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TOMMOROW 05:45 AM



HOW CORONAVIRUS WILL FOREVER CHANGE THE AIRLINE INDUSTRY AND THE WAY WE FLY

Higher fares, fewer routes, pre-flight health checks and less free food: The coronavirus pandemic is ushering in a new era of air travel. A seismic shift is underway as the world's airlines reassess their operations and how they will look emerging from the crisis. At eerily empty airports, mask-wearing and social distancing already show a behavioural change among the few staff and travellers left. A long shakeup lies ahead that is set to touch almost every aspect of flying after limits

.....LIFE & TIMES
P6

News Digest

04 TH RAMAZAN			
FIQAH	IFITAR	SEHRI	
JAFARIYA	07:22	04:11	TODAY
HANAFIYA	07:15	04:14	TOMMOROW

Learn From Home Through VMC

New Delhi: While the world is grappling with Coronavirus and the economy has hit a pause, certain sections of society such as students need to continue preparing for some of the toughest competitive exams like JEE & NEET. With the restrictions on conducting Classroom programs, most institutes are trying to find ways to teach students Online. At VMC, they had it covered even before the pandemic started as they had developed their own proprietary Online learning platform called VMC GURU. At VMC, all of their regular classroom batches are running on schedule, without any delay or disruption, with best of the faculties taking ●P-02

Modernisation Of Land Records

Srinagar, Apr 27 : Financial Commissioner, Revenue, Dr. Pawan Kotwal today held a Pre-bid video conference with prospective bidders to discuss their queries seeking amendment in the Request for proposal (RFP) floated on 5th of March, 2020 for inviting bids for modernization of land records in Jammu and Kashmir under DILRMP. During the course of meeting with the prospective bidders and survey expert/Consultant T L Sharma (Former Director Survey of India), the specific queries submitted by the prospective bidders were discussed in detail. The representative of these companies put forth their ●P-02

Opening Of Offices At Civil Sect

Srinagar: Secretary Youth Services and Sports Department, Sarmad Hafeez and Commissioner Secretary Floriculture, Gardens & Parks Department Sheikh Fayaz today chaired a joint meeting here to review the preparations being made for the opening of offices at Civil Secretariat here on May 04. The meeting was attended by Executive Engineer Secretariat, CMO Srinagar, Health Officer SMC, and other officials. Sarmad Hafeez who is also incharge Estates Department, visited various sections of the civil secretariat and expressed ●P-02

2 Year Old Among 23 More Covid-19 Cases In J&K

Fresh Positive Cases Include 13 Women

SRINAGAR: A two-year-old girl from the Shopian district on Monday became the youngest in Jammu and Kashmir to have tested positive for novel coronavirus. In all 23 fresh cases were reported in the last twenty-four hours and includes an expectant mother besides at least thirteen other women.

Among the fresh cases, 15 were confirmed at Viral Diagnostic Lab of SKIMS Soura and include five each from Baramulla and Shopian, three from Bandipora and one each from Budgam and Kupwara districts.

Seven other cases were confirmed at the COVID-19 testing laboratory at Chest Disease hospital Drugan and include six from Anantnag district and one from Srinagar.

Also, the Jammu division reported one fresh case—a 46-year-old, a native of Mahore Reasi with travel history to UP. His is the first case from Reasi district, the sources added.

Regarding the five cases from Shopian, the sources said includes 2-year-old girl and a ●PAGE 02



A HEALTH OFFICIAL takes swab sample for Covid-19 test of a city resident at a centre in Srinagar-KO Photo by Abid Bhat

Door-to-Door Health Survey in Srinagar

Authorities on Monday started door-to-door health survey across Srinagar in a bid for better planning & response for fight against COVID-19.

"Door-to-door health survey has started across Srinagar. We request all residents to cooperate with our teams on the ground and participate in this important health audit," Srinagar district administration wrote in its twitter handle. ●P-02

ONE AMONG THE WOMEN IS AN EXPECTANT MOTHER WITH
few just days left for her delivery. She has been shifted to SKIMS Bemina and would probably be referred to JLNH hospital for further treatment."

Prepare for Post 3rd May Scenario: LG To Officers

JAMMU: Lieutenant Governor, Girish Chandra Murmu Monday called for preparing a comprehensive strategy for the post 3rd May scenario in advance to combat COVID-19 pandemic in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

The Lt Governor was chairing a meeting on COVID-19 control efforts at the Raj Bhavan soon after the interaction with the Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, through video conferencing, to discuss the emerging situation and plan ahead for tackling the COVID-19

pandemic.

Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to LG; BVR Subrahmanyam, Chief Secretary; Dilbag Singh, DGP; Atal Dulloo, Financial Commissioner Health and Medical Education; Shaleen Kabra, Principal Secretary to Government, Home Department; Bipul Pathak, Principal Secretary to LG attended the meeting.

LG underlined the importance of continued efforts at all levels of the administration in fight against coronavirus in the UT and asked the officers to formulate an

effective rapid response mechanism so that pro-active steps can be taken to deal with any emerging situation.

He observed that the increased testing is the key in identifying and combating covid-19 pandemic, and asked the officers to ensure the sustainability of the testing speed and to explore the possibilities of increasing the same. He directed for effective implementation of restrictions in Red-Zones to contain the spread of the deadly virus.

The Lt Governor ●PAGE 02

Free From Agra Jail Quarantined In Tral School

AGRA: Six Kashmiri youth released from UP's Agra Jail reached their native town Tral where they were quarantined in a school.

Over 200 Kashmiri's were detained in different jails of Uttar Pradesh among which some have been released. These arrests were made after the abrogation of special

status of Jammu and Kashmir in August last year.

Official sources said that six people, all hailing from Tral town, who were booked under Public Safety Act and lodged in Agra Jail were released, but shortly after reaching Tral, they were quarantined for a period of ●PAGE 02

369 Stranded Students Return Home

KATHUA - A group of 369 students, hailing from different districts of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, reached here on Monday from Kota in Rajasthan onboard 15 SRTC buses, officials said.

Soon after their arrival, they were screened for COVID-19 and later allowed to proceed to their home districts in the two Union Territories where they would undergo administrative quarantine before ●P-02

Govt Extends High Speed Internet Ban Till May 11

SRINAGAR: The Government on Monday ordered the continuation of the ban on high-speed internet in Jammu and Kashmir till May 11.

In a latest order issued by the Home Department, the reason cited for the decision includes spurt in militant violence, the launch of new outfits and "well-founded" apprehensions of the "field agencies" regarding "enhanced efforts by Pakistan for recruitment in the (militant) ranks as well as infiltration attempts, which heavily depend on high-speed internet."

"Such restrictions have been placed in order to curb uploading, downloading, circulation of provocative videos, guard against rumormongering, fake news, prevent the use of encrypted messaging and VOIP services for infiltration and co-ordinating (militant) activities, and defeat the nefarious designs from across the border to propagate (militancy)," reads the order issued here by Principal Secretary Home department, according to media reports.

It said the misuse of data services by "anti-national elements" has the potential to scale up violent activities and disturb public order, "which has till now been maintained ●P-02

J&K's Internet Restrictions Figure In UN Report

SRINAGAR: The United Nations Special Rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression has said that limitations imposed by the government on internet in Jammu & Kashmir have made access to basic information difficult for healthcare professionals.

In his report titled "disease pandemics and the freedom of opinion and expression", UN rapporteur David Kaye has expressed concern over internet restrictions in Kashmir. "It has been reported by health-care professionals in Kashmir that the limitations imposed by the government have made access to basic information difficult to obtain," reads the report.

The report is being submitted ●P-02

Lower Munda Encounter Ends, Bodies Of 3 Militants Recovered



Soldiers at an encounter site- KO File photo

SRINAGAR: Three militants were killed in an encounter with government forces at Lower Munda area of Qazigund in south Kashmir's Kulgam district on Monday. Bodies of all the militants have been recovered, officials said.

The gunfight ensued after a joint team of Police, CRPF and army's 19 Rashtriya Rifles launched a cordon-and-search-operation in the area amid specific inputs about the presence of the militants. ●PAGE 02

4 Children Among 6 Injured In Blast Near Lower Munda Encounter Site

SRINAGAR: Four children were among six persons injured in a blast near encounter site at Lower Munda on Monday afternoon and one of them was referred to SMHS Srinagar hospital while three ●P-02

ACCORDING TO THE SENIOR
Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kulgam, Gurinderpal Singh the operation has ended with the killing of three militants.

People Hold Funeral Prayers in Absentia

Over hundred people, defying lockdown curbs, offered funeral prayers in absentia for Asif Dar, the militant reportedly killed in Lower Munda encounter on Monday morning. ●P-02

CASO Ends Without Success in Pulwama

Government forces Monday launched a Cordon and Search Operation (CASO) in a hamlet in South Kashmir's Pulwama districts. A cordon and search operation was launched in Putrigam ●P-02

Aug 5 Has Changed Geopolitical Situation: Bajwa

ISLAMABAD (PTI) - The Balakot airstrike and the abrogation of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution to bifurcate Jammu and Kashmir are the two significant events that will have a "lasting imprint" on the geopolitical situation of South Asia, according to Pakistan Army chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa.

In an article in the 'Green Book 2020', a research journal of the Pakistan Army which is recognised by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan and published biennially, Gen Bajwa also describes Kashmir as a nuclear flashpoint.

General Bajwa being the Patron-in-Chief of the journal expressed his view in a ●P-02

Heavy Cross LOC Shelling Rattles Uri

Srinagar- Heavy firing and shelling exchanges started on Monday between Indian and Pakistan armies on the Line of Control (LoC) in Uri sector of Jammu and Kashmir.

Police sources said heavy exchange of fire started in Hajipiper area as Pakistani troops started unprovoked firing and shelling, after which the Indian soldiers responded using same weapons. It was not immediately known whether the Pakistan shelling was intended to facilitate the infiltrations of militants into the Valley.

Till last reports came in, sporadic shelling exchanges were still going on in the area.

Doctors Panel Issues Advisory for Pollen Allergy

SRINAGAR: The J&K Society of Consultant Doctors (JKSCD) on Monday issued a health advisory ahead of the pollen season in Kashmir.

A statement issued by the JKSCD here said that a large proportion of the population reports seasonal symptoms related to pollen, the most common of which being itchy and watery eyes, nasal congestion, runny nose, persistent sneezing and in moderate to severe cases, wheezing and shortness of breath.

Although pollen allergies, including mild allergic asthma have not been identified as a major risk factor for COVID-19 infection, the JKSCD advised public to remain cautious.

Any moderate to severe asthma, irrespective of trigger, where patient needs daily treatment is included in the list of chronic lung conditions that make a patient vulnerable to COVID-19, it said.

President JKSCD, Dr Maajed Jehangeer, advised children and adults on maintenance medications for allergies such as inhaled corticosteroids and/or bronchodilators (inhalers), leukotriene inhibitors and/or antihistamines (allergy tablets) to continue their treatment as prescribed by their doctor.

