



Maximum : 19°C
Today 07:03 PM
Minimum : 11°C
Humidity : 62%
SUNSET
TOMORROW 05:58 AM

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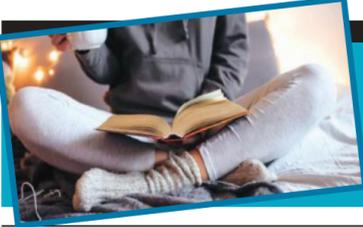
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.....LIFE & TIMES
P5



News Digest

3 Houses Gutted in Noorbagh Blaze

Srinagar: Three houses where six families were residing got completely damaged in a blaze at Noorbagh area of Safa Kadal on Wednesday. The three houses of Ghulam Muhammad Kaloo, Mushtaq Ahmed Dar, and Habibullah Wani got completely damaged in the fire incident. "Six families were residing in these houses," they said. They said that fire tenders reached the spot to douse the flames (KNO)

Govt Forces Attacked In Awantipora

Srinagar: Suspected militants opened fire on a patrolling party of government forces in south Kashmir on Wednesday, but there was no report of any casualty. The militants opened fire at the patrolling party at Barsoo in the Awantipora police district around 2.30 pm, a police official said, adding that no one was hurt in the incident. Soon after the attack, government forces cordoned off the area and launched a hunt for the attackers.

Bangladeshi National Arrested Along IB

Jammu: A Bangladeshi national was arrested by security forces along the International Border (IB) in Jammu and Kashmir's Samba district, officials said. He was apprehended in an area under the Narayanpur Border Out Post in the district, they said. The man was subjected to questioning about his presence in the border belt, the officials said, adding that he has been arrested. He has been identified as Sadiq Bulbul of Dhaka, they said.

Non-Local Labourer Found Dead

Srinagar: A non-local labourer was found dead in Qazigund area of south Kashmir's Kulgam district on Wednesday. The body was recovered by police today morning in Gassipora Wanpov village of the district, news agency GNS reported today. The deceased has been identified as Lalwa Sadhu son of Krishan Lal Sadhu of Bihar. Sadhu was working as a labourer in Gassipora Wanpov. Confirming it, a police official said that apparently Sadhu died due to cardiac arrest.

Mortar Shell Triggers Panic In Poonch

Jammu: Panic gripped a border town in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday after a live mortar shell was found, but it was defused by security forces, officials said. People found the mortar shell in Mendhar town, triggering panic, they said. The information was given to Army which defused it safely, thereby averting a major tragedy, the officials added.

Maulana Sa'ad Booked For Culpable Homicide



NEW DELHI- Tablighi Jamaat leader Maulana Sa'ad Kandhalvi has been booked for culpable homicide after some of the attendees of the religious congregation died due to coronavirus, police said on Wednesday. Kandhalvi had organised the religious gathering at Nizamuddin Markaz last month against the social distancing protocol imposed by the Centre to curb the spread of the deadly disease. **»PAGE 02**

Bandipora Milkman's Contact Tracing Starts

SRINAGAR: The administration in Bandipora district on Wednesday started door-to-door operation to trace contacts of a milkman, who tested positive for coronavirus on Tuesday. According to the reports, medical teams have started a major operation in Naidkhai area to trace the contacts, mostly females of a 35-year-old milkman who tested positive for coronavirus at the SKIMS hospital here. **»PAGE 02**

Siblings Flee From Quarantine Centre, Booked

SRINAGAR: Two brothers escaped from a quarantine centre in south Kashmir's Shopian district but were brought back to the facility and booked by the police, reports said Wednesday. The two brothers hailing from Malik-bugh village of Shopian fled from the quarantine centre on Tuesday. **»PAGE 02**

J&K Admin Rules Out Lockdown Relaxation

All Kashmir Districts In Red Zones, Cases May Spike: Div Com

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Wednesday ruled out relaxation in the lockdown extended till May 3, saying that a significant spike might be witnessed in coronavirus cases in the coming days due to aggressive testing. Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole told Kashmir Observer that all the districts in Kashmir have red zones and due to which stricter norms will remain in place and there will be no ease in lockdown restrictions. The restrictions, he said will remain stricter in red zones within the districts.



LOCALS DOUSING FLAMES RAGING FROM A RESIDENTIAL house in Noorbagh area of the city on Wednesday. Pic Abid Bhat

"First of all, the districts have to be categorized in red, grey and green zones. As of now, no district of the Valley falls in green zone. All the districts are in red zones," Pole said.

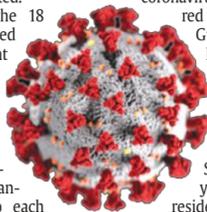
In Kashmir Valley, 76 hotspots for coronavirus have been found. Srinagar, the capital city is the most affected district in the Valley with 15 Red Zones and 73 cases of coronavirus till Wednesday. The red zone areas of city include, Chattabal, Eidgah, Ahmed Nagar, Lal Bazar, Hawal, Nowshera, Nishat, Khayam, Goripora, Hyderpora, Bemina, Jawahar Nagar, Nati-pora, Lasjan and Tengpora. Elaborating further, the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir said that red zones were those areas where restrictions will be tightened. **»PAGE 02**

J&K Crosses 300 Mark, 22 More Test Positive

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Coronavirus cases crossed 300 mark in Jammu and Kashmir as 22 more people, 18 among them in Valley including a minor tested Covid-19 positive on Wednesday, a day after lowest number of cases were reported from the Union Territory.

"22 new cases reported from J&K today. Jammu-4 Kashmir-18. All contacts of positive cases. Total number of positive cases now 300 Jammu-54 and Kashmir-246 from Jammu, reports said. The eight new cases from Ganderbal are contacts of a coronavirus patient from Guzhama village. They are four men and four females, including a minor girl. Here in Srinagar, a six-year-old girl, a resident of Vilgam Kupwara tested positive after coming in contact with a Covid-19 **»PAGE 02**



U RGE PEOPLE TO RELIGIOUSLY FOLLOW THE LOCKDOWN guidelines so that we don't have these red zones in the Valley," he said.

Of Withering Wait & Worry: Kashmir's Captive Chronicles

Omer Farooq

SRINAGAR: Since the outbreak of the global pandemic, Shameema from Sopore is continuously suffering from searing stress and high blood pressure. Behind her troubled state of mind and body is the growing concern for her son, Abdullah Bin Muhammad, who's languishing in Kotbalwal Jail, Jammu under the charges of Unlawful Activities Prevention Act. Shameema has already lost her son, Ibrahim Janwari, in a 2012 gunbattle with troops. And now, her main breadwinner's detention is taking a huge toll on her health. Her son was arrested in January 2019 and shifted to Kot Balwal, Jammu. Amid Covid-19 scare, Shameema is getting worried about the "unhygienic conditions" in the jail.

"My brother is suffering from a stomach ailment and chest disease from so many months now," said Ubaidullah, Shameema's youngest son. "As food quality and mandatory social distancing is not possible in a crowded lockup, my mother frets for her son's wellbeing." **A Sister's Stress** On July 13, 2019, Nazima's brother, Muhammad Huzaf Bhat, from the Sangrama area of North Kashmir, was slapped with stringent Public Safety Act (PSA) and shifted to Kotbalwal Jail, Jammu. "As no healthy food is served to Kashmiri captives, my brother has developed a skin problem in prison," said Nazima. "And since he's the youngest among siblings, our mother has developed an acute state of depression." Nazima's captive



Special Report

brother recently sent a word to her from his prison cell. "Everything is good," he told his sister. "But," Nazima said, "he feared that if anyone gets infected in prison, the virus will spread like a wildfire." **A Father's Fear** Muhammad Ramzan's son and the

family breadwinner, Imtiaz, is languishing in Sub Jail Kupwara under PSA since last year. The only son among five sisters, Imtiaz married an orphan girl in 2018. "Before imprisoned, he was nursing stomach and occasional fever problems," Ramzan, a resident of North Kashmir's Zainageer area, told Kashmir Observer. After the COVID-19 outbreak, the father got worried about "lack of medical facilities in jail". "Around 30 captives share a barrack," the father said. "And this makes the chances of spreading of the virus maximum." **A Daughter's Distress** Zafar Ul Islam, a 38-year-old preacher of a local mosque in Sopore continues to be under detention since the abrogation of Article 370. He was slapped with PSA and shifted to Agra where he **»PAGE 02**

A Reporter's Diary

Jyotsna Bharti

I live in one of the swish areas in Mumbai – the dream city now fighting to survive the Covid-19 crisis. Ever since the pandemic enforced a lockdown, the vibrant city with ivory towers and big enterprises looks lifeless. The mundane routine which we once knew has gone into hibernation. I'm told it's a long haul! Already 22 days have passed, since I've been locked in my apartment, watching the pervasive desolation hushing and haunting the city, which apparently never slept before. For a change, I hear birds chirping, while I stand near window sipping my hot chai expecting for a warm company from it. I watch out for hours at late nights. I see these long buildings standing just dead. Alarming ambulances rumbling on abandoned roads further surge the sense of siege. This is a new pulse of life, driven by a shortage of groceries, life resources, and sanitisers. What once was a promising living has now become a grim survival.

'I see Kashmir in Mumbai'



Author's window view from her Mumbai Apartment

This desolation drifts me to the faraway land where people are struggling to survive. I think about Kashmir, which I was planning to visit this spring, the season of tulips, the almond blossom and a promise of life after dead winter. As I watch the struggle from my window these days, I imagine myself a girl caught in curbs in mountains which Kashmiris call their home. Her daily struggle leaves me dazed, as I perceive myself a prisoner in my own home now. I think of these iron grills in my window as some prison partition, coming in the way of my liberty. Then I think of girls of my age in the valley, their aspirations, their dreams, their dreams. How does it feel to live such a life? Most of us didn't have any idea, until, as they say, chickens come home to roost. In this hopeless hour, I see Kashmir in Mumbai. I'm reminded of Appa's promise to visit Dal Lake this year. This was my major motivation, my big boost. But now, as life has taken an unexpected turn, I immersed in the beautiful thought of Kashmir's ecstasy, only to think of that landlocked region cursed with perennial lockdown. Behind the serene face, I see **»PAGE 02**

Ban On High Speed Internet In Kashmir Extended

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR- The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Wednesday ordered continuance of ban on the high speed internet across the Union Territory till April 27, despite growing chorus and sharp criticism by the human rights bodies amid the coronavirus pandemic. Principal Secretary, Home Department, Shaleen Kabra in an order issued today extended the ban on high speed internet across the Union Territory till April 27, reports said. Accord-

ing to the order, internet speed on mobile phones in the region will be restricted to 2G only. The order cites usage of social media applications for circulation of photographs of militants, mobilization of crowds, infiltration attempts by militants, civilian killings as some of the reasons to extend high speed internet ban. The order also refers to the funeral of a militant attended by 500 villagers "defying the lock-down and throwing social-distancing norms to the wind." As on date, it said, access to internet is available **»PAGE 02**



From Front page...

J&K Admin Rules...

while in green zones normal activities can be carried out.

"I urge people to religiously follow the lockdown guidelines so that we don't have these red zones in the Valley," he said.

Pertinently, the Ministry of Home Affairs today issued the updated set of guidelines on coronavirus lockdownasking the State and Union Territories not to dilute lockdown guidelines in any manner and instead impose stricter measures as per local requirements.

Divisional Commissioner Kashmir said that to facilitate rural and agriculture economy, a little relaxation might be given after April 20 strictly on case to case basis. "However, that will only be done when our performance improves and we move from red to grey and grey to green zones. Restrictions will be gradually eased," he said.

Pole further said that in coming days, the cases might rise because the administration was going for aggressive testing across the Valley. He said many asymptomatic cases also might come to fore.

"But this shouldn't panic or worry people. The situation is under control and we are ready to meet any challenge," he added.

J&K Crosses 300...

patient from Chattaball area. The minor is temporarily putting up in Nawa Kadal area of the Old City. Two other cases from this capital city are a mother-daughter duo.

In Bandipora's Gund Jahangir village, three more people tested positive. Two men and a woman are said to be contacts of previous Covid-19 patients.

Two youth from Muqami Shahwali village of Kupwara are among those who were reported positive today. Both of them have contracted the dreaded disease from Covid-19 patient, reports said.

A man with travel history to Nizamuddin New Delhi was among two people who tested positive to coronavirus in Baramulla district. Both of them are residents of Sopore.

Two doctors —one from ASCOMS Sidhra and one Post Graduate (PG) from Medicines Department of the Government Medical College (GMC) Jammu were among four people who tested positive to Covid-19.

