



Maximum : 13°C
Minimum : 09°C
Humidity : 86%

SUNSET
Today 07:05 PM
SUNRISE
Tomorrow 05:56 AM

OBSERVER

23rd year OF PUBLICATION

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COVID-FORCED BEHAVIOURAL CHANGES TO STAY FOR LONG: REPORT

The radical behavioural changes that Covid-19 pandemic has forced on people as well as organisations following the lockdowns are here to stay for long-term, and will impact consumption patterns for a host of goods and services, according to a report. The most visible changes are in the media and information space that has seen massive adoption of digital format, said the report by domestic arm of the French advertising powerhouse Publicis Groupe. The findings of the report mark the "profound shifts in the wake of the Covid lockdowns and the resultant changes in the way...."

.....LIFE & TIMES
P5

News Digest

DSEK Okays Promotion Of 90 Teachers

Srinagar: Directorate of School Education Kashmir (DSEK) on Friday accorded sanction to the promotion of 90 teachers as headmasters. Principal Secretary School Education Department Dr Asgar Hassan Samoon had earlier directed the concerned officers to conduct DPC meetings regularly to address the pending grievances of employees of the school education department regarding their promotions, an official spokesperson said. Regarding the issue of pending salaries of RETs being converted into teacher grade II and III, he directed for immediate release of their salaries. **● P-02**

Gutlibagh Village Declared Red Zone

Srinagar: The district administration Ganderbal on Friday declared Gutlibagh village as a red zone and the adjoining villages as buffer zone after a positive case was detected in the area. District Magistrate Ganderbal Shafiqatqbal today declared Gutlibagh village as a red zone and the adjoining villages of Babawayil and Wayil as Buffer Zones, a day after a man tested positive for coronavirus in the village, an official spokesperson said today. Iqbal invoked prohibitory orders under Section 144 of the CrPC and Disaster Management Act, 2005, banning inward or outward movement of any person from the red zone. **● P-02**

LG Inaugurates First Covid Call Centre

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Friday inaugurated the union territory's first Covid response call centre in Srinagar, an official spokesperson said. It also launched web and mobile applications which will help in real time integrated management of the coronavirus disease, he said. The call centre and the web and mobile applications were e-inaugurated by Lieutenant Governor G C Murmu, the spokesperson added. Deputy Commissioner, Srinagar, Shahid Iqbal Chaudhary said the magnitude of the COVID-19 crisis needed a central response. **● P-02**

Free Ration For BPL Families In Srinagar

Srinagar: The district administration on Friday announced to provide free ration to the below poverty line (BPL) families in view of prevailing situation and restrictions in place due to coronavirus pandemic. The distribution of foodgrains for the current month starts tomorrow and will be completed within two weeks, an official spokesperson said today. He said that under this initiative around 30 thousand quintals of foodgrains will be distributed free of cost amongst over 1.4 lac BPL families in the district. "The initiative will benefit just under 6 lac persons who will be provided 5 kilograms of rice per person per month," the **● P-02**

The Kashmiri Supermom Who Fought Her Children's Covid-19 Battle

WasimNabi

SRINAGAR: Departed tears that recently jetted out of Masrat's sleep-deprived eyes signified her immense gratitude for the bravehearts holding the fort during the current catastrophe. Some of those Covid-19 warriors formed a human wall on April 13, to give a hero's farewell to the young mother at Srinagar's Jawahar Lal Nehru Memorial (JLNM) hospital. Much of that respect came from Masrat's awe-inspiring motherhood display. With novel coronavirus

creating a new tribe of 'untouchables' in the society, this young mother from Srinagar's Natipora became a shield of her infected daughters. On March 26, when a team of tearful doctors declared her two daughters, aged 4 and 8, as Covid-19 positive cases, Masrat turned numb with shock, and struggled with her sinking heart. "I remember there was so much of panic in the hospital then," recalled Dr Bilquis Shah, nodal officer, JLNM hospital, Srinagar. "It was the initial stage in Covid-19 fight back and the hospital had started



Farewell Moment: Aleeza and Sehirsh receive bouquets on their discharge from JLNM hospital.

getting the viral foothold." Masrat's two daughters—Aleeza and Sehirsh—were among the 26 high-risk patients initially admitted in JLNM, declared exclusively for Covid-19 management, on March 25. And next day, their test came out positive. "The moment their results came, all of us were in tears," Dr. Bilquis continued. "It was very hard to tell a mother that her daughters have become the pandemic patients, when there was so much of corona scare in the air." What followed was perhaps

the traumatic experience for both healthcare specialists and the family in the hospital. Sensing something wrong, the kids started screaming and craving for their mother's reassuring embrace. Even as the doctors supervised these children with utmost care, they were inconsolable, especially the little girl. In the fight against the invisible enemy, Dr. Bilquis said, the crying children only became the face of a new human tragedy. At that moment, their Covid-19 'negative' mother threw herself in the **▶PAGE 02**

Kashmir Records Another Covid-19 Death, J&K Toll 5 MBA Student, Couple Among 19 More Test Positive

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Kashmir witnessed fourth death due to coronavirus Friday, even as 19 more people, all from Valley tested positive to the dreaded disease, taking the total number of infected people across the Union Territory to 333.

The 75-year-old COVID-19 patient from Armpora Sopore in north Kashmir's Baramulla district died at a hospital here, making it the fourth death in Kashmir due to the novel coronavirus. A 75-year-old man from Arampora locality of Sopore died of coronavirus at the SKIMS Bemina, one of the exclusively Covid-19 manage-

ment facilities, fifteen days after he was admitted at the hospital, reports said. The elderly man had tested Covid-19 positive earlier this month. "The man was 70 plus. He was hypertensive and also was suffering from Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD Asthma)," Medical Superintendent Dr Shafa A Deva said. She said the body of the deceased would be handed over to his family for last rites with due compliance to the Ministry of Health guidelines.

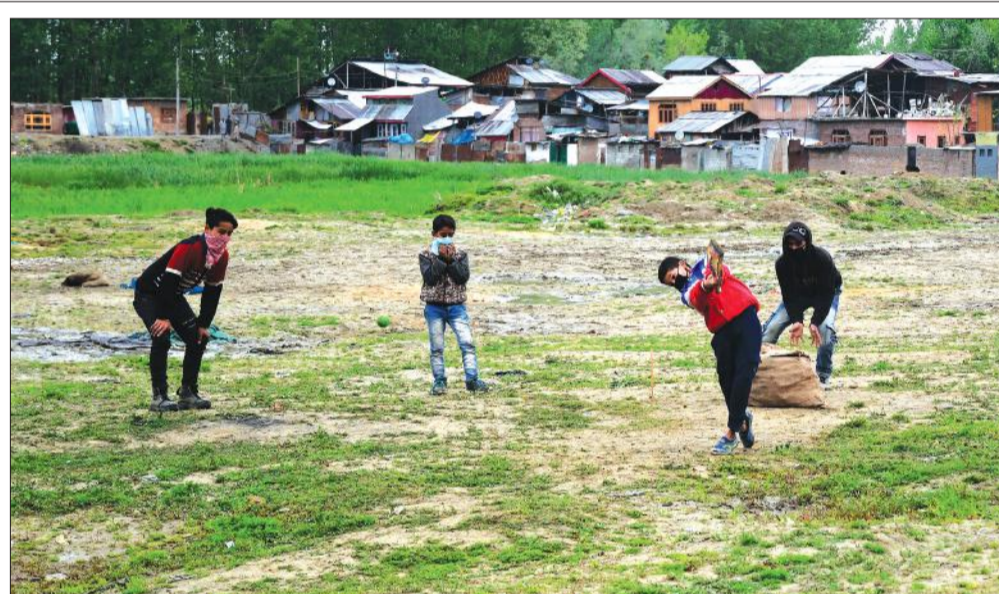
With the elderly man's death, the toll due to Covid-19 has risen to four in Kashmir and five across Jammu and Kashmir UT.

Meanwhile, 19 fresh cases were reported in J&K, all in Kashmir Valley—nine of them are from Bandipora, eight from Shopian and 2 from Kupwara, news agency GNS reported.

A couple and a youth are among three new cases reported from worst hit Gund Jahangir village of Bandipora. They all are said to be contacts of previous patients. **▶PAGE 02**



A GROUP OF DOCTORS WALKING THROUGH the compound of SMHS hospital here on Friday. Pic Abid Bhat



A GROUP OF MASKED BOYS PLAYING CRICKET on a rainy day in Srinagar outskirts on Friday. KO-Photo Abid Bhat

Govt Puts 'Formal' Darbar Opening In Srinagar On Hold

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Friday deferred "formal" reopening of Darbar move offices in Srinagar till mid-June, citing the hampering of Covid-19 combat efforts.

Modifying its April 10 order, the government ordered that the formal opening of the Darbar at Srinagar will take place on June 15. "All officers" assigned specific COVID-19 control tasks shall continue to function from their present location till further orders, so as to ensure that COVID-19 control efforts are not hampered on account of physical dislocation of officers/offices," reads the fresh order. As per an order issued here, it would be further reviewed on June 15. The Civil Secretariat at Srinagar

shall start partial functioning on 04.05.2020 with the staff and officers on 'as is where is' basis i.e. those who have already been or likely to get relocated before that date.

Govt Orders Resumption Of Offices From April 20
SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Friday ordered resumption of all offices across the Union Territory from April 20, while the education institutions and training institutes have been closed **● P-02**

"All Administrative Secretaries shall furnish list of officers/staff who shall work from Srinagar and Jammu respectively to the General Administration **▶PAGE 02**

Curbs In Srinagar To Continue Till May 3

SRINAGAR: The district authorities on Friday renewed prohibitory orders, banning public movement and operation of business and other establishments in district Srinagar till May 3 in view of the coronavirus pandemic. District Magistrate Srinagar, Dr Shahid Iqbal Choudhary **● P-02**

1200 J&K Workers In Punjab Go On Hunger Strike

PATHANKOT: Nearly 1,200 workers from Jammu and Kashmir, who have completed their quarantine period of fourteen days in different camps in Punjab's Pathankot district, are on a hunger strike for the last **● P-02**

Post-Prayer Clashes In Sumbal, 6 Cops Injured

SRINAGAR: At least six policemen on Friday were injured in clashes that erupted in Sumbal area of Bandipora district after a group of people offered congregational defying the prohibitory orders in place. **● P-02**

Pharmacist Suspended For Refusing To Serve Covid-19 Patients

SRINAGAR: The district administration in Kupwara on Friday suspended a pharmacist after he refused to serve meals to the covid-19 patients being treated at a hospital in the frontier district. **● P-02**

Govt Eases Construction Norms, SOPs Issued

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir administration has relaxed restrictions on the construction activities in the Union Territory on the condition that the executing agencies will follow the norms of social **● P-02**

Anjuman To Suspend Religious Activities In Ramzan

SRINAGAR: Jammu Kashmir Anjuman-e-Sharie Shiyaaan on Friday announced to suspend all religious activities during the holy month of Ramzan, amid the threat of Covid-19 spread. **● P-02**

Why Only 4000 Tests If Over 50,000 Under Lens, HC Asks Govt

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir High Court has directed Chief Secretary and Secretary Health and Medical Education to "urgently examine" the issue of "insufficient sampling" amid submissions that only around 4000 people have been tested for COVID-19 even as the government states that over 50000 people have been put under observation in J&K.