Dr Jehangeer asked such patients not to discontinue their medication for fear of COVID-19. "It is very possible to have asymptomatic or almost asymptomatic COVID-19 and to mistake it for seasonal rhinitis/hay fever. Therefore, patients with hay fever should keep their symptoms under the best possible control and that means using intranasal corticosteroid inhalers and other medicines as prescribed by their doctor," Dr Jehangeer said.

He further emphasised that these drugs are not inadvisable, and there was a strong scientific evidence that intranasal steroid use for hay fever improves nasal innate immunity.

Dr Jehangeer said that those having hay fever/pollen allergy develop symptoms compatible with COVID-19 and they will need to self-isolate, inform their doctor and monitor their health as everyone else.

If progressive breathing difficulty develops prompt medical assistance should be sought, he said.

Although the definitive diagnosis of COVID-19 is not clinical and can be confirmed only through laboratory testing, Dr Jehangeer said that there are still some clinical signs that can differentiate between hay fever/pollen allergy and COVID-19 infection. "The term 'hay fever' is a misnomer as there is no fever in ●PAGE 02



SOLITUDE: On the second day of Ramazan, a man is seen praying on the banks of Dal Lake amid lockdown- KO Photo by Abid Bhat

From Front page...



Ko Photos by Abid Bhat



2YearOldAmong 23 More

12-year-old boy. Both hail from Heerpora village. Three others a 12-and 17-year-old besides 75-year-old man are from Beminipora. With two fresh cases, Heerpora, a small village now has 48 COVID-19 patients even as a few among them have recovered.

Regarding Baramulla cases, sources said that they include three females each aged 32-years-old and two males—one 32-year-old and other a 6-year-old boy, all residents of Malpora Sheeri and contacts of previous patients.

"One among the women is an expectant mother with few just days left for her delivery. She has been shifted to SKIMS Bemina and would probably be referred to JLNH hospital for further treatment," informed Deputy Commissioner Baramulla Dr G N Itoo.

Regarding cases from Anantnag district, sources said that they include five females aged 41, 44, 45, 46 and 75 of Wangam Nowgam besides a 55-year-old of Pushroo Nowgam.

Regarding three cases from Bandipora, sources said that they include 36-year-old woman, a 14-year-old boy and 65-year-old man from Gundjahangir village, one of the severely affected areas in the north Kashmir district.

Regarding Kupwara, they said, a 6-year-old boy from Muqam-e-Shahwali tested positive for the pestilence.

Budgam case is a 30-year-old female from Rat-sun area of the central Kashmir district. Srinagar's case is said to be a 75-year-old woman from Rainawari in central Kashmir district. With these fresh cases, Bandipora now has 127 COVID-19 patients, highest in all districts, followed by Srinagar (86), Shopian (68), Baramulla (67), Kupwara (48), Anantnag (49), Jammu (26), Udhampur (20), Ganderbal (15), Budgam (14), Kulgam (6), Rajouri (4), Samba (4), Pulwama (3) while Kathua, Kishtwar, Ramban and Reasi districts have one case each.

Meanwhile, twenty seven people have recovered including 13 in Srinagar, 4 in Baramulla, three in Ganderbal, two each in Shopian and Udhampur besides one each in Bandipora, Kupwara and Jammu district. With them, 164 have recovered while seven people six in Kashmir and one in Jammu have died, leaving active cases at 375. Meanwhile, according to officials, till date, 67570 travellers and persons in contact with suspected cases have been enlisted for surveillance which includes 6320 persons in-home quarantine including facilities operated by government, 259 in Hospital Quarantine, 375 in hospital isolation, and 9984 under home surveillance. Besides, 50625 persons have completed their surveillance period. With inputs from GNS

Door-to-Door Health Survey...

Deputy Commissioner Srinagar, Shahid Iqbal Choudhary said that the survey is indispensable for better planning & response in fight against COVID-19.

"House-to-House Health Survey/Audit under progress in #Srinagar. Indispensable for better planning & response. Sporadic reports of non-cooperation. Request Citizens to pl help visiting teams for accurate health data. It's a collective fight against COVID-19," Choudhary tweeted.

Govt Extends High Speed...

due to the gradual easing of restrictions on access to the internet while ensuring that rights and interests of the citizens are not affected adversely."

"Now, therefore, on consideration of the overall security scenario and the reports of the law enforcing agencies, I am satisfied that there is no other alternative but to continue with the speed restrictions in respect of access to the internet through mobiles while providing unrestricted fixed-line connectivity i.e. without any speed restrictions, and, accordingly, in the interest of the sovereignty and the integrity of India, the Security of the State and for maintaining public order, ...,I, Principal Secretary to the Government, Home Department, hereby direct that there shall (restrictions on access to the internet with mobile data services restricted to 2G only," reads the order, adding that these restrictions shall continue till May 11.

J&K's Internet Restrictions...

to Human Rights Council's 44th session sched-

uled from June 15 to July 3, 2020

According to the report, the continuation of restrictions on internet has been troubling, amid outbreak of COVID-19. "In the context of the pandemic, it has been especially troubling to observe the continuation of several instances of Internet shutdowns. The most prominent has been the long-term disruption that the Government of India has imposed on Kashmir," reads the report.

Referring to UN experts' statement in August 2019, the report states that the government imposed what several mandate holders found to be "a form of collective punishment of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, without even a pretext of a precipitating offence".

"Early in 2020 the Supreme Court of India found that the Government must periodically justify its continuing actions in Kashmir, but even as of this writing, reporting suggests that people in Kashmir are only able to access limited Internet sites and with extremely limited speeds," the report states.

On 22 August 2019, a group of five United Nations human-rights experts had issued a joint statement asking the government to end the crackdown on freedom of expression, access to information and peaceful protests in Kashmir.

Lower Munda Encounter Ends...

According to the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kulgam, Gurinderpal Singh the operation has ended with the killing of three militants. "Bodies of all three militants were recovered during the searches at the encounter site," the SSP said.

Meanwhile, sources said that the bodies were taken to PCR Kashmir and as per the new policy, the bodies would be buried in Baramulla or Ganderbal after their funeral to be participated by select members of the family in presence of a magistrate.

In case of the unidentified militants, the police hands over the body to local Auqaf of the area where the bodies are buried and they perform their funeral by complying with the norms amid pandemic.

4 Children Among 6 Injured

others require "surgical intervention."

Official sources said that the blast occurred soon after government forces withdrew from the encounter site.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kulgam, Gurinderpal Singh said that the area was sanitized of the explosives while the announcement was made, urging people not to venture into the prohibited area. "We have also erected banners there, asking people not to go near the spot. While we sanitized the area, it seems that some explosive had been left unnoticed which these persons fiddled with, leading to the blast," he said, adding that five persons were injured and have been hospitalized.

Sources said that five of the injured were shifted to SDH Dooru and one critically wounded, 15-year-old Obaid Beigh son of Bashir Ahmad Beigh of Lower Munda was admitted to emergency hospital Qazigund.

Dr Asima Nazir, Medical Superintendent of emergency hospital Qazigund said that one injured was administered first aid and later shifted to SMHS hospital Srinagar for specialized treatment.

Dr Rafiq Salathia, Medical Superintendent of Sub District Hospital Duroo said that three of the five injured were referred to GMC Anantnag as "they needed surgical intervention." Two others have been admitted and given required treatment, he added.

The five injured have been identified as Aakash Ayoub Rather son of Mohammad Ayoub Rather of Badermuna, Sameer Ahmad Beigh son of Mohammad Sidiq Beigh, Mehran Showket son of Showket Ahmad Ganie, Zubair Ahmad Shah son of Syed Abdul Ali and Khurshid Ahmad, all residents of Lower Munda.

People Hold Funeral Prayers...

Reports said that at least 3 militants were killed in Lower Munda Kulgam encounter. Among them one is top militant commander Asif Majid Dar.

KNT news agency reported that over 100 people offered funeral prayers in absentia for the slain militant at his native village Dangar Mohalla Kakapora area of South Kashmir's Pulwama district.

The funeral prayers were offered after the culmination of Zuhar Prayers. According to the report minor stone-pelting

incident also occurred in Kakapora. Group of youth pelted stones at police. However, there was no retaliation from the police.

CASO Ends Without Success.

village after receiving inputs about the presence of militants there, police said.

Soldiers from 53 Rifles (RR), Special Operation Group (SOG) of Jammu and Kashmir police and 183 Battalion CRPF launched this search operation.

Official sources said that all exit points were sealed and house to house searches launched. They further said that additional forces were deployed in the adjacent area to prevent any law and order problem.

During the search operation, door to door searches were conducted and the identity cards of the people were checked.

Sources said that the operation was called off after no contact with any militant was established.

Prepare for Post 3rd May...

urged J&K Bank to reach out to the masses with the digital banking facilities by encouraging them to use UPI, BHIM, QR in addition to the use of Aarogya Setu application.

He further directed the officers to take necessary measures to fulfill the nutritional requirements of the vulnerable population with special focus on destitutes and slum dwellers.

Free From Agra Jail Quarantined

two weeks in a private school.

They include Farooq Ahmed Bhat (45), son of Muhammad Akbar Bhat of Larrow Jager, Ajaz Ahmed Tali (35), son of Ghulam Nabi, Muhammad Rafiq Bhat son of Ghulam Ahmed of Tral-e-Payeen, Muzaffar Ahmed Baba (44), son of Ghulam Muhammad, Bilal Ahmed Bhat (26), son of Abdul Hamid, a resident of Larrow Jager and Muzaffar Ahmed Bhat (53) son of Muhammad Rafiq of Tral-e-Payeen.

369 Stranded Students Return.

joining their families, the officials said.

They said six students from Kargil, who also completed their quarantine period of 14 days in Kathua, also joined the group from Ladakh.

"The Jammu and Kashmir government had dispatched 15 SRTC buses three days back to bring back 369 students who were left stranded in Kota due to the lockdown. The students entered Jammu and Kashmir this (Monday) morning, District Development Commissioner, Kathua, O P Bhagat, who himself received the students, said.

He said all the students were screened by the special team of doctors and later allowed to move towards their respective districts.

"Eight buses with students of Kashmir and Ladakh left for Srinagar. Six students of Kargil, who had completed administrative quarantine in Kathua, also boarded the Ladakh-bound bus," he said.

Officials said a group of 57 students from Ladakh is travelling from Kota to their home districts. Bhagat said all the students would go through mandatory administrative quarantine as a precautionary measure after reaching their home districts

2 Pairs Of Siblings Washed

said that Rs 8 lacs, 4 lac each, would be given as ex-gratia to the bereaved family under SDRF.

A report from Shopian said two sisters were killed due to flash floods triggered by heavy rains in Chotipora area of the district on Monday evening.

Reports said that the two sisters who were walking on the bank of a stream were washed away due to the flash floods.

The sisters have been identified as Khalida (25) and Sumiya (23) daughters of Ghulam Mohammad Pal.

The incident occurred late Monday evening, reports said.

Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Wajahat Hussain said that soon after the incident a search operation was launched to retrieve the bodies of the duo. When reports last came in at around 9 PM, the searches to find out the bodies were going on

Doctors Panel Issues Advisory...

hay fever whereas fever, sometimes high-grade is common in COVID-19 infection," he explained.

