



Maximum : 05°C  
Minimum : -1°C  
Humidity : 69%

SUNSET  
Today 05:44 PM  
SUNRISE  
Tomorrow 07:36 AM



## News Digest

### Army Porter Dies Of Burn Injuries

Srinagar: A speech and hearing impaired porter working with army has died after suffering grave burn injuries at an army camp in Andherhama, Drugmulla in north-Kashmir's Kupwara district on Wednesday evening.

32-year-old porter identified as Bhowan Patra from Assam, working as Industrial Person was at residential quarters at DOU Andherhama Drugmulla when the incident took place. The porter was immediately removed to 168 Medical Hospital Drugmulla with grave burn injuries and in the **● P06**

### Bandipora Admin Airlifts Injured Girl

Srinagar: The administration in north Kashmir's Bandipora district on Wednesday airlifted a critically injured girl from Tulail area near the Line of Control (LoC) for advanced treatment. Toiba Manzoor of Badugam Tulail sustained serious head injuries on Tuesday after she fell from the roof of her house, reports said. The doctors advised her to be shifted to SKIMS for specialised treatment.

After receiving an SOS from the family for evacuating the patient, the Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Dr Owais Ahmed passed directions for airlifting the injured girl from **● P06**

### Rs 74K Fine Imposed On Budgam Traders

Srinagar: The district authorities on Wednesday imposed a fine of Rs 74,000 during a market checking drive in central Kashmir's Budgam district.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) Budgam, who is also the Adjudicating Officer today imposed a fine of Rs 74,000 on various food outlet owners, shopkeepers, traders and wholesale dealers for violating the food safety standards in the **● P06**

### One Corona Death, 13 Cases In Ladakh

Leh: Thirteen people tested positive for coronavirus in Ladakh, where one person died of the infection, taking the fatalities in the Union territory to 128 and the virus caseload to 9,634, officials said on Wednesday. The latest COVID-related death was reported from Kargil district on Tuesday, they said. Of the 128 deaths so far, Leh district has accounted for the highest 84 deaths and Kargil 44. According to officials, 12 people tested positive for COVID-19 in Leh and one more in Kargil, while 15 patients were discharged after successful treatment, bringing down the active cases to 180 175 in Leh and five in Kargil.

### IAF Ferries 75 Stranded Passengers

Srinagar: The Indian Air Force (IAF) ferried 75 stranded people between Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh on Wednesday. An official here said 21 passengers were airlifted from Kargil to Srinagar, 27 passengers, including two infants, from Srinagar to Kargil and 27 passengers from Kargil to Jammu. The passengers were facilitated by Anwar Hussain, Liaison Officer Kargil, Mohammed Raza, Liaison Officer Srinagar and Mohammed Yusuf, Liaison Officer Jammu and their team of **● P06**

## US Poised To Impeach Trump



Picture Courtesy: Agencies

**Armed Guard Deployed To Protect US Capitol**

As the House opened its impeachment hearing, the District of Columbia National Guard said it has been authorized **● P06**

#### AGENCIES

WASHINGTON: The House of Representatives was set to impeach President Donald Trump for inciting insurrection Wednesday, with several key Republicans backing the Democrat-led push to bring down the real estate tycoon in flames just a week before he leaves office.

Washington was in a state of siege as lawmakers opened their session, with armed National Guard soldiers deployed, central streets barred to cars and public spaces fenced off.

The expected majority **▶ PAGE 06**

### 'Dying' Trump Sanctions Imam Raza Shrine

While Donald Trump was virtually gasping for breath to stay alive as President of the United States for a few more days he imposed new sanctions on two Iranian foundations on Wednesday. The designations announced by the U.S. Treasury Department target Execution of **● P06**

### Kashmir Reels Under Intense Cold Wave

Srinagar Freezes At Minus 7.8°C Lowest In 8 Years

#### Press Trust of India

SRINAGAR: The Kashmir Valley reeled under severe cold, with Srinagar city—the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir—recording its lowest minimum temperature in eight years, the Meteorological Department said here on Wednesday.

Srinagar recorded a low of minus 7.8 degrees Celsius, which was the lowest temperature recorded in the city in eight years, an official of the MET department said.

He said the exact same minimum temperature was recorded in the city in 2012 on January 14.

The rest of the valley was also reeling under intense cold.

Pahalgam tourist destination, in south Kashmir, recorded a low of minus 11.7 degrees Celsius – down from the previous **● P06**

### Grenade Hurlled At CRPF In Rainawari

#### Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: Panic gripped Rainawari area of the city on Wednesday after suspected militants lobbed a grenade towards a Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) team.

According to the officials, unknown militants hurled a grenade towards CRPF party **● P06**

## First Time In 7 Months, No Corona Death In J&K

#### Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: No new deaths due to coronavirus were reported for the first time in little over seven months, 215 days to be exact, in Jammu and Kashmir, even as 121 fresh cases of Covid-19, including six travellers and a minor were detected across the Union Territory during the last 24 hours.

Officials said that last time it was on June 12, when no Covid-19 related death was reported in J&K. "Today it is after a gap of almost seven months that past 24 hours passed without any Covid related causality," a senior official said.

So far 1912 people have succumbed to virus in J&K—1200 in the Valley and 712 in Jammu region.

Srinagar district with 452 deaths tops the list followed by Jammu (365), Baramulla (172), Budgam (111), Kupwara (84), Pulwama (88), Anantnag (94), Doda (64), Bandipora (61), Udhampur (57), Kulgam (53), Rajouri (55), Kathua (50), Ganderbal (46), Shopian (39), Samba (39), Poonch (24), Ramban (21), Kishtwar (22), and Reasi (15).

Meanwhile, six travellers and a minor were among

### J&K Receives 1.46 Lakh Doses Of Vaccine



KO Photo Abid Bhat

#### Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday received the first consignment of 1.46 lakh doses of coronavirus vaccine from Pune-based Serum Institute of India (SII), officials said.

While 79,000 doses were received here for vaccination of nearly 60,000 health-

care workers in the Kashmir valley, 67,500 vaccines have been received in the Jammu division, they said.

The officials said the vaccination will begin on Saturday at 30 centres across the union territory.

"To begin with, inauguration ceremonies will be held at SKIMS hospital Soura in Srinagar **● P06**

121 fresh novel coronavirus cases reported in Jammu and Kashmir in the last 24 hours, officials said on Wednesday.

Among the fresh cases, they said, 55 are from Jammu Division and 66 from Kashmir

Valley, taking the total tally to 122,885.

Giving district-wise details, the officials, Srinagar reported 35, Baramulla 8, Budgam 7, Pulwama 5, Kupwara 3, Bandipora **▶ PAGE 06**

## LG Conducts Whirlwind Tour Of Srinagar City

#### Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha on Wednesday arrived here and conducted a whirlwind tour of the city for the first hand assessment of the situation following recent heavy snowfall.

According to an official spokesperson, Sinha conducted a whirlwind tour of Srinagar city to inspect the snow clearance and other restoration works. During his tour, LG visited Lal Chowk, TRC crossing, Sonwar, Dalgate, Nishat, Foreshore road, Hazratbal, Saida Kadal, Rainawari, Khanay, Dastgeer Sahib, Babademb, Mu-



nawarabad and other areas of the city and took the firsthand assessment of the situation.

"At Lalit Ghat, the LG interacted

with the Shikarwalas and enquired about the present tourism scenario. He also assured early redressal of the genuine issues put forth by them

### LG Meets Slain Jeweller's Family, Assures Action

A high-level investigation is underway into the assassination of Punjab born Jeweller Satpal Nischal here last month so that his killers are brought to justice very soon, Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha said Wednesday. Sinha, who arrived **● P06**

during the interaction," he said.

The official spokesperson said that earlier Sinha received a firsthand appraisal of the **▶ PAGE 06**

## CBI Books JK Bank Manager For Depositing Banned Notes

5 Others Also Named In FIR For Depositing Rs 12.84 Cr In Banned Currency

#### Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Over four years after the demonetisation exercise, the CBI has booked the executive manager of a bank, three firm proprietors and two persons for depositing Rs 12.84 crore in banned currency which was later transferred to different accounts through net banking as legitimate money, officials said.

Based on "source information" received on December 10 last year, the CBI has filed an FIR saying Rahul Chaudhary and Dushyant Chaudhary were operating accounts of Shiva Trading Company, Divyanshi Sales Corporation and Shyama Trading company in the Jammu and Kashmir Bank's Ghaziabad branch.

Taking advantage of their rapport with executive manager Netar Sabharwar, the Chaudhary duo were allegedly operating the accounts instead of their proprietors, also named accused in the FIR, officials said.

The CBI has alleged that the accused duo in connivance **▶ PAGE 06**

## IndiGo Plane Gets Stuck In Snow At Srinagar Airport



#### Agencies

SRINAGAR: Authorities on Wednesday deboarded passengers from a flight of Indigo airlines after it came in "close proximity" of accumulated snow at the parking bay of the Srinagar airport.

Sharad Kumar, Director, Air-

port Authority of India, said the passengers were shifted to other aircraft in order to avoid any incident, reported news agency GNS.

"There was the possibility of an incident as the plane came in close proximity of snow accumulated there and in order to avoid it (incident), the plane was halted there and then. The passengers were deboarded and shifted to another plane," he said. "The aircraft was later toed and brought back on the way," he said.

The plane was bound for New Delhi and had to be halted at around 12:30 P.M. as it came to the close proximity of the snow accumulation, the **▶ PAGE 06**

### J&K Delimitation Based On 2011 Census: Law Ministry

#### Agencies

JAMMU: Ministry of Law and Justice in its annual review report has revealed that the delimitation in Jammu and Kashmir would be done on basis of the 2011-census figures under the provisions of 2019-Act.

On 5 August 2019, the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir was bifurcated into two separate union territories- Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh.

In the Re-organisation Act, it was revealed that the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir will have a legislative assembly while the Ladakh UT **● P06**

## Work Begins On Bailey Bridge To Make Highway Through

SRINAGAR: The Border Roads Organization (BRO) has started work on Bailey bridge along the Srinagar-Jammu highway to make it motorable for vehicles carrying essential supplies to the Valley.

ADGP Traffic, T. Namgyal said that the repair work on the damaged portion along the highway was in full swing and that there has to be concrete filling on its side of the bridge, which will take some time to settle down fully.

"In the meantime BRO has initiated the process of launching a Bailey bridge, which will provide interim relief to facilitate movement of essential supplies including petroleum, gas and other essential supplies towards the



Picture Courtesy: Twitter

valley," he said.

Meanwhile, in a fresh communiqué, the Traffic Police Headquarters said that the **▶ PAGE 06**

### BSF Detects Cross-Border Tunnel In Kathua



#### Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: A 150-metre tunnel constructed along the International Border (IB) to facilitate infiltration of militants in Jammu and Kashmir from Pakistan was detected by Border Security Force (BSF) personnel in Hiranagar sector of Kathua district **● P06**

## In FOCUS

## Remembering Mir Shafqat Hussian—The People's Advocate

#### Mir Urfi

In a Covid-crippled day last year, I had a young visitor at my home. He was incarcerated for many years, and as soon as he saw me, he broke down.

"When I heard about Mir Shafqat Hussian's demise, I felt as if my father has passed away," he cried.

He said whenever he would be jailed, his parents wouldn't take much pains to seek his release.

"It was Shafqat who would fight for my freedom," the youth told me. "On hearing about his death, I felt a hollowness like the one in an orphan's heart."

I discovered this deep and devoted public connection with the

people's advocate soon after joining him in 2003.

Before working with him, I was not much aware about Kashmir's human rights situation. I largely believed that things had returned to normal.

But Mir Shafqat Hussian opened my eyes to the blatant use of power and the plight of peoples' rights in the valley.

Back then, a major issue was the frequently-slapped Public Safety Act (PSA).

In case of PSA detentions, the advocate would often tell me, justice in the first place is not the release of the detained but to bring them to jails close to their homes, "so that their parents could be less troubled



by not having to travel outside Kashmir to meet their children".

Shafqat started practice in 1992 and during that time there was gross and rampant abuse of PSA. Many lawyers at that time would

file petitions against the lawless law and in his decades of work, he fought such cases in thousands.

By 2008, he was the lone lawyer to fight PSA detentions in Kashmir. As courts and offices remained

shut during 2016 protests, the parents of the PSA detainees approached Shafqat. The lawyer used his own money to buy digital equipment so that he and his team could file writ petitions to seek release of these youth.

It was a great time of hardship for our firm as we were not earning anything. And yet he sponsored the legal help for the captives of Kashmir. He tirelessly worked from home, forgetting about his own personal life and falling health.

I am witness to the fact that Shafqat played a pivotal role in helping the Amnesty International to highlight the rights abuse in Kashmir.