"Let this issue be urgently examined by the Chief Secretary, UT of J&K as well as Secretary, Health and Medical Education," said a division bench of Justice

Gita Mittal and Justice Rajnesh Oswal while hearing clubbed Public Interest Litigations through video conferencing. The submissions were made by advocate Ateeb Kanth who also pointed out that the report filed by the Health Department shows that only 157 technicians are available and it stands a reason for "insufficient sampling". As a result, he said, despite the Government stand that 50,000 (now around 60000) people have travelled into J&K, only 4,000 people have been tested for COVID-19. The court also sought comments from "stakeholders" including the Indian **▶PAGE 02**

WE SHALL CONSIDER THE IMPACT of this order on the next date of hearing after full information has been placed before us,"

Business Tycoon Chaya Booked for 'Escaping' Red Zone

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: J&K Police has filed an FIR against the noted Kashmiri businessman Mushtaq Ahmad Chaya for "escaping" a Red Zone in Jammu and undertaking a travel towards Srinagar.

Police said Mr Chaya left for Srinagar along with few others and has reached his Zakoora home in Srinagar despite lockdown.

"As intimated by SHO PS Trikuta Nagar, Jammu vide his signal dated 17-4-2020 that today one person namely Mushtaq Ahmad Chaya R/O Zakoora Srinagar who was staying at Farooq Abdullah Enclave, Bhatindi Jammu has deliberately left for Srinagar along with other persons from Red Zone Bhatindi," a Police missive sent to **▶PAGE 02**

KO Reporter Detained For Being Out In Lockdown

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A prominent journalist from Ganderbal district was arrested by Sumbal police while discharging his professional duty. He was slapped with various charges and lodged in police station Sumbal. Mushtaq Ganaie, who works for Kashmir Observer, was arrested on Saturday afternoon when he was traveling home near Sumbal. "My car was intercepted by a police party at a naka and I was asked to give reasons for my being out in the lockdown. I showed my identity papers and explained the reason even as a press tag was pasted on my car windshield" Mushtaq said.

He said while I was showing my papers, the SHO of Police Station Sumbal arrived there and ordered that I should be taken to the police station. "When I argued with him he abused me and refused to listen to my pleas that I was on job like him", Mushtaq said. The journalist was later booked on charges of "creating hurdles in police officer's duty" and detained for two days in the lock-up. An FIR bearing number: 60 of 2020 was registered against him. "I was not able to contact any one as my phone was confiscated", he alleged. Journalist was released two days later after his family members approached court and got bail orders. Kashmir Observer made **▶PAGE 02**

Two Unknown Militants Killed In Shopian Encounter CRPF Trooper Injured In Pulwama Shootout

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Two unidentified militants were killed in a gunfight with government forces in south Kashmir's Shopian district, while a CRPF trooper was injured in a militant ambush in Pulwama district, officials said Friday.

Acting on specific inputs about the presence of militants, a joint team of special operations group (SOG) of police and army laid a cordon around Dairoo village of Keegam in Shopian this morning, a police official said. When the joint team started advances, the mili-

tants hiding in a residential house opened fire at them in a bid to escape from their dragnet. "The fire was retaliated leading to an encounter. In the exchange of fire, two militants were killed," the official said. The bodies of the militants were recovered from the debris of the house that was blasted by the state forces. The identity of the slain and their group affiliation are being ascertained, officials said. Meanwhile, a CRPF trooper was injured this evening when militants opened fire upon a mobile checkpoint established by **▶PAGE 02**

SPO's killers Shot Dead In Gunfight: Police

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir police on Friday claimed to have killed two alleged militants responsible for assassination of a policeman and injuries to another in Kishtwar area of Doda district. On Monday, special police officers (SPOs) Pashid Iqbal and Vishal Singh were patrolling Tander, Dachan area of Kishtwar when they were **● P-02**

Army Chief Reviews Situation Along LoC In Kashmir

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR- Army chief General M M Naravane reviewed the security situation along the Line of Control in the Kashmir Valley on Friday, a defence spokesperson said here. On the second day of his two-day visit to the valley, Naravane reviewed the security situation along the LOC, including counter-infiltration measures, said Colonel Rajesh Kalia. He said the Army chief, accompanied by the Northern Army Commander Lt Gen Y K Joshi and Chinara Corps Commander Lt Gen B S Raju, visited the formations and units. The local Commanders briefed Naravane on the existing secu-



urity situation and the measures in place to foil infiltration bids by terrorists, Kalia said. The Chief of Army Staff was briefed on the cease fire violations, retaliations, counter infiltration operations and operational preparedness, he said. During an interaction **▶PAGE 02**

Advisor Baseer Khan Directs Speedy Completion Of Power Augmentation Projects

'Ensure round the clock electricity to quarantine centres, during Ramadhan'

JAMMU: Advisor to Lieutenant Governor Baseer Ahmad Khan today directed speedy implementation of various Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) meant for augmentation of power infrastructure including increasing transmission capacity so that uninterrupted power supply is provided to people at the earliest.



The Advisor was speaking at a review meeting convened to discuss power scenario and implementation of various centrally sponsored schemes in Kashmir under KPDCCL projects.

The schemes currently being executed include Integrated Power Development Scheme (IPDS), Deendayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana (DUGJY), Prime Ministers Development Plan (PMDP) and several other schemes.

While reviewing the progress and targets of the schemes, the Advisor directed speeding up their execution for the greater good of the society. He maintained that officers should hold

regular meetings to remove the bottlenecks, if any, so that these schemes are completed within the stipulated timeframe without incurring any cost

escalation. The Advisor while discussing the condition of distribution infrastructure asked the engineers to identify all

worn-out poles, transformers and conductors in the region so that sufficient funds are made available for replacement in a mission mode for creating a much more reliable distribution infrastructure.

The Advisor directed that round the clock power supply must be maintained in the newly established quarantine centers for COVID-19 positive patients.

He also directed maintaining uninterrupted power supply during Sehri and Iftar time in the coming holy month of Ramadhan.

For the convenience of the public, the Advisor directed PDD officers to maintain a register in every district regarding damage of transformers and their repair.

The meeting was attended by Secretary PDD, M Raju and other senior officers.

MD, PDCL, Chief Engineer PDD Kashmir attended the review meeting through video conferencing.

COVID FIRST PREFERENCE: Blocked drain inundates Srinagar locality with filthy water

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Due to blockade of drainage system in Bhagwanpora area of Noor Bagh Srinagar, stench and garbage spilling all over the road and into the premises of houses have created health problems for people while concerned department is doing nothing to give a respite to the people.

Locals told news agency that filth and dirty water are all over on the link road and in the premises of the houses. "This is because of the faulty drainage system that the area has. The water from the drain has spilled all over the road and it has now become impossible to even walk on it," said locals.

"The reason we are reporting this to your news agency is that, our endless pleas to the municipality has always been treated with a deaf ear, and so almost everyone has stopped bothering and have adjusted to the scenario," they said adding that Covid-19 threat has kept the administration busy and no other matters are being considered important now.

The locals said that it has become difficult for them to spend time even inside the houses. "The foul smell emanating from the drain has made our lives hell. Even children are not able to concentrate on their studies," they said and once again urged concerned department to repair the drainage system.

Meanwhile, locals from New Colony Shamabad area of Central Kashmir's Budgam district told KNT that from past week they are unable to get clean drinking water. "Last week, a 100 feet pipe line was damaged and since then 25 households are without drinking water. Water is flowing from the pipe but the concerned department, despite being categorized as essential one, is not bothering to repair the pipe," they said and appealed DC Budgam to look into the matter. (KNT)

Strict adherence to SOP's in Red zones of district Pulwama Intensive surveillance measures in place: DM

PULWAMA: The District Magistrate, Pulwama, Dr Raghav Langer, today said that District Administration is strictly adhering to guidelines (SOP's) in the areas declared COVID-19 Red zones in the district. He said that the 4th door to door screening cum surveillance work in red zones is under completion and all the contacts have been traced. The purpose is to contain the spread of community transmission by enforcing restrictions already imposed under the Disaster Management Act, 2005.

He said restrictions in the red zone areas including Khaigam, Sangerwani, Abhama of Tehsil Rajpora and Gudoora, Chandgam, Pinglana and Parigam of Tehsil Pulwama have been intensified till final screening and surveillance of all persons belonging to these areas is complete.

He said no outward or inward movement is allowed in these areas and movement across the red zone boundaries is for essential supplies (medical, grocery, vegetables), medical emergencies, fumigation, sanitation, and of



enforcement and survey personnel.

It is pertinent to mention that the administration has put in place a scientific and comprehensive mechanism in all these areas to ensure all requirements and needs of residents are covered as long as these areas remain under restrictions. He added hundreds of officials have been deputed in these areas for the convenience of people, whereas screening and surveillance is under process which will be completed in next few days.

DM hailed the role of health officials, Municipal Committee, officials of various departments and volunteers in helping the administration in containing the COVID-19 in these areas. Earlier, District Authorities booked 8 persons for violating the government orders in Red zones, where section 269 IPC (unlawfully or negligently doing something which is likely to spread infection of any dangerous disease to life), section 270 IPC (malignant act likely to spread infection of dangerous disease to life), section 271 IPC (knowingly disobeying any quarantine rule) and section 188 IPC (for disobeying the Government

orders) have been invoked. To ensure coordination joint control rooms, with dedicated nodal officers have been established and people from Red zone areas have been asked to contact 24*7 COVID Control Room (01933240412, 01933240912) for COVID-19 queries and emergencies.

Moreover People hailing from the Red zone villages have been asked to contact round the clock (24*7) District Emergency Control room in case of any grievance regarding the essential services & other related issues on Landline No 01933- 240354.

SMC designates Official Spokesmen Joint Commissioner (administration), Secretary, Health Officer to issue press statements: Commissioner SMC

SRINAGAR: Commissioner, Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC), Gazanfar Ali, chaired a meeting of officers to discuss various issues regarding the functioning of the corporation, here today.