Similarly, cough is rare in hay fever whereas there is a dry and persistent cough in COVID-19 cases, he added.

He further explained that fatigue and myalgia (muscle pain) are rarely encountered in hay fever whereas most patients with COVID-19 infection report severe fatigue and significant myalgia.

"Also, symptoms of hay fever are relieved by over the counter anti-allergy tablets like antihistamines, leukotriene inhibitors, whereas COVID-19 symptoms do not respond to these over the counter cold medications".

The President JKSCD said that there was no reason to self isolate in case of a simple pollen allergy.

He however urged people to follow the general guidelines for physical distancing, maintain hand hygiene and avoid touching ones face and see a doctor non-urgently. "However, if symptoms get worse, or there is fever and/or progressive difficulty breathing seek urgent medical care," he said.

Dr Masood Rashid Spokesperson JKSCD requested administration to provide free masks to all patients who seek medical advice in the health set-up.

Quoting a study, Dr Rashid said that if both COVID-19 positive patient and his/her casual contact are wearing a mask the risk of transmission of the virus is very low.

"As such, the benefit of wearing a mask (even homemade one) cannot be overemphasised especially now that evidence is forthcoming that many patients (upto 50% in some parts of world) with COVID-19 may be asymptomatic," he said.

Aug5HasChanged Geopolitical...

Note at the first page of the publication.

"Year 2019 witnessed two significant events which will have lasting imprint on the geopolitics of this region; first, the unwarranted Balakot Strike by Indian Air Force on 26th February and second, the unilateral annexation" of Jammu and Kashmir on August 5, through abrogation of Article 370 and 35A, the Pakistan Army chief said.

"Former was a coercive attempt to carve out space for war under nuclear overhang and enforce compellence; adroitly denied by Pakistan Air Force the very next day, through a calibrated and proportionate response Indian craving for establishing a New Normal was stymied comprehensively.

"The latter, despite condemnation by the World at large, continues to haunt the lives of over eight million Muslims" of Kashmir..." he wrote. General Bajwa goes on to say: Kashmir is a nuclear flashpoint and in total disregard to international norms, Mr (Narendra) Modi has not only endangered the immediate neighbourhood, but has also raised the ante for the entire World.

The powerful army, which has ruled Pakistan for more than half of its 70 plus years of existence, has hitherto wielded considerable power in the matters of security and foreign policy. Pakistan and India were almost on the brink of a war following the Pulwama suicide attack in Jammu and Kashmir in February 2019 that killed dozens of CRPF soldiers and prompted India to carry out air strikes on alleged militant camps in Balakot city in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

The strained ties between India and Pakistan further nose-dived following the abrogation of Article 370 in August to withdraw the special status of Jammu and Kashmir. The move angered Pakistan, which downgraded diplomatic ties with India and expelled the Indian High Commissioner stationed in Islamabad.

India has categorically told the international community that the scrapping of Article 370 was its internal matter. It also advised Pakistan to accept the reality and stop all anti-India propaganda.

In the 'Green Book 2020' editorial, Editor-in-Chief Lt Gen Sher Afgan made a case for the changing global order due to the impact of the latest technologies and revolutions in the military and strategic thoughts.

"New players like China & Russia are pushing the US led International Liberal Order towards an era of more multipolar power centres. Regionalism is gaining currency, Populism sentiment is high and traditional power centres are grappling to remain atop, he wrote.

He said that South Asia, due to its strategic location and role in world politics, is also under a great impact of this rapid transformation in the geo-politics and geo-economics and Paki-

stan armed forces had superbly tackled through cross-domain responses.

Former diplomat Shamsah Ahmad Khan in his article, 'India-Pakistan Relations: In Perspective', wrote that Pakistan has been living with a lingering suspicion that India had never reconciled to the sub-continent's partition and facing India's hostility and belligerence.

He said that as one of the oldest unresolved international conflicts, Kashmir is today "a nuclear flashpoint."

There are other articles in the 'Green Book 2020' about the regional and global situation. However, disclaimer by the publisher reads that the view by authors do not imply the official policy of the Pakistan Army as an institution.

Learn From Home Through Vmc ...

Live Online classes. The Live Online classes shall continue till the restrictions are there and then the students can gradually return to the classroom delivery as things go back to normal .

They have ensured that all of the batches that are scheduled to start in the coming weeks shall also start on time with the Online Live delivery. The response to the Online Live Classes has been inspiring with thousands of students joining and participating. The feedback has also been very encouraging from both parents and students alike. Students are also getting their doubts cleared in smaller batches from their centre teachers during the Live Classes for good clarity of concepts.

On the current scenario Vishnu Dutt Sharma, CEO of VMC said "The pace at which VMC and its students have adapted to the new reality has been a pleasant surprise for us as well as our students and we are proud to say that our students are well on track to prepare and ace competitive exams like they always have. It is a great achievement as we have managed to eliminate the impact of lockdown for most of our students' preparations."

Students are gaining admissions into VMC's programs through their flagship National Admission Tests, which too have been conducted Online with unprecedented attendance rates not seen even in offline classroom based tests.

This isn't the first occasion where VMC has managed to stay ahead of the curve, but they have done so over the years: They were the first to introduce admission & talent screening test for IIT-JEE coaching in 1990; First to introduce computer based feedback and analysis of performance to students in 1995; In 1995, first to introduce a revision course for IITJEE preparation - Final Step (FS); In 2007, for the first time in India, VMC introduced online assessment for IITJEE coaching; and in 2011, VMC launched its Classroom Courses in 18 cities where classes were conducted through latest VSAT Technology.

On the "Learn From Home" side, with VMC GURU they have been enrolling and educating students who want to study completely online . They have courses that feature live classes from some of the best and hand-picked faculty across India. The live classes follow the same pedagogy of teaching and the same high quality of teaching as their coveted classroom programs but turn out to be more cost efficient as VMC incurs lesser costs in delivering these programs.

The online students will get access to the same resources – scientifically designed study material, national level test series, personalized analysis and mentoring – as is available to the classroom students of VMC. The Learn from Home solutions have both light as well as detailed courses tailored to the unique requirements of different students. This turns out to be a great solution for those students who don't have an access to VMC's centres due to distance or cities or those who require a more flexible program that can fit into their daily schedule or even those who want the high quality preparation programs of VMC at a much lesser price. VMC is also offering flat 35% Anti-COVID scholarships for these programs to help students fight Coronavirus and achieve their dreams.

Modernisation Of Land Records

suggestions and requested amendments in RFP.

Opening Of Offices At Civil...

his satisfaction over the arrangements. He reviewed the facilities at the health dispensary and directed for ensuring availability of medical officer and keeping ample stock of medicines in the dispensary.

No SoP followed to treat, bury pregnant lady of South Kashmir

Agencies

Anantnag: The death of a pregnant woman in south Kashmir whose Covid-19 test turned out positive has triggered fears that another hotspot of the disease may emerge in Anantnag district.

There have been allegations that the Anantnag Maternity and Childcare Hospital, where the 32-year old woman pregnant with twins died on Saturday, did not follow the proper protocol as they handed over the body to her family before the test result came as a result of which a large number of people attended her funeral at Larnoo Anantnag. The test result came late Sunday, hours after she was buried.

According to reports, over 100 people took part in her funeral besides dozens of ladies were present at her resi-

dence and gave her burial bath.

As per the standard operating procedures (SOPS), the pregnant women in red zones shall be enlisted and they shall be managed at health centres established in red and buffer zones.

According to SOP, all the asymptomatic pregnant women shall be tested one week before the expected date of delivery (EDD) using rapid antibody tests. However the hospital authorities have failed to set up an isolation facility for the expecting mothers coming from red zones at MCH Anantnag, thereby risking the lives of patients as well as attendants.

A doctor, requesting anonymity that the deceased lady wasn't kept in isolation ward and she came in contact with dozens of patients and attendants.

"She was taken to labour room but before treating her, doctors and para-

medical staff had to literally beg for safety gears, he said, adding that no SOP was followed as her samples for covid-19 should have been taken before seven days whether she was symptomatic or asymptomatic.

"The medical staff and attendants were worried as swabs of pregnant lady were taken for testing after her death," the doctor said. "The medical staff is in complete shock since her tests came positive."

Soon after allegations, an inquiry committee was constituted and asked to submit its report within three days. Officials sources said that despite knowing that she is from red zone area and taking her samples for covid-19 testing, body was handed over to family for last rites.

They said authorities should have kept her body in a mortuary till her co-

vid report would have come. "As per the WHO guidelines, all pregnant women who visit hospital have to be treated as covid-19 probable and this lady was from the red zone and made her more suspected," said another doctor.

Principal Government Medical College Dr Showkat Jeelani said that three doctors, two nurses and few medicos were immediately asked to go for home quarantine after the death of lady.

He further claimed that the lady was presumed as covid-19 patient and was buried as per WHO guidelines. Asked that there was an evidence that hundreds of people have participated in her last rites, he said: "We too have reports that few of her relatives have took part in her funeral. We have rushed a team there to trace her all possible contacts." (KNO)

18 patients discharged from Srinagar hospital

Srinagar: Eighteen persons, who were hospitalized after testing positive for Coronavirus last month, were discharged from JVC SKIMS Bemina hospital today after repeatedly testing negative for the infection they had contracted.

Among these 18 persons, only 5 are locals while rest are those who were part of the Tableegi Jamat and hail from Kerala and New Delhi.

Principal JVC SKIMS, Dr Reyaz Untoo told KNT that 18 patients were discharged from the hospital after their recovery from lethal COVID-19 infection. He added that among these 18 patients, 5 hail from Kashmir's Handwara and Baramulla towns.

Lone brother of six sisters dies in road accident

Pulwama: A youth died on Monday after being hit by a Tipper in Pathan village of south Kashmir's Pulwama district.

The deceased has been identified as nayat Ahmad Wani son of Ali Mohammad Wani from Sanzwatri village of Pulwama was riding a Scooty when he was hit by a Tipper.

"It was so instant that I can't get myself to believe it actually happened. The boy was badly injured and died on the spot," one of the eye-witnesses said.

It is pertinent to mention that the youth was a lone brother of six sisters.

Meanwhile, a police team reached the spot for investigations in connection with the mishap and arrested the Tipper driver.

People using old passes to violate lockdown: DC Sgr

Srinagar: Deputy Commissioner Srinagar Dr Shahid Iqbal Chaudhary on Monday said curfew passes issued by the administration are being misused which is damaged the very motive of the administration to fight the Covid-19 pandemic. He said people are using old passes issued in year 2014 and 2016 to violation lockdown guidelines which is very unfortunate as entire administration is on roads to protect the people.

Dr Shahid said that 30 per cent passes were issued to the essential services departments. "But 90 per cent of the curfew passes issued are being misused by the people. We have observed people are using old passes issued in 2014 and 2016. They have kept these passes in laminated form with old signatures and only dates have been changed," he said.

DC Srinagar further said that doctors were given red coloured passes with an aim that they will show the same to the men on ground from distance so that they are not stopped. "But we have seen these red passes with names changed and copies of passes," he said. "For instance, if an employee is given a pass to travel on a particular stretch, he is seen travelling on a different stretch."