He would tell them, "don't trust me", and instead ask the rights ac-

tivists to visit the family of victims and witness their pain first hand. He was in constant pursuit of telling world the true picture of Kashmir.

The legendary lawyer passionately fought for justice.

When the families of those detained would come and meet him,

**6 WHEN I HEARD ABOUT Mir Shafqat Hussian's demise, I felt as if my father has passed away," he cried.**

they would feel relieved after he would counsel and console them.

In fact, many of his clients over the years have repeatedly told me that they would feel that they have won half the battle after meeting Shafqat.

People would fall in love with him. I always felt it was something spiritual.

Mothers of the incarcerated youth especially would come and kiss his forehead. He would tell them that he was their son and would behave like one.

"Be patient with them," he would always tell us. "Remember their children are jailed and we must let go if they at times are not at their best behavior. Don't think just as a lawyer but also as a human being; try to understand their pain."

I hold his advice in my heart.

Shafqat undoubtedly believed that there was conflict yet he stayed away from politics. As a lawyer he always believed that his role was to fight for the justice within the legal framework.

But that didn't make his job easier. I remember once a man came to our office to confess how he was

tasked to execute the lawyer. "But I returned from **▶ PAGE 06**



# Here's how fragmented sleep patterns can predict vulnerability to chronic stress

New research from NYU Abu Dhabi's Laboratory of Neural Systems and Behavior for the first time used an animal model to demonstrate how abnormal sleep architecture can be a predictor of stress vulnerability.

These important findings have the potential to inform the development of sleep tests that can help identify who may be susceptible -- or resilient -- to future stress.

In the study, Abnormal Sleep Signals Vulnerability to Chronic Social Defeat Stress, which appears in the journal *Frontiers in Neuroscience*, NYUAD Assistant Professor of Biology Dipesh Chaudhury and Research Associate Basma Radwan describe their development of a mouse model to detect how disruptions in Non-rapid Eye Movement (NREM) sleep result in increased vulnerability to future stress.

The researchers assessed the sleep characteristics of both stress-susceptible and stress-resilient mice before and after experiencing chronic social defeat (CSD) stress. The social behaviour of the mice post-stress was classified into two main phenotypes: those susceptible to stress that displayed social avoidance and those that were resilient to stress. Pre-CSD, mice susceptible to stress displayed increased fragmentation of Non-Rapid Eye Movement (NREM) sleep due to increased switching between NREM and wake and shorter average duration of NREM bouts, relative to mice resilient to stress.

Their analysis showed that the pre-CSD sleep features from both phenotypes of mice allowed prediction of susceptibility to stress with more than 80 per cent accuracy. Post-CSD, susceptible mice maintained high NREM fragmentation during the light

and dark phase while resilient mice exhibited high NREM fragmentation only in the dark.

The findings demonstrate that mice that become susceptible to CSD stress exhibit pre-existing abnormal sleep/wake characteristics prior to stress exposure. In addition, subsequent exposure to stress further impairs sleep and the homeostatic response.

"Our study is the first to provide an animal model to investigate the relationship between poor sleep continuity and vulnerability to chronic stress and depressive disorders," said Chaudhury and Radwan. "This marker of vulnerability to stress opens up avenues for many possible future studies that could further explain the underlying molecular processes and neural circuitry that lead to mood disorders."

Agencies



## New tiny wireless device might help with weight loss

Scientists have developed a tiny wireless device that could help to fight obesity and to shed body weight by stimulating nerve endings. This device could be inserted via a simple implantation procedure.

A study led by researchers of Texas A&M University was published in *Nature Communications*, gastric bypass surgery is sometimes the last resort for those who struggle with obesity or have serious health-related issues due to their weight. Since this procedure involves making a small stomach pouch and rerouting the digestive tract, it is very invasive and prolongs the recovery period for patients.

Researchers said their centimetre-sized device provides the feeling of fullness by stimulating the endings of the vagus nerve with light. Unlike other devices that require a power cord, this wireless device can be controlled externally from a remote radio frequency source.

"We wanted to create a device that not only requires minimal surgery for implantation but also allows us to stimulate specific nerve endings in the stomach," said Dr Sung II Park, assistant professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering.

"Our device has the potential to do both of these things in the harsh gastric conditions, which, in the future, can be hugely beneficial to people needing dramatic weight-loss surgeries," he added.

Obesity is associated with health problems and it has a significant economic impact on the US health care system, costing USD 147 billion a year. Additionally, it puts people at risk for chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and even some cancers. For those with a body mass index greater than 35 or who have at least two obesity-related conditions, surgery offers a path for patients to not only lose the excess weight but maintain their weight

over the long term.

In recent years, the vagus nerve has received much attention as a target for treating obesity since it provides sensory information about fullness from the stomach lining to the brain. Although there are medical devices that can stimulate the vagus nerve endings and consequently help in curbing hunger, these devices are similar in design to a pacemaker, that is, wires connected to a current



**Our device has the potential to do both of these things in the harsh gastric conditions, which, in the future, can be hugely beneficial to people needing dramatic weight-loss surgeries**

source provide electrical jolts to activate the tips of the nerve.

"Despite the clinical benefit of having a wireless system, no device, as of yet, has the capability to do chronic and durable cell-type specific manipulation of neuron activity inside of any other organ other than the brain," he said.

To address this gap, Park and his team first used genetic tools to express genes that respond to light into specific vagus nerve end-

ings in vivo. Then, they designed a tiny, paddle-shaped device and inserted micro LEDs near the tip of its flexible shaft, which was fastened to the stomach.

In the head of the device, called the harvester, they housed microchips needed for the device to wirelessly communicate with an external radio frequency source. The harvester was also equipped to produce tiny currents to power the LEDs. When the radio frequency source was switched on, the researchers showed that the light from the LEDs was effective at suppressing hunger.

The researchers said this device could also be used to manipulate nerve endings throughout the gastrointestinal tract and other organs, like the intestine, with little or no modifications.

Agencies

## Food insufficiency linked to depression, anxiety during Covid-19 pandemic: Study

New research shows a 25 per cent rise in food insufficiency during the pandemic is linked to worsened mental health.

The new study was published in the *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*.

Food insufficiency, the most extreme form of food insecurity, occurs when families do not have enough food to eat. Among the nationally representative sample of 63,674 adults in the US, Black and Latino Americans had over twice the risk of food insufficiency compared to White Americans.

"People of color are disproportionately affected by both food insufficiency and Covid-19," said Jason Nagata,

MD, MSc, assistant professor of pediatrics at the University of California, San Francisco and lead author on the study. "Many of these individuals have experienced job loss and higher rates of poverty during the pandemic."

Overall, 65% of Americans reported anxiety symptoms and 52% reported depressive symptoms in the week prior to completing the survey. Those who did not have enough to eat during that week reported worse mental health, with 89% of food-insufficient Americans reporting anxiety symptoms compared to 63% of food-sufficient Americans. Similarly, 83% of food-insufficient Americans, compared to 49% of food-sufficient, Americans reported depressive symptoms.

"Hunger, exhaustion, and worry about not getting enough food to eat may worsen depression and anxiety symptoms," said Nagata.

Researchers found that receipt of free groceries or meals alleviated some of the mental health burdens of food insufficiency.

"Policymakers should expand benefits and eligibility for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and other programs to address both food insecurity and mental health," said Kyle Ganson, PhD, MSW, assistant professor at the University of Toronto, a co-author of the study.

Agencies

### Office Of The Assistant Regional Transport Officer Budgam Kashmir

#### NOTICE



Where as a joint application has been received from owner.

Shri : Shabir Ahmad bhat S/o: Bashir Ahmad Bhat R/o: Beerwah Budgam as Transferee) & Shri. Hafizullah Bhat S/o Ghulam Hassan Bhat R/o Haknipora Budgam as Transferee) for transfer of Tata Sumo vehicle No. JK04C-7740 As well as HPA Cancellation with M/S J & K State Co operative Bank Ltd B/u Beerwah Budgam.

Now it is therefore notified for general information that objections, if any to the proposed transfer of the said route permit/vehicle shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office ARTO Budgam within a period of 12 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper .

No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.2188

Dated 13/01/2021

Assistant Regional Transport officer  
Budgam Kashmir

MCB

### Office Of The Assistant Regional Transport Officer Budgam Kashmir

#### NOTICE

Whereas an application has been received from one. Shri : Gulzar Ahmad Ganie S/o: Gh Hassan Ganie R/o: Dabipora Budgam owner of vehicle bearing Registration No: JK04B 7566 for cancellation of hire purchase agreement with M/S State Bank of India B/U Budgam. .

Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any to the proposed cancellation of hire purchase Agreement shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office ARTO Budgam within a period of 12 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper .

No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.2189

Dated 13/01/2021

Assistant Regional Transport officer  
Budgam Kashmir

MCB

### Office Of The Assistant Regional Transport Officer Budgam Kashmir

#### NOTICE

Whereas an application has been received from one. Shri : Hafizullah Bhat S/o: Gh Hussain Bhat R/o: Budgam owner of vehicle bearing Registration No: JK04B 4100 for cancellation of hire purchase agreement with M/S State Bank of India B/U Budgam. .

Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any to the proposed cancellation of hire purchase Agreement shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office ARTO Budgam within a period of 12 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper .

No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.2190

Dated 13/01/2021

Assistant Regional Transport officer  
Budgam Kashmir

mcb

### PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my ITI Passed Marks Card under examination Roll No ZR18-041/242/18088, Session 18 S2 Certificate No 14785 somewhere. Now Have Applied For The duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in Old Secretariat Technical Education Board Srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Rukhsana Jan  
D/o Gh Mustafa Sofi  
R/o Rakhshalina Taingan

FP

### PUBLIC NOTICE

The DOB Of my wards Namely Adnan Gulzar has been wrongly mentioned as 07-07-2009 while his correct DOB is 13-06-2007 and The DOB of Shahid Gulzar has been wrongly written as 27-03-2010 while his correct DOB is 12-06-2008 which needs immediate correction. If anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Hanfia Lower High School Chandhara Pampore within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Gulzar Ahmad Rather  
F/O Adnan Gulzar (Correct DOB 13-06-2007)  
Shahid Gulzar (Correct DOB 12-06-2008)  
R/o Chandhara Pampore

FP

### PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost my RPLI Policy Bearing No R-JKS-PA-91120 . I have not applied for any loan on this policy and not mortgage in any department. Now I want to apply for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the Postmaster GPO Srinagar within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Imtiyaz Hussain Mir  
S/o Ali Mohd Mir R/o Khanda

FP

### PUBLIC NOTICE

I have lost the documents of my Scooty bearing Regd No; JK-05 7432. Now I have applied for the duplicate of the same if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may file his/her objection in the office of the RTO Sopore within a period of seven days from the date of publication of this notice. After that no objection shall be entertained.

Sonaullah Untoo  
S/o Late Gh Nabi Untoo  
R/o Mahala Untoo Hamam Sopore

AMS

### THE JAMMU AND KASHMIR STATE BOARD OF SCHOOL EDUCATION

#### BRANCH OFFICE SOPORE

The candidates whose photograph is published in this notice is claiming to have lost the original marks certificate of 10th under Below mentioned particulars Name Mehraj Ud Din Dar

Fathers Name Mohammad Maqbool Dar

Mothers Name Hamida Bano

Roll No 679505 Session /Year Annual Private 2013

Now the candidate has applied for Duplicate Marks Card. Anybody (if) having any objection may file the same before undersigned with (07) Seven days from the date of publication of this notice. Besides, the original marks card is treated as cancelled.

AMS

Sd/ Assistant Secretary  
Branch Office Sopore



## CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR

Ganderbal. Website [www.cukashmir.ac.in](http://www.cukashmir.ac.in)

### EXTENSION NOTICE

In view of bad weather and consequent disruption in transport / electricity, internet services etc., the last date for e - tender submission in response to NIT No. Est.-05 of 2020, dated 24-12- 2020 is extended till 15th January, 2021 (04:00P.M). The other Terms and Conditions of the tender shall remain unchanged.