Meanwhile, the government in the daily media bulletin issued today said out of 300 positive cases, 260 are active, 36 have recovered and 4 have died.

The bulletin said that till date 56595 travellers and persons in contact with suspected cases have been put under surveillance, including 7784 persons in home quarantine, 270 in hospital quarantine, 260 in hospital isolation and 30228 under home surveillance.

"Besides, 18049 persons have completed their surveillance period of 28 days. Moreover, 6 more COVID-19 patients have recovered and were discharged today," the bulletin said.

It added that 4871 samples have tested as negative till April 15, 2020.

Of Withering Wait

continues to be imprisoned till now.

Zafar's old and ailing parents, four daughters and two sons await his homecoming, as many PSA detainees were lately set free.

"We last met him in November 2019," said Muskan Jan, the detainee's eldest daughter studying in Class 8.

"Since then, we don't know anything about him. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, the entire family is worried about his health. We want our father back home. He should be immediately released on humanitarian grounds."

A Son's Sorrow

The pandemic has increased the restlessness of Ahmed Bin Qasim, son of Dr. Ashiq Hussain Faktoo, serving life imprisonment in Udhampur Jail and of Asiya Andrabi, currently lodged in Tihar Jail.

"Healthcare system is very mediocre, insufficient and terrible in jails," Ahmed said.

"My parents and other prisoners suffer from the frail immune system. In case they contract it [Covid-19], I'm not sure if they may overcome!"

Asiya suffers from multiple ailments which include bronchitis, asthma, while Dr. Qasim battles glaucoma.

To be honest, Ahmed said, there is little you can expect.

"I've lived it," the son said. "My father should have been released after 14 years even if he had committed a crime they accuse him of. They bent laws in order to prolong his detention."

A Wife's Woe

Shabir Ahmed Wani, a 38-year-old contractual computer operator in Govt. Degree College Sogam is lodged in Lucknow Jail under PSA. He was detained on August 3, 2019, and subsequently slapped with PSA.

"He had no involvement of whatsoever. No FIR was against him," said Wani's ailing wife. "We got surprised when we were handed a dossier."

His dossier mentions that he "might incite trouble in his area".

Wani has a small family including his parents, wife and children.

"He has disc problem, while his mother is diabetic," said Wani's wife, who undergoes dialysis.

"He should be with us, in this terrible time, as he has done nothing wrong to deserve that dungeon."

A Sibling's Struggle

On August 4, 2019, Er Rashid, former MLA Langate and chief of Awami Ittehad Party, was summoned by National Investigation Agency (NIA). Since then, he's under trail.

"He's a patient, suffers from chest disease," said Khurshid Ahmed, brother of Er Rashid.

"Last time, when I met him in the court, I gave him medicines prescribed by his doctors, but because of jail rules, he couldn't take them."

Now, due to lockdown, Khurshid said, the family is not able to send him monthly expenditure.

"There's no facility to transfer money to him because of the lockdown," the sibling continued.

The situation is very tough for Rashid and others in jail due to congestion, Khurshid said.

"During night he's kept with 5 to 6 people in a lockup of 10*12 ft," the sibling said.

"It was safe, if political detainees were kept separate but they're kept with criminals. Then, there're employees who frequent their cell. So what is the guarantee?"

A Doctor's Take

A doctor who happened to visit a sub-jail, a couple of months ago, with a team to examine prisoners, told Kashmir Observer that if somehow the novel coronavirus enters the jail premises, it would prove to be a "bomb because of overcrowding".

"Furthermore due to lack of nutritious food and psychological stress, most of them [captives] have developed a weak immune system which makes them vulnerable," he said.

A Judicial Intervention

Keeping the global health crisis in view, the recent Supreme Court order states that the state/ union territory could consider the release of prisoners who have been convicted or are under trial for offenses for which prescribed punishment is up to seven years or less, "with or without fine and the prisoner has been convicted for a lesser number of years than the maximum".

An Advocate's Argument

While reflecting on the SC order, advocate Shafiqat Nazir said the high powered committee established on the orders of Supreme Court of India has issued guidelines of the release of a class of prisoners which seems not in congruence with the guidelines of the Supreme Court.

"We have people detained under PSA on the basis of apprehension," advocate Nazir told Kashmir Observer. "The apex court says to release convicts on parole or bail, and government says we won't release them."

In order, he continued, the government guidelines say no one among militancy-related would be released.

"However, SC had issued no such direction," Nazir said. "Secondly, they excluded people under preventive detentions. People held under sec 107 are to be released."

This is a sad state of affairs, the advocate argued, that convicted people are to be released and not those under preventive detentions, as if the virus won't affect the latter.

"They are making a class within the class which is not permissible under law," he added.

An Academic View

Since the world has not faced the current situation before, therefore nowhere in international law are there specific guidelines related to prisoners under pandemic, said Dr. Sheikh Showkat Hussain, an expert on International Law.

"But yes, there're guidelines as per Geneva Conventions which include they [prisoners] should be kept in a hygienic atmosphere," the law professor said.

"A prisoner or detainee does not lose a basic human right to life. Any act by which his life is put to risk should not be justified."

However, as a result of the near-collapse of the current world order, as argued by Ibrahim Kalin, a special adviser to the President of Turkey, globalization as we know will change in substantial ways.

When asked if the world community would now sit and frame guidelines for prisoners under pandemic, Dr. Hussain told Kashmir Observer, "Maybe, but right now, the situation is chaotic, which has not left the current world-order affected and disturbed. This is the anarchic chaotic situation now."

An Activist's Advocacy

Zahoor Wani, a human rights defender working with Amnesty International, said the high-powered committee established on the recent Indian apex court order has excluded preventive detentions.

"But the problem in Kashmir is that most of its cases are preventive and militancy-related ones," Wani told Kashmir Observer.

And since militancy-related cases are a matter of national security, the rights activist said, they're very difficult to get released.

"In PSA, you've to approach courts which are dysfunctional at the moment, but if government wishes, it can simply revoke the cases, but that is not happening," Wani said.

A Watchdog Report

Amnesty International India, where Zahoor Wani works as rights activist, recently released a press statement under the title, 'India Covid-19 Response: Government Must Refrain From Abuse Of Power And Immediately Release All Arbitrarily Detained In J&K'.

As per the statement, 1249 people have been administratively detained i.e. without any charge or trial by the authorities.

At least 251 prisoners were shifted to out of Jammu and Kashmir out of which 23 suffered from a health ailment.

An Official Record

As per the Jammu and Kashmir Department of Prisons, "At present, there are 14 functional prisons which include 2 central jails, 9 district jail, 1 special jail, and 2 sub-jails."

In its official website, the department mentions, "Against a lodgement capacity of 2830 inmates, the department is accommodating more than 3600 inmates."

A State's Response

In a move to decongest various jails across J&K amid COVID-19 scare, the authorities lately decided to release 65 prisoners from jails.

Among the liberated prisoners, 22 were facing the stringent Public Safety Act (PSA).

Director General Prisons (DGP) informed the division bench of J&K High Court about this decision through a written report.

The bench comprised of Justice Gita Mittal and Justice Rajesh Oswal was hearing a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) through video conferencing regarding the spread of Covid-19.

The DGP informed the court that 22 Public Safety Act detainees, 32 undertrials, nine under trial prisoners falling under section 107,109,151 of the CrPC have been released.

The sanction for parole has been granted to 19 other prisoners. Two prisoners are already on parole.

But while the news has finally brought some smiles to the families of these prisoners, many others continue to wither in wait and worry for their captive wards' safety in the pandemic.

Maulana Sa'ad...

An FIR was registered against the cleric on March 31 at Crime Branch police station on a complaint of the Station House Officer of Nizamuddin.

He was earlier booked for holding the event, police said.

After several attendees of the Tablighi Jamaat event succumbed to coronavirus, we added IPC section 304 (culpable homicide not amounting to murder) in the FIR against the leader, a police official said.

Some foreigners who attended the event have also been booked for violation of visa norms.

In an audio message, Kandhalvi had said that he was exercising self-quarantine after several hundreds who visited the Tablighi Jamaat congregation at Nizamuddin Markaz tested positive for coronavirus.

The FIR registered against the Tablighi Jamaat event says that the Delhi Police contacted the authorities of Nizamuddin Markaz on March 21 and reminded them of the government order which prohibited any political or religious gathering of more than 50 people.

It says that despite repeated efforts, the event organisers failed to inform the health department or any other government agency about the huge gathering inside the Markaz and deliberately disobeyed government orders.

The sub district magistrate of Defence Colony inspected the premises several times and found that around 1,300 people, including foreign nationals, were residing there without maintaining social distance. It was also found that there were no arrangements of hand sanitizers and face masks, the FIR adds.

The Nizamuddin centre, attended by thousands, turned out to be a hotspot for spread of coronavirus not only in the national capital, but the entire country.

More than 25,500 Tablighi members and their contacts have been quarantined in the country after the Centre and the state governments conducted a "mega operation" to identify them.

At least 9,000 people participated in the religious congregation in Nizamuddin. Later, many of the attendees travelled to various parts of the country.

Bandipora Milkman

The officials believe that many women may have come into contact with this milkman and may have contracted the infection.

Bandipora district has recorded 53 cases, 26 from Gund Jahangir hamlet.

Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Shabbaz Mirza said that contacts will be traced, quarantined and tested. He said that milkman who was tested positive, had come into contact with an already Covid-19 patient.

"The situation is under control and there are no reports of community transmission of this lethal virus," news agency KNT quoted him as saying.

Meanwhile, the administration in south Kashmir's Anantnag district have put the owner of a bakery shop

Siblings Flee From

evening prompting police to intervene, news agency KNT reported quoting unnamed officials. Both of them were brought to the quarantine centre after police found them present in their home.

Both these brothers having travel history were lodged at a Guest House, the report added.

Officials said that despite knowing that the coronavirus is a dreaded disease, they negligently and deliberately left the quarantine centre increasing the risk of spreading the infection.

"A case has been registered against them," they added.

New Guidelines ...

Services provided by self-employed electrician, IT repairs, plumbers, motor mechanics, carpenters to allowed from April 20, according to the fresh order.

However, the exemptions given from April 20 will not be applicable in COVID-19 hotspots/ containment zones and the State/ UT governments shall not dilute guidelines in any manner but may impose stricter measures as per local requirements.

According to the MHA order, all international, domestic flights shall remain suspended till May 3. All train services will also remain suspended during the lockdown period.

"All social, political, sports, religious functions, religious places, places of worship shall be closed for public till May 3," the MHA order reads.

It adds that gatherings of funerals and marriages will be monitored and regulated by the District Magistrate.

Educational institutions, coaching centres, domestic, international air travel, train services will also remain suspended till this time, it said.

Public places like cinema halls, malls, shopping complexes, gymnasiums, sports complexes, swimming pools, bars will also be shut till May 3.

Highway 'dhaba', truck repairing shops, call centres for govt activities to remain open from April 20: Shops of agriculture machinery, its spare parts, its supply chain, repairs, 'Custom Hiring Centres, related to farm machinery to remain open from April 20.

Spitting in public has been made a punishable offence and a strict ban enforced on sale of liquor, gutka and other tobacco products.

From April 20 activities permitted include agricultural, horticultural activities, farmers and farm workers in field, procurement of agri products, 'Mandis'.

The home ministry said permitted industries must make arrangements for stay of workers within their premises or adjacent buildings by observing social distancing norms.

The home ministry said defence, paramilitary, health and family welfare, disaster management, NIC, FCI, NCC, Nehru Yuva Kendra and Customs offices will function without any restriction.

Other ministries and departments are to function with "100 per cent attendance" with deputy secretary and above rank officers.

"Remaining officers and staff to attend up to

33 per cent as per requirement," it said.

The guidelines said in order to mitigate hardship to the public, select additional activities will be allowed, which will come into effect from April 20.

"However, these additional activities will be operationalised by states and UTs and district administrators based on strict compliance to the existing guidelines on lockdown measures," it said.

The nation-wide lockdown is aimed to contain the spread of the pandemic that has killed over 370 people and infected over 11,000 in the country.

Containment Zones

at several other places to check the unwanted movement of the people and to enforce the lockdown.

Only persons with valid passes are allowed to move, they added.

In the declared containment or red zones across the valley, the restrictions have been intensified as authorities have sealed those zones to ensure strict adherence to the standard operating procedure and warned of strict action against anyone who violated the prohibitory orders, the officials said.