Threadbare discussion was held in the meeting which was attended by the senior officers of the corporation. The issue of fake news being circulated in some section of media which is being attributed to the SMC officials was also discussed.

On the occasion, the Commissioner designated three

officers who can speak to the media on behalf of the Corporation.

The Commissioner designated Joint Commissioner, Administration, Syed Abul Qasim

and Secretary, Sofi Mohammad Akbar as spokespersons for the SMC functioning while Health officer, Dr Qazi Javid was asked to speak to media on health and hygiene.

SMC installs decontamination tunnel at J&K High Court

SRINAGAR: Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) installed and made operational a decontamination tunnel at Jammu and Kashmir, High Court, here today.



The tunnel was installed at the entry point of the High Court building to ensure persons visiting the court get sanitized instantly while entering or leaving the premises.

Speaking on the occasion, Commissioner said that SMC has already installed decontamina-

tion tunnels in all the major hospitals of Srinagar.

"We are installing such tunnels at other places of public importance also," he added.

Dy Mayor oversees sanitization works at Lal Bazar

SRINAGAR: Continuing sanitization work, a team of workers of Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) equipped with protective gear and specialized machines today sanitized various areas of Lal Bazar.

The sanitization works were carried at Botsha Mohalla, Mughal Mohalla, Sheikh Hamzah Colony, Satbooni and other adjacent of Lal Bazar.

Under the directions of Srinagar Mayor, Junaid Azim Mattu, the Deputy Mayor, Parvaiz Ahmad Qadri along with the concerned Corporator, Dan-

ish Shafi, visited the areas and took first hand assessment of the sanitization works being carried by the SMC.

On the occasion, sanitization chemical mixture was sprayed in various lanes and bye lanes of these areas. Besides, the Deputy Mayor also visited ATMs in the area and directed the concerned to ensure ATMs are being sanitized on regular basis. Deputy Mayor informed that extensive sanitization drive is being carried in Srinagar with an aim to break the chain of transmission of COVID 19.

Chamber urges Gol to restore 4G internet in J&K

SRINAGAR: PHD Chamber on Friday urged Government of India to restore 4G internet services in Jammu and Kashmir and said restricting high-speed internet, it becomes harder to access information online required to combat Covid-19 pandemic.

According to statement issued to Kashmir News Service (KNS), PHD Chamber appealed Government to restore high speed internet services across Jammu and Kashmir in wake of Covid-19 pandemic. PHD Chamber Mentor Mush-taq Ahmad Chaya and Chair-

man PHD Chamber Kashmir Baldev Singh Raina said as the COVID-19 has spread within the Country and across the globe pushed many active on halt due to clampdown of the services in J&K since August 2019. They said in current situation the virus can engulf school, college and university going children who are unable to access high speed internet service so that online information could have availed to defeat the pandemic.

"The issue is particularly severe for schools, colleges

and universities where the risk of spreading the disease is high. The Universities, schools are all closing for varying amounts of time, some moving classes exclusively online through apps and software like Zoom and Google Classroom until they reopen and have shift to online lesson plans, they're running into the limitations of our threadbare internet networks, which leave most of the students unable to connect to their new online classrooms", office bearers of PHD Chamber said.

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

- 310 - St Eusebius begins his reign as Catholic Pope
- 387 - Bishop Ambrosius of Milan baptizes Augustinus
- 1025 - Boleslaw Chrobry is crowned in Gniezno, becoming the first King of Poland
- 1506 - The cornerstone of the current St. Peter's Basilica is laid in the Vatican
- 1518 - Bona Sforza is crowned queen consort of Poland
- 1521 - Diet of Worms: Cardinal Alexander questions Martin Luther
- 1552 - Mauritius of Saksen occupies Linz
- 1663 - Osman declares war on Austria
- 1666 - Peace of Kieff: Netherlands & bishop Von Galen of Munster
- 1676 - Sudbury, Massachusetts, attacked by Indians
- 1688 - "Germantown Quaker Petition Against Slavery": Francis Daniel Pastorius authors 1st formal written protest against African-American slavery in English colonies in Germantown, Pennsylvania
- 1738 - Real Academia de la Historia ("Royal Academy of History") founded in Madrid
- 1775 - Paul Revere and William Dawes ride from Charlestown to Lexington warning the "regulars are coming!"
- 1783 - Fighting ceases in the American Revolution, eight years to the day when it began
- 1797 - France & Austria sign ceasefire
- 1809 - First run of 2,000 guineas horse race at Newmarket, England
- 1848 - American victory at the battle of Cerro Gordo opens the way for invasion of Mexico.
- 1861 - Battle of Harpers Ferry, Virginia, part of the Maryland Campaign (US Civil War)
- 1869 - 1st international cricket match, held in SF, wins by Californian
- 1902 - Denmark is first country to adopt fingerprinting to identify criminals
- 1906 - San Francisco earthquake and fire kills nearly 4,000 while destroying 75% of the city
- 1912 - Tripolitan War: in continuing hostilities, Turkey closes the Dardanelles Straits after an Italian naval bombardment of the coastline
- 1915 - French pilot Roland Garros is shot down and glides to a landing on the German side of the lines during World War I.
- 1916 - US Secretary of State Warns Germany that the USA may break diplomatic relations unless torpedo attacks on unarmed ships stop
- 1922 - Netherlands soccer team defeats Denmark 2-0
- 1924 - 1st crossword puzzle book published (Simon & Schuster)
- 1925 - World's Fair opens in Chicago
- 1927 - Chiang Kai-shek forms anti-government in China
- 1945 - Diplomatic relations between the Soviet Union and Bolivia are established.
- 1946 - League of Nations dissolves (3 months after UN starts)
- 1946 - US recognizes Tito's Yugoslavia government
- 1948 - International Court of Justice opens at Hague Netherlands
- 1951 - France, West Germany & Benelux form European Steel & Coal Community
- 1954 - Colonel Gamal Abdal Nasser seizes power & becomes Prime Minister of Egypt
- 1956 - Egypt & Israel agree to a cease fire
- 1958 - Government troops reconquer Padang, Middle-Sumatra Indonesia
- 1961 - CONCP is founded in Casablanca as a united front of African movements opposing Portuguese colonial rule.
- 1979 - Major Haddad declares South-Lebanon independent
- 1980 - Zimbabwe (formerly Southern Rhodesia) declares independence from UK
- 2013 - 27 people are killed and 65 are injured in a cafe bombing in Baghdad, Iraq
- 2013 - Two earth-like planets are discovered orbiting the star Kepler-62



PRAYERS

- FAJR 4: 29
- ZUHR 12: 32
- ASR 5: 12
- MAGRIB 7: 07
- ISHA 8: 33

From KO Archives

'Onus both on India, Pak for safe bus travel'

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Prime Minister Manmohan Singh today said that it is the joint responsibility of India and Pakistan as also the local authorities on both sides of the Line of Control (LoC) to ensure full security cover to passengers of the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service. "Notwithstanding the recent dastardly attempt to disturb the bus service between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad by terrorists, the people of Jammu and Kashmir came out on the streets as one to welcome this gesture of reconciliation," he said addressing the Chief Ministers' Conference on Internal Security here.

"I hope the terrorists and extremists in the region have grasped the mood of the people and will not try to disturb this bus service again," he said.

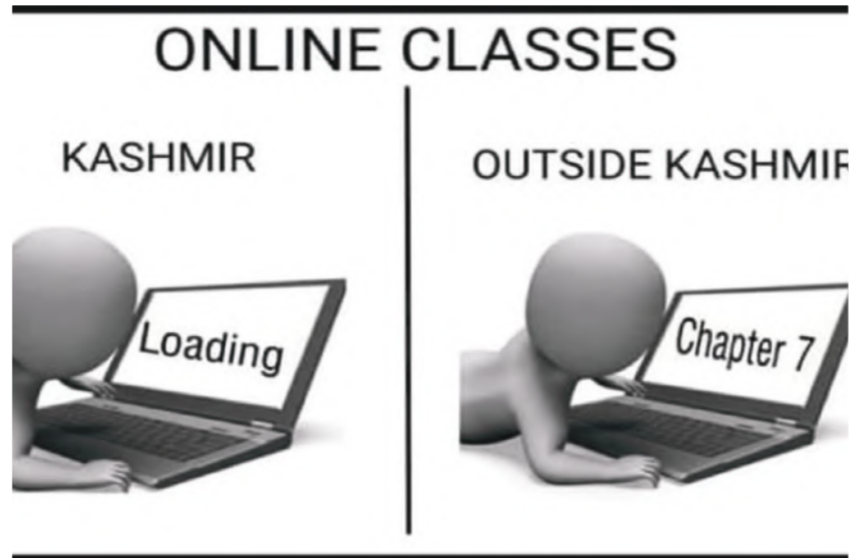
Singh said it was the joint responsibility of the governments of India and Pakistan and the local authorities on both sides of the LoC to work together in providing full security to passengers.

(Kashmir Observer, 18 April, 2005)

KASHMIR
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NO HOLDS BARRED



India is proud of Demographic Dividend. It means that India has 62.5% of its population in the age group of 15-59 years. It shows that we are living in an age where the potentials of youth can be channelised into constructive ways. Nevertheless, it is looking a distant dream, given the present situation in India.

Covid-19: Impacting Our Minds And Our Wallets!

FAIZAN SHAH MALIK

India finds itself in a rather precarious position with the Stock market which was soaring just a few months back, hit all time high and was making new highs every week, has now dropped almost over 35% of its value from its recent highs and is now back at 2016 levels.

We are officially in Lockdown. Call it a curfew or a lockdown or address it by any other name, the bottom line is that we are going to be staying home for the next 20 days or so, at least for now.

So as each day passes by, we are beginning to realize that this might be getting a lot worse than what we originally thought and it is this scary reality that we have to live with every day now and no one knows for how long.

However, we hope and pray that with all this social distancing (some mandatory, some not) that is happening almost across the globe, we will be able to flatten the curve sooner than later and we will be able to lower the spread of this virus and bring it down to a manageable level where we can get back to our normal day to day routine.

Hence, with the passage of time it will surely bring with it a host of issues and problems to our doorsteps and to our homes and into our minds, and one of them is the psychological and emotional toll that it will have on almost an entire population, which in my opinion is currently being underestimated or overlooked.

Having lived through it, in a somewhat similar situation very recently in Kashmir since and over the years, I can say this with a degree of certainty that it will be widespread, it will be substantial and a lot of people will need a lot of help for varied degrees of mental, emotional & psychological trauma that they will go through, for a variety of reasons and one of the most prominent reason among those will be purely economical.

Lot of people will lose their livelihood. Some people will lose their jobs, others will lose their businesses, bankruptcies and insolvencies will increase and when people won't be able to pay their bills, the emotional trauma of that will be enormous in itself.