By Order,

Sd/- Campus Development Officer  
(Estates & Stores)

संख्या - : CUKmr/Est/ Cafeteria /F.No.313/14(III)/1250

दिनांक- : 08th January, 2021



- 1641 - United East Indian Company conquers city of Malacca, 7,000 killed
- 1761 - Third Battle of Panipat: In one of the largest battles of the century, the mostly Muslim Afghan Durrani Empire defeats the mostly Hindu Maratha Empire in Northern India. An estimated 60,000–70,000 were killed in the fighting and about 40,000 Maratha prisoners massacred afterwards.
- 1784 - US Revolutionary War ends with the US Congress of the Confederation ratifying the Treaty of Paris
- 1814 - King of Denmark cedes Norway to King of Sweden by treaty of Kiel
- 1914 - The Gandhi-Smuts Agreement is reached between Gen. J.C. Smuts and Mahatma Gandhi, regarding voluntary registration, poll tax, recognition of Indian marriages and other matters
- 1929 - Afghan King Amanullah forced to resign
- 1943 - World War II: Japan begins Operation Ke, withdrawal of its troops from Guadalcanal
- 1943 - World War II: Casablanca Conference begins between Winston Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt
- 1944 - Soviet army begins offensive at Oranienbaum/Wolchow
- 1950 - US recalls all consular officials from China
- 1956 - Jordan government refuses to join Pact of Baghdad
- 1969 - 25 members of US aircraft carrier Enterprise die during maneuvers
- 1969 - Soyuz 4 launched; rendezvous with Soyuz 5 two days later
- 1974 - World Football League founded
- 1975 - USSR breaks trade agreement with US
- 1990 - UN Secretary-General Javier Perez de Cuellar says he has lost all hope for peace in Gulf
- 1994 - Russian manned space craft TM-17, lands
- 1998 - Researchers in Dallas, Texas present findings about an enzyme that slows aging and cell death (apoptosis)
- 2000 - 4 United Nations tribunal sentences five Bosnian Croats to up to 25 years for the 1993 killing of over 100 Muslims in a Bosnian village.
- 2005- Landing of the Huygens probe on Saturn's moon Titan
- 2008 - MESSENGER spacecraft performs a Mercury flyby
- 2010 - Yemen declares war on al-Qaeda
- 2011 - Stampede near Sabarimala in Kerala, India kills 104 devotees and injures 100 more
- 2012 - Suicide bomber kills 53 and injures 130 in Basra, Iraq

(KASHMIR OBSERVER, 14 January, 2001)



KASHMIR  
OBSERVER

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K O V I E W

SC steps in

In a step towards resolving the ongoing farmers' protest, the Supreme Court on Tuesday stayed the implementation of the three farming laws and announced the establishment of a committee of experts to recommend if any changes were needed in the laws. The court, however, said that the suspension cannot be indefinite or for "an empty purpose". "All it needs to be seen is which part needs to be deleted from the law and which should stay. that is why a committee is needed," the Chief Justice of India S A Bobde said.

The court's decision was welcomed by farmer leaders but they made it clear that they would not call off their protest until the laws are repealed. In a statement, the All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee (AIKSCC) also said that they will not participate in any court-ordered committee process. The farmers body also expressed apprehensions over the members chosen for the committee saying these people "are known for their support to the three Acts".

As is clear, the farmers are not ready to budge. They want the three farm laws passed by the union government that deregulate crop pricing withdrawn. They argue that the laws will only hurt their livelihoods and will only benefit large corporations. The situation remains deadlocked. Fir over a month now the farmers have laid a siege to New Delhi, blocking its main entry points. If the protests continue, the government, it seems, will have fewer options left but to accede to farmers' demands. If this happens this will be the first time that the Modi government will be forced to withdraw any of the laws it has passed so far.

One of the biggest charge against the BJP-led union government is that it has been unilaterally passing the far-reaching laws with a bearing on the lives of the millions of people. This started with sudden demonitisation of Rs 1000 and Rs 500 notes in November 2016 that plunged the country into a virtual chaos. People thronged the banks to either exchange or deposit their old currency. Long queues of people, a significant number of them senior citizens, appeared outside the banks and ATMs to deposit their cash. Scores lost their lives in the process. Then followed the GST reform which crushed the small businesses. This was followed by the revocation of Article 370 that granted J&K its semi-autonomous status within Indian Union. The move's disruptive fallout is still playing out in J&K and Ladakh, the former parts of J&K state, now downgraded into two union territories. Following this, the centre came up with Citizenship Amendment Act that ensured that only non-Muslim refugees from the neighbouring countries are entitled to Indian citizenship. Though the CAA was also resisted by people, the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic ended the protest. Now the farmers protest is taking place despite the pandemic. And it remains to be seen how the central government responds to it. The best course for the government is to address the anxieties of the farmers and do everything to assure them that their livelihoods will not be threatened.

O T H E R O P I N O N

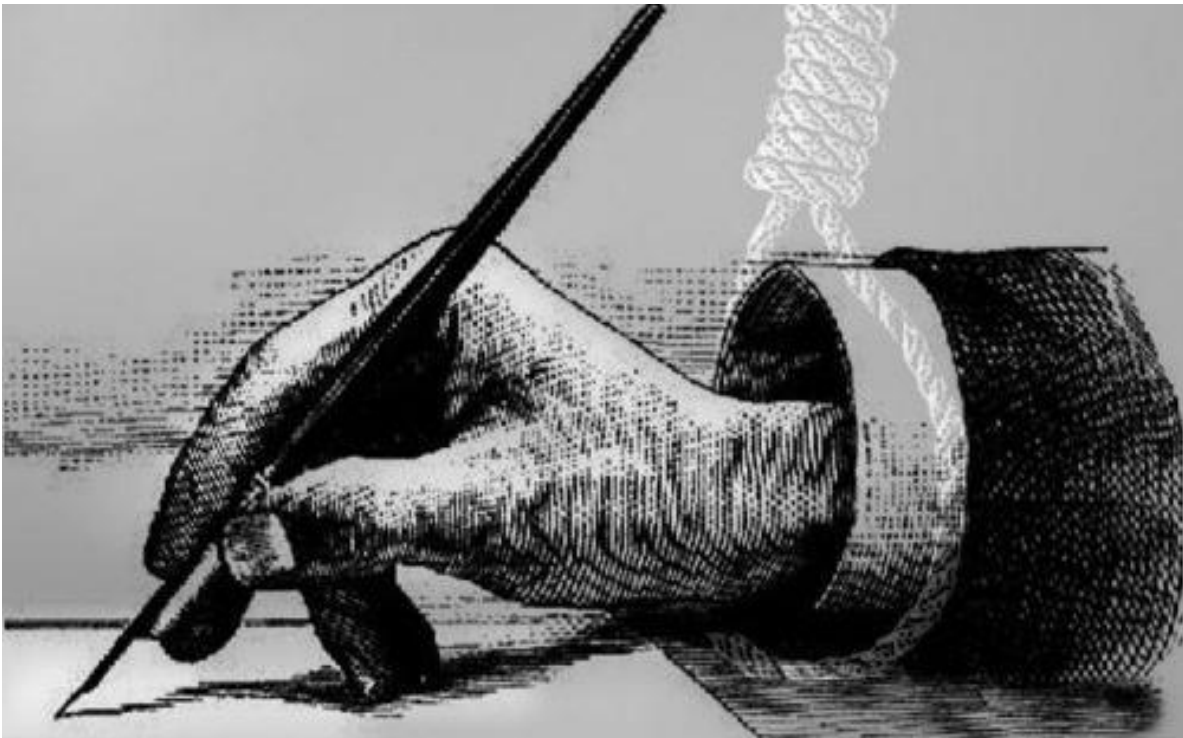
On courts and laws

The Supreme Court's interim order in the ongoing contestation between large sections of the farmers and the Centre over the new farm laws may be motivated by a laudable intention to break the deadlock in negotiations. However, it is difficult to shake off the impression that the Court is seeking to impose a compromise on the farmers' unions. One portion of the order stays the three laws, seeks to maintain the Minimum Support Price as before and prevents possible dispossession of farmers of their land under the new laws. The stated reason is that the stay would "assuage the hurt feelings of the farmers" and encourage them to go to the negotiating table. However, it is somewhat disconcerting that the stay of legislation is effected solely as an instrument to facilitate the Court's arrangement rather than on the basis of any identified legal or constitutional infirmities in the laws. The order forming a four-member committee may indeed help relieve the current tension and allay the government's fears that the Republic Day celebrations may be disrupted, but it is not clear if it would help the reaching of an amicable settlement as the Samyukt Kisan Morcha, the umbrella body spearheading the protests, has refused to appear before the panel. The Court's approach raises the question whether it should traverse beyond its adjudicative role and pass judicial orders of significant import on the basis of sanguine hope and mediational zeal.

The Court did make its position amply clear during the hearing, with the Chief Justice of India, S.A. Bobde, faulting the Centre for its failure to break the deadlock arising out of the weeks-long protest by thousands of farmers in the vicinity of Delhi, demanding nothing short of an outright repeal of the laws. It is only in the wake of the government's perceived failure that the Court has chosen to intervene, but it is unfortunate that it is not in the form of adjudicating key questions such as the constitutionality of the laws, but by handing over the role of thrashing out the issues involved to a four-member panel. It is not clear how the four members on the committee were chosen, and there is already some well-founded criticism that some of them have already voiced their support for the farm laws in question. The Court wants the panel to give its recommendations on hearing the views of all stakeholders. Here, the exercise could turn tricky. How will the Court deal with a possible recommendation that the laws be amended? It would be strange and even questionable if the Court directed Parliament to bring the laws in line with the committee's views. While a negotiated settlement is always preferable, it is equally important that judicial power is not seen as being used to dilute the import of the protest or delegitimise farmer unions that stay away from the proceedings of the panel or interfere with the powers of Parliament to legislate.

The Hindu

Straight Strokes  
Of Conversations,  
Courage And Memory



GOWHAR GEELANI

It appears that the people, politicians, pulpit and Kashmir's opinion makers and the civil society — all are in the Freeze mode. They do not know what to do or lack resources and means to change anything substantial on the ground. Perchance they are waiting for a miracle. But do miracles happen?

The virulent acts of criminalising opinions in Kashmir will have far-reaching consequences. When conversations do not happen something undesirable happens. It is an irrefutable fact that since August 5, 2019, censorship has been normalised in the Kashmir Valley. And conversations criminalised.

It appears that the entire Kashmir society is put on the ventilator where it is gasping for breath in the absence of proper medical aid, professional advice or due to medical negligence.

For the last two years or so, Kashmir's once vibrant civil society is on the silent mode. Also, Kashmir's social media space is circumspect. Kashmir's cafes and shop fronts (Waane Pyaend), once the places for catharsis, are either deserted or dull. Even when some are filled they sound dreary in the absence of meaningful conversations.

In the words of one professor of political science, Kashmir's "cafeteria approach" to conversations and controversies would provide vent to emotions and sentiments of all kinds. Now people who go out often look around, rolling their eyes out in all directions to make sure that no one else is listening to their possible conversations. On the mobile phone devices, people seldom speak their heart out and prefer speaking in a coded language to avoid scrutiny of any sort from the Big Brother. Many have reached to a discomforting conclusion that expressing a view on the region's political landscape is unlawful or entails a cost.

Generally, all sorts of conversations would happen on the shop fronts in Srinagar's downtown or in the suburbs and ruburbs of the vale. In the coffee shops. And in the editorials of newspapers, too. It was a norm, but not anymore.

No conversations are happening. There are whispers and murmurs, though. Or, there are cryptic conversations.

The situation is so dire that even the unionist camp is complaining of suffocation and strangulation. One can only imagine the mood of the other ideological camp. That is one of the measuring rods to understand the severity.

Worse, the region's leadership across the ideological spectrum has abdicated responsibility. Leaders, who once upon a time would talk about the Kashmir issue and its possible impact on South Asian politics or geopolitical matters, are absent from the scene. There was a time when they claimed to control and own up the street sentiment. Now they do not even issue symbolic statements on existential matters.

In their appreciation, they have paid a cost for their expression. And in a choked atmosphere there are consequences for any form of expression. That is largely true. But what had they expected? That the path of resilience will be a bed of roses?

To a large extent, this unfortunate situation is a result of extreme fear. In extreme fear, psychologists say, there are three possibilities. First possible reaction is to succumb to fear. That is called Flight. Another possibility is to resist. That is called Fight. There is one more possibility; not knowing what to do. This one is called Freeze. It appears that the people, politicians, pulpit and Kashmir's opinion makers and the civil society — all are in the Freeze mode. They do not know what to do or lack resources and means to change anything substantial on the ground. Perchance they are waiting for a miracle. But do miracles happen?

Is this a healthy sign for any society? Is this an evolution or a near collapse? Can the institution of dialogue remain discredited forever? While the Big Brother and Ministry of Love can afford to remain busy in self-congratulatory chatter for enforcing silence in the society, it is not healthy by any stretch of the imagination.

History tells us that chronicling ordeal or documenting pain has never been easy.

Elie Wiesel in Night — a book that sheds light on the horrors of violence of Holocaust during Adolf Hitler's time — makes some important observations. Answering the basic question about why he wrote the book, Wiesel notes: "Was it to leave behind a legacy of words, of memories, to help prevent history from repeating itself?"

Wiesel's autobiographical account documents suffering, survival and hope. As a teenager he found himself captive at Auschwitz, one of the deadliest Nazi German concentrations camps at the time. The survivor developed hatred for all of humanity while suffering in the camp. That was being human.