"While all entry-exit points of areas declared as containment zones have been sealed, at least half of these points in each one of these areas have been sealed with removable barriers, enabling access into and out of them as and when required," they said.

The local mohalla committees of all such areas have been reached out to and are onboard the administration's efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19, the officials said.

The administration has put in place an elaborate and a comprehensive mechanism to ensure all requirements and needs of the residents are covered for as long as these areas remain under restrictions, they said.

Markets across the valley were shut and public transport was off the roads with only pharmacies and groceries allowed to open, the officials said.

LG Orders Easing

directed to strictly observe the protocols like social distancing for labourers etc, working in these kilns, Additional Secretary to Lt Governor, Rakesh Magotra said in a letter to Jammu divisional commissioner.

He said since the Centre has extended the lockdown up to May 3, the administration has to ensure hassle-free supply and distribution of commodities of daily need to the public at large.

The letter said timings for opening of shops selling essential commodities will be increased to avoid overcrowding, while goods stored by dry fruit sellers in their shops or godowns may be allowed to be transported to cold storages in a systematic and staggered manner.

Load carriers are allowed to enter the city premises during the lockdown before 9 pm to unload essential commodities. A plan is devised for opening of business entities engaged in non-essential items like mobiles, books etc in a staggered manner, fixing days in a week during which certain trades shall be allowed to open, the letter read.

Magotra asserted that standard operating procedures be devised for strict compliance by these traders.

Interacting with traders and representatives of various associations at Raj Bhavan here on Tuesday, the Lt Governor said a committee has been constituted for resumption of commercial and industrial activities in a controlled manner.

The Lt Governor was informed that around 50,000 labourers working in brick kilns across Jammu were left stranded due to the lockdown, with a request to allow the operations of these kiln units.

Later in an order, the General Administration Department (GAD) said sanction has been accorded to the constitution of an eight-member task force for restoring economic activities and employment process in the Union Territory.

The terms of the reference of the task force include developing a strategy or action plan for restoring normal economic activities in all sectors in the Union Territory and to develop a package for assistance to industry, agriculture, horticulture, animal husbandry sectors to ensure their normal functioning, the order issued by Additional Secretary Rohit Sharma said.

It said the task force will also finalise a time-bound plan for recruitment to government job vacancies at different levels along with the process to be followed for early recruitment, keeping in mind the fiscal balance and monitoring the recruitment process.

The order said the task force would submit the recommendations on the recruitment and action plan by May 15 and May 30, respectively.

Meanwhile, 29 senior officers, including 23 Indian Administrative Service (IAS) and five Kashmir Administrative Service (KAS) officers, have been assigned the task related to COVID-19 management in addition to their duties.

Financial Commissioner (Health & Medical Education department) Atal Dulloo would be the overall in-charge of Union Territory Coordination - COVID-19 response effort.

while Financial Commissioner (Finance department) Arun Kumar Mehta has been designated as nodal officer for coordination with banks and maintaining smooth flow of funds to the public and to relief efforts; and monitor implementation of Prime Minister Garib Kalyan Yojana, a separate order issued by the GAD said.

Principal Secretary (home) Shaleen Kabra, Principal Secretary (school education department) Asgar Hassan Samoon and secretary (higher education department) were appointed as nodal officers for mobilisation of volunteers, training, deployment (as and when required) for assistance to the administration in COVID-19 management.

Principal Secretary (housing and urban development department) Dheeraj Gupta was appointed as nodal officer for coordination with urban local bodies (including their elected representatives) for COVID-19 management activities, the order said.

Such activities include sanitation drives, fumigation and to assist health department in devising administrative mechanism for planning,

conduct and supervision of door-to-door survey in Jammu and Srinagar cities to ascertain the spread of COVID-19, the order added.

Scamster Mushtaq

applicant/apPELLANT (peer) to avail the remedy by approaching the High Powered Committee. In the event, applicant approaches the High Powered Committee, it shall consider and decide the application of applicant in accordance with the scheme/ guidelines, laying down the categories for release of prisoners given the spread of COVID 19," a bench of Justice Tashi Rabstan had said last week.

In April 2018, a special anti-corruption court sentenced Peer to a total of 16 years of rigorous imprisonment for his involvement in the 2012 Common Entrance Test (CET) scam.

The court had also imposed a fine of Rs 1 crore on Peer and Rs 50 lakh on another accused, Sajad Ahmad Bhat, who was acting as a broker in the scam. The court had sentenced Peer to seven years of rigorous imprisonment under section 420 of the Ranbir Penal Code (RPC), five years of imprisonment under section 5 of the Prevention of Corruption Act, three years of imprisonment under section 409 of the RPC and one year of imprisonment under section 120B of the RPC. It has ordered that all the sentences would run "consecutively".

The court had convicted 43 accused, including Peer, in the case, while it acquitted seven others.

In its 382-page order, the court had said, "Mushtaq Peer, being at the helm of affairs as chairman of the board, occupied the top position, which he had abused to the fullest by orchestrating the criminal conspiracy for putting on sale the question papers, the secrecy of which he was under obligation to maintain.

"This dastardly crime is his brainchild and it would not have been possible for others to have even a glimpse of the question papers had he not defied the state..."

It had observed that scams like these contributed to the large-scale brain drain from the state and other law-and-order problems and said, "Therefore, this accused deserves no leniency at all."

Peer was arrested on November 23, 2014, by the Crime Branch. During the investigation, it had come to light that Peer, in connivance with the other accused, had sold the CET 2012 examination papers, along with the answer keys, to some candidates for Rs 60 lakh. (GNS)

'I see Kashmir ...

the searing struggle for life.

It's the place where lies the dystopian world. Post-abrogation of its semiautonomous status last summer, Kashmiris find themselves in a drawn-out lockdown. The curbs initially came with cable TV suspension, internet blockade and communication clampdown.

And as the Curfewed Kashmir became information blackhole, people outside found it difficult to contact with their loved ones in their haunted homeland.

For months, they had no idea, if their kin were alive or dead!

Is it still beautiful to you? Because that's how the life of a Kashmiri looks like!

While the entire country has the privilege of entertaining themselves by the various medium of communications, Kashmir is still suffering from the last summer's high-speed internet kill switch.

Despite repeated pleas, even pitched by those who served the Indian cause in Kashmir, the valley is still grappling with slow-internet.

Medics doubling as Covid-19 combatants, students given mass promotion and working class anxious of their jobs are now waiting for the Indian apex court's direction on the restoration of 4G internet in Kashmir.

Denial of these basic human rights has only deepened the gulf on ground. With the result, the childhood at the most beautiful place isn't beautiful at all; it's full of terror and scar.

Clearly, people in Kashmir are in pain.

And to overcome the bludgeoning anxiety, they've been suggested to revive traditional 'Daraev kin Darbar', wherein people would talk through windows to maintain sanity in the state. This comes when the social spaces are already under curbs.

We all listen to whatever our national media shows it to us. But have we ever tried to hear any Kashmiri about their plight of living?

The place known for its rich culture and dazzling countenance has now turned into deserted land filled with barricades and concertina wires. And as the witness of daily brutality and violence, people in 'paradise' are suffocating today.

Is this what "our integral part" deserve? Are we still going to crib about our national lockdown?

Jyotsna Bharti is an intern with Kashmir Observer. She has previously worked with Republic TV.

Ban On High ...

through fixed line without any speed restrictions. However, in respect of mobile internet, speed has been restricted to 2G.

"While these restrictions have not posed any hindrance to COVID-19 control measures, they have reduced incidents of misuse of social media by way of uploading and circulation of provocative audio/video content, fake news, rumour mongering, coordination of militant activities and other such acts that rely upon high speed mobile connectivity," reads the order.

"Upon consideration of the available inputs, and taking note of 'misuse' of social media applications in militant activities as also in adversely impacting public order, it is apparent that there is need for continuation of the speed restrictions on mobile internet services," the order adds.

174 Dedicated Beds For COVID-19 Cases At SKIMS Bemina

'Hospital admitting coronavirus positive patients for secondary level care referred from various centres'

SRINAGAR: Principal, SKIMS Medical College, Bemina, Prof. (Dr.) Reyaz Ahmad Untoo today said that SKIMS Medical College and Hospital, Bemina which is designated as COVID-19 hospital has 150 dedicated beds for Isolation wards along with 20 beds in high dependence unit and 04 beds in ICU. The Principal said that with all the arrangements in place, the hospital has been able to handle COVID-19 cases successfully and the administration is always working to further improve the facilities. While giving details of the procedure for handling COVID-19 cases, the Principal said that the designated Rapid Response Teams (RRT) receives the patient along with full information from the referral centres. The Medical Superintendent of the Hospital coordinates all activities within the Hospital after receiving the

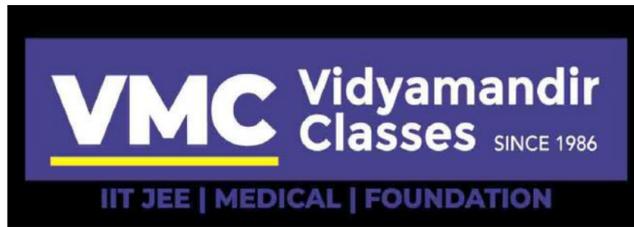
patient. He said that a roster for consultants, senior residents, junior residents, postgraduates and Paramedical staff ensures that any emergency related to COVID-19 is professionally taken care of. The hospital has issued contact numbers for referral, so that all arrangements for the reception of the patient and further management are put into full gear, beforehand. The Principal said that the radio-diagnosis department has kept the facilities like portable X-rays, portable ultrasounds and ECG Machines near the wards and CT Scan has been covered properly with protective covering for use in case of COVID-19 patients. To tackle any Obstetric emergency in a COVID-19 pregnant patient, the Department of Obstetrics has placed staff round the clock in OT, he further added. The Principal said that the Hospital is admitting COVID-19 posi-



tive patients for secondary level care referred from various centres. "At present some patients in early respiratory distress stand admitted and may need ventilator support as and when decided by the COVID-19 management team treating the patient. Adequate arrangements are in place for any type of medical need," he said. Regarding the medical supplies and other facilities, the Principal said the District Administration has helped in providing some PPE Kits besides accommodation in two Hotels wherein faculty and resident doctor staff has been placed as per roster duties. In addition to this, 40 rooms, 20 each in boys and Girls Hostels have been

put into use for staff on duty. The patients are provided hygienic free food by the diet Section of the Hospital. The Medical Supplies Corporation is also providing PPE Kits, N95 Masks, Sanitisers etc., he said. The Principal said that the SKIMS Medical College was also actively participating in the screening of passengers arriving at Srinagar Airport till 22nd of March and has screened thousands of patients in coordination with Directorate of Health Services Kashmir and Airport Authority of India. He said that two dedicated ambulances have been kept for any emergency related to COVID-19 patients. Besides this, the hospital has five more ambulances available and some being used by the Department of Community Medicine in awareness programmes in the catchment areas and the attached Rural Block (Soibugh).

Vidyamandir Classes to organize NAT across nation for NEET and IIT/JEE aspirants



NEW DELHI: Vidyamandir Classes are set to organize National Admission Test on 18th April across the nation through online medium due to the ongoing pandemic of Covid-19. This exam will be conducted digitally for the safety of students and to address the accessibility issue. The last date for the registration of the NAT exam will be 17th April, 2020. NAT is a qualifying test conducted by VMC for its foundation programs which is available in both classroom and online format. This exam is especially designed for IIT/JEE and NEET aspirants who want to be a part of the top engineering and medical colleges and want to pursue courses in these streams. By scoring top grades in this exam meritorious students can get an opportunity to get 100 percent scholarship for other study programs at VMC. This exam is also a check for the students to understand their current potential and on the basis of marks obtained in NAT, students can comprehend their academic intellect. Since the past 33 years VMC has a proven track record of success in national competitive exams. Speaking on this occasion, Vishnu Dutt Sharma, CEO, Vidyamandir Classes

added, "Due to the current COVID 19 pandemic situation, on 2nd and 3rd April we conducted NAT through our online portal for the first time and we had an overwhelming response with the highest ever attendance rate. The Online NAT has truly turned out to be a huge success for VMC. As there is no major change in the current scenario, we are again conducting NAT test through the digital medium. This eligibility test is a golden opportunity for students to fully comprehend their ability to appear for IIT/JEE and NEET. It is an opportunity for the aspirants to kick start the preparation under the guidance of exceptional faculty members who are known in the industry and are teachers from premium engineering and medical colleges. Our unique study material churns out academic excellence in students and confidence in them to score higher marks in competitive exams. Above all, by attending NAT, students are taking a step ahead towards success in national level competitive exams." The registration fee for the exam is Rs.99/- . The students can visit the website www.vidyamandir.com for more information on NAT.