It looks like the worst case scenario is unimaginable and we really cannot or do not want to even fathom it, just because it seems so improbable and implausible right now, we tend to ignore what that reality might look like.

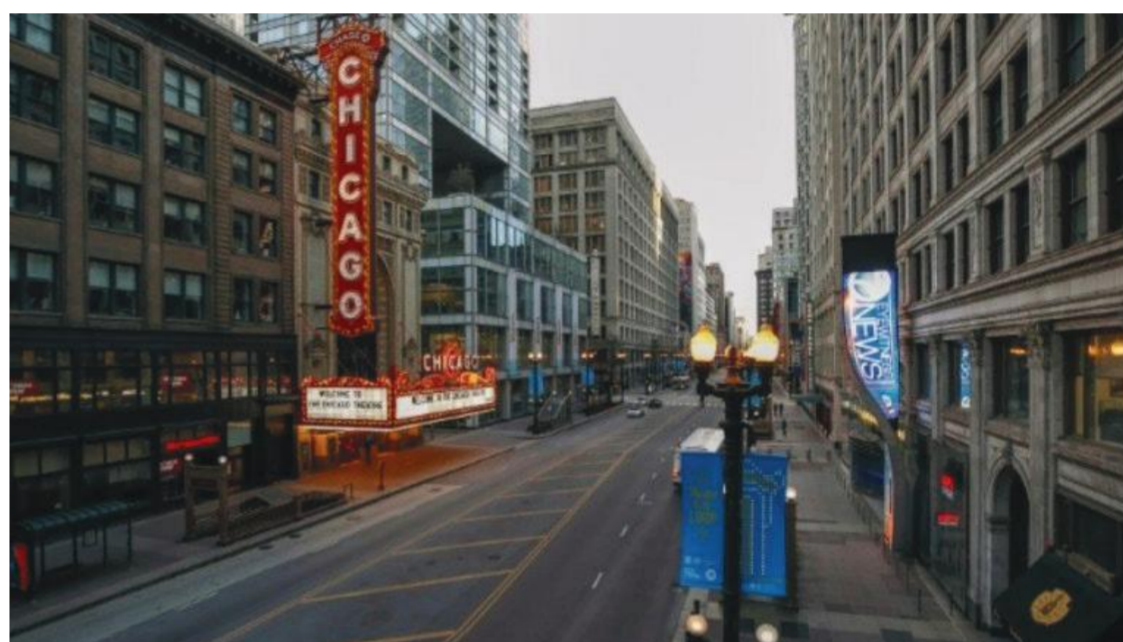
But with each passing day the subconscious mind is beginning to transform and give some verisimilitude to what very recently just looked like a figment of our imagination.

So the governments across the globe will need to prepare for this inevitable, this catastrophe that seems to befall upon us in the not so distant future.

And India is no different, in fact India is a lot more vulnerable given its population size and density especially in the metros.

As Governments across the world are announcing all sorts of financial packages to help them weather this storm and keep their economies afloat, India is yet to announce anything substantial.

The US senate passed a big economic stimulus of around 2 trillion dollars a few days back, which includes sending checks to individuals and bail out packages for big industries as well as for small businesses. While some governments are debating on the packages, some have already announced, people across the globe are getting jittery and scared. Will I lose my job? How will I pay my rent? How will I make my payments? Will the government assistance be enough? There are



Having lived through it, in a somewhat similar situation in Kashmir over the years, I can say this with a degree of certainty that impact of lockdown will be widespread and people will need a lot of help for varied degrees of mental, emotional & psychological trauma.

numerous other questions that are cropping up in people's minds, and they are looking up to the government for answers and solutions.

So the government needs to step up and assure people and come up with a package that keeps us all afloat till we get back on track once the dust settles.

Luckily, India has so far had a lot less confirmed cases of the Covid-19. Is that because of lack of testing or are we behind the curve by a few weeks to the other countries, all this remains to be seen and we will know soon enough.

As we brace ourselves for the economic impact of this, the government needs to address this sooner than later.

India finds itself in a rather precarious position with the Stock market which was soaring just a few months back, hit all time high and was making new highs every week, has now dropped almost over 35% of its value from its recent highs and is now back at 2016 levels.

However, the stock market does not always reflect the true state of the economy in a country. As we have seen in India, GDP growth rate has been falling in the past 1-2 years with growth falling from upwards of 7% to around 4.5% now. The slowest it has grown since Q1 of 2013.

Besides other factors, demonetization hurt the economy badly as it dealt a crushing blow to the unorganized sector which is primarily cash based and accounts for over 90% of the India's economy.

With India announcing lockdown for 21 days, economic impact of this shutdown will be enormous. As we brace ourselves for the rough road ahead, we need the government to come up with solutions and announce some major relief measures in form of economic pack-

ages or waivers that takes care of the poor as well as the middle class of this country as they will bear the brunt of this catastrophe that seems inevitable now.

Because we might be in this for long haul and we probably need more help from the government in the later months as well, when this thing hits its peak, which hopefully will be sooner than later, we don't want them to have dealt all their cards now and have nothing left in tank for later. So anything they come up needs to address the current situation and have in mind the worst hasn't come yet.

We need both relaxation on monetary policy front and strong fiscal measures to help the economy move forward because the headwinds that we are going to face will be strong and we will need all the help we can get.

They can just borrow (at the low interest rates now) and shore up the economy and come up with a package much bigger than anyone is thinking about. They can surely afford a larger fiscal deficit now but they can't afford an economy that is totally destroyed and then cannot be fixed quickly.

Once we see the government comes up with something on the economic front, the mental aspect of this needs to be addressed as well, and that it should not be taken lightly. We hope to hear from the government on both fronts very soon.

Faizan Shah Malik is MA in Economics & MBA from University of Texas, Arlington. He is currently working as a Freelance Investment Advisor, Futures & Commodities trader.



OBSERVER MAIL

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

MAIL YOUR LETTERS

P.O.Box # 337, GPO, Srinagar-190 001
email: editpage.ko@gmail.com

Youth is a stage of life that falls between the childhood and the adulthood. This stage of life is a hub of creativity, energy, agility, etc. However, it also is the stage of emotional instability. For a nation to achieve the greatest things of a civilisation, it is youth that can play a vibrant role in this endeavour.

India is proud of Demographic Dividend. It means that India has 62.5% of its population in the age group of 15-59 years. It shows that we are living in an age where the potentials of youth can be channelised into constructive ways. Nevertheless, it is looking a distant dream, given the present situation in India.

At the present moment, the whole world is engulfed by the COVID-19. The avenues for youth are narrowing with each passing day. Socially, economically, politically, morally, etc., the youth of today find themselves isolated and marginalised more than ever. Same is the situation here. The youth of Kashmir are full of unique characteristics but have limited or no means to show their potential. They are pass-

Wasted Youth

ing through so difficult times an outsider can hardly imagine. Like their past they stare at a gloomy future.

When we talk of the youth of Kashmir in the present situation, the picture is already blurred. They had just emerged from a seven month long lockdown when they found themselves locked in again. What our youth are going through can be any one's guess.

Adding to the misery the government refuses to unlock the most vital source of communication, the internet fully, even after this new phase of isolation was necessitated due to COVID 19 outbreak. We can't meet each other. We can't talk to each other. We can't go into someone's house. We can't have social gatherings. Friend circles are gone in the real world and the virtual world of the friend circles are inaccessible.

In this backdrop youth of Kashmir feel choked.

These are the testing times of any society but here one can not even communicate with the loved ones staying outside the four walls of your home.

These times test the efficiency of a society but here, it is not a thought at all. I myself being in my youth, am busy in counting the cases of corona virus. I feel helpless. My constructive powers are wasted. A youth goes through the darkest stages of life, to see a light at the end of the tunnel. But in this part of the land, the tunnel has no end and the possibility of a light is an utopian concept. Our lives are meaningless. We live for the sake of living. I like others have a habit of time passing. Not knowing how to utilise this precious time in making a change that we cherish in our bruised hearts. My eyes well up with tears when I meet my friends. They say that



in this big world we are alone.

...
Syed Mustafa Ahmad
Syedmustafaahmad9@gmail.com
Hajibagh, Zainakote
Srinagar

Longer It Goes, Harder It Is
The Psychology Of Lockdown

DOUGLAS SUTHERLAND

At a very basic level, human behaviour is governed by reward principles. If what we do is followed by a perceived reward, we're more likely to keep doing it. Not getting sick is a reward, but it may not be perceived as such for much longer as most of us weren't sick in the first place. This lack of reward reinforcement could be intensified by an optimism bias – "It won't happen to me" – which may become stronger than our anxiety as time passes and the perceived threat reduces.

The Covid-19 pandemic has forced millions of people to live under strict lockdown conditions, but the psychology of human behaviour predicts they will find it harder to stick to the rules the longer the situation continues.

New Zealand has now reached a midway point of a comprehensive four-week lockdown and there have already been some rule breakers. Most prominent among them was the country's health minister, David Clark, who almost lost his job this week for flouting lockdown rules by going mountain biking and driving his family 20 km to a beach.

He won't be the last to break the rules. During a pandemic, fear is one of the central emotional responses and up to this point, most people have complied with lockdown conditions out of fear of becoming infected. But as time passes, people's resolution may begin to fray.

Psychology of a pandemic

A group of more than 40 psychologists are currently reviewing research relevant to people's behaviour during a pandemic to advance the fight against Covid-19.

The psychological factors that motivate us to stay in our bubble are a mix of individual, group and societal considerations.

At a very basic level, human behaviour is governed by reward principles. If what we do is followed by a perceived reward, we're more likely to keep doing it. Not getting sick is a reward, but it may not be perceived as such for much longer as most of us weren't sick in the first place. This lack of reward reinforcement could be intensified by an optimism bias – "It won't happen to me" – which may become stronger than our anxiety as time passes and the perceived threat reduces.

Outside of our individual psychology, broader social factors come into play. In times of uncertainty we look to others to guide our own behaviour as they set our social norms.

Often, there is a degree of confusion about guidelines on what people are allowed to do, for example when exercising during lockdown. Seeing others out surfing, mountain biking and picnicking in a park can lead to a mindset of "if they're doing it, why can't I?"

To counter this, governments must appeal to people's sense of shared identity and highlight examples of punishment for rule breakers. But an over-emphasis on punishment risks people sticking to rules merely for social approval, which means they may conform in public but not in private. Being punished can also build resentment and may lead people to seeking out loopholes in the rules.



A schoolteacher dresses up as a clown for his two-year-old daughter in San Fiorano, Italy, while in lockdown. | Marzio Toniolo/via Reuters

Group behaviour

In order to last the distance at the highest level of lockdown, people need to cooperate as a group. If everyone complies, we'll all be okay.