Similarly, we have bone chilling accounts on Holocaust by Primo Levi, Viktor E. Frankl, Heather Morris, Anne Frank and many more.

Why is it important to write and to document?

"Did I write it so as not to get mad or, on the contrary, to go mad in order to understand the nature of madness — the immense, terrifying madness that had erupted in history and in the conscience of mankind?" writes Wiesel in Night.

Anne Frank, a young Jewish girl, would write her diary while in hiding in Amsterdam. After being captured by the Nazi troops the family was taken to a concentration camp. Anne's father survived and remembered that his daughter had been maintaining a diary. He went back to the house where the family was hiding to find his daughter's diary. It was published as a book titled The Diary of a Young Girl which sold millions of copies and was translated in several languages.

But is it easy to write when surveillance is at peak, and thought police an undeniable reality? Can one search for meaning in times of extreme fear? Viktor E. Frankl's Man's Search For Meaning tells us that it is indeed possible to find meaning and cling on to hope in distress. In Elie Wiesel's words, his survival in the concentration camp was a matter of chance because others were not as lucky.

In writing also lies moral obligation to chronicle, to document and to tell the tale. The aim of the powerful has always been to erase memories. All dark periods in history are judged one day. The response of the people is judged. The response of the leadership is judged. The response of the pulpit will also be judged!

There are times when one wants to write but it is difficult to find words. At other times it is the lack of will that becomes an obstacle. Sometimes survival takes precedence because of fear.

Courage, the ancient Greeks held, was not a virtue in itself, but that it was a quality that made all the virtues possible. Indeed, Kashmir has shown grace under pressure. Now it must also summon courage to initiate conversations, dialogues and to write what is long overdue!

The views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect the editorial stance of Kashmir Observer

Gowhar Geelani is an author-journalist and a political commentator

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

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Dilemma in Career Choices

It is winter in Kashmir, and for a student, it is a time to wake up early and rush towards coaching centers. Kashmir is one among the beautiful places on earth, but, taking its youth into cognizance, they have made this wonderful heaven a wandering one.

In Kashmir, after passing class 10th examinations, students get a welcome in different coaching centers to opt their streams. But, this time they have to be careful because whatever they will be in future is purely reflected by the subjects they opt. Students must understand and know why they're opting a particular

stream. Consistency, sticking to goals, inquisitiveness, time management and dedication is the key to success. And proper strategy, clear perspective and motivation are three basic factors they need to work upon. I see a number of students wandering in coaching centers. They go to almost every coaching center but they are still in a dilemma and confusion.

I have seen a number of students getting admission in coaching centers without consulting their parents or elders. Parents have to give freedom and independence to their children but to some limits. Parents are known as the best counsellors of a child, but if they

become abortive to give right opinions and decisions to their children, then they are responsible for their arrogance. Home is the best school for children and they should get proper nourishment here or else they will become unsuccessful in their goals.

Parents sometimes force their children to choose medical stream: a practice typical in our society. Children have the right to choose their subject of interest. Parents must encourage them and appreciate their choice and support them fully, this will lead them to achieve their goals easily because if a person has not any sort of interest in studies he can never achieve his goal

in life. When parents send their children to outside places far from home to study, they should keep in consideration that their children should not become victims of bad evils of our society like drug abuse etc that can set a blot on a student's character.

The hand of a parent is the best support that a child can hold. So, parents should look after the likes, dislikes and choices of a child and make proper decisions for them. So that they can turn the wandering heaven into a wonderful one!

Hina Jaan  
islamtamjeed@gmail.com



# Why I Bemoan the Loss of Our Downtown

WAJAHAT QAZI

Warped and flawed modernization has led to the demolition of the traditional housing structures of downtown giving way to ugly, concrete, incoherent blobs.

The only redeeming feature of Srinagar city- an extended urban sprawl that has no coherence- is the downtown: a unique constellation of habitats, living spaces and small business establishments. Worldwide , downtowns are places or spaces where vice jostles with virtue and the best and worst of human nature is at display. But, nay, not our downtown. It remains a space that defies conventional or even stereotypical views of downtowns elsewhere.

The reasons appear to be spiritual, sociological and cultural. The city of seven bridges that connect downtown with the rest of Srinagar city is dotted with tombs and shrines of Sufi saints that bought Islam to Kashmir and are revered by most people here.

The denizens of downtown have a firm belief that because of these shrines, there is a vigil over it that keeps the place clean in the spiritual senses. Sociologically and historically, the downtown was a place where , while turfs were zealously and jealously guarded , both for fun and other prosaic reasons,-fate kadal wallahs jokingly mocked the zaina kadal wallahs and so on, everyone knew everyone. The scope for vice and mischief is thereby very restricted. Culturally, downtown was and perhaps is a zone and a sphere unto itself perhaps best reflected in the sense of humour of its denizens.

Downtown, as I recall it , was then a large extended family defined by a high level of social capital. While it was a self-contained space economically with Maharaj Gunj as its economic and trading centre of gravity , the sense of community was very strong. The Khojas (wealthy business people) owed a sense of responsibility toward the poorer downtown wallahs, neighbours in



downtown looked out for each other: it was a source of embarrassment if a neighbour did not do so.

The houses and dwellings of downtown were unique in their shapes, sizes and architecture: most houses were built from what were called maharaj seer( maharaj bricks- small rectangular bricks baked to a hardness in kilns that defied the severest of shocks, the front doors of these dwellings were small(one had to bend to enter), the walls of rooms were splattered with what was called 'bore'- special mud mixed with straw- that staved off the cold of severe Kashmir winters. Many many years ago, the roofs of these houses were covered with clay over which flowers grew. The downtown was connected by small lanes, and by lanes called kochas dotted by cobblestones in a way whose closest analogue remains the arterial system of the human body. Drainage was and remains an issue.

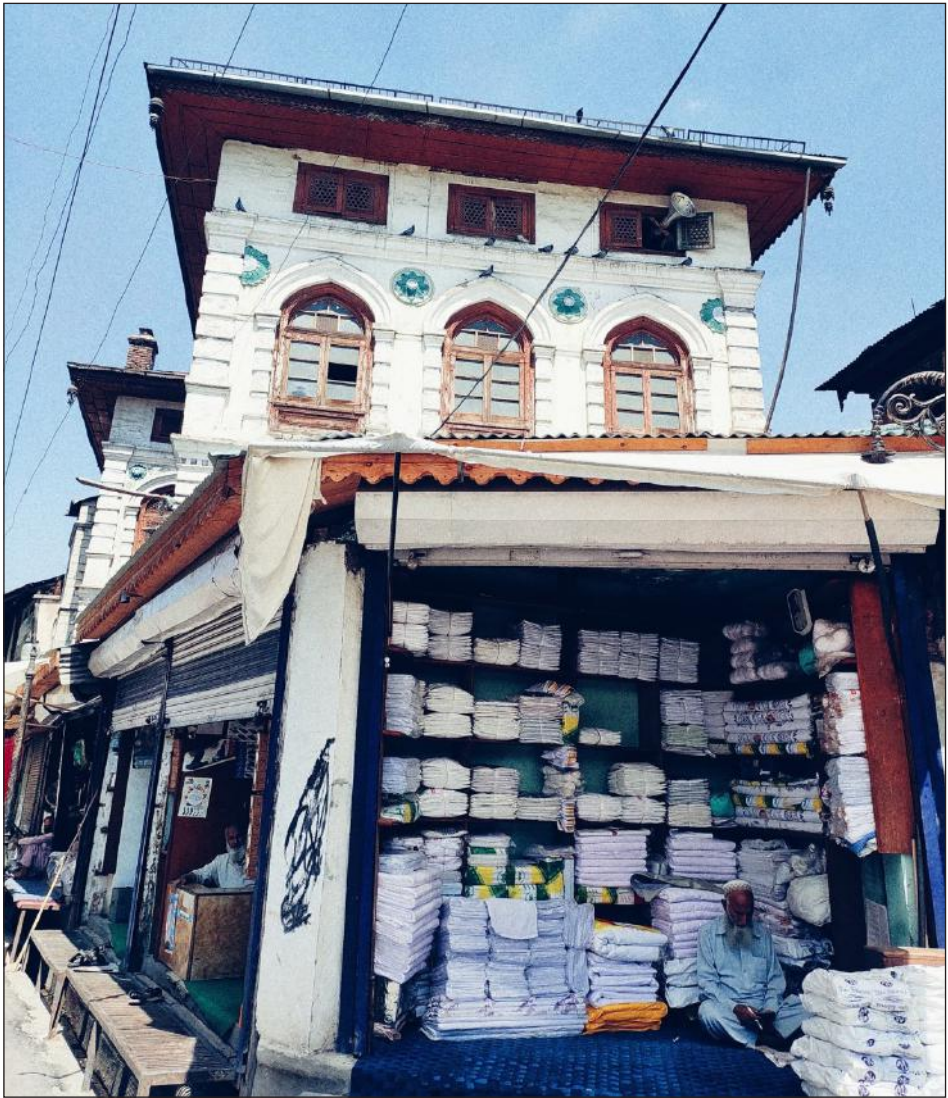
All in all, our downtown was a marvel in its own right-culturally, socially, physically and even economically. But this unique urban space of Kashmir is decaying. In fact, it is losing its character. The reasons, in the main, pertain to the population explosion in Kashmir, the attendant break down of the traditional family structure and concomitant expansion of Srinagar city. The story and saga is also one of neglect and urban decay.

Those who continue to live in the downtown either do so, partly by choice but mostly because of economic reasons. Warped and flawed modernization has led to the demolition of the traditional housing structures of downtown giving way to ugly, concrete , incoherent blobs. Ownership of the motor car has meant that the tonga wallahs( horse driven carriages) are not even a relic; they have gone extinct. Businesses have migrated to other urban centres and central business districts like Lal Chowk or other business centres that have mushroomed within and in the boundaries of Srinagar city.

I noticed this as I wandered across, through and around our downtown. Because I am a romantic(hopelessly so), the loss of downtown's special character is a personal loss for me. My wanderings came to a close after days, and as dusk fell on

downtown , I peered from the precincts of the Hari parbat fort- a strategic fort built apparently by the Mughal emperor Akbar on a steep hill-, downtown glistened with electricity casting a surreal hue on snow clad Srinagar. The muezzins' call to prayer reverberated through the city. I closed my eyes and said a prayer for my and our downtown!

*The author has a Masters with Distinction in International Relations from the University of Aberdeen, Scotland. Worked as the Associate Editor of Kashmir Observer.*



## WhatsApp: Guarding Privacy On Messaging Services

Change of terms and conditions will affect more than a billion messaging app users

You might have missed the message that popped up on your screen as you signed into WhatsApp recently — or you might simply have checked 'OK' to the changes to its terms and conditions — but there are repercussions now to the amendments proposed by WhatsApp.

By February 8, unless you accept those updated terms and conditions, you may be shut out of the messaging service that is enjoyed by more than a billion users the world over. It's by far the world's most popular messaging system, had some 78 million downloads in November, and in India alone more than 400 million use the service and that number grows by the day.

Given these types of numbers, its ease of use and popularity, any change to terms and conditions is significant — this one more so. Because WhatsApp is owned by Facebook — the social media platform purchased it from founders Brian Acton and Jan Koum in 2014 for \$19 billion (Dh69.7 billion) — the new changes now mean that your personal data could be shared with its parent company.

Given what has happened in recent years to users' data, how it was collected, farmed and used, there are obvious concerns now about this move.

But this also raises a far more basic question about your data and personal details. They are yours and should remain so. Certainly, one of the attractions in signing up to WhatsApp and using it multiple times daily for most people, is that it pledged to keep your details private — that they wouldn't be shared with anyone else. The new terms and conditions raise many questions.

A number of governments and privacy advocates globally have taken issue with Facebook and WhatsApp about this new proposed relationship — and rightly so. We all have a basic right to privacy, regardless of the whims of the owners and merger conditions of these technology companies.

The issue of personal privacy is compounded by the sheer size of Facebook and its reach globally. It is used daily by a billion people, and has more than 2 billion users. Its ability to shape events too is huge, yet it shuns any responsibility for the spread of false information and fake news.

A good first step now towards curbing the power of Facebook would be for governments and privacy regulators to halt this sharing of information from WhatsApp. Otherwise, the case for breaking up Facebook grows far stronger.

Gulf News

Given what has happened in recent years to users' data, how it was collected, farmed and used, there are obvious concerns now about this move. But this also raises a far more basic question about your data and personal details. They are yours and should remain so.





# Cyber Police Busts Fake Call Centres, 23 Held

Press Trust Of India

**SRINAGAR:** The Cyber Police in Kashmir busted several fake call centres on Wednesday and arrested 23 people for allegedly duping people by posing as executives of multinational companies on phone.