KPC initiates a fund for members in the fraternity who may be in dire need

SRINAGAR: As the coronavirus outbreak is ripping apart economies and shattering the businesses, the media industry is also not immune to its ill effects. Some of our fraternity members may be in dire financial need during the ongoing crisis. As such, Kashmir Press Club (KPC) is raising a fund for this purpose (Bank details below). We will try to help our associates with an amount for basic sustenance. As a first step KPC management has decided to dedicate Rs 1 Lakh from its account for this welfare fund. We are also raising an appeal for donations within the journalist community of Kashmir to help build this as a corpus fund to deal with this situation. You can donate even an amount as small as Rs 100 to this cause. This fund would be at the disposal of all the journalists of Kashmir, irrespective of fact that whether he is a KPC member or not. However, before disbursal, the KPC management committee would be well within its rights to scrutinize the requests and before taking a final call. As a basic rule, only those

KASHMIR PRESS CLUB
ایران صحافت

949B, POLO VIEW, SRINAGAR

BANK DETAILS:
 Account Name: Kashmiri Press Club Welfare Fund
 Account No: SB/1112040100003880
 IFSC Code: JAKA0POLOWW
 MICR Code: 190051050
 Bank Name: J&K Bank (Polo View), Srinagar J&K

(Rs. 3000/month during pandemic period) would be a kind of sustenance kit. But before the amount is disbursed to non-member journalists, two bonafide members of the KPC should recommend his/her name. No names will be shared to maintain confidentiality and uphold the dignity of our brethren in need. You can either directly contact management committee including President Shuja-ul-Haq, Vice-President Moazum

Distribution of vegetable saplings kicks start at Lalmandi

SRINAGAR: To promote cultivation of vegetables by people in their kitchen gardens for improved food security and physical activity, the department of Agriculture today kick started distribution of various vegetable saplings including hybrid tomato, saag (Khanyari), bottle gourd, cucumber among the growers and kitchen garden lovers at Lalmandi under the campaign "AAYEIN SABZI UGAYEIN". Director, Agriculture Kashmir, Altaf Aijaz Andrabi, said that the main aim of distribution of saplings is to promote Kitchen Garden activities in both rural and urban areas of Kashmir division. The campaign is aimed at ensuring maximum reach out to the growers who could use their spaces and enjoy healthy supply of vegetables in these extra-ordinary circumstances. Andrabi impressed upon the officers of the department to promote the kitchen gardening in such a way that growers get



more and more benefits from the scheme. He added that vegetable production not only contributes to the daily consumption of population, but it can be adopted for commercial purpose as well. He said vegetable cultivation has a good potential of employment generation. On the occasion, Director Agriculture said that the Department is committed to promote the Kitchen Garden Scheme and aims at providing quality vegetable saplings to the growers besides fulfilling domestic requirement to create surplus vegetables which could be transported to National as well as International market for resource generation. During the distribution of vegetable saplings necessary guidelines issued by various organizations regarding Covid-19 (Social Distancing) were followed in letter and spirit. Among others Joint Director Agriculture, (Extension/Inputs), Chowdhary Mohammad Iqbal, Seed Production Officer, Manzoor Ahmad Lone, In-charge, Kitchen Garden Altaf Ahmad and other concerned officers of the department were also present.

Dy Mayor visits Dastgeer sahib, Naqshband sahib shrines to oversee sanitization works

SRINAGAR: To oversee the sanitization works being carried out by Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) in Khanyar and Rainawari areas, the Deputy Mayor, Parvaiz Ahmed Qadri along with the SMC's special team of field functionaries in full protective gear and equipped with specialized machines visited Khanyar and Rainawari areas of the city today. The team sanitized Dastgeer Sahib Shrine in Khanyar, Naqshband Sahib Shrine in Nowhatta, Jawahar Lal Nehru Memorial hospital in Rainawari, Gousia hospital in Khanyar and other public places in the surrounding areas. On the occasion, sanitization chemical mixture was sprayed in the premises of shrines and hospitals and its adjacent areas. The sanitization works was supervised by the Deputy Mayor who was accompanied by concerned Corporators and Ward Officer. On the occasion, the Deputy Mayor informed that extensive sanitization



drive is being carried out in Srinagar to break the chain of transmission of COVID 19.

People living in red zone areas in Bandipora complain about shortage of essentials

Agencies
BANDIPORA: People living in red zone areas of district Bandipora have complained about the shortage of essential items including medicines and food even as the administration has made tall claims about providing essentials to people living in these areas. Locals said that they have been left at God's mercy as there is no help from the authorities after their village was declared as red zone. "Life is becoming hell here with each passing day as the authorities have not been able to provide essential items including medicines," they said. They alleged that no one

comes to their village without doctors' team nor is anyone picking up their phone calls from the administration. "The supply of medicines, milk and food has dried up after their area was declared as red-zone. We are facing acute shortage of essentials despite tall claims made by the administration. Even the helpline numbers are a hoax as nobody responds to repeated calls," the locals alleged. They said that even their neighbouring villages do not allow them to enter their villages for the fear of contracting the virus. "I am a labourer and there is nothing to do when the whole country is under lockdown due to this deadly virus.



We are vulnerable and can catch the virus if we go to work," said a local from Gund-Jahengeer.

A senior official of the district claimed that they have been providing all the essential items including medicines to the people living in red zone areas of the district. "We have also been tracing the contacts of positive patients in these areas to ensure the spread of virus is contained and more lives are saved," he said. Authorities have declared 12 villages as red zones in the district after 56 positive cases were reported from these areas. The areas include Konan, Gund-Qaiser, Gund-Dachina, Hakbara, Parrey Mohalla, Madwan, Pethkoot, Chandergair, Batagund, SK Bala, Gund-Jahengeer and Naidkhai.

FCS&CA Kashmir appeals public not to pay extra for rice, flour

SRINAGAR: The Department of Food Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs (FCS&CA) Kashmir today appealed consumers not to pay anything extra for the items bought from Ration Ghats or Fair Price shops. According to FCS&CA, the price of Rice under NFSA is Rs 3/Kg for AAY and PHH categories and Rs 15/kg for NPHH category. Likewise, Rs 15 for J&KFES and Rs 23/kg for OMSS categories. Similarly, the price of Wheat Flour (Atta) is Rs 3/Kg for AAY and PHH, and Rs 13/kg for NPHH consumers under NFSA.

DIAL-EMMA

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

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

This Day in History

- 1799 -- Napoleonic Wars: The Battle of Mount Tabor - Napoleon drives Ottoman Turks across the River Jordan near Acre.
- 1865 - Battle of Columbus & West Point, GA (Ft Tyler)
- 1913 - The Bulgarians and the Turks agree to an armistice that will be accepted by the other nations involved
- 1917 - Lenin arrives back from exile in Russia at Finland Station, Petrograd to join the Russian Revolution
- 1921 - Liberal Freedom League forms in The Hague
- 1922 - German-Russian treaty signed in Italy, Soviet Union recognized
- 1922 - Rapallo Agreement, between Germany and Russia, is signed
- 1939 - Stalin requests British, French & Russian anti-nazi pact
- 1943 - 40 NZ bombers attack Haarlem, Netherlands (85 killed)
- 1945 - Red Army begins Battle of Berlin
- 1945 - US troops enter Nuremberg, Germany
- 1946 - 1st US launch of captured V-2 rocket, White Sands, NM; 8 km alt
- 1953 - British royal yacht Britannia launched by Queen Elizabeth II
- 1957 - USSR performs atmospheric nuclear test
- 1972 - Two giant pandas arrive in US from China
- 1972 - Apollo 16 launched; 5th manned lunar landing (Decartes Highlands)
- 1974 - USSR performs nuclear test at Eastern Kazakh/Semipalinsk USSR
- 2003 - Treaty of Accession is signed in Athens admitting 10 new member states to the European Union
- 2007 - Virginia Tech massacre: The deadliest mass shooting in modern American history. The gunman, Seung-Hui Cho, kills 32 people and injures 23 others before committing suicide.
- 2012 - At least 55 people are killed in the Syrian uprising despite UN presence to oversee ceasefire
- 2012 - For the first time since 1977 no Pulitzer Prize is awarded for fiction
- 2013 - 37 people are killed by a 7.8 magnitude earthquake in Khash country, Iran
- 2014 - South Korean ferry MV Sewol sinks on route Incheon to Jeju, 304 drown, mostly students. National controversy erupts over rescue efforts and actions of crew and owners.
- 2017 - Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoan wins referendum on 18-article constitutional reform package

HIJRI CALENDAR
22
SHABAN
1441

PRAYERS

- FAJR 4:32
- ZUHR 12:32
- ASR 5:10
- MAGRIB 7:05
- ISHA 8:31

From KO Archives

Pervez Visit To Begin With Prayers

India to fire new CBMs At Pak

NEW DELHI: Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf will begin his two day India visit Saturday with prayers at dargah of Sufi saint Khwaja Moinudin Chisti at Ajmer before commencing extensive talks with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh on all outstanding issues, including Kashmir, on Sunday. Seeking to break fresh ground, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh is expected to place new confidence building measures to carry forward the peace process in his talks with Pakistan President, who visits India on his first visit after the failed 2001 Agra Summit. Singh, who will hold parleys with Musharraf after witnessing the last one-day Indo-Pak cricket match for over an hour in the morning, is likely to suggest opening of additional bus routes and ways to promote tourism in Kashmir to enable people-to-people contacts. A joint statement after the talks is not ruled out. Official sources said that Musharraf, who will be accompanied by his wife Seeba and a 40-member delegation, has been conveyed Singh's suggestion that providing full security to the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service-was the "joint responsibility" of the two countries and signals from that side have been "positive". On the eve of Musharraf's visit, the Prime Minister told a Chief Ministers' conclave here that "it is the joint responsibility of the Governments of India and Pakistan." to provide full security to the bus passengers. The two countries should fight the scourge of terrorism in the region, he added. **FIGHTING TERROR TOGETHER:** India and Pakistan can work together in fighting the sources of terrorism in the region making it clear it was their joint responsibility to ensure full security to the passengers of Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service. He said "I do believe that it is the joint responsibility of the Governments of India and Pakistan, and of the local authorities on both sides of the line of control, to work together in providing full security cover to the bus service which is a service for peace and for promotion of reconciliation." "I sincerely hope we can work together in protecting the lives of innocent people and in lighting the sources of terrorism in the region," Singh said.

KASHMIR
OBSERVER

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Why Concrete Barricades?

On Tuesday, the government went on erecting concrete barricades at the entry points to the areas declared red zones in Srinagar and some other parts of the Valley. In Srinagar, the barricades were set up at the newly declared red zone Natipora to halt the movement of the people in and out of the area. By the very look of it, the step comes across as exceptionally harsh and, in a way, uncalled for. More so, when the cases in the Valley, especially in Srinagar have tended to flatten in recent days.

The barricades, while they won't stop the people walking out of these colonies seem specifically geared to stop the movement of traffic in and out of them. This is both ridiculous and dangerous. What if there is a fire in these colonies and the fire brigade needs to move in? What if any person is taken seriously ill and needs to be moved to hospital? And if there are other exit routes from these colonies then what is the fun of blocking the one entry point with a concrete barricade? There are no convincing answers.

These barricades make for an apocalyptic sight and should have been avoided. And that too at a time when the people have begun to volunteer to ensure social distancing in their respective colonies. They have also set up makeshift barricades which can be easily removed once the time to lift the lockdown. So, where did the need for officially sanctioned concrete barricades come up? It is almost as if the government thrives in strengthening the curbs on people, no doubt for valid reasons, but a part of it comprising the extreme measures like erecting barricades is almost being resorted to for its own sake.

Government has justified the concrete barriers on the grounds that the people have damaged and removed barricades during nights. Underlying this rationale is a troubling assumption: that people are like cattle and so only the government can think for them and guide their behaviour in a particular direction. This thinking also denies people any agency and so empowers the government to think for them.

Going by this understanding the government would need to micro-manage the public life to ensure people do not contract COVID-19. But the problem with this approach is that for all the all-encompassing powers of a modern government it can't be ubiquitous and omnipotent. It has no option but to trust the people to do the right thing. People need to be sufficiently informed about the disease and urged to follow the precautions and they will certainly obey the advice. Their powerful incentive to do so is that it is in their own interest.