COVID holds tight grip on Bandipora with 126 positive cases



Total number of cases in the district now stands at 126 of which 103 are active while 22 people have been discharged so far. A patient has also died due to Covid-19 in Gund-Jahengeer village of Hajin

Agencies

Bandipora: Three more people in Bandipora, who had close contact with previous cases, tested positive for deadly COVID-19 on Monday, taking the toll in Bandipora to 126.

An official said that three more cases

were found positive, who belong to Gund-Jahengeer. "Total number of cases in the district now stands at 126 of which 103 are active while 22 people have been discharged so far. A patient has also died due to Covid-19 in Gund-Jahengeer village of Hajin," he said.

He said that out of the total 123 cases,

84 were reported from Hajin medical block and 42 from Bandipora block. In Gundjhangeer over 51 patients have been tested positive and in Gund-Qaiser over 26 people have been tested positive so far.

Deputy Commissioner Bandipora Shahbaz Ahmad Mirza informed that the survey is being conducted to break the chain of Coronavirus in the district. He said in the level one, 300 Booth Area level Group (BAG) teams have been constituted comprising of a Booth Level Worker, Anganwari Worker and Aasha worker. He said the teams will visit every household and shall enquire about the well being of every individual, HE said the teams will update the health status of every individual on mobile app "Swasthya Nidhi App".

An official said that "more than 250 people in Gund-Qaiser village Covid-19 hotspot were placed under administrative quarantine and the rest of the villagers have been quarantined in their homes after the number of patients in this Kumar-Mohalla Gund-Qaiser village was increasing day by day.

He said that the "village has been sealed off by the authorities, and everyone who lives there put into quarantine. The authorities conducted a house to house survey and screened over 2000 people in the village.

"All essentials will be supplied to them. We have sent our teams to distribute masks to residents, conduct surveys and anybody with a cough or a fever is being tested for covid-19. We are now testing more and more people every day."

LeT militant, his associate arrested in Uri

Agencies

Baramulla: Jammu and Kashmir police on Monday claimed to have arrested a militant and his associate in Uri area of north Kashmir's Baramulla district.

Police officials said that a joint team of Army, Police and CRPF laid



a naka near Namla Bridge Uri where they apprehended one militant and his associate, saying that arms and ammunition were recovered from their possession.

On preliminary enquiry, officials said that the duo has been identified as Zubair Ahmad Tantry@ AbuBakar, son of Ghulam Mohammad Tantry of Baharampora Sopore, an active militant of LeT outfit and his associate Bilal Ahmad Rather, son of Ghulam Mohammad Rather of Sahura Uri.

"On search, a huge cache of arms and ammunitions and other incriminating material was recovered," officials said, adding that a case under FIR number 49/2020 under various provisions of Indian Arms Act, Indian Explosives Act and Unlawful Activity (Prevention) Act has been registered

Chandigarh Returned Engineer Turned Militant Among Dead

Srinagar: Only one 'militant associate', and not four militants as claimed by the government forces earlier, was killed at Guddar in the Devsar area of the south Kashmir district. The slain, Aqib Mushtaq Lone who had completed engineering recently from a college in Chandigarh, is a son of a police officer posted in Srinagar, reported news agency

"There were four to six militants but only one militant was killed at Guddar area," according to the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kulgam, Gurinder Pal.

Asked whether the slain was an Over Ground Worker of militants or a militant himself, the police officer said: "He hurled grenades and fired from a pistol." However, a police spokesman said that he was a militant associate.

To a question about the deleting of tweets by police regarding the encounter, first claiming two militants were killed and later followed it with as many more militants killed at Guddar, the SSP said: "Please see the twitter handles. It was not done by me."

A resident of Shuch Kulgam, Aqib had completed engineering from a college in Chandigarh, according to his uncle Bashir Ahmad. Some reports suggest that he had completed B.Tech.

"I saw him around 6:30 doing ablution. I asked why was he doing ablution early as there was still time for (Magrib) Nimaz. He told me it was better to be ready early,"

the uncle of the slain said over phone. At around 6:45 p.m., he said, someone called him and he left.

"We called him at around 7:12 p.m., his phone was ringing but he did not answer. There was firing and I told them (family) he is killed."

Bashir Ahmad said that body has been taken to Srinagar. "Mushtaq Ahmad (father of slain) is in Srinagar," he added.

Meanwhile, a police spokesman said that in view of inputs regarding militants planning to abduct and murder police personnel, exhaustive domination was being carried out by joint forces of Kulgam Police, RR and CRPF from the last few days.

"On Sunday, 26 April 2020 at about 2000 hours one of such patrolling party of joint forces was attacked by militants numbering 4 to 6 in between villages Chehlan and Asthal," the spokesman said.

"In the exchange of firing that ensued, one army officer received firearm injuries."

The attack was followed by an exchange of firing between forces and militants in which forces confirmed having hit 2 to 4 militants. "The exchange of firing stopped around 2200 hrs. Due to expansive area of search, undulating terrain and total darkness, it was decided to carry out a search of the area after first light," the spokesman said, adding, "When search started in the morning, the body of an unknown militant associate along with a pistol and a grenade were recovered." GNS

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
- BUBHERA: 01932-228243
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153

HIGHWAY STATUS

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

HIJRI CALENDAR

04 Ramazan
1441

PRAYERS

FAJR	4: 16
ZUHR	12: 28
ASR	5:16
Magrib	7:15
ISHA	8:43

This Day In History

- 1949 - Former Philippine First Lady Aurora Quezon, 61, assassinated while en route to dedicate a hospital in memory of her late husband; her daughter and 10 others also killed
- 1951 - Mohammad Mosaddegh elected Prime Minister of Iran by the Parliament of Iran (Majlis)
- 1952 - WW II Pacific peace treaty takes effect
- 1956 - Last French troops leave Vietnam
- 1958 - Great Britain performs atmospheric nuclear test at Christmas Island
- 1958 - Vanguard TV-5 launched for Earth orbit (failed)
- 1965 - US marines invade Dominican Republic, stay until October 1966
- 1967 - Muhammad Ali refuses induction into army & stripped of boxing title
- 1969 - Charles de Gaulle resigns as president of France1971- Samuel Lee Gravely Jr becomes 1st black admiral in US Navy
- 1972 - Courts award 1968 Kentucky Derby prize money to 2nd place winner due to the winner being given drugs before the race
- 1973 - Over 6000 Mk. 82 500 pound bombs detonate over 18 hrs in a railway in northern California. 5500 structures damaged, town of Antelope destroyed, with every building reduced to foundations. Leads to Transportation Safety Act (1974)
- 1975 - South-Vietnam Gen Duong Van Minh sworn in as president till April 30
- 1977 - Andreas Baader and members of terrorist group the Red Army Faction (Baader-Meinhof Gang) jailed for life after a trial lasting nearly 2 years in Stuttgart, Germany
- 1977 - The Budapest Treaty on the International Recognition of the Deposit of Microorganisms for the Purposes of Patent Procedure is signed.
- 1983 - Argentine government declares all 15-30,000 missing persons dead
- 1983 - NASA launches Geos-F
- 1986 - Soviet TV news program Vremya announces a nuclear accident at Chernobyl nuclear power station, 2 days after the event
- 1987 - NBA announces expansion to Charlotte NC & Miami Fla in 1988 & Minneapolis Minn & Orlando Fla in 1989
- 1988 - Aloha Airlines Boeing 737 roof tears off in flight; kills stewardess.
- 1989 - Argentina, hit by rocketing inflation, runs out of money
- 1989 - Iran protests sale of "Satanic Verses" by Salman Rushdie
- 1991 - Space Shuttle STS 39 (Discovery 12) launched
- 1993 - Carlo Ciampi forms Italian government with ex-communists
- 1993 - Zambian plane crashes at Libreville, Gabon, 30 soccer players die
- 1994 - Aldrich Ames, former CIA officer & wife Rosario plead guilty to spying.
- 1994 - Freddy Thielemans sworn in as Mayor of Brussels, Belgium
- 1995 - Gas explosion in South Korean metro, 103 die
- 1995 - Sri Lankaan BAE748 crashes at Palaly, 52 die
- 2001 - Millionaire Dennis Tito becomes the world's first space tourist.
- 2003 - Andre Agassi recaptures the world no.1 ranking to become the oldest top-ranked male in the history of the ATP rankings (33 years, 13 days)
- 2005 - The Patent Law Treaty goes into effect.
- 2013 - 8 people are killed and dozens are injured after Taliban attacks on election candidates in Pakistan

From KO Archives

Manmohan and I will resolve Kashmir: Musharraf

ISLAMABAD - Hoping that Kashmir issue would be resolved during his as well as Prime Minister Manmohan Singh's tenure, President Pervez Musharraf has said both of them realised after their recent talks that they should "seize the moment" and contribute to peace, amity and harmony between the two countries.

Musharraf said he and Singh did not discuss any specific time frame to resolve the Kashmir issue during their recent talks in New Delhi but he expected it to be resolved during their tenures.

"We did not discuss a time frame as such. But one does realise, he does and I do, that we both now are at a juncture in history at a time where we can contribute to peace, amity and harmony between India and Pakistan. We are lucky, I would say to be the personalities, who at this time and at this point, can play a role," he said during an interactive programme 'Apke Roobaroo' on the state-run FT V Musharraf said both he and Singh realised that "we should seize the moment This is the word. We must seize the moment Otherwise we would be letting down two nations and the people of Kashmir. Now what is seizing the moment if we both have to be seize the moment, it should be done within our tenure."

(Kashmir Observer, 28 April, 2005)

KASHMIR
OBSERVER

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Exiting The Lockdown

As the second phase of lockdown nears the end, the union government is in a bind as to the future. The government is unenviably caught between the desperate need to flatten the Covid-19 curve and to revive the economy. It is a tough situation to be in. In fact, the urgency to reopen the economy is becoming greater by the day across the world. But in a country like India where a significant population ekes out a hand to mouth existence, it is impossible to continue with an indefinite lockdown. More so, when the government is in no position to extend a monetary help to the poor and needy beyond a point. So, the union government faces a difficult choice. And it has to make this choice in a few days from now.

Initial pointers from the prime minister Narendra Modi's meeting with chief ministers on Monday have underlined that the states with a growing number of Covid-19 cases are likely to see a stricter lockdown post May 3 than those with Green Zones. However, "the mode of restrictions and modalities of exit" from the lockdown in Green Zones would be announced before the second phase of the lockdown ends

As of Monday, India's number of Covid-19 positive cases has passed 27000. The number has been doubled in around eight days, an average that gives some hope that, if all goes well, the country may be able to get a handle on the runaway infection in near to medium term. But this is what makes easing the lockdown a fraught proposition. Once the markets open and people start gathering again things could go back to square one. So, it won't be an easy decision to lift the lockdown. The government will have no option but go for a gradual easing.