Acting on information that some fake call centres were operating in the city, Cyber Police Station, Kashmir Zone launched an investigation, a police spokesperson said.

Cyber Police Station, Kashmir Zone, Srinagar constituted several teams in collaboration with the district police and carried out multiple raids in Rangreth, Kar-

fali Mohalla-Habbakadal and Natipora, he said.

"During these raids, 23 accused persons involved in running of these fake call centres were arrested," he said.

During the course of investigation, it was established that some fake call centre employees were posing as executives of multinational companies and duping innocent people in the name of offering technical support and solutions to their software problems, the spokesperson said.

The accused were making cold calls, and sending e-mails and pop-ups on the victims' computer screens. They used to take remote access of their

computers and infect their systems with malware. Then they would ask for money from the victims in return for help by posing as technical support executives, he added.

The spokesperson said the accused also used electronic signatures of the victims for illegal financial gains. These fake call centres would mostly call international citizens and demand their financial and bank details illegally so as to extort money from them.

"These fake call centres have been identified as Secure Tech Rangreth Srinagar, YSS Micro Technologies Rangreth and Vertex Technology, Karfalli Mohalla Srinagar," he said.

According to the spokesperson, fake call centres earn anything between Rs 5 lakh and Rs 20 lakh per day, depending upon the size of their set-up.

These scammers mostly cheat people staying in foreign countries by posing as technical support executives, insurance agents, law enforcement officers, bank officials and online shopping site executives, he said.

The major issue is that young students are getting attracted to such call centres due to higher salaries. These fake call centres earlier used to be limited to big cities only. However, now they have mushroomed in other parts of the country as well, he said.

## Owaisi's Party To Contest UP Panchayat Polls

**BALLIA (UP), :** The All India Majlis-e-Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen (AIMIM) is likely to contest the upcoming panchayat polls in Uttar Pradesh under an electoral pact with regional outfit Suheldev Bharatiya Samaj Party (SBSP).

The SBSP, headed by former UP minister Om Prakash Rajbhar, is garnering smaller and regional parties under the Bhagidari Sankalp Morcha.

"Candidates belonging to Asaduddin Owaisi's party are likely to be fielded in the panchayat elections as the Morcha's joint candidate," Rajbhar told reporters here on Wednesday.

He said the nine constituents of the Morcha will hold meetings at all the 75 district headquarters of the state on January 17.

"After this, a joint rally of the Morcha will be organised. It will be addressed by Owaisi as well as other leaders of the front," he said. Uttar Pradesh has a total of



File Pic

58,758 "gram panchayats" and as many panchayat heads.

As per a state government notification, the five-year tenure of 58,660 "gram panchayats", barring 88 of Gautam Budh Nagar

and 10 of Gonda districts, where gram panchayat elections were held last, ended on December 25.

Asked about the Morcha's stand for the upcoming UP Legislative Council polls, Rajbhar said, "The SBSP will not support the BJP."

The SBSP was part of the BJP-led NDA in the state when Rajbhar was a minister till he parted ways with the saffron party following differences with Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath.

At present, the SBSP has four MLAs in the 403-member UP Legislative Assembly.

Biennial elections to 12 legislative council seats in Uttar Pradesh will be held on January 28.

Making light of Rajbhar, UP minister Sriam Chauhan told reporters later that the BJP will gain if Owaisi contests polls in UP.

"Asaduddin Owaisi has no poll issues and if he contests the elections, then the votes will get divided, thereby benefiting the BJP," he said here.

### From Front page...

## US Poised To Impeach Trump

vote, coming seven days ahead of Democrat Joe Biden's inauguration, would make Trump the first US president to have been impeached twice.

Trump's epic downfall was triggered by his January 6 speech to a crowd on the National Mall, telling them that Biden had stolen the election and that they needed to march on Congress and show "strength."

Amped up on weeks of conspiracy theories pushed by Trump, the mob stormed into the Capitol, fatally injured one police officer, wrecked furniture and forced terrified lawmakers to hide, interrupting a ceremony to put the legal stamp on Biden's victory.

One protester was shot dead, and three other people died of "medical emergencies," bringing the toll to five.

Trump still remains defiant, refusing to accept responsibility for his campaign to undermine Americans' belief in the election system and his final, fiery speech on the Mall.

But his once seemingly unbreakable grip on Republicans is eroding as leaders run out of patience -- and look to a post-Trump rebuilding of their party.

Vice President Mike Pence threw Trump a lifeline on Tuesday, saying he would not invoke the 25th Amendment that allows him and the Cabinet to strip a sitting president of his powers.

But impeachment on the single charge of "incitement of insurrection" is all but assured to pass. A vote has been scheduled for around 3:00 pm (2000 GMT).

Trump, who has been stripped of his social media megaphones by Twitter and Facebook, and finds himself increasingly ostracized in the business world, is struggling to impose his message -- let alone any kind of resistance.

On a quick trip to Texas on Tuesday he visited the US-Mexico border wall, which he regards as one of his biggest achievements. But the brief, low-energy speech he made there did nothing to recapture his rapidly sliding momentum.

His insistence that his infamous speech to the crowd had been "totally appropriate" and that he bore no blame infuriated allies and opponents alike.

While the House impeachment is all but assured, it had seemed highly unlikely that the Republican-controlled Senate would follow through with a trial.

Senate leader Mitch McConnell made clear that there was no time before the January 20 change in presidency because the Senate is in recess until January 19.

Other than scheduling problems, there has been no appetite among Republicans, who acquitted Trump in his first impeachment trial a year ago, to strip him of office just days before he is set to leave anyway.

## Armed Guard Deployed...

to arm troops assigned to security duty on the U.S. Capitol grounds.

The Guard said in a statement that the authority was requested by federal authorities and approved by Army Secretary Ryan McCarthy as of approximately 6 p.m. Tuesday.

Up to 15,000 Guard members are expected to be on duty in coming days in the district to support law enforcement in connection with the Jan. 20 inauguration of President-elect Joe Biden. Authorities are concerned about threats of violence, following the insurrection at the Capitol last week.

## 'Dying' Trump Sanctions...

Imam Khomeini's Order and Astan Quds Razavi which manages the shrine of Imam Ali Raza in Mashhad, their leaders and subsidies. They are the latest action to reinforce the "maximum pressure" campaign on Iran pursued by Trump's administration.

## Kashmir Reels Under Intense...

night's minus 5.6 degrees Celsius.

The resort was the coldest recorded place in Jammu and Kashmir.

The minimum temperature in Gulmarg tourist spot settled at minus 10 degrees Celsius -- up from minus 11.2 degrees Celsius the night earlier.

Qazigund recorded a minimum of 9.3 degrees Celsius compared to minus 1.4 degrees Celsius a day earlier.

Kupwara in north Kashmir recorded a low of minus 5.6 degrees Celsius, while Kokernag, in the south, minus 9.9 degrees Celsius.

The sudden plunge in the minimum temperature resulted in the freezing of water supply pipes. A thick layer of ice had frozen over many stagnant water bodies including the Dal Lake.

Kashmir is currently under the grip of 'Chillai-Kalan'--the 40-day harshest winter period when a cold wave grips the region and the temperature drops considerably.

The chances of snowfall are the most frequent and maximum during this period and most areas, especially in the higher reaches, receive heavy snowfall.

While 'Chillai-Kalan', which began on December 21, will end on January 31, the cold wave continues even after that in Kashmir with a 20-day 'Chillai-Khur'd' (small cold) and a 10-day 'Chillai-Bachha' (baby cold).--PTI

## Grenade Hurlled At CRPF...

from 21 battalion outside Chatti Padhsahi Gurudwara here in Rainawari on Wednesday afternoon that erupted with a bang.

"However, no loss of life or injury was reported during the incident," officials said, adding that a manhunt has been launched to nab the attackers.

Meanwhile, Police claimed to have arrested two alleged Lashker-e-Taiba (LeT) militant associates from this capital city.

Muzaffar Jan of Old Barzulla and Abass Shafi Najar of Natipora were arrested by police from Bulbul Bagh Barzulla on the basis

of reliable information, a police spokesperson said Wednesday. He further claimed that arms and ammunition, including two Chinese pistols, two magazines and 13 pistol cartridges were recovered from the possession of the duo.

"In this regard, FIR No. 06/2021 under relevant sections of law has been registered at Police Station Saddar. Investigation in the case is underway," the police spokesperson added. (With KNO inputs)

## First Time In 7 Months,...

2, Ganderbal 5, Shopian 1, Jammu 47, Udhampur 1, Rajouri 2, Doda 1, Kathua 3, Samba 1 new case of Covid-19,

Moreover, they said, 174 more patients have recovered and were discharged from various hospitals--77 from Jammu Division and 97 from Kashmir valley. The number of active cases has reduced to 1629 in J&K. (With agency inputs)

## J&K Receives 1.46 Lakh...

and Government Medical College Jammu, where Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha will be present," they said.

Besides these two, there are 14 immunisation centres each in the Kashmir valley and the Jammu division.

The officials said in the first phase, healthcare workers across the union territory will be given shots while frontline workers will be covered in the second phase.

Jammu and Kashmir has recorded over 1,22,700 cases of coronavirus so far while the death toll due to the epidemic has reached 1,912. The number of active cases is around 2,000.

## CBI Books JK Bank Manager...

with proprietors -- Pankaj Kumar of Shiva Trading, Vikas Rathi of Divyanshi Sales and Ghanshyam Patel of Shyama Trading -- and Sabharwal changed registered phone numbers in the companies' accounts for SMS alert service to be able to use them for fund transfers, they said.

After the government declared Rs 1,000 and old Rs 500 notes as illegal tender on November 8, 2016, Sabharwal allegedly allowed Rahul and Dushyant Chaudhary to make Rs 12.84 crore cash deposit in the three companies' accounts in violation of bank norms and RBI instructions related to cash deposits, they said.

Using the changed phone numbers, the duo transferred this amount to various bank accounts through Real Time Gross Settlement (RTGS), they said.

## LG Conducts Whirlwind Tour...

response mechanism put in place to restore affected services, from the concerned officers in a meeting held here at Raj Bhavan. The LG, he said, sought a detailed report on the status of restoration works especially road, water, and power being carried out by different departments across Kashmir.

"The LG was informed that the continuous snowing for the past few days has affected normal life throughout the Kashmir Valley, however, the administration, following his directions, had started restoration work on foot footing from day one to ensure that people do not face any inconvenience," he said.

As per the official spokesperson, the LG issued specific instructions to all the concerned officers, field-level officers to ensure swift completion of snow-clearance and dewatering of all lanes and by-lanes.

"He also directed them to monitor restoration efforts and ensure round-the-clock operations for the earliest possible restoration in areas where public services are still disrupted. He enjoined upon them to remain at the beck and call of the people and ensure an uninterrupted supply of essentials and healthcare facilities across the valley," he said.

He further said that the LG directed senior officials to ensure adequate men and machinery for snow clearance of city lanes, village link roads and further asked them to ensure the team on the ground is functional round the clock to provide maximum relief to the common man.

According to the official spokesperson, the LG was informed that the power supply in all districts of Kashmir has been restored.

"It was given out that all 115 33KV lines stand restored and 255 receiving stations, except receiving station Machil, stands restored. It was also informed that 951 (11KV) feeders have been restored, while as out of 945 damaged DTs, 720 have been restored and the remaining shall be made functional soon," he said.

"Similarly, it was informed that the R&B department has cleared snow from 7892 km of road length out of a total of 8026 km across Kashmir, while some remote areas which witnessed heavy snowfall including roads in far-flung areas of Shopian, Budgam, and Kulgam are being cleared and will be made motorable by tomorrow," he added.

BVR Subrahmanyam, Chief Secretary; Rohit Kansal, Principal Secretary, Power; Shailendra Kumar, Principal Secretary to Public Works (R&B); P K Pole, Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir; Vijay Kumar, IGP, Kashmir; M Raju, Secretary to the Government, Jal Shakti Dept; Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar; Mohammad Aijaz, MD, KPDC, besides Chief Engineers of PDD, PHE, R&B, Commissioner SMC, and other officers were present in the meeting.

## LG Meets Slain Jeweller's...

here on Wednesday, visited Satpal's family and expressed solidarity with them, an official spokesperson said.

Strongly condemning the killing, the LG said that a high-level investigation has already been initiated and assured the family members that culprits involved in this heinous act of violence will be brought to justice very soon. He paid condolences to the family members of the deceased and said that such "despicable and cowardly act will not go unpunished".

"The LG was briefed by the family members that their family is residing in Kashmir for the last 50 years and during this long period, they are living with local people with very cordial relations," the official spokesperson said.