OTHER OPINION

A narrowing window: On extension of lockdown

It appeared inevitable, and the Centre has accepted the view of several States to extend the national lockdown for the novel coronavirus until May 3. The decision provides comfort and continuity to those in charge of containing the pandemic, but it is a small window within which an orderly exit must be planned. While announcing the extension, Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke of incentivising areas that avert a spike in cases — over 10,000 nationally — through rigorous enforcement of the restrictions. These areas are to be allowed limited exemptions in activity after April 20, once they pass the 'litmus test' and are not at risk of becoming hotspots. Such a scheme naturally presumes that everyone can get a free or highly affordable confirmatory test for viral infection or recovery, which could place them in a green territory. Again, this has to be aligned with well-recognised protocols on healthy behaviour to stop new infections. The Centre's lockdown is the most rigorous globally, but it has witnessed severe gaps in implementation. Although the Home Ministry's original 21-day order and subsequent enabling amendments on farming had clear clauses, many States did not abide by them. So much so, the Union Home Secretary has had to restate the order's provisions allowing inter- and intra-State movement of goods vehicles. Active follow-up with State governments and clear instructions to enforcement agencies are necessary to help the public adhere to a curfew. The Prime Minister, who has affirmed the need to make full use of the rabi harvest, must ensure that intentions translate into results, and produce reaches the market. Failed communication — States are partly responsible — has resulted in distressing instances of arbitrary and often violent policing.

Further extensions of a lockdown appear less and less feasible, as pressure builds up in an economy rendered moribund by the coronavirus. Millions of workers are already dependent on meagre income substitution measures and food donations, and many face escalating private debt. The Finance Ministry's welfare schemes need to be reviewed, and enhanced relief provided to all workers rendered unemployed through funds infusion and provision of food for at least six months. Those who have lost jobs, and senior citizens, should be able to enrol in the PDS online immediately. A gradual reopening of activity after May 3, going beyond essential services will require classification of infection risk for various groups, such as school and college students, teachers, and workers. The reality of COVID-19 is that there cannot be a return to normal overnight, and governments must plan for a sequential restoration of activity. The effort should be to enable the workforce, ensuring its health and safety.

The Hindu

Help Poor But Keep Your Camera At Home

AABID TURABI

In a nation of over a billion population where still 49% depend on primary sector to meet their basic requirements, crisis like Covid-19 makes many vulnerable helpless. In last two to three weeks I have witnessed people helping each other without considering caste, religion or ethnicity. But at the same time social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram were flooded with stories showcasing the brotherhood of mankind. But photos showing helper helping the helpless and then posting such photos for netizens to see and appreciate intrigues me. We need to realise one thing that it is good to help people but it's not necessary to flaunt the philanthropy by posting photos of charity on social media.

Right to privacy is protected as intrinsic part of Right to Life and personal liberty under Article 21 and as a part of freedom guaranteed by part third of the Constitution of India. This right holds its importance equally even in these difficult times when Covid -19 has made many people needy to such an extent that they might be compromising their privacy.

Tranquility lies in serving people who are in need and this Covid-19 has made many people time bound needy. The labourers don't beg, they work but in these circumstances they are helpless. Similarly many people with money and assets are bound by the lockdown and have become themselves needy.

In a nation of over a billion population where still 49% depend on primary sector to meet their basic requirements, crisis like Covid-19 makes many vulnerable helpless. In last two to three weeks I have witnessed people helping each other without considering caste, religion or ethnicity. But at the same time social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram were flooded with stories showcasing the brotherhood of mankind. But photos showing helper helping the helpless and then posting such photos for netizens to see and appreciate intrigues me. We need to realise one thing that it is good to help people but it's not necessary to flaunt the philanthropy by posting photos of charity on social media.

Over the past two weeks I saw people of high repute like the top level bureaucrats to the lowest in the hierarchy sharing photos in which they are helping people. I derive two basic assumptions from this :-

Either these people are trying to incite in us the general feeling of compassion and encourage us to work for humanity, then that is a very noble cause.

Or they are trying to showing to people that they are helping and getting social media likes and attention; this has the least possibility.

But in both the cases there is a third person who is being helped. He has an equal self esteem and worth but due to some circumstances he isn't able to stand for himself or herself.

There is a little difference between use and abuse of camera; at one moment you might be using it while the next you might be abusing and disturbing someone's



personal space and privacy. We should be very careful while using our camera these days. Most of the people who are being helped and whose photos are latter uploaded on social media sites are very poor and unaware of the social issues but the people who have knowledge and are in need don't come to ask for help fearing our smartphones as the Urdu poet puts it ;

Khud-dar mera shehar ka faqon sai mar gaya
ration to bat raha tha woh photo sai dar gaya

There are many needy people who don't ask for help fearing their self esteem and privacy may be at risk. We are still young in the age of social media and we have to learn everything good is not worth sharing. Our smart phones sometimes outsmart us. We can give food to animals and birds and share those on social media. We enjoy a superiority over someone doesn't mean we should be proclaiming sovereignty on social media. It has only been this decade and second half of last that we have started to use social media so as I said we are too young in this field and we have to learn and remind ourselves of the ethical issues related to these things.

By posting our photo in which

we are helping others on social media we are not telling our future generation to work rather we are guiding them a thing with which they can pretend they are helping while they are not. The culture we are promoting by this is very poisonous and it'll rust the roots of our ethics and social fabric.

It has a Islamic perspective too. Islam doesn't encourage show off and in matters of giving it tells us to remain extremely confidential.

People working in Public Service Institutions should be highly conscious that these institutions have been brought only to help the general public and it is the duty of everyone to keep to ourselves the information shared by the people. We can't for mere social media attraction and Facebook likes ruin someone's prestige.

Some of us may say we take consent from the person who is in the photo or video, but speak logically while keeping ourselves at their place would we like our photo to be posted on Facebook. I'm sure not.

Author works at SKIMS, MCH Bemina. He can be reached at: turabi1294@gmail.com

Who Is Stealing My Socks?

There's a clever thief or woolly goblin gobbling up my socks one at a time

MICK O'REILLY

Is there a ghost or goblin that trolls washing machines in search of socks? Not so much socks, plural, but sock as in singular.

I'm convinced there is. And I'd be willing to go on a limb here and suggest that no matter where you live, no matter who does your washing, no matter how careful you are, this sock goblin has visited your washing machine on more than one occasion.

How often have you done your laundry and ended up with a single sock?

I am starting to get alarmed that I might be haunted by this demon?

I wouldn't trust anybody now with my socks. Unless these casual cleaners have security clearance from the Pentagon or bonded by Her Majesty's Secret Service, I wouldn't trust them

Regularly, these past few weeks, a pair ends up as a single.

It's done surreptitiously, you see, sometime between the time the door is closed and the machine is programmed and when the alarm goes off to inform you the load is done.

Socks go missing. Like, all the time.

I am almost at the stage where I am preparing a missing poster replete with a photograph of the remaining sock, and putting it up on lamp posts, community centres and at local stores.

I'll rip down the ones for Missing Fluffy who wandered off three weeks ago — cats do that you know — or for cleaners offering their services and do things like laundry and ironing.

I wouldn't trust anybody now with my socks. Unless these casual cleaners have security clearance from the Pentagon or bonded by Her Majesty's Secret Service, I wouldn't trust them.

Socks don't just walk away on their own, you know.

I am convinced that there is a huge black market out there from pirated socks. I can tell you without a word of a lie that right now, I am missing — doh! — a Homer Simpson sock. I can't walk around wearing just one Homer, can I?

I'm also missing a plain black sock. And a white one too.



Stealing my socks

Who would want to steal socks. I have heard regularly of underwear and other ladies' garments being stolen from washing lines. Washing lines?

My pairs don't make it as far as the washing line and it's there, usually with peg in hand, that I realise that I've been burgled, the victim of theft, robbed of my sock in broad daylight.

I know one man who believes he has a solution to this sock-theft ring. When he does his laundry, he uses a clothes peg to keep the pair of socks together in the washing machine in a desperate attempt to foil this sure-footed thief or sock goblin.

And here, now, to you, I will admit I have tried this technique, pegging to socks together as I place them in the machine.

Sadly, this failed. I was left with one peg and one sock — the other vanished between wash, rinse and spin cycles.

Socks are not sentimental objects for me. I

don't horde them. I simply wear them, most of the time, when I'm not in a warm climate and wearing flipflops. But when you're left with diminishing supply and only singular socks, it does get very frustrating.

This theft ring has left me now at the stage where I count my socks as I place them in the washing machine. It's a matter of sanity. One pair, two pairs, three pairs, four pairs.

Eight socks in all. Yes, and I count them again to make sure. Yes, eight socks. Shut the washing machine door, put in the powder and lavender-scented fabric softener that keeps your colours bright like new.

And then the machine does its thing, rumbles and tumbles. But when you open the door, you end up with three pairs and a single. Daylight robbery, it is. Aghhhhhh!

Gulf News

Pakistan Clerics To Resume Group Prayers In Mosques Even As Govt Extends Lockdown

Agencies

Islamabad: In clear defiance of the government directives, headline clerics in Pakistan on Tuesday announced they would resume congregational prayers in mosques, even as the coronavirus cases in the country rose to nearly 6,000.

The government has banned prayer congregations of more than five people as part of its measures to curb the spread of the deadly coronavirus.

Despite the government's pleas to observe social distancing, a group of headline clerics held a meeting in Karachi to discuss the issue of ban on such prayers and made the announcement before media at the Karachi Press Club.

Mufti Taqi Usmani, a religious scholar and former judge of the Federal Shariat Court, who was part of consultation, said it was decided that five time prayers as well Friday prayers would be held in mosques.

He, however, said that the "precautionary measures" of the government would be taken to avoid the spread of the coronavirus.

The clerics' decision came

as the government announced to extend the lockdown for another two weeks until April 30.

Those present at a press conference after the meeting included representatives from the Jamiat-e-Ulema Islam, Jamiat-e-Ulema Pakistan, Jamaat-i-Islami and Tanzeem-e-Islami among other religious parties.

The decision came despite announcement by Prime Minister Imran Khan to meet the clerics in order to discuss the issue of gathering in mosques in the holy month of Ramadan, which will start from April 25.

On Monday, over 53 senior clerics of Rawalpindi and Islamabad belonging to the Waqaf Madaris al Arabia held a meeting in Jamia Darul Uloom Zakria to discuss the ban on prayer congregations, Dawn News reported.

The Monday meeting—attended by clerics representing various seminaries, banned groups, proscribed persons and political and non-political parties—warned the authorities against the ban and said government leaders should abide by religious norms and seek forgiveness.

Health Ministry Identifies 170 Corona Hotspots In India



Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: The Union Health Ministry has identified 170 districts as COVID-19 hotspots and 207 districts as potential hotspots, officials said on Wednesday, reiterating that there has been no community transmission of the disease in the country so far.

Addressing the daily briefing to provide updates on coronavirus situation in the country, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Health Lav Agarwal said that states have been asked to classify districts which have reported a higher number of cases as hotspots, the districts where cases have been reported as non-hotspots, and green zones where no cases have been reported.

"Hotspots are those districts which are reporting more number of cases or where the rate of growth of COVID-19 cases is high," Agarwal said, adding a detailed direction has been issued to states stating consolidated efforts are required to utilise this period of lockdown to curb the spread of the virus.

"Cabinet secretary held a video conference today with all chief secretaries, DGPs, health secretaries, collectors, SPs, municipal commissioners and CMOs where hotspots were discussed and orientation on field level implementation of containment strategy was given.

"They were told about large outbreak containment strategies, cluster containment strategies. Delineation of buffer and containment zone, parameter mapping, defining of entry and exit points were also discussed in detail," he said.

The joint secretary said movement of people will not be allowed in containment zones except for those related with essential services and special teams will search for new cases and samples will be collected and tested as per sampling criteria.

The officials said that health facilities in buffer zone outside the containment zone will be oriented and people facing SARI and influenza-like symptoms will be tested there.



Trump Cuts Off US Funding To WHO Amid Raging Pandemic

Agencies

Washington: US President Donald Trump has halted funding to the World Health Organization over its handling of the coronavirus pandemic, drawing condemnation from infectious disease experts as the global death toll continued to mount.

Trump said Tuesday that he was cutting off U.S. payments to the WHO accusing the world body of failing to do enough to stop the virus from spreading when it first surfaced in China.

Trump, who has reacted angrily to criticism of his administration's response to the worst epidemic in a century, has become increasingly hostile towards the WHO.