Also, any decision to reopen the economy will require the government to ramp up testing and tracing protocols to avoid the proliferation of new Covid-19 clusters. The week ahead will thus be busy. Government will have to expand testing and also ensure there are no fresh outbreaks in major urban centres. More so the 13 such centres comprising Mumbai, Delhi, Ahmedabad, Indore, Pune, Jaipur, Hyderabad, Thane, Surat, Chennai, Bhopal, Agra, and Jodhpur — which account for more than half the cases in the country.

However, the upcoming week will be crucial in terms of the trajectory of pandemic in the country in the country. A diminishing number of cases will make it easier to plan an exit strategy. And in any case, the government can't ignore the growing urgency to reopen the economy. And to start with the best strategy would be to considerably ease the lockdown from the least affected areas of the country.

OTHER OPINION

The Other Virus

Amid the coronavirus crisis, three states framed a terrible everyday bigotry —but also, and hearteningly, a swift and lawful state response. In Mumbai this week, a resident of a suburb who refused to take groceries from a Muslim delivery-person was arrested. The delivery person had recorded a video of the bigoted behaviour he was faced with on his phone, Section 295A of the IPC treats as an offence "deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs". In Gujarat, arrests have been made for circulating messages on social media that cited the Tablighi Jamaat congregation in New Delhi — which did contribute significantly to the making of a COVID hot spot — to call for the social and economic boycott of the entire Muslim community. In Uttar Pradesh, after it came to light that a private hospital had issued an advertisement saying it would not admit Muslim patients unless they took a COVID test, the Meerut police filed an FIR against the owner under Sections 188 (Disobedience to order duly promulgated by public servant), 295A and 505 (statements "conducting to public mischief"). Such action taken in Maharashtra, Gujarat and Uttar Pradesh — states that are, incidentally, ruled by the BJP and the Shiv Sena, parties not exactly known for their political commitment to the secular principle —may not deter the next act of hate on the street, but it points to the way forward. At a time when anxieties and fears sparked by a shared health crisis are threatening to drive the wedge deeper between communities and sharpen polarisation, rendering the Muslim community doubly vulnerable, the state needs to, quite simply, uphold the law.

The problem, of course, is that for the most part, the state either looks away from acts of religious prejudice and discrimination that violate the fundamental rights and freedoms of fellow citizens, or becomes complicit in them. Or, responds defensively, as when the charge is levelled by governments and organisations located abroad — as it did, recently, after the OIC spoke of a rising "Islamophobia" in India in times of the coronavirus. The Indian envoy to the UAE, and the Indian embassies in Oman and Qatar rose immediately to douse that controversy, lest it affect the country's image and ties in a region crucial to India's diplomacy and strategy. On the other hand, it is inadequately realised or acknowledged how grievously religious polarisation, and the failure to act against it, could hurt, and even roll back, the hard-won gains that India is slowly and laboriously making in its battle against the virus.

In fact, heightened vigilance against the communal virus, and a firm resolve to act against it, must be, and must be seen to be, an essential part of India's anti-COVID strategy. The state must be on guard against communal bigotry, not just because it can erupt in violence, but also when it takes a costly toll on the many solidarities that shore up the fight against a common enemy in a public health emergency.

Indian Express

MUSHTAQ A HURRA

What is the logic behind the scare created by the pandemic when its mortality rate is just four or five percent. Why are lockdowns imposed? Why are economies left to crumble? Why are children deprived of their education?

Need Ventilators Not Bombs



THE WORLD has come to a standstill. Every heart is broken and every soul is grief stricken and every mind is obsessed with the fear of death. People are frightened of the tragic disaster which has almost assumed the shape of a monster, and is likely to engulf the humanity. In this extreme desperation, some are looking towards the skies for divine help while some others are looking for a medical science miracle. The spike in COVID19 positive cases across the globe is emerging as a Herculean task for the world to battle with. Developed and the developing countries are in the same queue, watching their people dying for the lack of necessary and proper medical facilities and services. WHO like international organisation has almost knelt down and accepted defeat.

Here, at this crucial juncture, a billion dollar question pops into the minds of many. What is the logic behind the scare created by the pandemic when its mortality rate is just four or five percent. Then, why are lockdowns imposed? Why are economies left to crumble? Why are children deprived of their education? World has witnessed lakhs of deaths to H1N1 flu as well but there was no such hue and cry then. Obviously there is something terribly serious which forces us to take the extreme measures. Leaders of the world have obviously failed to invest public money in right places, like in the vital areas of healthcare and education.

Today, the biggest challenge before the world is the sharp and scary rise in COVID19 positive cases. But, ironically, the virus has exposed deficiencies of all. World lacks sufficient and adequate healthcare facilities and services to tackle a challenge of this magnitude. It may sound bizarre but it is a reality that the so-called great champions and ambassadors of human rights and democracies have failed to invest adequately in the healthcare system. They have fooled the masses of the world in the name of nationalism and patriotism. Their monopoly of the global economic system has brought us to the virtual destruction and the threatened the human race from the planet called earth.

After the second world war, world witnessed a mad race of economic hegemony and nuclear

power. USA and the former USSR fought the prolonged battle of nerves popularly known as the Cold war. This politics of power led to the accumulation of deadly weapons, missiles, fighter jets and other sophisticated armoury. The two blocks and their allies made every possible attempt to put down each other. They, probably, did it deliberately or they lacked the vision to let humanity bloom and live happily on the planet. Conquering the Mars and the Moon is not a sin but depriving a commoner of his/her birth right is indeed a big sin.

The politicians of the world have never been the real statesmen. A statesman cares about the welfare of the people while as a politician cares about absolute power to extend their rule over masses, least bothering about their welfare and development. The pages of the history are testimony to the fact that there have been just rulers. One can cite the example of rulers like Hazrat Ommar Bin Khataab (RA). With a kingdom spread over twenty two lakh square miles, the caliph had no fort to live in and had a single pair of garment to wear. He would often be seen in the graveyards of Madina. And our ambitious politicians, including in that very sacred land, have put the whole humanity on a pile of bombs to exhibit their false pride and hollow showoff. Now, the whole world has understood their vision and mission. These ambitious killers have left the world barren. I challenge them to try their atomic bombs and highly skilled military to kill this tiny virus which is not even visible to a naked eye. It is a proven fact that ambitions lead to disasters. The present crisis is the result of this ambitious approach of our so-called leaders. Had they been sincere and honest rulers, then the world would not have been short of ventilators and medical infrastructure. It is pathetic to mention here that the country like America is begging before the world for ordinary face masks and hand sanitisers. And what is the situation in the countries like India and Pakistan, one need not to mention.

Almost a year ago, I was about to board my car near the casualty gate of SKIMS Soura Srinagar when my eyes caught sight of one of a close acquaintance who was bitterly crying. I rushed towards him and enquired about the reason. He

told me that his ailing mother was in dire need of a ventilator but all the available ventilators in SKIMS Soura were occupied. I do not need to give data and figures of medical equipments available in our tertiary care hospitals.

The story is no different in the countries of the Indian subcontinent. After the colonial rule, subcontinent won its freedom but ambitious rulers didn't let our chains to break. We are still facing the pangs of poverty, hunger, casteism, illiteracy and above all poor and substandard healthcare facilities. A big chunk of populace in the subcontinent has no access to any kind of medical facilities. The pandemic has exposed the real designs of our politicians who would brag about their political manifestoes and liberal outlooks. These hypocrites stand exposed to the masses, and they should be held accountable for their sins.

If experts are to be believed India and Pakistan will be the next hotspot of COVID19. Given the density and the population in these two nations, people may suffer immensely to poor healthcare facilities and services. I am of the firm belief that the post Corona period will cause big political changes in the world in general and the subcontinent in particular. Belligerence and provocation in the name of nationalism and communalism will no more lure the electorate. Time for these hypocrites and bigots to get ready for a changes which may be beyond their imagination.

Raising armies and investing on the defence of a nation, is not bad deal. But, investing only in the weapons of mass destruction to prove ones false pride is criminal. Building skyscrapers and flyovers is no measure of progress but lifting the common masses out of poverty is. Let the world seek a new system of governance. Communism, nationalism, socialism, communalism and liberalism have all been proven irrelevant and obsolete. From Chanakya to Machiavelli, all the models have proven inefficient. Model propounded by Mohammad (Pbuh) some 1500 years ago may hold the answer.

The writer is a teacher and a columnist. He can be reached at mushtaqhurma143@gmail.com



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Impact of Internet Curbs on Kashmiri Students

Kashmiris are locked down in their homes with internet on 2g speed amid panic of coronavirus.

We are well cognisant of the fact that the high speed internet in J&K has been suspended from last more than nine months now. This has affected life of every citizen, especially the student community.

Nowadays social media plays a cardinal role in every student's life, as it is elementary and convenient to access information, provide information and communicate. Teachers from different institutions of the world use social media as a tool of teaching. They create pages on Facebook or channels on YouTube for the students where

the information can be accessed and which the students of Kashmir woefully are not able to access.

The students in Kashmir are beset with many problems due to the security situation and which also has led to the delay of exams.

Nowadays we are more dependent on internet whether it is education, business, marketing or studies. The more one is dependent on something the more it becomes part of ones daily life. We the students of Kashmir remain clueless about new updates on different subjects as compared to our peers elsewhere in the world for no fault of ours.

Right to information and right to be educated is among fundamental

rights under Article 21 of the Indian constitution yet we are denied this right by the same govt which swears by this constitution and imposes curbs on us in its name.

Now the world is quarantined due to the outbreak of COVID-19, and I am sure the students in their homes elsewhere are able to listen lectures or to seek study material provided by teachers thus they keep pace with their studies. Alas! Kashmiri students are denied this right. We are not able to access study material due to agonisingly low speed internet (less than 70 KB/s). We are paying for 4g internet but in return we are getting 2g internet & sometimes no internet at all. It does not only affect our education but

also leads to our mental distress and agony. I know many bright students who in frustration have taken the iniquitous steps like smoking and fallen to drug abuse.

Apart from internet there are other issues too which affect the students life in the Valley like frequent lockdowns, curfews, encounters, power cuts. It is my humble request to the administration kindly restore high speed internet so that we will be able to at least compensate whatever little for what we have lost during past nine months.

Kamran Ashraf
kamranashraf8680@gmail.com
Student of Law
University of Kashmir, Srinagar

Lockdown Dairies: Imagining Kashmir from Assam

‘But for me the most relatable and turning resonating point with Kashmir and the valley’s people was when back home, my state was enveloped in infinite curfew...’

RAKSHANDA AFRIN

It is still hard to reason where their fault lies, or how the prime time ‘nationalists’ TV anchors are always shouting a battle cry against Kashmir.

As a young girl from Assam, which is some 3000 kilometres away from the ‘paradise on earth’, I believe I got too fortunate to actually visit the valley at a very early age as a school kid and spend some days soaking in its pristine allure.

My childhood memories of being there was mostly about the shikara rides in Dal Lake, snowfall and the ‘gandola’ ride in Gulmarg and picturesque landscape and meadows all around me and the valley’s apples and rich cuisines which the young heart relished throughout her stay.

But what stayed with me for long was when one of my neighbours commented that it is our good fortune how our family came back alive from Srinagar. That time I was too naive to make too much sense about it.