The LG was accompanied by BVR Subrahmanyam, Chief Secretary; Pandurang K. Pole, Divisional Commissioner, Kashmir; Vijay Kumar, IGP Kashmir, and Dr. Shahid Iqbal Choudhary, Deputy Commissioner Srinagar.

70-year-old Satpal Nischal, born and brought up in Punjab, was shot dead by suspected bike-borne militants near his shop at Sairaibala here on December 31, months after he purchased it after obtaining a domicile certificate. He had received three gunshot wounds in chest and died before making it to Srinagar's SMHS hospital for treatment.

The Resistance Front (TRF) claimed responsibility for killing Satpal, hours after the shootout. The statement of militant outfit went viral on the social media in which it threatened that "any Indian national irrespective of faith, caste or colour who comes to Kashmir with the intention of settling here, will be treated as an agent of RSS and not as a civilian"

## IndiGo Plane Gets Stuck...

sources said. There was panic but things eased as the passengers were informed about it, the sources added. "There was no problem to people as their safety was paramount for us. The plane was stopped as soon as it reached in close proximity of the snow accumulation," the Director Airport Authority of India added.

However, an official of a private airliner said that the maintenance of the runway and parking bay, including snow clearance, was the responsibility of the AAI, which they have allegedly failed to fulfil.

"The parking bay should have been free of snow by now. However, it is due to the callous attitude of AAI authorities that the flight was about to hit a snow mound," he said.

He added that the authorities earlier used to lift the snow in vehicles to make the runway and taxi bay smooth for flight operations.

## J&K Delimitation Based...

will be without a legislative assembly.

About the delimitation of constituencies in UT of Jammu and Kashmir, the Law and Justice Ministry in its year-end review has said that in March last year (06-March-2020) constituted a Delimitation Commission for delimitation of assembly and parliament constituencies across Jammu and Kashmir.

Unlike Jammu and Kashmir, the cold desert Ladakh in the absence of a legislative assembly enjoys the power of an autonomous hill development council.

Twin districts in Ladakh UT including Kargil and Leh have Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) headed by Chief Executive Council (CEC).

The Ministry in the annual report said that "After the enactment of Jammu and Kashmir (Reorganisation) Act, 2019 the erstwhile State of Jammu and Kashmir has been bifurcated into two Union territories, viz. Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir with legislative assembly and the Union Territory of Ladakh without legislative assembly.

"In terms of special provision as contemplated in Section 62 of said 2019-Act the readjustment of the constituencies in the successor Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir into assembly constituencies shall be carried out on the basis of 2011-census figures by a Delimitation Commission to be constituted under the provisions of Delimitation Act, 2002 as amended by said 2019-Act", the report said.

The report said that in pursuance of the mandate as contained in said 2019-Act and in accordance with the provisions of Section 3 of Delimitation Act, 2002 the central government has constituted a Delimitation Commission vide notification published in the Gazette of India on 6 March 2020 for the purpose of delimitation of assembly and parliamentary constituencies in the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir and the States of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, and Nagaland.

About the women empowerment and demand for reservation of seats for Women, it said that "there has been a consistent demand for giving adequate representation to women in parliament and state legislatures."

It said that gender justice is an important commitment of the government and the issue involved, however, needs careful consideration on the basis of the consensus among all political parties before taking any legislative action for amending the constitution to make appropriate provisions.

While highlighting the important tasks undertaken by the Law and Justice ministry it said that "During the period from 1st January 2020 to November 2020 the department has examined 41 legislative proposals. During this period, 40 bills were sent to the parliament for introduction."

"Out of the Bills which were already pending before parliament and those introduced during the period from 01/01/2020 to 01/11/2020, 40 Bills including one Constitutional Amendment Act, 2020 have been enacted into Acts," the report said.

"14 ordinances have been promulgated by the President under article 123 of the Constitution," the report said--(KNO)

## Work Begins On Bailey..

Jammu-Srinagar NHW shall remain closed for next few days due to sudden collapse of retaining wall of a bridge near Kela Morh, Ramban.

"Repairing work is going on. However, Jammu-Doda-Kishtwar, Jammu-Ramban, Gool Sangaldan, Magerkot- Banihal and Banihal-Qazigund stretches are through for local traffic," it said.

## BSF Detects Cross-Border...

on Wednesday, officials said.

This is the third tunnel unearthed by alert border guards along

the IB in the twin districts of Samba and Kathua in Jammu region over the past six months and ninth in the past decade.

"A nearly 150-metre-long tunnel was detected by a BSF patrol party during an anti-tunnelling operation in Bobiyaan village of Hirnagar sector this morning," Inspector General of BSF, Jammu frontier, N S Jamwal told reporters at the scene. He along with other senior officers rushed to Bobiyaan soon after the detection of the tunnel.

"The opposite of this side is Pakistan's Shakergarh which is notorious for having launch pads and bases of militants. We have inputs available with us as a result of that we are sensitive to whatever is happening here," the BSF officer said, assuring that all necessary measures are in place to counter Pakistani designs.

He said sand bags with Pakistani markings are evidence of the hand of Pakistani establishment in the construction of this tunnel, which is identical to the previously detected tunnels having a depth of 25 to 30 metre with two to three feet diameter.

Asked whether this tunnel was recently dug or it's an old one, the BSF officer said it is a matter of investigation.

However, he said some of the sand bags recovered from the tunnel have 2016-17 year of manufacture which suggest that it is an old tunnel.

"We were searching for this tunnel for a long time and its detection was the effort of the anti-tunnelling operation which is underway all along the IB. Whether any infiltration had taken place through this tunnel in the past can be said after completion of our investigation," he said.

Jamwal, however, said the BSF is sure that no infiltration had taken place through this tunnel in the recent past.

"We are undertaking some development works here and have strengthened the security in view of the anti-tunnelling drive, he said.

Referring to the killing of two Pakistani infiltrators in Surankote area of Poonch district and an encounter in Srinagar last month, the IG said Pakistan is always looking for an opportunity to push militants into Jammu Kashmir, whether it is through Line of Control (LoC) or IB.

"They are continuing with the attempts but we are fully alert to the situation. Our alertness resulted in detection of underground tunnels and shooting down of a Hexa-copter loaded with a huge cache of arms and ammunition," he said, adding the border protection grid comprising army, BSF and police are working jointly to scuttle Pakistan's attempts to push militants and weapons into this side.

Last year, the BSF detected two such tunnels in Samba district on August 28 and November 22 following successful infiltration by two groups of militants who were subsequently killed in separate encounters along Jammu-Srinagar national highway while they were enroute to Kashmir in trucks.

While three Pakistani militants affiliated with Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) were killed in a gunfight in Nagrota area near Jammu after they were intercepted aboard a Kashmir-bound truck in January last year, another group of Pakistani militants armed with weapons and a large quantity of grenades were killed at the same spot on November 19.

Investigations suggested both the groups infiltrated into this side through underground tunnels.

Meanwhile, Pakistani Rangers violated ceasefire by resorting to unprovoked firing on forward posts and villages in the Border Outpost area of Gurnam in Hiranagar sector, the officials said.

The firing from across the border started around 10 pm Tuesday, prompting strong and effective retaliation by the BSF, they said, adding the cross-border firing between the two sides continued till 2.25 am Wednesday but there was no report of any damage on Indian side.

## Remembering Mir Shafqat...

your door twice," the man informed the unfazed Shafqat. "First time, I walked away, from your office door after hearing you counselling a youth."

Another time, the advocate's likely-assassin had broken down outside his chamber, hearing Shafqat counselling a detained youth's old mother.

It was indeed the lawyer's goodwill that even changed the heart and mind of his enemies.

Justice for him was about easing the pain of people. It's impossible to find another Shafqat.- **As told to Yasir Mukhtar**

## Army Porter Dies Of Burn...

course of treatment succumbed at the health facility.

Meanwhile, a police official on the condition of anonymity confirmed the incident to GNS and said that a speech and hearing impaired porter has died in a fire incident at the army camp. "The cause of the incident is yet to be ascertained", the official said.

## Bandipora Admin Airlifts...

snowbound Gurez to Bandipora town.

The injured girl, reports said, was taken to SKIMS after being airlifted to Bandipora.

## Rs 74K Fine Imposed On...

district, an official spokesperson said.

He said that the fine was imposed on the erring traders, during the proceeding of cases of various blocks of the district related to the Food Safety and Standards Act, listed before the adjudicating officer.

## IAF Ferries 75 Stranded...

Assistant Liaison Officers, the officials said. The Kargil Courier has also been arranged for 14th January, between Kargil-Srinagar, subject to fair weather, the official added.



## Pompeo Cancels Europe Trip At Eleventh Hour After EU Leaders Refuse To Meet Him



### Agencies

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo cancelled his Europe trip at the last minute on Tuesday after Luxembourg's foreign minister and top European Union officials declined to meet with him. European and U.S. diplomats familiar with the matter said.

The extraordinary snub of the top U.S. diplomat, first reported by Reuters, came days after the storming of the U.S. Capitol by supporters of President Donald Trump, an unprecedented attack on American democracy that stunned many world leaders and U.S. allies.

Pompeo, a close ally of Trump, had sought to meet Jean Asselborn in Luxembourg, a small but wealthy NATO ally, before meeting EU leaders and the bloc's top diplomat in Brussels, three people close to the planning told Reuters. But the initial plan to go to Luxembourg, which had not been officially announced, was scrapped after officials there showed reluctance to grant Pompeo appointments, a diplomatic source said. The Brussels leg was still on until the last minute.

But the thin itinerary of Pompeo's final visit to Brussels raised questions about the merit of the trip. There were no meetings on his schedule with EU officials or any public events at NATO. A third diplomatic source said allies were "embarrassed" by Pompeo after the violence in Washington last Wednesday that left five dead.

Trump encouraged his supporters at a rally earlier that day to march on the

building that houses the Senate and the House of Representatives while lawmakers were certifying Democratic President-elect Joe Biden's Nov. 3 election victory. The Republican president claims, without evidence, that the election was stolen from him.

Pompeo condemned the violence but made no reference to the role that Trump's baseless claims played in galvanizing the march on the Capitol.

Appalled by the violence, Luxembourg's Asselborn had called Trump a "criminal" and a "political pyromaniac" on RTL Radio the next day. Luxembourg's foreign ministry confirmed the previously planned stop there was cancelled, but declined to give further details. The EU declined to comment.

The U.S. State Department, in a statement, attributed the cancellation to transition work before Biden takes office on Jan. 20, even if Pompeo had been reluctant until recently to unequivocally recognize Biden's win. The State Department declined further comment on European officials' rejection of meetings with Pompeo.

In Brussels, Pompeo was due to have a private dinner with NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg on Wednesday evening at Stoltenberg's private residence, before meeting Belgian Foreign Minister Sophie Wilmes, whose country is a NATO ally.

One of the sources said the lack of any public events at NATO was another reflection of European officials questioning the point of the trip. It was not immediately clear why Pompeo sought to go to Brussels so near to the end of Trump's term.

## Iran Unveils Its Largest Military Vessel During Missile Drill



### Agencies

**TEHRAN, IRAN** – Iran's navy has officially inducted the country's largest military vessel into its fleet during a maritime missile drill at a time of heightened tensions with the United States over its nuclear programme.

The indigenously-made forward base ship IRIS Makran, which is said to be able to carry up to five helicopters, joined the fleet with another ship that is capable of firing missiles.

The 228-metre (748-foot) long warship, previously an oil tanker, has been repurposed to provide logistical support, carry out search and rescue missions, deploy special forces, replenish and transport supplies, offer medical assistance, and act as a base for fast boats.

They will fire surface-to-surface cruise missiles in the sea, test out missiles from submarines, conduct special forces operations, and deploy unmanned aerial vehicles as part of the two-day drill being conducted in the Sea of Oman.

"By organising this drill we can evaluate our ability to respond to potential threats from the enemy in a timely manner and improve our performance through addressing weaknesses and boosting strengths," said Admiral Hamzeh Ali Kavian, who acted as the spokesman for the drill.

The US and its regional allies, particularly Saudi Arabia and Israel, see Iran's missile programme as a security threat with fears that Tehran might use its long-range missiles to carry nuclear warheads.



NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR said US seeks to ensure that allies, partners can protect their sovereignty

## US Unveils Plan To Counter China With India's Rise

### Agencies

The Trump administration declassified its strategy to ensure continued dominance over China, which focuses on accelerating India's rise as a counterweight to Beijing and the ability to defend Taiwan against an attack.

National Security Advisor Robert O'Brien on Tuesday announced the publication of the document, titled "United States Strategic Framework for the Indo-Pacific." Approved by President Donald Trump in February 2018, it provided the "overarching strategic guidance" for U.S. actions the past three years and was released to show the U.S. commitment to "keeping the Indo-Pacific region free and open long into the future," O'Brien said in a statement.