"The WHO failed in its basic duty and must be held accountable," Trump said at a briefing. He said the U.S. would be reviewing the WHO's actions to stop the virus before making any decision on resuming aid.

Nearly 2 million people globally have been infected and more than 124,000 have died since the disease emerged in China late last year, according to a Reuters tally.

Leading health experts have labelled Donald Trump's decision to cut funding to the World Health Organization (WHO) as a "crime against humanity" and a "damnable" act that will cost lives, reported the Guardian.

There was no immediate comment from the Geneva-based

organization on Trump's announcement. But when asked about possible U.S. funding cuts during a regular U.N. briefing earlier Tuesday, WHO spokeswoman Margaret Harris responded, "Regardless of any issues, our work will go on."

The move also drew a rebuke from the head of the United Nations, who said the WHO was "absolutely critical to the world's efforts to win the war against Covid-19".

Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said it was not the time to reduce resources for the WHO.

"Now is the time for unity and for the international community to work together in solidarity to stop this virus and its shattering consequences," he said in a statement.

The United States is the biggest overall donor to the WHO, contributing more than \$400 million in 2019, roughly 15 per cent of its budget.

Last week, Trump blasted the WHO for being "China-centric" and alleging that it had "criticized" his ban on travel from China as the COVID-19 outbreak was spreading from the city of Wuhan.

The WHO generally takes care not to criticize countries on their national policies, and it was not immediately clear what specific criticism Trump was alluding to.

Trump himself showed deference to China at the beginning stages of the outbreak.

"China has been working very hard to contain the Coronavirus," he tweeted Jan. 24. "The United States greatly appreciates

their efforts and transparency. It will all work out well. In particular, on behalf of the American People, I want to thank President Xi!"

Asked Tuesday about the appropriateness of seeking to cut the WHO's funding in the middle of a worldwide viral outbreak, Trump said the review would last 60 to 90 days.

"This is an evaluation period, but in the meantime, we're putting a hold on all funds going to World Health," Trump said.

Trump has also complained that other countries give substantially less than the U.S., singling out China.

The American Medical Association immediately called on Trump to reconsider his decision.

"During the worst public health crisis in a century, halting funding to the World Health Organization is a dangerous step in the wrong direction that will not make defeating COVID-19 easier," AMA President Patricia A. Harris said in a statement.

Harris said international cooperation is needed to fight the virus, along with science and data.

"Cutting funding to the WHO, rather than focusing on solutions, is a dangerous move at a precarious moment for the world," she said.

Richard Horton, the editor-in-chief of the Lancet medical journal, wrote that Trump's decision was "a crime against humanity ... Every scientist, every health worker, every citizen must resist and rebel against this appalling betrayal of global solidarity."

As Countries Grapple To Contain Outbreak, Covid Cases Worldwide Cross Two Million

Press Trust Of India

New Delhi: Here are the latest updates on the coronavirus crisis in India and other parts of the world on Wednesday.

11:42 a.m. Fight against COVID-19 is mother of all World Cups, India's head cricket coach Ravi Shastri says.

11:40 a.m. Fresh guidelines were issued by the government for enforcing the second phase of the coronavirus lockdown, with the Union home ministry barring all kinds of public transport and prohibiting opening of public places till May 3.

11:38 a.m. China did not give Americans access when it was needed the most in the beginning, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has said, demanding answers and transparency from Beijing over its handling of the coronavirus pandemic.

11:36 a.m. Stray dogs may have played role in novel coronavirus origin, study says.

11:35 a.m. Fifty six new COVID-19 cases detected in Gujarat as state tally jumps to 695.

11:19 a.m. Two more COVID-19 deaths in Gujarat as state's toll reaches 30.

11:19 a.m. Authorities in Kashmir seal off containment zones to ensure strict lockdown.

10:59 a.m. New disinfection robot can clean large surfaces quickly and aid cleaners in COVID-19 fight.

10:58 a.m. Trump names six Indian-Americans to Great American Economic Revival Industry Groups.

10:36 a.m. Twenty nine fresh COVID-19 cases in Rajasthan as the number rises to 1,034 in the state.

10:33 a.m. Stranded foreign students facing economic hardships can apply for off campus work authorisation, US says.

10:33 a.m. IMF calls on all countries to refrain from putting restrictions on exporting medical supplies.

10:20 a.m. UK will recover 'quickly and strongly' after COVID-19 crisis, UK finance minister Rishi Sunak says.

10:18 a.m. Bat coronavirus found in two Indian bat species, study says.

10:15 a.m. China shuts down its largest makeshift hospital in Wuhan as last batch of medics leave.

9:50 a.m. The death toll due to coronavirus rose to 377 while the number of cases in the country climbed to 11,439, Union Health Ministry says.

9:45 a.m. The lone COVID-19 patient in Meghalaya died on Wednesday morning, Chief Minister Conrad Sangma said.

9:33 a.m. Five more persons tested positive to coronavirus in Dharavi, taking the total number of such cases in Mumbai's slum area to 60, senior civic official says.

9:25 a.m. All five who died of COVID-19 in Bhopal were 1984 gas tragedy victims.

9:21 a.m. President Donald Trump announces halting America's funding of up to USD 500 million annually to the WHO while a review is being done to assess its role in "severely mismanaging and covering up" the spread of the deadly coronavirus when it first emerged in China.

9:02 a.m. China's recent COVID-19 cases jump to 1,500 amid exodus of Chinese from Russia.

8:33 a.m. Now is not the time to reduce resources for WHO as it fights COVID-19, UN chief Antonio Guterres says.

7:55 a.m. US registers record one-day toll of 2,129 as the total number of deaths crosses 25,000 in the country.

7:36 a.m. US President Donald Trump says he would leave it to individual governors to decide on reopening the economy in their respective States.

Corona patients can spread infection two to three days before symptoms show: Study

Press Trust Of India

Beijing: Patients with COVID-19 shed, or excrete, infectious coronavirus two to three days before showing first symptoms, according to a modelling study which says control measures taken after symptoms appear may have a reduced effect in curbing the pandemic.

The study, published in the journal Nature Medicine, noted that several factors can affect the efficacy of control measures designed to prevent the spread of the novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2.

These include the time between successive cases in a chain of transmission, and the incubation period between exposure to an infection and the appearance of symptoms, according to researchers, including Eric Lau from the University of Hong Kong.

If the serial interval is shorter than the incubation period, this would indicate that transmission may have happened before overt symptoms develop, they said.

In the study, the scientists assessed the temporal patterns of viral shedding in 94 patients with COVID-19 admitted to Guangzhou Eighth People's Hospital in China.

They analysed throat swabs collected from these patients from when symptoms first appeared until 32 days later.

According to the study 414 swabs were analysed, and the scientists found that the patients had the highest viral load at the onset of symptoms.

They also modelled COVID-19 infectiousness profiles from a different sample of 77 transmission pairs' from publicly available data.

US may need to extend social distancing for virus until 2022, says study

AGENCIES

United States: The United States may need to endure social distancing measures adopted during the coronavirus outbreak until 2022, according to researchers at the Harvard School of Public Health.

The study comes as more than 2,200 people died in the United States from the outbreak on Tuesday, a record, according to a Reuters tally, even as the country debated how to reopen its economy.

The overall death toll in the US from the virus stands at more

than 28,300 as of Tuesday.

"Intermittent distancing may be required into 2022 unless critical care capacity is increased substantially or a treatment or vaccine becomes available," the Harvard researchers said in findings published Tuesday in the Journal Science.

Giving examples of South Korea and Singapore, the researchers wrote that effective distancing could reduce the strain on healthcare systems and enable contact tracing and quarantine to be feasible.

The study acknowledged that prolonged distancing

would most likely have profoundly negative economic, social, and educational consequences.

The study added that even in the case of "apparent elimination", COVID-19 surveillance should still be maintained, as a resurgence in contagion may be possible as late as 2024.

The World Health Organisation has warned that infections had "certainly" not yet peaked.

Nearly 2 million people globally have been infected and more than 124,000 have died in the most serious pandemic in a century.

NEWS MAKERS

Stray Dogs May Have Played Role In Novel Coronavirus Origin: Study

Toronto: Scientists tracing signatures of the novel coronavirus across different species, have proposed that stray dogs—specifically dog intestines—may have contributed to the origin of the pandemic.

According to the study, published in the journal Molecular Biology and Evolution, many animals, beginning with snakes and most recently, pangolins, have all been put forth as the likely intermediate hosts transmitting the virus, SARS-CoV-2, from bats to humans.

However, according to Xuhua Xia from the University of Ottawa in Canada, the viruses isolated from these animals are too divergent



from SARS-CoV-2.

"Our observations have allowed the formation of a new hypothesis for the origin and initial transmission of SARS-CoV-2," Xia said.

"The ancestor of SARS-CoV-2 and its nearest relative, a bat coronavirus, in-

fectured the intestine of canids, most likely resulting in a rapid evolution of the virus in canids and its jump into humans," Xia said.

With scientists across the world scrambling to identify the species of origin to understand how the new coro-

navirus first leapt from its animal hosts to humans, the researcher believes the findings highlight the need for monitoring SARS-like coronaviruses in feral dogs.

According to Xia, the current study is based on the battle scars viruses get from fighting off and evading the host's immune system using adaptations found within their genomes.

He said humans and mammals have a key antiviral protein, called ZAP, which can stop a virus in its tracks by preventing its multiplication in the host and degrading its genome.

Xia said ZAP targets a pair of chemical letters, called CpG dinucleotides, within its RNA genome.

Saudi forces kill man who refused to leave home: Activists

A Saudi citizen who refused government orders to give up his home to make way for a new mega-project was killed by security forces, according to Saudi activists.

The man, who identified himself as Abdul Rahim Ahmad al-Hwaiti, said in a video posted online he was from the town of al-Khraybah in the northwest Red Sea region. He and other residents were being pressured by the government to give up their properties and accept financial compensation, he said.

Al-Hwaiti said in one video uploaded on YouTube that "anyone who refuses to leave the area would be arrested by government agents". He



called the government's move "forced displacement".

"This is my home," he said, adding he would not move elsewhere in Saudi Arabia because he considers his tribal area his "own homeland".

Al-Hwaiti said residents of the area do not want to be uprooted but are now living in fear because of what security forces might do to them.

"Nine people from my area have been arrested so far and I am sure I will be next - or even

killed," he said in one video. "I am sure if they kill me they would put weapons around my body and claim I was a terrorist."

According to Saudi activists, al-Hwaiti was shot dead after recording his last video documenting security forces storming his property. The Saudi government has not commented on the alleged killing. Calls to two government officials seeking comment rang unanswered on Wednesday.

Al-Hwaiti hails from the powerful al-Hwaitat tribe who are based in three countries: Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and the Sinai in Egypt. The al-Hwaitat have resided in the region for more than 800 years, predating the Saudi state itself by many centuries over.

Love to READ? Here are Some Career Choices

Azra Mufti

Reading is an activity not passivity. When we read, our senses are completely engrossed in the words and the ideas get transferred to our brains. People who are voracious readers get a chance to live multiple lives and view life from a larger lens rather than a myopic one. Readers turn out to be successful people as their broadened vision opens myriad choices for them.

As an adolescent, my attention was inescapably drawn towards classic literature, I used to enjoy every word I read, I connected with the characters and felt a strong connection with them, I remember writing essays like, "what would I do had I been Jane Eyre", "What lesson did I learn from Wuthering Heights", "who is my favourite character in Pride and Prejudice"? I have a rich tapestry of varied memories somehow connected to my favourite stories and characters. I owe a lot to my reading habit and it has helped me withstand the vagaries of time.

During this quarantine, I have seen a lot of people exchanging books to overcome their monotony and boredom. I updated a single post on availability of books and got messages from about fifty girls asking for the same. It made me happy to know the fact that we have so many readers in our Valley. Reading is gaining momentum these



days and people are making best use of their quarantine time. There is one good news for readers. If you love reading books and find solace in words, there are a lot of creative opportunities that you may cherry pick. Some of these are:

Literary Agents: A person who acts as an agent between an author and a publisher. Most of the traditional publishing houses like Penguin, Hachette and HarperCollins do not accept unsolicited manuscripts; they rely on literary agents for the same. Literary agent helps to get a manuscript out of the slush pile. The agent in return is given a commission from royalty. A literary agent helps an author make more money than he or she would otherwise make. They suggest changes to the manuscript before signing the contract. If you are an avid reader, you might prove to be a literary agent in making.