The reverse was evident in the early stages of the Covid-19 pandemic with the panic-induced buying of toilet paper, face masks and other "essentials". Here, we saw decision making based on emotion and the government attempting to counter it with fact-based information.

There is evidence that in times of major crises, groups may prioritise their local interests, such as keeping your family, neighbourhood or wider community safe. But this has the potential to spill over into vigilantism if local protection interests combine with fear. It can prioritise the interests of a few over the greater good.

Cultural factors

Cultural and political psychology also has an impact on our behaviour during lockdown. Broadly speaking, different cultures can be categorised as "tight" or "loose".

Tight cultures, such as China or Singapore, tend to be more rule bound and less open but are also associated with more order and self-regulation. In contrast, looser cultures, like the United Kingdom and the United States, place more emphasis on individual freedoms and rights, and are correspond-

ingly slow to self-regulate in the face of government requirements. Australia appears to fall towards the looser end of the spectrum while New Zealanders sits somewhere in the middle.

The challenge is how we respond as societies continue to "tighten" with strict rules while boredom and annoyance sets in.

Political polarisation, which has increased markedly in recent years, may be exacerbated by being physically distant from others. There is a danger that as we stay in our bubbles, both physical and virtual, we fall into "echo chambers" wherein we only hear similar voices and opinions to our own.

If this chamber becomes filled with resentment at ongoing restraints on our freedom, it can break down our motivation to stay home. But polarisation can be overcome by helping people identify with a bigger cause – and this was often invoked during times of war.

Even after populations emerge from the lockdowns, it will be hard to know what to expect. People will need clear guidelines at each stage and help to adjust to a new normal.

Douglas Sutherland, Clinical Psychologist, Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington.

BOOKS

How A Book Club Helped Britons Deal With World War II (And What We Can Learn From It)

NICOLA WILSON

These are unprecedented times – but, even so, comparisons are being made to the second world war in terms of the magnitude of the crisis that coronavirus represents. Some of this rhetoric is unhelpful but, as we bunker down into our homes and the government gets on a war footing, there is little doubt that the challenge to our liberty, leisure time and sense of well-being is real.

With early reports that book sales are soaring while bookshops and warehouses close down and publishers reassess their lists, what can the reading patterns of an earlier generation tell us about getting through a crisis and staying at home?

The restrictions at the beginning of the second world war affected all aspects of day-to-day life. But it was the blackout that topped most people's list of grievances – above shortages of food and fuel, the evacuation, and lack of news and public services. Households were reprimanded and fined for showing chinks of light through windows, car lights were dimmed, and walking around, even along familiar streets, late at night became treacherous.

With the widespread limitations to free movement, the book trade was quick off the mark. Books were promoted by libraries and book clubs as the very thing to fight boredom and fill blacked-out evenings at home or in shelters with pleasure and forgetfulness. "Books may become more necessary than gas-masks," the Book Society, Britain's first celebrity book club, advised.

Selling tales

I've been researching the choices and recommendations of the Book Society for the past few years. The club was set up in 1929 and ran until the 1960s, shipping "carefully" selected books out to thousands of readers each month. It was modelled on the success of the



American Book-of-the-Month club, which launched in 1926, and aimed to boost book sales at a time when buying books wasn't common. It irritated some critics and booksellers who accused it of "dumbing down" and giving an unfair advantage to some books over others – but was hugely popular with readers.

The Book Society was run by a selection committee of literary celebrities – the likes of JB Priestley, Sylvia Lynd, George Gordon, Edmund Blunden and Cecil Day-Lewis – chaired by bestselling novelist Hugh Walpole. Selections were not meant to be the "best" of anything, but had to be worthwhile and deserving of people's time and hard-earned cash.

Guaranteeing tens of thousands of extra sales, the club had a huge impact on the mid-20th-century book trade, with publishers desperate to get the increased sales and global reach of what publisher Harold Raymond called "the

Book Society bun".

Books will go on

The Book Society guided readers through the confusion of appeasement and the run-up to the second world war with a marked increase in recommendations of political non-fiction examining contemporary geo-politics. The classic novel of appeasement was Elizabeth Bowen's *The Death of the Heart* – the choice in October 1938 – in which a sense of malaise and inevitability of future war haunts the characters' desperate actions.

When Britain finally declared war against Germany in September 1939, the Book Society judges were divided. Some were relieved that, as George Gordon put it, "an intolerable situation has at last acquired the awful explicitness of war". But others were devastated, especially Edmund Blunden who was still

traumatised from fighting in the first world war.

The judges advised members that when they became weary of news, people "will turn to books as the best comfort", as had happened in the first world war with the increase in reading and library membership. Publishers and booksellers faced huge challenges during the second world war, including paper shortages, problems in distribution, a vanishing workforce, and bomb damage to offices and warehouses. But there were more readers – and from a wider social class – at the end of it. Demand consistently outstripped supply as consumer expenditure on books more than doubled between 1938 and 1945.

What people were reading

Throughout the second world war, the Book Society varied its lists between books that offered some insight on the

strangeness of contemporary life and works of fiction – especially historical fiction – that took readers' minds off it.

Titles in the first group include comic novels by the likes of EM Delafield and Evelyn Waugh, as well as forgotten bestsellers like Ethel Vance's *Escape*, an unlikely thriller set in a concentration camp, and *Reaching for the Stars*, American journalist Nora Waln's inside account of life in Nazi Germany.

More topical non-fiction became a priority as the devastation of the Blitz kicked in. *Winged Words: Our Airmen Speak for Themselves and Into Battle: Winston Churchill's War Speeches* were especially popular.

Historical fiction was consistently in demand. Half the club's choices in 1941 were long novels with historical settings. As today's readers prepare to batten down the hatches with Hilary Mantel's 900-page latest book, it is sobering to reflect on how an imaginative connection with the past has long helped readers find relief from the madness of the present.

The other fail-safes in the second world war were the classics. As books already in print became scarce, the Book Society reissued new editions of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, and Tolstoy's *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*. These were books that Walpole said he believed he could sit down with even through an air raid.

Indeed, Nielsen BookScan has reported a rise in sales of classic fiction as the coronavirus crisis deepens – including *War and Peace* – as readers use this unfamiliar time to knuckle down to the heavyweights. You can also join a *War and Peace* reading group online if you want a bit of company. After the homeschooling, working from home, and everything else. Here goes.

Nicola Wilson, Associate Professor in Book and Publishing Studies, University of Reading.

By arrangements with *The Conversation*.

Covid-Forced Behavioural Changes To Stay For Long: Report



Press Trust Of India

The radical behavioural changes that Covid-19 pandemic has forced on people as well as organisations following the lockdowns are here to stay for long-term, and will impact consumption patterns for a host of goods and services, according to a report.

The most visible changes are in the media and information space that has seen massive adoption of digital format, said the report by domestic arm of the French advertising powerhouse Publicis Groupe.

The findings of the report mark the "profound shifts in the wake of the Covid lockdowns and the resultant changes in the way consumer react and many of these behavioural changes are not transient but are likely to stay longer," the report noted.

Titled 'Reboot to a new normal', the study highlights the changes on the consumption patterns when it comes to media usage, purchase behaviour and overall marketing and brand trends following the outbreak and resultant lockdown enforced by the government between March 24 and April 15, which has since been extended up to May 3.

Moreover, the study examines the impact of the changing consumer on businesses, consumer sentiment and their behaviour towards brands and the response of the brands to these changes.

According to Anupriya Acharya, the head of Publicis Groupe India & South Asia,

the impact of the pandemic has meant that uncertainty has become the norm for brands and businesses across sectors and geographies.

"Most certainly, only the ones who imbibe this change, and more importantly, lead it, will emerge stronger. We look forward to and promise sharing the quest for the new normal, evolving businesses and robust communities," she said.

"Online is clearly the new norm as companies embrace remote work and rapidly digitise operations to ensure business continuity," the study said, adding unfortunately many brands still struggle to operationalise work-from-home initiatives due to their cumbersome compliance requirements.

The study finds that consumers are single-mindedly focusing on essentials, sidestepping discretionary purchases like apparel, electronics and watches.

Underscoring the importance of the digital delivery channels, restaurants and food delivery apps have seen surge in demand and also contactless delivery options.

At the start of the outbreak, ecommerce saw huge momentum with people instinctively turning to online channels but lost momentum after the lockdown, which now is being boosted by online grocery deliveries as the crisis accelerated. The lockdown boosted online retail with demand for fresh food, personal hygiene items and food delivery growing.

Another winner in this otherwise all-

losing situation is the rising viewership of television channels, which has been on the decline over the past year.

TV ratings has seen an exponential jump because of Coronavirus related news. The trend is in line with other Asian markets such as China and Korea, the report noted.

Between March 1 and 21, gaming has seen a 41 per cent increase in time spent, while entertainment and OTT platforms have seen 34 per cent growth, making it third winner.

Similarly, while print publications are gasping for breath, their online version has become the de facto source of information with digital editions of mainline publications, seeing huge increase in traffic.

"Between March 16 and 22, there has been a full 61 per cent rise online traffic to newspaper websites and mobile apps over the previous month," according to the report.

Regional publications have also seen huge online demand with traffic jumping by 50 per cent, which is significantly higher than that of English publications.

"Publishers may need to shift focus on to digital operations as it remains uncertain whether consumers will continue subscriptions of physical copies," the report said.

Publicis Groupe is a global leader in communication and is present in over 100 markets offering advertising media, data and technology services.

GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT MAGISTRATE, ANANTNAG
(Chairman, District Disaster Management Authority)

Subject: - Establishment of dedicated helpline for medical emergencies in district Anantnag – COVID19 containment measures.

ORDER

This office has been receiving numerous representations for issuance of movement passes in respect of cases requiring urgent medical attention like Dialysis, Chemotherapy, Radiotherapy, etc. Such patients have been found to be undergoing treatment both in government and private facilities at different locations within or outside the District. In certain cases, the patients have also been found availing free treatment/drugs through various institutional setups which require effective and timely delivery.

For medical emergencies and other distress calls, a Control Room is already functional in the District, however considering that the lockdown on account of containment measures for COVID19 pandemic has been extended up to 3rd of May, 2020, it has been felt expedient to put in place a separate institutional mechanism for offering requisite assistance and transportation facilities, wherever required, for such cases.

It is therefore ordered that a helpline facility for catering to the above mentioned medical emergencies shall be established for district Anantnag with the details and conditions mentioned below:-

Helpline contact Nos. - 9419453872
7006035495

Conditions:-

1. The helpline can be approached telephonically as well as through WhatApp.
2. Requisite prescriptions for availing the facilitation shall be submitted through WhatsApp.
3. The transport facility, wherever required, shall only be provided on prior appointment.
4. The above arrangement shall not apply for purchase and home delivery of medicines otherwise prohibited under relevant provisions of the law in vogue.