But then growing up my perception and knowledge widened too about how post-1947, Kashmir has rarely been free of controversy ever since.

I still remember once when I was watching a debate on AFSPA and Kashmir running on TV, my father then made me understand how many people from the rest of the country will come and give their opinions on Kashmir but no one tries to humanize the issue but rather focuses on demonizing the entire state.

As a media student, joining the University of Delhi, I came to the realization that everyone who is not a Kashmiri felt they were some expert on the state but would never try to read or understand its ever-changing geopolitics.

I evidently remember about the evening after the Pulwama attacks, when two of my acquaintances hailing from Sopore were asked to vacate their



Author's pic from her Assam home

rented house in Delhi as the landlady did not want to risk her life.

It is still hard to reason where their fault lies, or how the prime time ‘nationalists’ TV

anchors are always shouting a battle cry against Kashmir.

During my postgraduate research thesis on Article 370, I realised that the decision as claimed by the Modi government is to ‘free’ the people of the valley but whose freedom was it anyway?

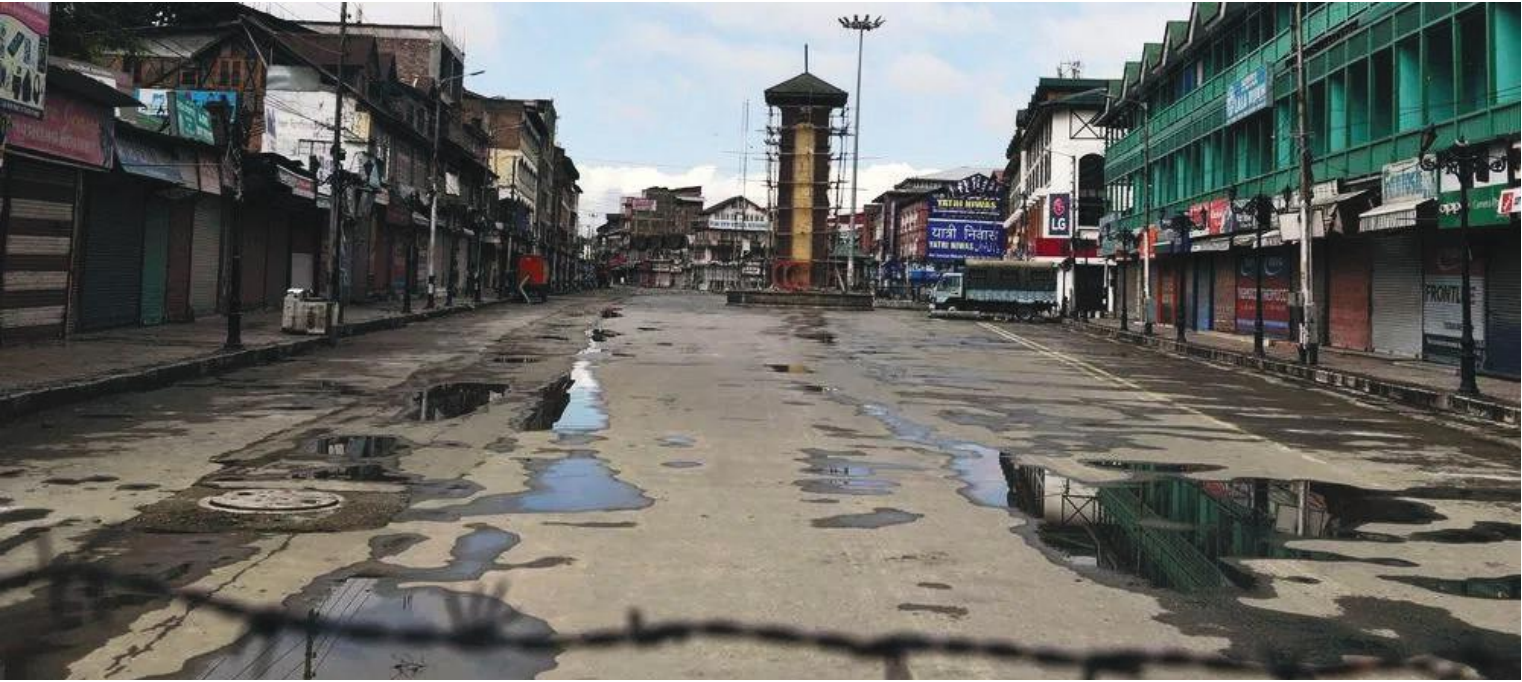
The whole country was enveloped in nationalistic fervour and chest-thumping completely delusional by the constant propaganda.

But no one dared to ask basic humanitarian questions like why Kashmir is the world’s heaviest militarized zone till date which has changed the entire narrative of the everyday lives of the ordinary Kashmiri.

But for me the most relatable and turning resonating point with Kashmir and the valley’s people was when back home, my state was enveloped in infinite curfew, Internet shutdown and heavy deployment of Indian forces during the introduction of the controversial Citizenship Amendment Bill.

If not fully, in some way it triggered in me the feelings of how living in a state of total communication blackout and constant turmoil would be.

Rakshanda Afrin is an intern with Kashmir Observer. Studied journalism from Xavier Institute of Communications, Mumbai and University of Delhi, she previously interned with The Citizen and NDTV, where she covered politics, gender and sports.



‘Weary, Worried, Wondering’—Kashmiri Students in Lockdown

With yet another 4G deadline, Kashmiri students supposed to study online find themselves grappling with weary indoors, where some of them are now drawing parallels with a ‘dystopian world’.

HIRRA SULTAN

Ever since she became a pandemic prisoner in her home, Mehnaz Shafi, 18, has been equating her life with a protracted plague threatening her normal upbringing and student life.

“The lockdown is another reminder of our cursed lives,” Mehnaz laments, “as it [closure] is what has always happened to our studies.”

Even though, she says, the year 2020 started with some internet promise and ‘normalcy’, it looks miserable now, as Kashmir, like rest of the world, is under the contagion curbs.

“This is not the first time,” she continues. “At least there’s a disease out there this time, and not someone’s blood.”

Campus Cravings

Mehvish Akhtar, 20, was supposed to join college this year, which amid pandemic, looks difficult now.

The wannabe architect says she has already lost precious time facing the situational torment in Kashmir, which last summer, was stripped of its special status.

“After last August, schools had reopened this early spring to everyone’s joy in Kashmir,” Mehvish says. “But now, they [campuses] are once again under a lock and key. It’s crazy to make peace with such a stressful situation, every now and then!”



Photo: Abid Bhat/KO

Future Tense

“What would become of us in the face of these repeated campuses closures?” wonders Haziq Ali, a class 10 student from Srinagar.

“How long are we going to suffer silently under the tormenting situation? I cannot even sleep at nights any longer.”

For weary indoors amid pandemic lockdown, the online tutorial is a global solution.

But as the union territory government seems in mood to restore 4G internet, despite the pleas from civil society members and veteran unionist like Dr.

Farooq Abdullah, Kashmiri students are only becoming anxious for their careers.

“They tell us to compete with students from all over India and yet do not give us the same facilities,” Shoaib Bhat, a Sopore-based student preparing for IIT-JEE, says. “Which other city has been under a curfew for this long?”

Kashmiri students, Shoaib says, don’t have sufficient internet speed to even download a PDF file.

“How are we supposed to stand up against someone who has had a whole year of classes and all other facilities?”

Out of Valley Trials

As part of ‘normalcy’ routine, many Kashmiri families would send their wards outside the valley to study in different Indian educational institutions. But many Kashmiri students in the face of hate campaign and assaults, especially after 2019 Pulwama attack, have grown apprehensive for their safety and security.

Even though thousands of Kashmiris study and work in mainland India, more now prefer overseas.

“Being a Kashmiri doesn’t feel like old times outside the valley now,” Arsalan Mir, a college-goer, says. “It feels as if you’ve become some symbol of suspicion now.”

Worried and Wondering

But as there’s no place to go right now, many of these students—who otherwise would cool their heels in outside campuses—are conveying a hard time back home.

“Be it 2016 or 2019, I was always away, watching home from distance,” says Sibtain Shah, a college student in Delhi.

“But now, as the world has become Kashmir, with police guarding every entry and exit, it feels as if chickens have come home to roost. But for us, it’s worrying time. As we grow weary indoors, we keep wondering about our dystopian world.”



Photo: Abid Bhat/KO

HOW CORONAVIRUS WILL FOREVER Change The Airline Industry And The Way We Fly

Bloomberg

Higher fares, fewer routes, pre-flight health checks and less free food: The coronavirus pandemic is ushering in a new era of air travel.

A seismic shift is underway as the world's airlines reassess their operations and how they will look emerging from the crisis. At eerily empty airports, mask-wearing and social distancing already show a behavioural change among the few staff and travellers left. A long shakeup lies ahead that is set to touch almost every aspect of flying after limits on movement unwind.

"We should be prepared for a choppy, sluggish recovery even after the virus is contained," Delta Air Lines Inc. Chief Executive Officer Ed Bastian said in a letter to employees this week. "I estimate the recovery period could take two to three years."

In a matter of months, the coronavirus reset the clock on a decades-long aviation boom that's been one of the great cultural and economic phenomena of the postwar world. The explosion in air travel shrunk the planet, created jobs and hundreds of millions of first-time fliers, and dispersed families rich and poor over continents. Now it's all on hold, with airlines slashing seat capacity by more than 70% since January, according to analytics firm Cirium.

There's no knowing when people will be willing to pack into enclosed cabin spaces again, though an International Air Transport Association survey found 40% of recent travellers anticipated waiting at least six months after the virus is contained before flying again. Budget carrier EasyJet Plc is among those planning to keep middle seats empty, at least initially, to reassure customers about personal spacing. At Korean Air Lines Co., cabin crew now have goggles, masks, gloves and protective gowns.

Cabins Post-Fever

Configurations are likely to change as car-

riers try to squeeze more money from customers. Some will upgrade premium cabins while their fleets are grounded, resulting in an even starker difference between higher-class sections and ever more Spartan economy seating, said Volodymyr Bilotkach, a lecturer in air-transport management at the Singapore Institute of Technology.

In Asia, one of the last strongholds for all-inclusive fares, airlines might also increasingly charge economy passengers separately for things like baggage check-in, legroom and meals, said Bilotkach, who wrote the book "The Economics of Airlines," published in 2017. Even before the virus struck, carriers there typically made only \$3 of profit from each customer, according to IATA. In Europe and the U.S., where ancillary charges are already going up, the figures were \$5 and \$17, respectively.

Cheap flights can be found for now as airlines compete for a handful of passengers, while inklings of a recovery show traffic on China's busiest routes is up at least 7% from February lows. IATA's chief executive, Alexandre de Juniac, said the wearing of face masks might reassure passengers, but keeping middle seats empty would be challenging and reduce maximum seat capacity to below break-even levels.

The industry has weathered storms before, but none as rough as this. Nearly two-thirds of the world's 26,000 passenger aircraft are grounded, and some 25 million jobs are at risk. IATA has warned that carriers face a \$314 billion shortfall in ticket sales this year, and half of them face bankruptcy in two to three months without government help.