"Beijing is increasingly pressuring Indo-Pacific nations to subordinate their freedom and sovereignty to a 'common destiny' envisioned by the Chinese Communist Party," O'Brien said in an expanded statement. "The

U.S. approach is different. We seek to ensure that our allies and partners – all who share the values and aspirations of a free and open Indo-Pacific – can preserve and protect their sovereignty."

The document lays out a vision for the region in which North Korea no longer poses a threat, India is predominant in South Asia and the U.S. works with partners around the world to resist Chinese activities to undermine sovereignty through coercion. It assumed that China will take "increasingly assertive" steps to compel unification with Taiwan and warns that its dominance of cutting-edge technologies like artificial intelligence will "pose profound challenges to free societies."

While the timing of the release just a week before President-elect Joe Biden takes office raises questions about the motive, the Trump administration's actions to counter China in Asia have largely enjoyed bipartisan support. Incoming Biden officials have talked about the need to work more with allies and partners against China,

which also forms a key part of the strategy -- particularly in strengthening security ties with Australia, Japan and India.

Rory Medcalf, a professor and head of the National Security College at the Australian National University, said that the document shows U.S. policy in Asia was driven by efforts to "bolster allies and counter China." But he noted that the strategy was so ambitious that "failure was almost assured" on issues such as disarming North Korea, sustaining "primacy" in the region and finding international consensus against harmful Chinese economic practices.

"The declassified framework will have enduring value as the beginning of a whole-of-government blueprint for handling strategic rivalry with China," Medcalf wrote in a post for the Australian Strategic Policy Institute research group. "If the U.S. is serious about that long-term contest, it will not be able to choose between getting its house in order domestically and projecting power in the Indo-Pacific. It will need to do both at once."

## Capitol Assault: US House All Set To Vote On Impeachment Of President Trump

### Agencies

**WASHINGTON:** A week after President Donald Trump's supporters stormed the US Capitol, the US House of Representatives will vote on Wednesday to impeach the president for his role in an assault on American democracy that stunned the nation and left five dead.

At least five Republicans have said they would join Democrats to impeach Trump for the second time, just seven days before he is due to leave office and President-elect Joe Biden is sworn in on January 20.

A vote of the House majority to impeach would trigger a trial in the still Republican-controlled Senate, although it was unclear whether such a trial would take place in time to expel Trump from the White House.

Democrats moved forward on an impeachment vote after Vice President Mike Pence rejected an effort to persuade him to invoke the 25th Amendment of the US Constitution to remove Trump.

"I do not believe that such a course of action is in the best interest of our Nation or consistent with our Constitution," Pence said in a letter Tuesday evening to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.



Despite the letter, the House passed a resolution late Tuesday formally calling on Pence to act. The final vote was 223-205 in favor.

As the House prepared for the impeachment vote on Wednesday, there were signs that Trump's once-dominant hold on the Republican Party was beginning to ebb.

At least five House Republicans, including Liz Cheney, a member of her party's leadership team, said they would vote for his second impeachment - a prospect no president before Trump has faced.

"There has never been a greater betrayal by a President of the United States of his office and his oath to the Constitution," Cheney, the daughter of former Vice President Dick Cheney, said in a statement.

Trump "summoned this mob, assembled the mob, and lit the flame of this attack" on the Capitol, she said.

Four other Republican House members, Jaime Herrera Beutler, John Katko, Adam Kinzinger and Fred Upton, also said they supported impeachment.

In a break from standard procedure, Republican leaders in the House have refrained from urging their members to vote against impeaching Trump, saying it was a matter of individual conscience.

The New York Times reported that the Republican majority leader of the U.S. Senate, Mitch McConnell, was said to be pleased about the impeachment push, another sign that Trump's party is looking to move on from him after the attack on Congress.

**'TOTALLY APPROPRIATE'**

In his first public appearance since last Wednesday's riot, Trump showed no contrition on Tuesday for his speech last week in which he called on his supporters to protest Biden's victory by marching on the Capitol.

"What I said was totally appropriate," Trump told reporters.

At a meeting to set the rules for Wednesday's impeachment vote, Democratic Representative David Cicilline told the House Rules Committee that the impeachment drive had the support of 217 lawmakers - enough to impeach Trump.

## 40 Killed In Deadliest Israeli Strikes On Syria Since 2018



### Agencies

**BEIRUT:** Israeli night raids targeting arms depots and military positions in eastern Syria killed at least nine Syrian soldiers and 31 allied fighters, in the deadliest raids since 2018, a war monitor said Wednesday.

The Israeli air force carried out more than 18 strikes against multiple targets in an area stretching from the eastern town of Deir Ezzor to the Iraqi border, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said.

The raids killed nine Syrian soldiers and 31 foreign militia fighters whose nationalities were not immediately known, the Britain-based monitoring group said.

Paramilitaries belonging to the Lebanese Hezbollah movement and the Fatimid Brigade, which is made up of pro-Iranian Afghan fighters, operate in the region, the Observatory said.

The Israeli military did not immediately comment.

Observatory head Rami Abdul Rahman called the Israeli raids the "deadliest since June 2018" when strikes on the same region killed at least 55 pro-government fighters, including Iraqis as well as Syrians.

The latest raids came hours after separate strikes near the Iraqi border on Tuesday killed at least 12 Iran-backed militia fighters.

The Observatory said it could not identify the warplanes responsible for the earlier strikes.

The Syrian state news agency SANA reported Wednesday's raids but gave few details.

"At 1:10 am (2310 GMT Tuesday), the Israeli enemy carried out an aerial assault on the town of Deir Ezzor and the Albu Kamal region," SANA said, citing a military source.

"The results of the aggression are currently being verified," it added.

It is less than a week since the last wave of Israeli strikes in Syria.

On January 7, Israel targeted positions in the south and in the southern outskirts of Damascus, killing three pro-Iran fighters.

Israel routinely carries out raids in Syria, mostly against targets linked to Iran in what it says is a bid to prevent its arch foe from consolidating a foothold on its northern border.

Israel hit around 50 targets in Syria in 2020, according to an annual report released by the Israeli military.

It has carried out hundreds of air and missile strikes on Syria since civil war broke out in 2011, targeting Iranian and Lebanese Hezbollah forces as well as Syrian government troops.

Israel rarely acknowledges individual strikes but has done so when responding to what it describes as aggression inside Israeli territory.

The war in Syria has killed more than 380,000 people and displaced millions more since it erupted after the brutal repression of anti-government protests.

## Young People First: Indonesia's COVID Vaccine Strategy Questioned

### Agencies

**JAKARTA, INDONESIA** – In the UK, the first person to receive a COVID-19 vaccine outside trial conditions was a 90-year-old pensioner. In Canada, the first recipient was only marginally younger at 89. In Germany, a 101-year-old nursing home resident was first in line.

But in Indonesia, the country worst affected by the virus in Southeast Asia with 836,718 confirmed cases and 24,343 deaths, the government has chosen an unorthodox vaccination strategy.

In the first phase that begins on Wednesday and continues until the end of March, 1.3 million healthcare workers and a further 17.4 million workers from the public service – police, soldiers, teachers and bureaucrats – will receive free jabs of CoronaVac, the vaccine developed by Chinese firm Sinovac Biotech. After that, it will be working adults.

"Indonesia is targeting the productive age at 18 to 59 years instead of elderly people because we have not completed the stage three clinical trials for people this age range with the Sinovac vaccine," Ministry of Health spokesperson Dr Nadia Wikeko told Al Jazeera. "We are still waiting for the BPOM (Indonesia's agency for drug and food control) review to see if the vaccine can be used safely for people over 60."

Many citizens support the strategy. "Because older people in Indonesia mostly stay at home, the



chance of being infected is lower than that of people of working age," said Putu, a 56-year-old Balinese woman who like many Indonesians goes by only one name. "So, if younger people get vaccinated first, they can visit older people safely."

**But experts are sceptical.**

"We know that older people who have already been vaccinated in China and the Middle East have responded as well to the vaccines as younger people," said Kim Mulholland, a professor of vaccinology at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine who is based at the University of Melbourne. "So the argument that older people should not be vaccinated because they have not been included in trials in Indonesia is not valid."

Indonesia's strategy is the reverse of the accepted wisdom on vaccination, with medical experts saying the first groups to be vaccinated should be front-line medical staff and then the elderly.

### NEWS MAKERS

## Elon Musk No Longer The World's Richest Person After Losing \$13.5Bn In A Day

After briefly topping Forbes' rich list, Elon Musk has now fallen back to second place behind Amazon's CEO Jeff Bezos after tumbling shares in Tesla, his electric vehicle company, chopped \$13.5 billion off his fortune in one day.

Musk became the world's richest person on Thursday – a result of his fortune growing by more than \$150 billion in a year, reports Business Insider.

But on Monday, shares in Tesla fell nearly 8% marking its largest one-day fall since late September. Based on estimates from Forbes,

this pushed his total wealth down to \$176.2 billion, compared to Bezos' \$182.1 billion fortune.

Despite Musk's wealth loss, he still stands more than \$20 billion above French luxury goods conglomerate LVMH CEO Bernard Arnault, the world's third-richest person according to Forbes.

As of Tuesday morning, Musk still tops Bloomberg's Billionaires Index, where he has \$194 billion compared to Bezos' \$183 billion. Its calculations take into account Musk losing \$15.6 billion from Monday to Tuesday, the report added.

## Youtube Suspends Trump Channel, Removes Video

### Agencies

Google-owned YouTube suspended Donald Trump's channel and removed a video for violating its policy against inciting violence – the latest sanction by the social media giant against the US president.

Online platforms and social media companies are distancing themselves from, and taking action against, those who encouraged or engaged in last week's deadly violence on the US Capitol by the president's supporters.

"In light of concerns about the ongoing potential for violence, we removed new content uploaded to Donald J Trump's channel for violating our policies," YouTube said in a statement.



The channel is now "temporarily prevented from uploading new content for a minimum of 7 days," it said.

The video-sharing platform also said it will be "indefinitely disabling comments" on Trump's channel because of safety concerns. The homepage of the Trump channel featured a month-old video of Trump casting doubt on the voting election process that logged some 5.8 million views. The free channel itself has 2.77 million subscribers.

Supporters of Trump stormed the

US Capitol on January 6, trying to halt the certification by Congress of President-elect Joe Biden's election win.

Trump, who has challenged the validity of Biden's victory without producing evidence, initially praised his supporters but later condemned the violence.

Politicians were forced to flee as the building was mobbed by protesters who overwhelmed security forces. Five people died in the violence, including one Capitol Police officer.

After the incident, Twitter and Facebook removed Trump's accounts and have been eliminating content supporting the assault, while Amazon.com suspended Parler – a social media platform favoured by many supporters of Trump – from its web-hosting service.

## Pakistan Court Jails Three For Vandalising Gurdwara Nankana Sahib

**LAHORE:** Pakistan's Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) on Tuesday sentenced up to two years imprisonment to three convicts involved in vandalizing Gurdwara Nankana Sahib in the country's Punjab province.

Gurdwara Nankana Sahib, also known as Gurdwara Janam Asthan, is a site near Lahore where the first Guru of Sikhs, Guru Nanak, was born.

In January 2020, a violent mob had attacked the Gurdwara and thrown stones and threatened to destroy the minorities worship place (Gurdwara Janamasthan) to build "Ghulam-e-Mustafa" shrine there. However,

police had controlled the situation.

"On Tuesday a Lahore's ATC handed down two years jail term to prime accused Imran Chishti and imposed a fine of 10,000 Pakistani Rupees. Two other accused – Muhammad Salman and Muhammad Ahmed – were convicted for six months. However, four other accused were acquitted for want of evidence," a court official told PTI.

All the suspects were present in the court when the sentence was announced. Strict security measures were taken to handle any protest by the religious elements in the wake of their conviction.







"I JUST REALLY HOPE IN A WHOLE WORLD SOCIETY, we can get over it and people can come to watch us play cricket, with players not going to work and not be worried about being abused or racially abused,"

# Introductory Ski Course For All-Girls Batch Begins At Gulmarg

Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** After two back to back boys batches, the Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir on Wednesday flagged off the first all-girls batch for introductory Ski Course at Gulmarg.

The all girls group was flagged off from TRC, Srinagar by Joint Director, Tourism Ms Tabassum Kamili towards Gulmarg, Deputy Director, Tourism Publicity / Recreation, Ideel Saleem, Deputy Director, Tourism Administration, Ms Nighat Alam, Tourist Officer, Recreation, Mudasir Mushtaq were also present.

This is the first girls group of 20 participants drawn from various districts of J&K. The girls group will undergo the 7- Day Introductory Ski Course at Gulmarg, during which the group will be introduced to the basics of Ski-



ing. All the lodging & boarding and the Ski equipment is being provided free of cost by the Tourism Department. A four member

Ski Instructors team is imparting Skiing training to these beginners. The Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir has drawn a weekly cal-

endar for imparting skiing training to as many as 6 groups this season. Among these 6 groups, two are exclusively meant for girls.