No: DCA/PA/2020/39-48
Dated: 16-04-2020

Sd/- (Syed Yasir) KAS
Addl District Magistrate Anantnag

DIPK-208/20

**GOVT. MEDICAL COLLEGE HOSPITAL JAMMU
SHORT TERM QUOTATION**

Till the below mentioned are not supplied by JKMSCL, sealed quotations are invited from the firms dealing in the line for supply of the following drug item. The quotation should reach the office within four days from the date of publication in the newspaper during working hours: -

S.No.	Name of the item.	Rate
1	Tab Hydroxychloroquine 400mg	

- The quotation must be typed only.
- The successful quotationer shall have to execute the supplies immediately, from the date of issue of formal order with them.
- The quotationer has to submit the name of the company/Manufacturer on the quotation of the item to be supplied.
- If the Supplier failed to supply at the quoted rates, then the undersigned reserves the right for debarring/blacklisting of firm for a period not less than 2 years.
- The undersigned reserves the right to accept or reject any quotation or a part thereof, without any reason thereof. Any dispute, if arises, shall be subject to the Jammu jurisdiction.

No: MCH/PS/16315-21
Dated:- 26/3/2020

DIPK-196/20

Medical Superintendent
Medical College Hospital Jammu

OFFICE OF THE MEDICAL SUPERINTENDENT DISTT. HOSPITAL KULGAM

Subject :- Procurement of Fully Body Personal Protection Equipment (PPE Kits), N95 Masks and Triple layer masks for District Hospital Kulgam.

**TENDER NOTICE NO 07 OF 2020
DATED 17/04/2020**

For and on behalf of Lieutenant Governor of J&K, e-tenders are invited from approved and eligible registered suppliers/manufacturers/authorized dealers/partnership firms registered in India under relevant Act of well repute for below mentioned supplies to District Hospital Kulgam on emergency basis.

The NIT containing the all details/Terms and conditions can be downloaded from the J&K Govt official web site (www.jktenders.gov.in). The interested bidder may submit their bids online upto the date and time mentioned below.

S.No.	Name of item	Item Description/Specification
01	Personal Protection Kits	SMS Fabric laminated with PE film (180 GSM)+ Triple layer mask+Face shield+Surgical Gloves+ Gaggle (Minimum 3mm)+Shoe cover
02	N95 Mask	NIOSH approved N95 Mask Respirators, Filter >95% non oil based particles, Flat Fold "C" style, Superior technology Micro Fine filter media, protects from respirable suspended particles matter, Composite of multi layers: pre-filter, fine filter & Skin comfort Layer, Dotted pattern edges for soft gel, Embedded Nose clip (No metal exposure), Unique fit adjusters (protection, comfort & fit) stapled outside Filter media, Leak proof & avoids puncture in Filter area, Latex free knitted Textile Elastic with long life, skin friendly, does not deform in high Temperature.
03	Tripple Layer Mask	Disposable triple layer face mask made of spun bond nonwoven consisting of three layers. Upper & lower layer made of PP spun bond 20 GSM, 20GSM & paper filter in between, Ultrasonically sealed with PVC coated nose clip, String Tie/Loop Tie, recommended to be used in High risk Areas viz Operation Theatre, use of this face mask is recommended in high risk areas like operation theatres as BFE (Bacteria Filtration Efficiency) of this mask is >95%, Breathable: Yes, Fluid Repellent, Yes Fluid Impervious: No, Recommended use high risk area, Bacteria Filtration efficiency greater than 95 micron.

Important Dates and Cost of EMD & Tender fee:-

S.No.	Event	Date
1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	17/04/2020
2	Date of publication of NIT online	17/04/2020
3	Date for downloading the NIT online	17/04/2020
4	Date for submission of Bid online	17/04/2020
5	Last date for submission of Bids online	24/04/2020 (up to 4.00 pm)
6	Date for opening of bids online	25/04/2020
7	Earnest Money Deposit	Rs. 30000/- (Rs. Thirty Thousand only)
8	Cost of tender documents	Rs. 500/- (Rupees Five Hundred only)

Bids must be accompanied with the scanned copy of cost of Tender document in the shape of Bank deposit receipt in the J&K Bank, Main Branch Kulgam (A/C No. 0010040500020305) in favour of Medical Superintendent DH Kulgam J&K and Earnest Money/Bid Security in the shape of CDR/FDR pledged to the Medical Superintendent DH Kulgam. The Bids of responsive bidders shall be opened online on same website in the office Medical Superintendent DH Kulgam (Tender receiving authority) on the above mentioned date.

Medical Superintendent
DH Kulgam

No. DHK/Acct/E-tender/2020/92-95
Dated 17/04/2020

DIPK-209/20



Government of Jammu & Kashmir (UT)
**OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) PROJECT
CIRCLE DIVISION 1ST, SRINAGAR**
Opposite Masjid Ibrahim, Hyderpora Srinagar PIN No.190014
E-mail:- pcd.bypass@gmail.com Phone-FAX:-0194-2435218

TENDER NOTICE
NIT No PCD-RnB-01 of 2020-21 Dated: 15/04/2020

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K UT, e-tenders (In Single cover system) are invited on **item rate basis** from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K State Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following works

S.No	Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (Rs.)	Earnest Money (Rs.)	Time of completion	Class of Contractor	M.H
1.	Painting of compound walling, kerb stones/ bunkers etc and cleaning of storm water drains of entire J&K High Court Complex Srinagar on the eve of Darbar move 2020	Rs.3.33 Lacs	Rs.200/-	Rs.6660/-	15 Days	"DEE"	2059 M&R
2.	Face lifting of Kerbs, Medians, Islands, & Dividers of NH-44 (National Highway Bypass Srinagar) Km 0 to Km 9.5th by way of Painting, Mulba Clearance etc.	Rs. 5.10 Lacs	Rs.300/-	Rs.10200/-	15 Days	"CEE" "DEE"	3054 M&R
3.	Face lifting of NH-44 (National Highway Bypass Srinagar) by way of clearance of Mulba, cleaning & painting of Kerbs stones of Central Verge, Footpaths, medians & Traffic Islands from Km 9.50 to 17.80.(Right & Left Tracks)	Rs.5.60 Lacs	Rs.300/-	Rs.5600/-	15 Days	"SHG"	3054 M&R
4	Temporary Centre Verge cut for traffic Management by Traffic Police at Bemina intersection of NH-44 (Srinagar Bypass)	Rs.1.05 Lacs	Rs.200/-	Rs.2100/-	10 Days	"DEE"	3054 M&R

Position of funds: Available

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

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	15-04-2020
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 15-04-2020 01.00 PM
3.	Bid submission Start Date	16-04-2020 from 10.00 AM
4.	Bid Submission End Date	27-04-2020 upto 4.00 P.M
5.	Date & time of opening of Bids	28-04-2020 at 11.00 A.M in the Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Project Circle Division 1 st

1. Bids must be accompanied with Earnest money /Bid security in shape of CDR/FDR pledged to Executive Engineer R&B Project Circle Division 1st and cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan/Receipt (Debited to M.H.0059 PWD) in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Project Circle Division 1st showing clearly the name of work along with NIT No. & S.No. failing which the tender will be rejected outrightly.

No: PCD-1st/NIT/07-17
Dtd:- 15-04-2020

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
R&B Project Circle Division 1st,
Srinagar

DIPK-174/20

Non-essential businesses to resume operations slowly but surely amid extended COVID-19 lockdown

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: A day after e-commerce marketplaces received government nod to deliver non-essential items beginning April 20, companies have begun evaluating all possibilities of resuming operations to make the most of this lifeline.

While some, who have been allowed to begin production activities, are unsure how they will do so and at what capacity given the absenteeism of labour and logistics constraints, optimists say that there is adequate inventory to cater to the demand during the extended lockdown.

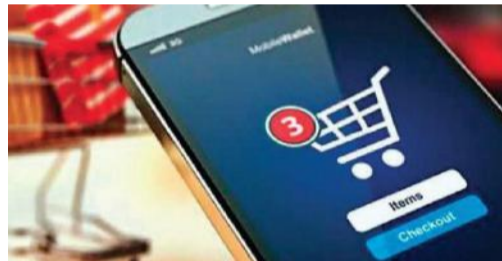
"Summer is here and we have enough inventory of air-conditioners and refrigerators to meet consumer demands. As our factory in Jhajjar, Haryana is in the green zone, we are also preparing to begin manufacturing soon to

take a decision soon. Godrej Appliances (Business Head & Executive Vice-President) Kamal Nandi believes the fresh guidelines that allow e-commerce platforms to operate amidst the lockdown will lower the overall impact on sales.

"Online sales will see significant traction for the time being given that there is a lot of pent-up demand and shops are shut. We are in discussions with key online players to begin rolling out our products as we foresee a deeper integration of offline and online trade in coming times," Nandi added.

Super Plastronics CEO Avneet Singh Marwah, which exclusively sells Thomson smart TVs on Flipkart, is also confident of meeting demand till the end of May.

He said that the brand is also unlikely to face any trouble relat-



ensure sustainability over the longer term," said Panasonic India and South Asia CEO Manish Sharma.

Items such as mobile phone, TV, refrigerator, AC, stationary and laptop will be available on e-commerce platforms from April 20.

According to the fresh guidelines issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, e-commerce has been deemed as an 'essential' service and vehicles used by these companies will be allowed to ply with permission except the demarcated containment zones - hotspots or red zones - where the spread of the infection is high. Adhering to the new rules, e-retailers such as Amazon, Flipkart, Snapdeal and PayTM Mall are preparing to accept orders and deliver all items, including non-essentials. E-retailers are also awaiting state nod on the 'non-essential' goods that can be sold and delivered post which third-party sellers could begin shipping their goods to fulfilment centres of these marketplaces.

State-wise Rajasthan, Odisha, Goa and Maharashtra have so far permitted these firms to function fully, while Uttar Pradesh, Telangana and Karnataka are likely

ing to manufacturing activity as its plants are located in green zones - the industrial belts of Noida and Jammu. "We have adequate stock for May and we will be resuming sales with great offers on Flipkart," Marwah said, adding the TV industry has seen a loss of about Rs. 2,000 crore so far.

Handset makers are also in talks with state and district administrations to ensure there aren't any ground-level difficulties as was seen by e-tailers in the first phase of lockdown.

"We are evaluating all aspects of resuming production and our manufacturing partners are working with authorities - at the centre and state level - in securing relevant permissions keeping in mind the facets of manpower, component availability and transport involved," a Xiaomi spokesperson said in an email response to The New Indian Express.