EasyJet, based in Luton, England, has data-science teams modelling various scenarios for how soon demand returns, at what levels, what prices people will pay and how much to charge to make a profit on a given flight, CEO Johan Lundgren said on a conference call last week. No one knows the answers. "We just need to be very flexible," he said.

Passenger Tests



A concern is that customers will be put off by health-related entry rules that may differ from country to country, especially during an uneven opening-up process. Just as airport security tightened after the September 2001 terrorist attacks in the U.S., travellers could be subject to tests like temperature checks, or they may even need health certificates to fly, according to consulting firm BCG. That could be time-consuming and complicate flying schedules.

"It needs to be quick and secure. Something that is a relatively minor burden," said Dirk-Maarten Molenaar, Amsterdam-based head of BCG's travel and tourism practice in Europe, the Middle East and North Africa.

The essential nature of air travel — it underpins trade, diplomacy, business and tourism — is forcing governments the world over to prop up carriers. Late Monday in the U.S., the Treasury Department disbursed its first round of payroll assistance to airlines. Around that time, Virgin Australia Holdings Ltd. went into administration after failing to secure state aid. Increasingly distressed, the carrier made eight different appeals for financing before finally collapsing.

More are bound to fail, resulting in less competition, said Bilotkach at the Singapore Institute of Technology. Big low-cost airlines will probably survive along with flag carriers, but many will be partially owned by governments, or at least owe them money, and so will likely cut the most marginal routes and may raise prices, he said. Less-established services like London-New Orleans or Amsterdam-Salt Lake City would be among the first to go, he said. "Fares will either stay at pre-crisis levels or slightly higher," said Bilotkach, who reckons a recovery is two or three years off. "There will definitely be fewer flight options available."

Essential Travel

The virus has led to a ballooning of remote video-conferencing, which could prompt a reassessment of the need to fly at all, according to UBS Group AG.

"It's definitely put it back into your thinking,

even if you're not an environmentalist," said Ce-line Fornaro, London-based head of European industrial equity research at UBS. "What is my essential travel?"

Fornaro expects a shift from air to high-speed rail travel in Europe and China to accelerate. Some low-cost, short-hop routes are likely to disappear. Flights of less than 300 miles made up one fifth of the European market last year, according to a UBS report this month.

If mirrored in other regions such as Asia, the trend would partially unwind the aviation industry's dramatic expansion. Short-haul flights, particularly in Europe, were already under attack from the flight-shaming movement that's encouraged travelers to use lower carbon-emitting means of transport.

Bouncing Back

It is hard to predict any outcome while the crisis is unfolding. But there's certain to be pent-up demand to visit family and friends once travel bans are lifted, said Jared Harcham, New York-based vice president and managing director of aviation at consulting firm ICF International Inc.

While airlines may have to cut prices initially to woo passengers back, hygiene concerns will gradually fade away, said Rico Merkert, professor of transport and supply-chain management at the University of Sydney's business school.

"There will be some base demand," Merkert said. "A lot of airlines have issued vouchers so all these people have to be carried as well."

More broadly, passengers should brace for a new order in airlines and aircraft.

With overall capacity down, carriers will favour smaller and more manageable jets like Boeing Co.'s Dreamliner and Airbus SE's A330 over behemoths like the A380, said Molenaar at BCG. Unheard-of alliances might crop up among national airlines as smaller rivals wither, he said.

"The industry could look very different," he said. "It could be that you go back in time, almost."

Boost Your Diet With Vitamin C And Zinc



Agencies

The Coronavirus outbreak has seen a huge spike in people buying vitamin supplements, with Vitamin C and Zinc emerging two of the top supplements in demand.

Typically, in any viral infection, the body's defence mechanism is to produce white blood cells (WBCs) to fight against the infection.

Zinc and Vitamin C reduces the level of chemicals called cytokines that are harmful to the body and are produced in the body during infections. Zinc helps increase the production of these infection-fighting WBCs and T cells.

Vitamin C, while providing overall immunity, is the most effective against respiratory based illnesses. Lack of Vitamin C is also the most common nutritional deficiency.

"It has been seen that older people are more at risk from the Coronavirus. Ensuring adequate intake of vitamin C via supplements, especially among elderly or individuals with risk factors owing to insufficient vitamin C, is important for the immune system to function properly and resist infections. With age, the body loses its strength to fight viruses, and when combined with existing medical conditions, it places elderly people at risk. But immunity is important at all ages and it can be increased at any stage by keeping oneself fit," says Dr Karthik Anantharaman, Director e-pharmacy, Medlife.

"There have been reports of people believing in Vitamin C to be a cure for Coronavirus, which is certainly not true. While Vitamin C helps boost immunity, it is basic hygiene, good food habits and physical

activities that help build immunity, rather than just the supplements. Pre-existing medical conditions like uncontrolled diabetes, uncontrolled High BP, uncontrolled cholesterol, etc too result in low immunity and these supplements should be seen as agents that help the body withstand or fight infections and not Coronavirus itself," notes Dr Anantharaman.

The natural sources of Zinc are legumes like chickpeas, lentils and beans along with seeds, nuts, and whole grains. Citrus fruits like orange, kiwi, lemon, guava and grapefruit are high in Vitamin C, along with vegetables like broccoli, cauliflower, capsicums and Brussel sprouts.

The over-the-counter zinc supplements are available as Zinc acetate and Zinc gluconate, with the former being more readily available and accessible. The quantity of Zinc needed by the human body to achieve optimal immunity is between 8 -11 mg and for Vitamin C (Ascorbic Acid) it is 500 mg. These two immunity supplements are available individually for consumption but there are supplements available that combine these two into one, which can also be considered by people, adds Dr Anantharaman.

Traditionally, natural foods are the best source of vitamins and nutrients, it is advisable to combine these natural foods along with supplements. But in case of unavailability or other reasons, supplements are quite effective and it is critical to combine them with physical activities and exercises. Supplements, apart from giving the desired immunity, come with the benefit of reducing risk of heart diseases, due to certain other important components present in them.

Lost Football Games Likely To Trigger Heart Attacks In Male Fans

Agencies

If you love soccer or a die-hard fan of football teams, read this carefully. Researchers have found that lost football games may trigger heart attacks in male fans.

"Strong emotions can induce heart attacks and our study indicates that losing a home game can affect supporters," said study author Dr Lukasz Kuzma of the Medical University of Bialystok in Poland.

"The findings suggest that the mental and emotional stress of defeat can provoke cardiac events," Kuzma added.

For the study, presented at

EAPC Essentials 4 You, a scientific platform of the European Society of Cardiology, the research team examined the connection between performance of the Jagiellonia Bialystok football team and admissions for acute coronary syndromes.

The club is known for its large group of avid supporters - an average of 17,174 per match in the 2016/17 season - who strongly identify themselves with the team.

The study included 10,529 patients with acute coronary syndromes (heart attack and unstable angina) admitted to the Clinical Hospital of the Medical University of Bialystok from 2007 to 2018.

This was the only centre in the city with 24-hour invasive cardiology services during this period. The average age of patients was 66.6 years and 62 per cent were men.

The team played 451 national and European matches during the study period. The day after the team lost a home game, there was a 27 per cent rise in male admissions for acute coronary syndromes.

No association was found in women, according to the study.

"Our study shows that poor results from the local professional football team coincided with more heart attacks in male residents," Kuzma said.



"Fans, particularly men with unhealthy lifestyles, should take up regular exercise and avoid smoking and excessive alcohol consumption," Kuzma added.

These steps are the key to supporting your favourite team as long as you wish without damaging your own health, the researchers noted.

5 Foods That Boost Lung Function

Agencies

Weight-loss, hair and makeup, spa treatments are all well and good. But unfortunately, most of us hardly pay attention to our internal organs when in reality, our bodies are nothing without our lungs, kidneys, hearts, and stomachs, etc. What we eat, how much we exercise, our genetics and environmental conditions are just some of the major factors that affect them. Especially these days, looking after our lungs has become imperative.

The good news is that with the help of certain foods, we can keep them in top shape. As compiled from Pinkvilla, here are five items that have been proven to decrease inflammation, open up the airways and protect against pulmonary diseases.

Apples

You must have heard the saying "An apple a day keeps the doctor away?" Well, it's true. Phytochemicals present in apples decrease oxidative stress and inflammation and the same can enhance pulmonary function. As per a study published in The European Respiratory Journal, apples can improve lung function significantly, especially in former smokers.

Green Tea

Green tea is one of the popular



food items among fitness freaks and why not? Its consumption has several health benefits, especially for the lungs. Antioxidants, polyphenols and epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG) can be found in green tea and these nutrients can prevent lung diseases, including cancer. The presence of a compound called theophylline acts as a bronchodilator which makes airway function better.

Ginger and garlic

The cooking staples are not only rich in anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties but also several other medicinal benefits that can help to keep certain lung-based health issues at bay.

Bananas

Bananas are packed with nutrients such as potassium, fiber and vitamin C and all these help to improve lung health as well. So, if you have been experiencing lung problems, then bananas may be your way out.

Turmeric

Turmeric is another commonly used food item that has been used to treat many different health issues for centuries. Its inclusion in the daily diet can keep lung diseases such as asthma, COPD, acute respiratory distress syndrome, lung injury and pulmonary fibrosis at bay.

Note: Please consult your physician before making any changes in your daily diet by including these foods.

Social Isolation May Up Respiratory Problems In Older Adults

Agencies

Social isolation is linked to a heightened risk of hospital admission for respiratory disease among older adults, say researchers, adding that this risk is independent of other potentially influential factors, such as general health and lifestyle. According to the study, published in the journal Thorax, social isolation and loneliness are associated with admission to hospital for various health conditions, but it's not clear if socially isolated adults with respiratory conditions might also be at risk.

To explore this further, the researchers at University College London in the UK linked up hospital records and death statistics for 4,478 people taking part in the English Longitudinal Study on Ageing (ELSA), a nationally representative long term study of older adults.

Social isolation was measured in terms of whether that person lived alone or not (domestic isolation); how much social contact they had with friends and family (social isolation); and how much social engagement they had, including with volunteering, cultural activities, and involvement with community groups. Information on potentially influential factors such as un-



derlying health conditions, smoking and physical activity levels was also gathered.

After taking account of potentially influential factors, loneliness and levels of social contact with friends and family weren't associated with a heightened risk of admission.

But living alone and poor social engagement were associated with, respectively, heightened risks of 32 per cent and 24 per cent, the study said.

In a bid to explain the associations they found, the researchers said that people who are socially isolated may be more physically inactive and smoke more, and less likely to be prompted to see a doctor when symptoms first appear.

"Older adults living alone with existing lung conditions may benefit from additional targeted community support to try and reduce the risk of hospital admissions," the researchers suggested.

"The roll-out of social prescribing schemes may present opportunities for referring those individuals to social engagement community activities," they concluded.

'Another Pandemic': In Latin America, Domestic Abuse Rises Amid Lockdown

Agencies

BUENOS AIRES/SANTIAGO/MEXICO CITY/LA PAZ: Lockdowns around Latin America are helping slow the spread of COVID-19, but are having a darker and less-intended consequence: a spike



in calls to helplines suggests a rise in domestic abuse, in a region where almost 20 million women and girls suffer sexual and physical violence each year.