Archivist: if you love history and books, then this might prove to be your

dream job. It requires a degree in library science or archival science; they deal with strange unpublished material and are in charge of processing and cataloguing important documents. An archivist should have a great understanding of historical concepts. Archivists mainly deal with record keeping and they should know the importance of these documents.

Book Reviewer: People are always looking out at fresh releases, be it movies or books, companies and websites are looking out for new takes for fresh arrivals. Book reviewers give an unbiased view of the books that are new in market and mostly these reviews determine the sales also. Getting paid to read a book is something everybody will desire and book reviewers actually get this money. A critical thinking and passion for reading is what a book reviewer needs. Before publishing a book, manuscripts are sent to book reviewers to suggest edits and rectify mistakes;

these reviewers often bring twists and turns in a book to make it more appealing to public.

Copywriter: next time you like any content on billboard, pamphlet or brochure, note it that it I the job of a copywriter. In this digital world where content is considered as king, content writers are very much in demand. A copywriter needs to have an eye for detail and excellent language skills. Copy writing can come in different forms like web content, creating blogs, biography writing or writing annual reports. To be a great copywriter, you just need to have excellent reading and writing skills.

Proof Reader: if you are a grammar Nazi, then this might be a perfect job for you. Proof readers look for grammatical mistakes, spelling errors and sentence correction.

Azra Mufti is the author of 'Tearful Pages and Shattered Dreams'

Coronavirus (COVID-19): Calming Anxiety



Meghan Tuohy Walls, PsyD

If you feel stressed about coronavirus, you're not alone. Coronavirus (COVID-19) has had ripple effects into almost every aspect of our lives. With schools and workplaces closed for now, it's affected the way we live every day. So much has changed in such a short time.

It's natural to feel anxiety when we face a crisis, the unknown, or sudden change. It's a normal reaction to feel the need for safety, certainty, predictability, and control.

Anxiety is a normal emotion and serves as a signal to pay attention so we can protect ourselves. Anxiety alerts us. It prompts us to adapt. But when we're overwhelmed by anxiety, it sometimes can do more harm than good.

When anxiety becomes overwhelming, we're less able to rise to a challenge, and sometimes we get stuck.

Here are some tips that can help you cope with anxiety and give you a sense of control even during an uncertain time. Many are simple techniques with proven benefits.

Follow the advice of experts. First, know what to do to avoid the spread of germs. This not only helps keep you safer, it gives you

and your kids a sense of control! Follow the expert guidelines for health and safety. Wash your hands well and often. Keep surfaces clean. Stay at home. Keep a safe distance from others. When you do these things, you protect yourself, your family, and your community.

Notice, label, and accept your emotions. When you feel anxious, quietly say to yourself, "OK, there's my anxiety again." Just putting a label on what we feel helps reduce our concern.

Accept anxiety as one of your many emotions. Don't ignore it, fight it, reject it, or be afraid of it. Don't judge yourself for feeling it. Be kind. Give yourself permission to be human.

Keep it in perspective and notice the good. Don't let anxiety run the show. It's one part of your emotional life, but it's not the whole thing. Leave room to challenge yourself: Is there anything going well? What positive things have happened that make me think this anxious thought might not be accurate?

Direct your attention or practice mindfulness. When you notice anxious thoughts, know that you don't have to dwell on them. Direct your attention to things that help you feel calm. You can use techniques such as guided imagery (easily found on YouTube or Google Video) or

mindfulness practices that help you focus on being in the moment.

Practice breathing. Just pausing to take a breath can calm you in a difficult moment. It can help you pause before you react, and choose how to react. Specifically, "belly breathing" or diaphragmatic breathing is most helpful. Practice for 5-10 minutes a day. Try an app like "Belly Bio" that is free to download.

Reach out to others. Staying in touch with friends and family is good for you and for them. Feeling close to others reduces anxiety, and has been known to boost the immune system. Even though we're staying home, we can reach out by phone, video chat, or social media. We can feel close, even while we're apart. Practice physical distancing, but social togetherness.

Practice gratitude. Noticing what we're grateful for is a powerful remedy to anxiety. Showing gratitude is another way to feel close to others. It benefits your mood and your health. Say a simple heartfelt thank-you. Make a list of what you're grateful for. Send a letter to someone who's helped you. Let loved ones know how much they mean to you.

Be awed by nature. Even 5 minutes spent appreciating nature can lower anxiety and blood pressure. It raises emotional well-being. It reminds us we are part of something bigger than ourselves.

active. Even though we are staying at home, find ways to be active every day. There are plenty of ways to be active outdoors and still practice social distancing. Exercise relaxes you. It generates hormones that boost the body's immune system. If you can't get out, take a fitness class online.

Keep your balance. Calming anxiety doesn't mean ignoring problems. It's about finding our balance so we can cope well; so we can help ourselves and each other through this situation. We can find calm and well-being even when we face great uncertainty.

Know when to reach out for help. If your anxiety seems overwhelming — if you're having trouble sleeping, eating, or interacting in the ways you normally would — get help. Most behavioral health providers are offering telehealth visits during this time and can schedule with new patients. Don't be afraid to reach out for help during this stressful time! (Kids Health)

Govt Of Jammu & Kashmir Office of the Chairperson, District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA)/ Deputy Commissioner Bandipora

The Sr. Superintendent of Police, Bandipora
Sub Divisional Magistrate, Sumbal
Chief Medical Officer, Bandipora

No: DCB/PS/2020/544-49 Dated: 14/04/2020

Subject: Helpline Numbers for Red Zone Areas of District Bandipora

Sir,
I am enclosing a list alongwith contact numbers of teams, headed by concerned tehsildars, constituted for each of red zones of district bandipora, for the convenience & facilitation of general public of the said areas,with the request that concerned officers/official be directed to respond to the calls effectively and to ensure time bound resolution/provision of grievances/services.

Yours Faithfully,

Shahbaz Ahmad Mirza, KAS

DIPK-161/20

Chairpersons, DDMA/Deputy Commissioner, Bandipora

HELPLINE NUMBERS OF RED ZONES DISTRICT BANDIPORA		
S. No	Red Zone	Helpline No's
1	Nowgam (Bonakoot)	1. Tehsildar Bandipora, 9797015308 2. NT Concerned, 9541334686 3. SHO Pethkoot, 7006161336 4. Duty Magistrate, 9906686139 5. TSO, 7006820651 6. Dr. Tariq Iqbal, 9796914496 7. Dr. Tariq Jan, 7006244608 8. Dr. Shabir Ahmad Bhat, 7006326088 9. Mohd Yousuf Samoon, Pharmacist, 9149836187
2	Konan	1. Tehsildar Bandipora, 9797015308 2. SHO Concerned, 9596767413 3. Duty Magistrate, 9596225114 4. TSO, 7006820651 5. Dr. Mohsin, 7051207397 6. Dr. Shah Nawaz, 7006403006 7. Dr. Muzamil, 7006807484 8. Manzoor Ahmad, Pharmacist, 7889538713
3	Gund-i-Qaiser	1. Tehsildar Bandipora, 9797015308 2. SHO Bandipora, 9596767413 3. Duty Magistrate, 9906462823 4. TSO, 7006686407 5. Dr. Gh Hassan Akhoun, 9906686602 6. Dr. Tariq Ahmad Sofi, 9596184321 7. Manzoor Ahmad, Pharmacist, 7889538713
4	Gund-i-Dachina	1. Tehsildar Bandipora, 9797015308 2. SHO Aragam, 9596767421 3. Duty Magistrate, 7006921875 4. TSO, 7006686407 5. Dr. Majid Khan, 7006026313 6. Dr. Reyaz ur Rehman, 9906068027 7. Dr. Irfan Hussain, 7889898644 8. Dr. Javed Ahmad Dar, 9797387094 9. Bashir Ahmad, Pharmacist, 9697962636
5	Hajin	1. Tehsildar Hajin, 9469636449 2. NT Concerned, 7006821870 3. SHO Concerned, 9596767431 4. Duty Magistrate, 8899030121 5. TSO, 8899031558 6. Dr. Ab Rashid Tell, 9796360738 7. Dr. Reyaz Ah, 7006351889 8. Dr. Shabir Ahmad, 7889466458 9. Dr. Nisar Ah Najjar, 7006719885
6	Madwan	1. Tehsildar Hajin, 9469636449 2. NT Concerned, 9149804519 3. SHO Concerned, 9596767431 4. Duty Magistrate, 9149804519 5. TSO, 8899031558 6. Dr. Iftikar, 9149987940 7. Dr. Nisar Ah Najjar, 7006719885 8. Nisar Ah, Pharmacist, 7006563687
7	Batagund	1. Tehsildar Hajin, 9469636449 2. NT Concerned, 7006821870 3. SHO Concerned, 9596767431 4. Duty Magistrate, 9149804519 5. TSO, 8899031558 6. Dr. Iftikar, 9149987940 7. Dr. Nisar Ah Najjar, 7006719885 8. Nisar Ah, Pharmacist, 7006563687
8	Chandergeer	1. Tehsildar Hajin, 9469636449 2. NT Concerned, 9149804519 3. SHO Concerned, 9596767431 4. Duty Magistrate, 9596321188 5. TSO, 8899031558 6. Dr. Tasaduq, 9419004775 7. Dr. Nisar Ah Najjar, 7006719885 8. Mohammad Mubarak, 9149816828
9	Kosumbagh (Hakabara)	1. Tehsildar Hajin, 9469636449 2. NT Concerned, 9149804519 3. SHO Concerned, 9596767431 4. Duty Magistrate, 9149955782, 6005432611 5. TSO, 8899031558 6. Dr. Mohammad Sultan, 7006103477
10	S.K. Bala	1. Tehsildar Ajas, 8899085355 2. NT Concerned, 9149804519 3. DO Ajas, 9596767452 4. Duty Magistrate, 7889899029/ 9906531454 5. TSO, 8899031558 6. Dr. Tariq Ah, 7780878673 7. Dr. Syed Mubarak, 7006159155 8. Fayaz Ahmad, Pharmacist, 7006807445
11	Gund-i-Jehangeer	1. Tehsildar concerned, 9469636449 2. NT Concerned, 7006821870 3. SHO Concerned, 9596767431 4. Duty Magistrate, 7889380290 5. TSO, 8899031558 6. Dr. Altaf Hussain, 9419004847 7. Dr. Atta Mohammad, 9419003423 8. Dr. Mohammad Altaf, 9858996516 9. Dr. Faheem Gowhar, 9906213210 10. Dr. Shanfira, 6006323941
12	Naidkhai	1. Tehsildar concerned, 9469636449 2. NT Concerned, 7006821870 3. SHO Concerned, 9596767431 4. Duty Magistrate, 9149802731 5. TSO, 8899031558 6. Dr. Muzaffar Ahmad, 7006013689 7. Dr. Zubair Ahmad, 7006197025 8. Jameel Farooq, Pharmacist, 7006912553

In case of emergency, query or other issue related to COVID 19, contact	
DISTRICT CONTROL ROOM BANDIPORA and DISTRICT COVID CONTROL ROOM at following No's	
DISTRICT CONTROL ROOM BANDIPORA	DISTRICT COVID CONTROL ROOM BANDIPORA
01957225322	01957225024
01957225323	9419010752
01957226782	6005890078
7006526985	7006346438
7006378557	
7006328689	
9018259722	
7780930471	

Government of Jammu & Kashmir Union Territory. Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Division Baramulla.

CORRIGENDUM

Subject: Invitation of Tenders.

Reference: This office NIT No: 01/01-10/2020-21/RnB/Bla Dated 01.04.2020
In view of the extension of Lockdown due to Corona Virus, the dates for above referred NIT is hereby extended as mentioned below.

1	Bidding documents download end date	05.05.2020 4:00PM
2	Bid Submission End Date	05.05.2020 upto 4:00PM
3	Date and time of Opening of Bids (Online)	06.05.2020 upto 11:00AM

All other terms and conditions shall remain intact as mentioned in the original NIT.

No: 47-50
Dated: 14.04.2020

-sd-
Executive Engineer,
R&B Division Baramulla

DIPK-149/20

Sensex tumbles 310 points to close near 30400-mark; Nifty finishes below 9000

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI: Equity benchmarks reversed early gains to finish in the negative territory on Wednesday as risk-off mood prevailed amid grim prognoses of the economic fallout of the coronavirus pandemic. Traders said that weak global markets and the rupee plunging to its all-time low against the dollar further weighed on sentiment. After gyrating over 1,346 points during the day, the 30-share BSE Sensex ended 310.21 points or 1.01 per cent lower at 30,379.81. Similarly, the NSE Nifty settled 68.55 points, or 0.76 per cent, down at 8,925.30.