Kitchen appliances maker Wonderchef believes e-commerce is the only recourse for retailers to stay afloat amid the challenging coronavirus times.

"Our sales had come down to zero and e-commerce opening up will provide some cash flow.

Govt Urges AMUL, Leading Private Firms To Set Up Milk ATMs Across Jammu And Kashmir Dairy sector has potential to transform J&K's rural economy: Navin Choudhary

JAMMU: Asserting that Dairy sector has potential to transform J&K's rural economy, Principal Secretary Animal and Sheep Husbandry Department, Navin K Choudhary, today emphasized for evolving a robust roadmap with its implementation on ground for achieving the desired goals.

Principal Secretary, while reviewing the measures needed towards developing the dairy sector in J&K during a meeting held at Civil Secretariat, asked all the stakeholders for working with a new vision and proactive approach to take this potential vocation to new dimensions.

Choudhary asked the officers to scale up setting up of dairies in private sector besides encouraging enhanced processing in terms of other milk products like cheese, paneer, butter, curd, milk powder etc. He emphasized upon them to put in their best to make sure that in next one year all related programmes are successfully implemented resulting in nil import of milk products in UT of Jammu & Kashmir.

While reviewing the CAPEX Plan, Principal Secretary asked the department to not to undertake any new construction work rather focus on completion of ongoing works. He asked the department to revise their CAPEX Plan to strengthen veterinary services, equipments in hospitals and veterinary centres. He was apprised that there is sufficient stock of medicines and vaccines are available for next few months.

Principal Secretary directed the officers to set up procurement process in motion at the earliest.

Choudhary also asked for robust production of cattle feed for which a coordinated action plan be implemented in consultation with Agri-

culture Production Department. He asked for establishment of more units producing cattle feed and poultry feed in the Union Territory.

Meanwhile, Choudhary reviewed the immediate situation in view of COVID-19 pandemic and was informed that household consumption of milk has not gone down while there is shortfall of 4 to 6 lakh litre (approximately) in consumption due to closer of hotels, restaurants, sweet



shops, dhabas, tea stalls, banquet halls besides absence of various social and religious functions.

In this regard, Principal Secretary had a detailed discussion with Principal Secretary SWD and the two departments have agreed to deliver milk to Anganwadi centers under "Mid Day Meal" scheme and "Poshan Scheme". Both public sector as well as private sector milk processors will supply milk in half litre pouches to the Anganwadi centres for further distribution among the children by Anganwadi officials.

Both the Principal Secretaries di-

rected their officers to work out an effective mechanism within 3 days to start this process early next week.

The Principal Secretary asked both public sector organisations like AMUL and private sector milk processors to set up large number of Milk Vending Machines (milk ATMs) across Jammu and Kashmir and to begin with in Srinagar and Jammu cities. He assured them that EoI's in this regard will be issued early next week.

All representatives of milk producers welcomed this move as it will ensure unhindered milk supply in urban areas even in difficult situations like the prevailing.

Expressing dismay over the price fixation mechanism by CAPD Department of milk and milk products which generally gets revised only after a year, Principal Secretary said that this does not take the producer's interest in terms of their rising costs. He emphasised that while consumer's interest should be taken care of producer's interest in terms of remuneration prices also needs to be ensured. He asked the officers to immediately work out a viable Price Fixation Mechanism like in other parts of the country. The arbitrary prices also result in other malpractices which could be avoided through an established mechanism envisaging periodic review of the price of inputs as well as end milk products.

Among others, the meeting was attended by Director Animal Husbandry Jammu Vivek Sharma, representatives of AMUL and Mission Director Dairy Development, Purnima Mittal while Director Animal Husbandry Kashmir and representatives of Khyber Dairy, Kashmir participated in the meeting through video conferencing.

Bankers welcome RBI's steps to enhance liquidity amid COVID-19 pandemic

Press Trust Of India

MUMBAI: The second set of measures announced by RBI for COVID-19 pandemic-stricken economy got a thumbs-up from bankers who welcomed the steps taken as per the evolving market conditions.

SBI Chairman Rajnish Kumar, who also heads industry lobby grouping IBA, called the measures, which included both regulatory as well as liquidity interventions, as "rightful recognition to the evolving market conditions" by RBI. "Overall, the second set of package by RBI is an excellent reflection of combining the policy response and regulatory responses in the most optimal manner," he said in a statement. Kumar said the second set of targeted long term repo operations will help non-bank lenders and micro lenders. He also welcomed the refinancing support for SIDBI, NHB and NABARD, saying deserving sectors will get help. British lender Standard Chartered Bank's country chief executive Zarin Daruwala called the announced measures second booster shot to the economy from RBI within a month, and added that steps like reducing liquidity coverage ratio requirements and NPA relief during moratorium



will improve credit delivery appetite. Padmaja Chunduru, the managing director and chief executive of the state-run Indian Bank, said RBI's tone is full of empathy and support to the needy sectors of the economy. Small businesses and retail borrowers will benefit through the 90-day extension in NPA recognition for stressed standard assets, while the

90-day extension given for NCLT filing in cases of bad loans will save banks 20 per cent in provisions, she said. SBI chairman Kumar also said that allowing 90-day asset classification standstill for accounts covered under moratorium will "imbibe banks with the desired operational flexibility to lend a helping hand to stressed accounts".

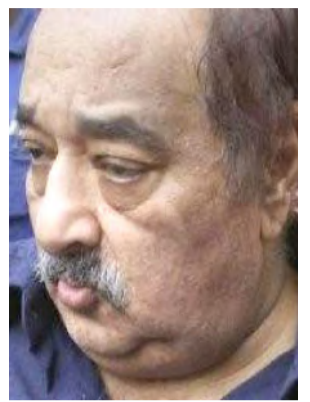
Court denies interim bail to HDIL promoter Rakesh Wadhawan in PMC Bank scam

MUMBAI: HDIL promoter Rakesh Wadhawan, currently lodged in jail in connection with the multi-crore rupees Punjab & Maharashtra Cooperative (PMC) Bank scam case, was denied interim bail on Friday by a special court here.

Rakesh Wadhawan, who is in his 60s, had sought bail on health ground citing the coronavirus outbreak. He has been booked under the Prevention of Money-Laundering Act (PMLA). His plea was rejected by special PMLA judge PP Rajvaidya.

In his application for interim bail, Rakesh Wadhawan had cited his advanced age and existing illnesses, and said that he fears contracting the coronavirus infection in jail.

Housing Development and Infrastructure Ltd (HDIL) promoter Rakesh Wadhawan and his son Sarang are



accused, besides several others, in the Rs 4,355-crore PMC Bank scam which surfaced in September last year.

The case is being probe by the Enforcement Directorate, along with the Economic Offences Wing of the Mumbai police. The case stems from massive loans given by PMC Bank to the now bankrupt HDIL.

COVID-19 LOCKDOWN: Fuel sales slump 50 per cent in April; 94 per cent decline in aviation fuel



Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: India's fuel consumption slumped by a record 50 per cent in April as all petroleum products except LPG saw massive demand erosion following a nationwide lockdown halted economic activity and travel. According to provisional industry data for fuel consumption in the first half of April, petrol sales were down 64 per cent, while diesel slumped by 61 per cent. Aviation turbine fuel (ATF) consumption collapsed by 94 per cent as most airlines have stopped flying.

The only fuel that showed growth was LPG as the government dole of free cooking gas cylinders to poor households fired up consumption by 21 per cent during April 1 to 15, the data showed. Overall the decline in petroleum product sales was 50 per cent, it said.

The data pertains to sales made by three public sector (PSU) oil marketing companies. Private firms such as Nayara Energy do not share mid-month sales trend and their numbers get reflected only in the monthly consumption numbers released by the oil ministry in the second week of every month.

Industry officials said this is the biggest ever drop in sales and the first data for the complete lockdown period. March sales numbers

were released last week but this included consumption in the pre-lockdown period as well.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced a 21-day lockdown beginning March 25, shutting offices and factories, barring those involved in essential services. Also, flights were suspended, trains stopped plying, vehicles went off the road and cargo movement stopped as most people were asked to stay home to help check the spread of coronavirus.

The lockdown was earlier this week extended till May 3. India had consumed 2.4 million tonnes of petrol and 7.3 million tonnes of diesel in April 2019. As much as 6,45,000 tonnes of ATF was used in that month last year.

In March 2020, the country's petroleum product consumption fell 17.79 per cent to 16.08 million tonnes. 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, while ATF consumption fell 32.4 per cent to 4,84,000 tonnes. However, LPG sales rose 1.9 per cent to 2.3 million tonnes in March.

RBI Announces Slew Of Measures To Offset COVID-19's Adverse Impact On Economy

Press Trust Of India

HYDERABAD: The RBI announced another raft of measures to cut the Gordian knot tied up by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The central bank's Friday whopper evenly covered four aspects including liquidity, credit flow, and easing of stress among financial institutions and markets.

The highlights include a 25 bps (0.25%) cut in reverse repo rate, a Rs 50,000-crore targeted long term repo operation (TLTRO), suspension of the 90-day NPA norm for banks, a Rs 50,000-crore special finance window for NABARD, SIDBI and National Housing Board, extension of the ways and means advances to states by up to 60 per cent, exemption for banks from paying dividends and others.

The reverse repo rate has been reduced by 25 bps to 3.75 per cent. The move is expected to discourage banks from sitting on cash and instead encourage them to go out and lend. The surplus liquidity under the reverse

repo window stood at Rs 6.9 lakh crore as on April 15. However, other policy tools such as the marginal standing facility, bank rate remain unchanged at 4.65 per cent.

Governor Shaktikanta Das also announced another targeted long term repo operation of Rs 50,000 crore in tranches to ensure that even NBFCs and MFIs have access to liquidity. According to Das, the proposed Rs 50,000 crore is only a beginning and the RBI will not budge from releasing additional tranches based on the need.

The funds will be made up in bonds, commercial paper, NCDs etc with 50 per cent going to small and mid-size NBFCs as the TLTROs until now have been parked in public banks and big corporates while NBFCs were facing hardships.

He also announced a special finance facility to NABARD, SIDBI and National Housing Board totalling Rs 50,000 crore.

Importantly, RBI relaxed the 90-day NPA norm, and advised banks to maintain higher provision to standstill,



which can be adjusted later for actual slippages.

"Cashflow of households and businesses are affected. We recognize that COVID-19 has challenged the ability of borrowers to repay. Thus the NPA count shall not include the 90-day moratorium period," he said adding that the relaxation is consistent with

Basel guidelines.

According to Das, scheduled commercial banks and financial institutions have to make an additional 20 per cent provision. Due to the challenges of resolutions of accounts, the period of resolution will be increased by a further 90 days.