The first two batches with twenty boys in each group completed their Introductory Ski Course on 31 Dec, 2020 and 13 Jan, 2021. The boys expressed immense joy and thanked the Tourism Department for the unique learning and thrilling opportunity.

During the course of the Introductory Ski training, three of the best among the trainees in each of the six groups will be selected and sponsored by the Directorate of Tourism, Kashmir for Intermediate & Advance level courses.

Apart from the Tourism Department, hundreds of boys and girls are being imparted basic Ski training this season by the Youth Services & Sports Department. The Indian Institute of Skiing & Mountaineering has also started various Ski training courses at Gulmarg.

## 2-Day District Pencak Silat Championship Concludes In Srinagar



Agencies

**SRINAGAR:** The 2-day District Pencak Silat Championship organized by District Srinagar Pencak Silat Association under the banner of Pencak Silat Association of Jammu Kashmir today concluded at Indoor Sports Complex, Srinagar on Wednesday.

Sports officer central Nusrat Gazala was the chief guest on the occasion while Manager Mohammad Iqbal, Mr Yasir Ashai, Mr Javid Ashai, Moomin Bilal Kaboo, Shadab Mufti, Javed Ashai, Waris Mir were also present at the Indoor Stadium as the guests of honour.

Around 300 students from various Schools and clubs participated during the two day championship. The participants (both boys & girls) from the age category of 6 to 24 years participated in the event. "Players are very happy as

earlier the championships were affected due to Covid-19 pandemic and now the situation is better and the organizers have taken proper safety measures and followed proper rules during this championship," one of the participants said.

While talking to media, Ms. Gazala said that youth should be fit mentally as well as physically and they should take proper precautions during the activities as this pandemic is still existing. She thanked parents as they play an important role in supporting their children during this pandemic and are allowing them to take part in sports activity.

"The gold medalist will be selected for the upcoming state championship where around 16 districts will be participating," manager Iqbal said. The event concluded with a prize distribution ceremony where Mr. Irfan presented a vote of thanks.

## Angelo Mathews Returns To Sri Lanka Squad For Home Test Series Against England

Press Trust of India

**COLOMBO:** A fit-again Angelo Mathews was on Wednesday named in the 22-member Sri Lanka squad for the two-Test series against England, starting Thursday in Galle.

Former captain Mathews, 33, missed the South Africa tour because of a hamstring injury but is expected to be part of the playing eleven in the two Tests against England, which are a part of the

ICC World Test Championships.

The series is a resumption of the contest that was halted in March last year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Sri Lanka will be led by Dimuth Karunaratne and the squad was approved by the Minister of Youth and Sports Honorable Namal Rajapaksa, Sri Lanka Cricket said in a statement.

The second Test will be held from January 22 at the same venue. Both the matches will be held behind closed doors

because of the pandemic.

Squad: Dimuth Karunaratne (Captain), Kusal Janith Perera, Dinesh Chandimal, Kusal Mendis, Angelo Mathews, Oshada Fernando, Niroshan Dickwella, Minod Bhanuka, Lahiru Thirimanne, Lasith Embuldeniya, Wanindu Hasaranga, Dilruwan Perera, Suranga Lakmal, Lahiru Kumara, Vishwa Fernando, Dushmantha Chameera, Dasun Shanaka, Asitha Fernando, Roshen Silva, Lakshan Sandakan, Nuwan Pradeep, Ramesh Mendis.



## Harris Will Open If Injured Pucovski Doesn't Make It To Brisbane Test: Justin Langer



Press Trust of India

**BRISBANE:** Opener Will Pucovski has a partially dislocated shoulder and Marcus Harris would replace him if he fails to recover in time for the fourth and final Test against India here this week, Australia head coach Justin Langer said on Wednesday.

Pucovski suffered the injury during the Sydney Test, which was his debut in the longest format. The 22-year-old was injured while diving on the field. The fourth Test begins on January 15.

"Will had a sore shoulder before he fell, he was actually going to have a scan after that day's play anyway, just to see what was happening," Langer said at a virtual press conference.

"We will see how he pulls up today, we are really hopeful that he will get up and if he doesn't, then the obvious thing would be Marcus Harris would come in as an opener," he added.

Langer said he is quite optimistic about the batsman pulling through.

"Will is a young guy, he has just played his first Test. So mentally he's going to be exhausted anyway. We will keep an eye on how he pulls up today. With shoulders, as long as he can bat OK and catch, it's not as big a deal in Test cricket, we're really hopeful he will get up, we will probably know by tonight," Langer added.

Pucovski, who has suffered numerous concessions, made an impressive start to his Test career, scoring a half-century on debut.

Harris has so far played nine Test matches for Australia scoring 385 runs, including two fifties, with the highest score of 79.

The four-match series is tied at 1-1 currently with the hosts winning the pink-ball opener in Adelaide and India emerging triumphant in Melbourne. The third game in Sydney ended in a draw.

## Nathan Lyon Praises Mohammed Siraj For 'Calling Out Racist Abuse'



Press Trust of India

**BRISBANE:** Indian pacer Mohammed Siraj has set a new standard for calling out poor crowd behaviour, Australia's top off-spinner Nathan Lyon said on Wednesday, describing cricket as a sport for all with no room for racism or abuse of any form.

The Indian team had lodged an official complaint with the ICC after a group of spectators at the Sydney Cricket Ground racially abused pacers Jasprit Bumrah and Siraj on the third and fourth day of the third Test.

"There is no room for any racial sledges or any abuse in any type. People think they

are being funny, but it can affect people in different ways. For me, cricket is the sport for all and there is no room for it at all," Lyon said during a virtual press conference.

"If the time is right to call in match officials you do it. We have got a lot of security around the ground these days and if there is anyone doing it then they can be removed, as there is absolutely no place for it. It will set precedence to report issues to officials."

While fielding at the square-leg boundary, Siraj was allegedly called "monkey" and "brown dog" over two days by some spectators, who were removed by security guards

after the matter was reported to the on-field umpires.

"I think it's quite disgusting to be honest. Yes, I've been on the other end of it, coping abuse, whether that's England, New Zealand, South Africa or wherever it may be. But there's no room for it. As a player you've got to try your best to block it out," Lyon said.

He feels that players would now have the option of stopping play and call out their abusers in the stands.

"It will may do (set a precedence to report issues to officials). It will be up to that player and how they have been affected."

"I just really hope in a whole world society, we can get over it and people can come to watch us play cricket, with players not going to work and not be worried about being abused or racially abused," the country's experienced spinner said.

The Australian players had supported their Indian counterparts after the incidents with skipper Tim Paine even joining the visiting team huddle after Siraj's complaints on the fourth day of the drawn match.

The four-match series is currently tied 1-1 with the fourth Test scheduled to be held here from Friday.

**THERE IS NO ROOM FOR ANY RACIAL SLEDGES OR ANY abuse in any type. People think they are being funny, but it can affect people in different ways. For me, cricket is the sport for all and there is no room for it at all,"**

## Paul Pogba Volleys Man United To Top Of The PL Table

Press Trust of India

**NEW DELHI:** Paul Pogba sent Manchester United to the top of the Premier League by scoring with a deflected volley in a 1-0 win at Burnley. United came into the match at Turf Moor knowing at least a point would move the team into first place for the first time at this stage of the season since Alex Ferguson was in charge of the title-winning 2012-13 side.

Pogba met a cross from Marcus Rashford with a first-time effort from the edge of the box that deflected off Burnley defender Matt Lowton and through the legs of goalkeeper Nick Pope in the 71st. It gave United a three-point lead over Liverpool heading into their meeting at Anfield on Sunday.

The video assistant referee provided the main talking point of a tense opening period, with Burnley's last man, Robbie Brady, avoiding sanction for bringing down Edinson Cavani outside the area because of a foul by United left back Luke Shaw moments earlier at the end.

Shaw, who was booked for his hefty challenge on Johann Berg Gudmundsson, soon swung in a cross that Harry Maguire headed home from an acute angle, only for it to be ruled out for a push by Maguire on Erik Pieters as he climbed.

The United captain was fur-



ous that the decision was not reviewed. United controlled the second half and Pogba delivered in a rare clear-cut opening for United. United looked to add another, with James Tarkowski producing an important last-ditch challenge on Anthony Martial.

Josh Brownhill struck a shot wide for Burnley and substitute Matej Vydra saw an effort deflected into the side netting by Bailly as the hosts finally went on the attack, with the VAR checking a handball against Maguire in the box.

There was still a tense ending as Tarkowski miscued a shot and Martial wasted a later one-on-one opportunity to make it 2-0.

**UNITED LOOKED TO ADD ANOTHER, with James Tarkowski producing an important last-ditch challenge on Anthony Martial.**

### NEWS MAKERS

## 'Repeated COVID-19 Testing Behind Indian Shuttler's Nasal Bleeding,' Says BWF

Press Trust of India

**BANGKOK:** Badminton World Federation on Wednesday said it is working with Thailand Open organisers to ensure "comfortable" COVID-19 testing conditions during the tournament after Indian shuttler Kidambi Srikanth was left with a bloodied nose following a test.

Former world number one Srikanth on Tuesday got a bloodied nose after undergoing multiple COVID-19 tests and miffed at the poor treatment of health officials at Thailand Open, the Indian called it "unacceptable".

The (BWF) said the Badminton Association of Thailand explained the reasons behind the bleeding. "Kidambi Srikanth got a bloodied



nose after undergoing multiple COVID-19 tests. The athlete had been swabbed three times earlier with the most recent one possibly causing irritation and fragility of the capillaries," the BWF said in a statement.

"Therefore, when the swab was repeated on Tuesday, and factoring in the athlete's tense nature, the position of the stick in the nasal passage was misaligned, which caused the slight bleed-

ing noticed from the tip of the swab." The world body said Srikanth had no complaints at the time of testing. "The COVID-19 staff member did not notice any bleeding from the athlete's nose and there was no complaint from Kidambi at that point."

"After about three to five minutes, another athlete from the India team reported that Kidambi had a nose-bleed. "It is not known whether the athlete had blown his nose or stuck tissue up his nostrils which could have caused more blood vessels to rupture." The sport's world governing body added that it is working with the organisers "to ensure the safest and most comfortable conditions for all players and participants." Srikanth is scheduled to open his campaign against compatriot Sourabh Verma on Wednesday.

## Indian Golfer Lahiri Hopes To Welcome 2021 With A Good Start At Sony Open

Press Trust of India

**HAWAII:** Ace Indian golfer Anirban Lahiri would look to make a solid start to the year when he tees off at the Sony Open, the first full field event of 2021 on the PGA Tour, starting here on Thursday.

Returning to Hawaii for the fourth time, Lahiri, who has shown a liking for events on Island venues, will aim for a strong start as he begins a run of at least three tournaments in a row.

The Indian star arrives at the Waialae Country Club in Hawaii after a break at home following a series of decent results in the fall, which included his first top-10 finish on the PGA Tour in nearly two years.

In recent months, Lahiri has

done well on the Islands - he was T-6 at the Coralas Puntacana Resort and Club Championship in the Dominican Republic and T-11 in the Bermuda Championship.

So he will be hoping Hawaii and the Sony Open could bring in some more good news and results for him.

Lahiri is excited about the Sony Open and said, "The schedule so far is looking good. At the moment, I should get into the first four (events) starting with Sony Open, then the American Express and then Torrey Pines (Farmers Insurance Open), and hopefully (Waste Management Phoenix Open) Phoenix. Phoenix might be tough and go, but I think it's the same week as Saudi (on the European Tour) so I think I should get in."

His strong run towards the end of 2020 improved his rankings and that has translated into at least three or four straight weeks of action to start of the New Year.

"So yeah, I could actually continue playing but I think as of now, I'm planning on just playing the first four and let us see how it goes. I am feeling good with the game. And I would love to do well in Hawaii," Lahiri said.

It was a roller-coaster 2020 for Lahiri. First his form dipped and there were not enough tournaments, but the silver lining was that the status he had for 2020 was retained as per PGA Tour's decision.

"That was a big boost for many of us," he said.

A truncated 2020 saw him miss

four cuts in his first six starts before the Tour was halted in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Lahiri, who had come to India to play the Hero Indian Open in March 2020, was forced to stay on in the country as international flights were suspended.

"It was tough for my golf, but not all that bad, because I got to spend a lot of time with my family, which I normally don't get. Also I managed to get a lot of time with my coach, Vijay Divecha and work on my game and that helped," Lahiri said.

Lahiri returned to the US, but got only one more event before the 2019-20 season concluded. Then came the fall season and things turned for the better.