Kotak Bank was the top loser in the Sensex pack, cracking 6.23 per cent, followed by Hero MotoCorp (4.83 per cent), Bajaj Finance (4.63 per cent), HDFC (3.61 per cent), HDFC Bank (3.57 per cent) and Maruti Suzuki (3.55 per cent). On the other hand, HUL, HCL Tech, ITC and Nestle India were among the gainers, rising up to 6.07 per cent.

Despite opening on a positive note, domestic stocks gave up all gains in a highly volatile session following negative sentiment in global equities amid projections of major slump in economic growth, traders said.

The IMF on Tuesday slashed India's projected GDP growth to 1.9 per cent in 2020 from 5.8 per cent in January, as the global economy is seen hitting the worst recession since the Great Depression in the 1930s due to the raging coronavirus pandemic.



Meanwhile, the government on Wednesday said industrial units in rural areas will be allowed to function from April 20, provided they follow social distancing norms, while all kinds of public transport will be barred and public places closed till May 3.

"There may be greater clarity for the market participants as the details of the limited relaxation of the lockdown rules are announced by the state governments. But the volatility in the markets may stay with us till the trajectory of growth and price level becomes less uncertain," said Joseph Thomas, Head of Research - Emkay Wealth Management.

Analysts also said the focus will now also shift to the earnings season and the management commentary on the impact of coronavirus. "Almost all sectors have been affected by the lockdown and the market will try to measure the future financial impact of this, rather than focusing on the previous quarter numbers. This is expected to drive stock specific moves in the market in the coming days. IT companies will officially kick off the earnings season and investors will be keen on how the virus spread has impacted their services and the locations in which those services are offered," said Vinod Nair, Head of Research at Geojit Financial Services.

BSE bankex, finance, energy, auto and consumer durables indices ended up to 2.49 per cent lower, while FMCG, basic materials, realty, capital goods and metals gained up to 4.33 per cent. Broader BSE midcap and smallcap indices rose up to 1.32 per cent. On the currency front, the rupee tumbled 17 paise to close at an all-time low of 76.44 (provisional) against the US dollar. Brent crude futures, the global oil benchmark, slipped 4.43 per cent to USD 28.29 per barrel.

Bourses in Shanghai, Hong Kong and Tokyo ended significantly lower. Stock exchanges in Europe too opened in the red.

The death toll due to COVID-19 rose to 377 while the number of cases in the country climbed to 11,439 on Wednesday, according to the Union Health Ministry. Global tally of the infections has crossed 19 lakh, with over 1.2 lakh deaths.



Petrol, Diesel Demand To Pick Up As Trucks Allowed To Ply Amid COVID-19 Lockdown Extension

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Petrol and diesel consumption, which saw its biggest ever decline in the aftermath of a nationwide lockdown, is likely to pick up in the second half of the month as the government has allowed trucks to ply as well as farmers and industries in rural areas to resume operations after April 20.

Petrol and diesel sales had fallen by over 66 per cent and aviation turbine fuel (ATF) consumption collapsed by 90 per cent as the unprecedented nationwide lockdown shut factories, stopped road and rail transportation and suspended flights.

"The government has allowed inter and intra-state movement of goods traffic by road as well as rail. Also, farming operations, as well as industries outside municipal limits, have also been allowed to operate from April 20. All these will involve fuel consumption," a top industry official said.

Trucks are the biggest user of diesel. Diesel is also used as fuel in the harvester and other agri equipment. Some goods train also run on diesel.

The official said that all these activities will allow diesel demand to pick up in the latter part of the month. Also, vehicles used by e-commerce operators will be allowed

to ply. These vehicles would largely use petrol. "There isn't much hope for ATF but petrol and diesel demand certainly will look up if all the industries and activities permitted by the government resume operations from April 20," the official said.

The government hasn't yet allowed resumption of domestic and international flights. Also, road construction and resuming work on projects in industrial clusters has been allowed, which too would consume fuel, he said. As part of a plan to exit the world's biggest lockdown and revive stalled economic activity, the government on Wednesday allowed makers of information technology hardware, farmers and industries in rural areas to resume operations after April 20.

This came a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi extended a nationwide lockdown to May 3 to prevent the spread of coronavirus. The lockdown was first imposed on March 25 for 21 days. From April 20, the government will lift restrictions on e-commerce companies, goods movement by roads and restart port and air cargo operations.

Factories beyond municipal limits including those in the food processing industry, mining, packaging material, oil and gas exploration and refineries will be allowed to operate. Road construction, irrigation projects, construc-

tion work and projects in industrial areas such as SEZ and EoUs will be allowed to operate.

The official said both public and private sector oil refineries had cut down their run-rate following the drop in demand. Petrochemical plants too had shutdown as products like polymers they produced were not being lifted by user industries such as plastics and packaging unit.

He said that now with packaging industry allowed to operate, some of the products from packed godowns will move, allowing resumption of petrochemical units. The collapse of demand in the world's third-biggest consuming nation during April came on the back of worst fuel sales in more than a decade recorded in March 2020.

The country's petroleum product consumption fell 17.79 per cent to 16.08 million tonnes in March. Diesel, the most consumed fuel in the country, saw demand contract by 24.23 per cent to 5.65 million tonnes.

This is the biggest fall in diesel consumption the country has recorded as most trucks went off-road and railways stopped plying trains. Petrol sales dropped 16.37 per cent to 2.15 million tonnes in March as the 21-day nationwide lockdown enforced to prevent the spread of COVID-19 took most cars and two-wheelers off the road.

FSSAI guidelines ask food business operators to maintain hygiene, safety amid COVID-19 outbreak

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Food regulator FSSAI on Wednesday issued guidelines related to hygiene and safety that food business operators (FBOs) need to follow during the coronavirus disease outbreak.

In its 14-page 'Food Hygiene and Safety Guidelines for food businesses during coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic', the FSSAI has suggested various measures that need to be taken by the FBOs.

"These specific measures, detailed in the document, include maintaining high levels of personal hygiene; excluding COVID-19 infected persons from the operations; practicing social distancing; and appropriate cleaning/sanitisation of the food operations' premises, food contact materials etc," FSSAI said in a statement.

As per the guidelines, food business owners or employers should have a COVID 19 screening protocol in place to screen all personnel entering the premises. Those with temperature more than 99 degree Fahrenheit and/or flu like symptoms should not be allowed to enter establishments. Large food businesses have been asked to set up a local emergency response team to handle suspected coronavirus case.

The document is primarily intended for all types of food businesses including food service, transport and retail operations.

The guidance has been developed based on the best practices currently recognized and adopted internationally. Although there is currently no evidence that food is a likely source or route of trans-

mission of COVID-19 virus, it is important to take all precautions to prevent any possibility of person to person spread of COVID-19 infection during food business operations, the statement said. The FSSAI said that FBOs are already following various hygienic and sanitary measures as per Schedule IV of Food Safety and Standards (Licensing and Registration of Food Businesses) Regulations, 2011. "Nevertheless, COVID-19 situation demands implementation of some additional focussed measures mainly to prevent human-to-human spread of the disease in food business operations and also to reduce the likelihood of contamination of various materials in contact with food such as equipment, packaging materials etc," the statement said.

Find out how COVID-19 has impacted movement of public across the world; Apple releases data

Press Trust Of India

HONG KONG: Apple has launched a new website that shows with striking graphs how the coronavirus pandemic has slammed the brakes on life around the world.

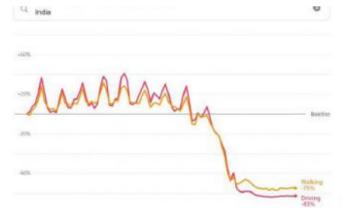
The tool visualises the movement of people in dozens of major cities and countries around the world based on the number of requests

lowed, the disease marched into Europe and North America, and the Apple data show the severe impact on movement in those regions.

Rome saw a staggering drop in mobility numbers -- more than 90 per cent -- starting early March.

London followed within a couple of weeks with a plunge in transit figures of nearly 90 per cent.

New York City, the epi-



made for directions on Apple Maps since January 13.

It shows the dramatic drop in the number of users driving, walking or taking public transit as governments around the world rolled out increasingly stringent containment measures to stop the spread of the deadly virus.

Apple said Tuesday that the purpose of the new website was to help global efforts to try and stop the spread of COVID-19 by giving insights into the movement of people to governments and health authorities.

Hong Kong and Seoul, among the first places hit by the virus after it emerged in mainland China, saw mobility numbers drop by as much as 60 per cent from the second half of January.

In the weeks that fol-

lowed, the disease marched into Europe and North America, and the Apple data show the severe impact on movement in those regions.

A similar drop was seen in Sydney in March as Australia strengthened its social distancing policies. In Singapore, mobility figures were reduced but not dramatically since January, but following a surge in cases and a lockdown imposed earlier this month, they plunged. Apple's website follows the launch earlier this month of a similar movement data tool from Google.

Both projects use anonymised data, the firms have said, as rights activists have raised concerns about the privacy and security of users being compromised in anti-coronavirus projects that involve personal information.

Income tax refunds worth Rs 4,250 crore issued in a week: CBDT



Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The Income Tax department has issued over 10.2 lakh refunds worth Rs 4,250 crore within a week, the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) said on Wednesday.

The Finance Ministry had last week said it will fast track issuance of pending income tax refunds up to Rs 5 lakh, which will benefit around 14 lakh taxpayers, to provide relief to individuals and businesses hit by

The CBDT has already issued over 10.2 lakh refunds totalling to around Rs 4,250 crore as on April 14, 2020. An official statement said that about 1.75 lakh more

refunds are in the process of issuance in this week. "These refunds would get credited directly to the taxpayer bank account in 5-7 business days from issuance," it said.

The CBDT, which is the apex body on matters relating to personal income and corporate tax, had in last fiscal issued 2.50 crore refunds totalling Rs 1.84 lakh crore. CBDT added that in around 1.74 lakh cases, email responses are awaited from taxpayers regarding reconciliation with their outstanding tax demand for which a reminder email has been sent asking them to respond within 7 days so that the refund can be processed accordingly.

No one is now safe: Media report predicts second wave of job loss amid COVID-19 pandemic

Press Trust Of India

NEW YORK: Not just aviation and hospitality sectors which bore the brunt of the first wave of job losses and salary cuts, millions of white-collar jobs spanning across industries are now at stake as longer shutdowns have risked a repeat of the deep and prolonged labour downturn that accompanied the 2007-2009 recession.

According to a Wall Street Journal report, higher paid, higher-skilled jobs are now at risk as new contracts/clients are dried up, sales are plummeted, cash flow is restricted and no one is now safe in the US.

"The consensus of 57 economists surveyed this month by The Wall Street Journal is that 14.4 million jobs will be lost in the coming months, and the unemployment rate will rise to a record 13 per cent in June, from a 50-year low

of 3.5 per cent in February," the report said on Tuesday.

Altogether, about 16.8 million American workers, making up about 11 per cent of the US labour force, have already filed jobless claims for unemployment benefits. Gregory Daco, chief US economist of Oxford Economics, projects 27.9 million jobs will be lost. "The virus shock does not discriminate across sectors as we initially thought," Daco was quoted as saying.

Job search website ZipRecruiter found 39 per cent employed in business and professional services reported they were laid off, nearly the same rate as respondents in retail and wholesale trade. From law firms to IT companies and event management firms, everyone is affected. Even state and local governments in the US who employ 20 million aren't immune.



"Unlike the federal government, they are generally required to balance their books every year. As tax revenue plunges, layoffs and other cost reduc-

tions become necessary," the report said. Many municipalities in the US have already laid off hundreds of workers.

The financial impact of the coronavirus has begun to hit Americans hard as nearly 33 per cent of voters have already lost their job, been furloughed,

placed on temporary leave, or had hours reduced - with 41 per cent of those who have lost a job already reporting having trouble covering basic costs, according to a new survey by non-profit research group Data for Progress.

While over half of voters under age 45 (52 per cent) have lost their job, been placed on leave or had hours cut, only 26 per cent of those over 45 fall into this category. Slightly more men (37 per cent) fall into the job loss/furlough category than women (31 per cent). Among people who have already suffered some loss in income because of the pandemic, 41 per cent anticipate having difficulty covering costs immediately and 81 per cent within the next month. Most voters report that if they lost their current income, they would be able to go 2 months or less before they were unable to pay their bills.

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