There was also an extension of the

resolution timeline for large accounts under default. An additional provisioning of 20 per cent is required for not implementing a resolution in 180 days and this will be provisioned in the June 7 circular. Banks need to conserve capital and absorb losses, Governor Das said.

As a bonus, RBI exempted banks

from making dividend payouts from FY20 until further notice. This will help lenders conserve cash and make up for the provisions in case of rising bad loans.

There was an easing of the liquidity coverage ratio requirement for banks too to ease the liquidity flow for loans given by NBFCs to real-estate companies and relaxation of ways and means advances (WMA) up to 60 per cent until September to states so that they don't bunch their bond issuances and instead space them out. The extension of WMA should come to the states' rescue to make up for the shortfall in cash flows.

Channeling Mahatma Gandhi, Das noted that during our darkest moment, we must focus on the light.

While he noted that the macroeconomic landscape has deteriorated severely in some areas, Das added that India still is among a handful of countries projecting positive growth.

India though will suffer this fiscal, but is expected to rebound sharply in FY2022.

Iran parades medical gear, not missiles, on Army Day as coronavirus deaths near 5,000

TEHRAN: Iran on Friday paraded disinfection vehicles, mobile hospitals and other medical equipment to mark its national Army Day as the country's death toll from the coronavirus outbreak rose by 89 to 4,958.

The total number of cases of infection in the Middle East country hardest hit by the pandemic rose to 79,494, of which 3,563 were in critical condition, health ministry spokesman Kia-nush Jahanpur said on state television.

A parliamentary report released earlier this week said the coronavirus death toll might be almost double the figures announced by the health ministry, and the number of infections eight to 10 times more given a lack of widespread testing.

Friday's small "Defenders of the Homeland, Helpers of Health" army parade was held at a training centre before a group of commanders in face masks to underscore the military's role in battling the highly infectious Covid-19 disease. It was a far cry from the typical Army Day parades, which normally feature spectacles of infantry, missiles, submarines and armoured vehicles, with warplanes flying overhead.

"Due to health and

social protocols, it is not possible to hold a parade of soldiers ... The enemy now is hidden and doctors and nurses are (instead) at the frontlines of the battlefield," President Hassan Rouhani said in a message to soldiers, disseminated by state media. Army forces chief Major General Abdolrahim Mousavi thanked the more than 11,000 military medical staff fighting to stem the spread of the novel coronavirus in Iran, which has one of the world's highest death tolls.

Deputy Health Minister Iraj Harirchi warned earlier this week that infections could spread further in autumn.

"We have to get used to living with the virus until an appropriate medication or vaccination is found," Harirchi said on state TV. A recent resumption of "low-risk" business activities "doesn't mean that conditions have returned to normal," he said, warning that the easing of restrictions could lead to increased infections.

So-called low-risk businesses — including many shops, factories and workshops — resumed operations on April 11 across the country, with the exception of the capital Tehran, where they will reopen from Saturday.

London buses step up virus measures after 20 drivers die

LONDON: London's transport authorities on Friday announced new measures to protect bus drivers from coronavirus, as colleagues held a minute's silence for 20 who have already died.

Mayor Sadiq Khan, whose father was a bus driver, led tributes to the victims as authorities said passengers would no longer be able to use the front door near the driver.

"It breaks my heart that 20 London bus workers have lost their lives to #Covid19. It could easily have been my dad and his friends," Khan wrote on Twitter. "Our transport workers are heroes and we must do everything we can to protect them."

He joined a minute's silence called by the trade union Unite, which has been pressing for better protection for London's 20,000 bus drivers and other transport staff.

London is on the front line of the coronavirus outbreak in Britain, where almost 14,000 people have died, making it one of the worst hit countries in the world. Since a nationwide lockdown was introduced last month, bus passengers numbers in London have fallen by about 85 per cent.

But a reduced service is still running on the buses and trains for key workers. Four Underground and train staff have also died.

Transport for London (TfL), the city's travel authority, has already introduced a new cleaning regime for buses, stations and depots.

The seats at the front of buses closest to the driver have been roped off and drivers sit behind a clear protective screen.



US Has Three Times More Patients Than Any Other Country

Press Trust Of India

WASHINGTON: The United States, the global epicentre of the coronavirus outbreak, now has the highest single-day death toll and three times more confirmed cases than any other country.

The United States, with the world's third-largest population, has four times as many deaths as China, where the pandemic began, and which has the world's largest population. By Thursday afternoon the United States had almost 770,000 confirmed cases and 34,000 deaths.

New York is the worst hit with almost 220,000 and 16,500 deaths, as

more people were being admitted into hospitals with symptoms.

The increasing numbers also alarmed the city's health workers who took to the streets earlier this week to demonstrate over a lack of protective equipment for them. In most hospitals, special measures have been taken to separate potentially ill people from the staff.

Earlier this week, New York's iconic landmark, the Empire State Building was lit in red to pay tribute to health workers who are on the front line of the response to the pandemic.

In Connecticut, Pakistani physician Dr Saud Anwar received an "unsung hero's parade" for his efforts to

fight coronavirus.

Dr Anwar, an AKUH alumnus and a Connecticut state senator, jointly developed a ventilator device that enables seven patients to be treated at once.

"I'm sharing my experience and my passion to do my part in fighting for every single person" affected by this virus, said Dr Anwar who shared information about the ventilator device on his Facebook page, including a video demonstrating how the device works.

On Wednesday morning, the total US deaths were close to 26,000, which rose to more than 33,000 by Thursday morning, an addition of almost 5,000.

Spain's coronavirus death toll crosses 19,500; second only to Italy in Europe

MADRID: Spain's death toll increased to nearly 19,500, government figures showed on Friday.

The country reported 585 new fatalities in the past 24 hours, but said it had revised its counting mechanism, making the figures difficult to compare with previous tolls.

The total number of deaths in Spain now stands at 19,478, the third-highest in the world after the United States and Italy.

Overnight, the government issued revised guidelines for reporting deaths in order to homogenise data from the country's 17 autonomous regions in an apparent move to eliminate any deaths where the patient had not been tested for COVID-19.

But such a methodology has proven controversial with Madrid and Catalonia, the two worst-hit regions, who this week insisted they had thousands more victims than the official count.

The national death toll on Friday was the highest daily figure since Sunday when 619 people died in 24 hours.



The data also revised down the number of people who had recovered from COVID-19, giving an overall total of 72,963.

But the number of cases did correlate with earlier figures, showing an increase of 5,252 new cases, bringing the overall total to 188,068.

"It must be recognised that that number of dead is much higher,"

Ignacio Aguado, vice-president of Madrid's regional government, told Spain's RNE radio.

"We're only talking about those who have died in hospital after testing positive, but people are also dying in old people's residences and at home without having been tested, so we will never know the real number (of deaths) in this tragedy."

Afghanistan: Unknown gunman kills six local workers at US base

KABUL: An unknown gunman shot dead six local workers from the main American military base north of Afghanistan's capital and wounded three others, an Afghan official said on Friday.

The nine workers, all Af-

ghan nationals, were on their way home late Thursday when a gunman riding a motorcycle opened fire on them about 500 meters (about a quarter mile) from Bagram air base, Parwan provincial governor's spokeswoman Wahida Shahkar said.

No insurgent groups immediately claimed responsibility for the attack but Taliban and Islamic State group fighters are active in northern areas of Afghanistan.

workers, who provide cleaning services at the base.

The Afghan government and Taliban are in the process of exchanging prisoners as part of a peace deal signed by the US and the Taliban on February 29 in Doha.

The release of up to 5,000 Taliban prisoners and 1,000 government personnel ahead of intra-Afghan negotiations is a condition of the US-Taliban deal.

900 US army personnel test positive for COVID-19



NEW YORK: As many as 900 US soldiers from all three components have tested positive for coronavirus. The announcement was made at the Pentagon during a briefing by US Chief of Staff of the Army James McConville.

"As of this morning, we have 900 soldiers from all three components test positive for COVID-19," he said in an AP video. He added that they currently have the testing capacity of up to 700 tests per day and are taking all measures to ensure the safety of army personnel.

McConville said the army will continue training its soldiers. While ensuring a safe environment by maintaining social distancing, screening and testing. "We need to make sure the army is ready to go to war and so

we continue to train."

The US army had called for suspension of training for "non-mission essential functions," on March 26.

The decision was taken as efforts taken by the army to reduce the spread of the coronavirus proved to be insufficient. At the time, 280 army personnel were tested positive for the virus.

But within days, the decision was reversed almost immediately as Defense Secretary Mark Esper said that the armed forces will find a way to both protect the troops from the virus while performing the military's essential operations.

On April 6, the army announced that there will be a temporary hold on sending new recruits for training. The pause will allow commanders to ensure proper safety measures are in place.

BOTTOM LINE

Imran Khan seeks top Pakistan agency's help to fight coronavirus

Press Trust Of India

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan has asked the country's lead agency in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic to take measures to cope up with the deadly disease during the upcoming holy month of Ramadan as the number of Covid-19 cases in the country crossed 7,000.

Khan was on Thursday addressing a meeting of the National Command and Operation Centre (NCOC), which has been formed to take unanimous decision on all issues related to the coronavirus. It became operational earlier this month.

The NCOC officials were asked to take steps to fight the disease during the month of Ramadan which starts from April 23.

He ordered compilation of accurate data about Covid-19 patients and the number of deaths, according to officials.

The spike in the number of cases in the last two days has been due to the increase in the



per day testing capacity.

Officials said that the testing capacity was being gradually raised to 25,000 people per day by the end of this month.

The number of Covid-19 cases in the country rose to 7,125 after 497 new infections were reported in the last 24 hours, according to the latest official data.

At least 11 people died during the period, taking the number of total deaths in the country to 135. A total of 1,765 people have recovered so far from the disease.

The Ministry of National Health Services reported that Punjab registered 3,376 cases, Sindh 2,008, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa 993, Balochistan 303, Gilgit-Baltistan 245 and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir 46.

So far 84,794 tests have been conducted, including 6,264 in the last 24 hours.

Meanwhile, the government has urged people to offer the Friday prayers at home to contain the spread of the disease. The Sindh provincial govern-

ment has imposed complete restrictions on the movement of people from 12-3 pm.

The government is facing difficulties in holding people back as hardline clerics earlier this week announced to resume congregational prayers in mosques in clear defiance of the government directives to curb the spread of the pandemic.

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 hardline clerics held a meeting in Karachi on April 14 to discuss the issue of ban on such prayers and announced to resume congregational prayers.

Despite efforts by the government, there has not been much improvement in curbing the spread of the disease and as the government allowed opening up of selected industries, it was feared that the disease might further spread.