kashmir and the amalgam will try to keep J&K away from development and prosperity.

He said that 890 rules were not applicable in J&K including the no reservation for Gujjars and Bakerwals and job reservation also other schemes from central government but post August 05 decision, the funds from the central government are directly being utilized in J&K, which was not happening in the past under dynasty rule.

"Schemes are also being implemented regularly," the Union Minister said, adding that the development with dignity is the way forward. "I assure you that all the problems and challenges people were facing earlier, will be eliminated in the times to come."

Naqvi also stated that the PAGD has proven the death declaration of destructive dynastic politics in J&K.

Terming PAGD as a conspiracy by the regional parties including the Congress party, Naqvi said that the alliance is a conspiracy against J&K people and they've got engulfed into their ill-thoughts.

To a question about the continuous detention of few mainstream leaders, he said that a very

transparent independent democracy should have been in J&K for a long time now but the dynasty rulers have always opposed this and that's why the regional parties initially called for a boycott and demanded the restoration of Article 370 and 35A.

The Union Minister said that the security has been provided to many people already and all the representatives who need it will not be deprived of it as well.

About the eviction and demolition drive of Gujjars and Bakerwals homes in parts of J&K, Naqvi said that no one can be allowed to disobey the forest land law. "No one will force the Gujjar community to leave the forests. Whosoever is living within forests will remain there," he said.

Reacting over the tweets of former chief ministers of the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir, the Union Minister said that no power in the world can destabilize India be it Pakistan or anyone else.

The regional parties along with the Congress party are hatching the conspiracy to de-motivate the people and bring them down from confidence level but BJP is committed to strengthening it, he said.

The PAGD doesn't want the J&K to adopt the path of development, peace and prosperity, he said. —Agencies

Fine for not wearing masks in Delhi to be raised to Rs 2,000: Kejriwal

80 per cent beds in Delhi private hospitals to be reserved for Covid patients from today: Delhi CM

NEW DELHI, NOV 19: Delhi government implementing from Thursday decision to reserve 80 per cent of beds in private hospitals for COVID-19 patients: CM Kejriwal.

Fine for not wearing masks in Delhi to be raised from Rs 500 to Rs 2,000: Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal. Appeal all political parties, social organisations to distribute masks at public places in Delhi: CM Arrangements

being made for over 1,400 ICU beds, including 663 in Delhi govt hospitals and 750 at Centre-run facilities: Kejriwal. Directed raising of non-ICU bed reservations at pvt hospitals in Delhi from 50 per cent to 60 per cent for COVID-19 patients: CM. Appeal to people not to celebrate Chhath at ponds, other water bodies; it may cause massive spread of COVID-19: Kejriwal. PTI

Delhi Man Had Affair, Killed By Woman's Fiance, Body Dumped: Cops

A quarrel had broken out at the woman's rented house in northwest Delhi involving her, her fiance and her mother, and victim Neeraj Gupta, a resident of Model Town, after he objected to the wedding, they said, adding the incident took place on November 13.



NEW DELHI, NOV 19: A quarrel had broken out at the woman's rented house in northwest Delhi involving her, her fiance and her mother, and victim Neeraj Gupta, a resident of Model Town, after he objected to the wedding, they said, adding the incident took place on November 13.

A 46-year-old businessman, who was in an extramarital relationship with an employee, was stabbed to death allegedly by the fiance of the woman who then stuffed the body in a suitcase, boarded a train and disposed it in Gujarat's Bharuch, police said on Wednesday.

A quarrel had broken out at the woman's rented house in northwest Delhi involving her, her fiance and her

mother, and victim Neeraj Gupta, a resident of Model Town, after he objected to the wedding, they said, adding the incident took place on November 13.

The police said Mr Gupta was hit on the head with a brick by the man, stabbed thrice in the stomach, and later, his throat was slit. The woman and her mother helped him in disposing the body, they added.

All three accused — Faisal (29), her mother Shaheen Naaz (45) and fiance Juber (28) — have been arrested, police official Vijayanta Arya said. The matter came to notice after police were informed that Mr Gupta had gone missing from northwest Delhi's Adarsh Nagar.

Neeraj Gupta's wife told police that she suspected Faisal to be behind her husband's disappearance. She also disclosed that Faisal and Neeraj Gupta were in a long-standing relationship, a senior officer said.

Based on her complaint, a case was registered under section 365 (Kidnapping or abducting with intent secretly and wrongfully to confine person) of the Indian Penal Code and Faisal was interrogated, the police said.

Parliamentary panel grills Twitter over 'obscene' tweets by Kunal Kamra targeting SC, CJI

Kamra has refused to retract his controversial tweets against the SC or apologise for them, saying he believes they 'speak for themselves'

NEW DELHI, NOV 19: A parliamentary committee questioned Twitter on Thursday over the recent "obscene" tweets by stand-up comedian Kunal Kamra targeting the Supreme Court and the Chief Justice of India (CJI), and sought reply from the social media giant over the matter within seven days, said the panel's chairperson Meenakshi Lekhi.

This came close on the heels of Twitter apologising in writing to the same Parliamentary panel for wrongly showing Ladakh in China and promising to correct the error by the month-end.

Twitter India representatives deposed before the Joint Committee of Parliament on Data

“It is shameful that Twitter is allowing its platform for obscene remarks like the one by stand-up comedian Kunal Kamra against the Supreme Court and the CJI”

Protection Bill on Thursday. "It is shameful that Twitter is allowing its platform for obscene remarks like the one by stand-up comedian Kunal Kamra against the Supreme Court and the CJI," Lekhi told reporters here.

"Twitter is allowing its platform to be misused for abusing top constitutional authorities, such as Supreme Court and CJI," Lekhi added.

She said members of the committee across political spectrum, including Congress MP Vivek Tankha, BSP MP Ritesh Pandey and BJD MP Bhatruhari

Mahtab, grilled Twitter representatives on this issue.

Lekhi also said explanation of Twitter about banning handles and tweets was found to be inadequate.

Meanwhile, Kamra has refused to retract his controversial tweets against the Supreme Court or apologise for them, saying he believes they "speak for themselves".

Earlier, Attorney General KK Venugopal consented to the initiation of criminal contempt proceedings against him for a series of tweets following the Apex Court giving interim bail to Republic TV editor-in-chief Arnab Goswami. —PTI

Judge Hearing MJ Akbar's Defamation Case Against Priya Ramani Transferred

Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Vishal Pahuja, who presided over a special MP/MLA court in Rouse Avenue District Court, has now been transferred to Karkardooma District Court as Senior Civil Judge-cum-Rent Controller



NEW DELHI: The judge hearing former union minister MJ Akbar's defamation case against journalist Priya Ramani has been transferred to another court by the Delhi High court.

Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Vishal Pahuja, who presided over a special MP/MLA court in Rouse Avenue District Court, has now been transferred to Karkardooma District Court as Senior Civil Judge-cum-Rent Controller.

Recently, the District and Sessions Judge, Rouse Avenue, had refused to transfer MJ Akbar's defamation case from the special MP/MLA court.

The case is at the stage of final hearing.

Vishal Pahuja's name is among 215 judicial officers who were transferred and posted with immediate effect by a notification issued by the high court on Wednesday.

Over 90 postings among them pertain to newly inducted officers in the Delhi Judicial Services.

The order by Registrar General Manoj Jain listed the names of 168 judges who were transferred, and another 47 judicial officers who have been posted as Metropolitan Magistrates.

The judicial officers shall be under the control of the Principal District and Sessions Judge of the District to which they have been allocated.

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