In cities from Buenos Aires to Mexico City, Santiago, São Paulo and La Paz, families and individuals have been confined in their homes in an unprecedented way, often only allowed out for emergencies or to shop for essentials.

Prosecutors, victim support teams, women's movements and the United Nations all say this has caused a rise in domestic violence towards women. They cite increasing numbers of calls to abuse hotlines.

In some countries, like Mexico and Brazil, there has been a rise in formal reports of abuse,

while in others, including Chile and Bolivia, there has been a drop in formal complaints. Prosecutors and UN Women said the latter was likely not due to a decline in violence, but because women were less able to seek help or report abuse through normal channels.

"The jump in violence has not surprised us, it is the unleashing of a violence that was already there in people," said Eva Giberti, founder of the Victims Against Violence program in Argentina, who helps runs a hotline for women to report abuse.

"Under normal social circumstances that had been limited to some degree."

Argentina's emergency 137 line for abuse victims, supported by the justice department, has seen a 67% rise in calls for help in April versus a year earlier, after a nationwide lockdown was imposed on March 20.

UN Women in a report on Wednesday said there was evidence of rising violence against women in Mexico, Brazil, and Colombia, and a doubling in the number of femicides in Argentina during the quarantine, citing a women's observatory in Mar del Plata.

Pre-pandemic, the Argentine government estimates that a woman was killed every 23 hours.

Domestic violence "seems to be another pandemic," said Lucia Vassallo, a film maker whose documentary "Line 137" looks at the issue.

Yemen crisis deepens as Southern Transitional Council declares self-governance

Agencies

Sanna: Yemen's southern separatists early on Sunday declared self-rule of the country's south as a peace deal with the government crumbled, complicating a long and separate conflict with the Houthis who control much of the north.

The Southern Transitional Council (STC) accused the government of failing to perform its duties and of "conspiring" against the southern cause, and said self-governance had begun at midnight.

The government condemned the move and said the separatists — who have long agitated for independence in the south — would be responsible for the "catastrophic and dangerous" outcome.

The breakdown between the one-time allies comes as a Saudi-led coalition, which backs the internationally recognised government in a battle against the Iran-aligned Houthi rebels, has extended a unilateral ceasefire aimed at fending off the coronavirus pandemic — a move rejected by the Houthis.

Yemen's separatists signed a power-sharing deal in Riyadh last November that quelled a battle — dubbed a "civil war within a civil war" — for the south that had in August seen them seize control of the second city of Aden.

The Riyadh pact quickly became defunct, failing to meet deadlines for key measures including the formation of a new cabinet with equal representation for southerners, and the reorganisation of military forces.

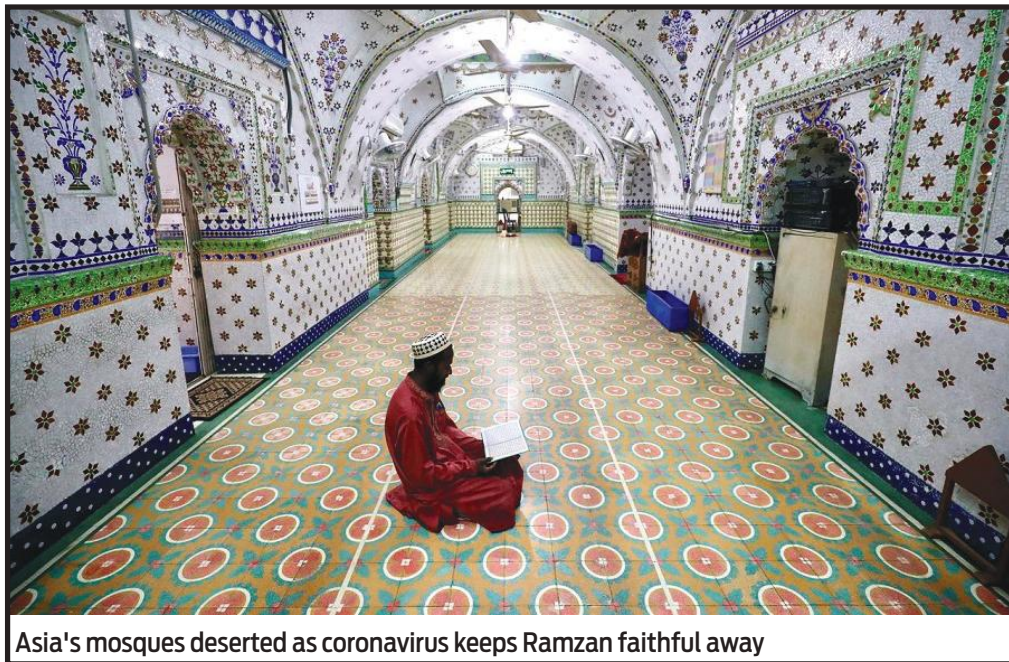


The STC announced in its statement that it was declaring self-governance in the south starting midnight on Saturday, April 25.

"A self-governing committee will start its work according to a list of tasks assigned by the council's presidency," it said.

Aden residents reported heavy deployments of STC forces in the city and a separatist source told AFP they had set up checkpoints "at all government facilities, including the central bank and port of Aden". Military vehicles drove through the city with STC flags flying aloft.

The political landscape in the south is complex, and despite the STC's declaration some southern cities said they did not recognise the call to self-rule and would remain aligned with the central government.



Asia's mosques deserted as coronavirus keeps Ramzan faithful away

Military Spending Sees Biggest Jump In A Decade In 2019

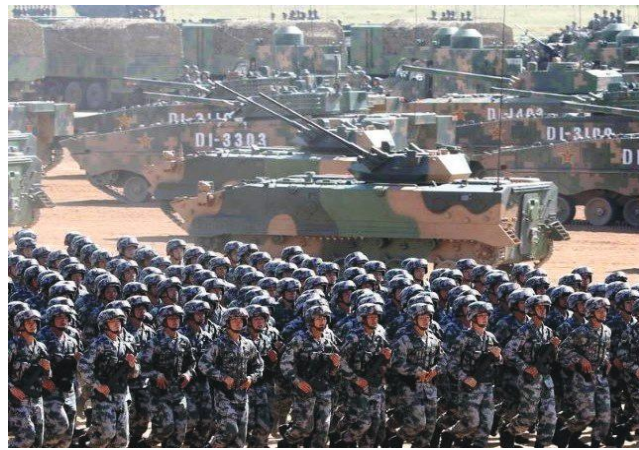
Agencies

STOCKHOLM: The Global military expenditure saw its biggest uptick in a decade in 2019, the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), said in its latest report on Monday, marking the first year two Asian countries, China and India, were among the top three spenders.

The world's nations spent a combined \$1.9 trillion (1.78 trillion euros) on their militaries in 2019, the report said,

of 3.6%, the largest spending growth since 2010. "Military spending has reached the highest point since the end of the Cold War," Nan Tian, a researcher at SIPRI, told AFP.

The increase are the world's largest spenders, headed by the US, which spent \$732 billion in 2019, a 5.3% increase, alone accounting for 38% of global spending. China's expenditure reached \$261 billion in 2019, a 5.1% increase over 2018, while that of India grew by 6.8% to \$71.1 billion, it said.



adding that the five largest spenders, which accounted for 62% of the total expenditure, were the US, China, India, Russia and Saudi Arabia.

Compared to 2018, that represented an annual growth

China's ascent also in part helped explain India's rise. "India's tensions and rivalry with both Pakistan and China are among the major drivers for its increased military spending," said Siemon T. Wezeman, a se-

nior researcher at SIPRI.

According to SIPRI, other notable developments included Germany, which increased spending by 10% in 2019 to \$49.3 billion, the largest percentage increase of all the top 15 spenders. Germany's increased spending could in part be explained by an increased perception of threat from Russia, the report said.

Virus impact

The global military spending in 2019 represented 2.2 per cent of the global gross domestic product (GDP), which equated to around \$249 per person. The expenditure also represented an increase of 3.6% from 2018 and the largest annual growth in spending since 2010, SIPRI said.

While Tian noted that military spending growth had accelerated in recent years — 7.2% higher in 2019 than it was in 2010 — he also told AFP that this trend could be reversed as a result of the new coronavirus pandemic, and its economic fallout.

As the world heads for a potential global recession, Tian argued that governments will have to weigh military spending against other sectors, such as healthcare and education. "It's highly likely that this will really have an impact on military spending," Tian said.

Students return to school in China while New Zealand reports zero community transmission

Agencies

Beijing: Children in China's two most important cities went back to school on Monday after more than three months at home, as coronavirus restrictions eased and governments around the world began charting a path out of the pandemic lockdown.

Europe's four worst-affected countries all reported marked drops in their daily death tolls, offering hope that the outbreak may have peaked in some places — at least for now.

But leaders and experts remain divided on how quickly to revive shuttered economies while maintaining a delicate bal-

ance between freedom and safety.

Italy and New York laid out partial reopening plans, with France and Spain to follow suit this week, while tens of thousands of final-year students returned to school in Shanghai and Beijing after months of closures. "I'm glad, it's been too long since I've seen my classmates," 18-year-old Hang Huan said in Shanghai. "I've missed them a lot."

Students in Beijing must have their temperatures checked at school gates and show "green" health codes on an app that calculates a person's infection risk, according to the education ministry.

Virus numbers in China —

where the disease first emerged late last year — have dwindled as the country begins to cautiously lift control measures, although fears remain over a potential resurgence and cases imported from abroad.

Primary schools in Norway were also set to reopen on Monday, along with some businesses in Switzerland such as hairdressers and florists, while New Zealand prepared to begin its phased exit from lockdown in the evening.

"There is no widespread, undetected community transmission in New Zealand," Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern declared.

"We have won that battle."

Coronavirus cases in Pakistan rise to 13,328; death toll 281

Press Trust Of India

Islamabad: Pakistan's coronavirus cases have climbed to 13,328 while the death toll from the pandemic has reached 281 with 12 more fatalities, the health ministry said on Monday.

According to the Ministry of National Health Services, more than 3,000 people have recovered from the contagion.

The ministry said that Punjab has reported 5,446 cases, Sindh 4,615, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa 1,864, Balochistan 781, Gilgit-Baltistan 318, Islamabad 245 and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir 59 cases.

The coronavirus tally in Pakistan has climbed to 13,328 while 281 people have died due to the sickness, including 12 in the last 24 hours, it said.

So far, 150,756 tests have been conducted including 6,391 in the last 24 hours, while the authorities announced to increase the number of daily tests to 20,000 from the next month.

The government said that an in-camera meeting of the special Parliamentary Committee on Coronavirus Disease will be

held on Monday at the Parliament House to review the impact of the continuous lockdown on the country's economy.

It will also receive recommendations from representatives of traders and the business community for formulating a strategy to deal with the crisis.

President Dr Arif Alvi visited mosques in Bara Kahu area



of Islamabad on Sunday night to check if the guidelines were being followed. He directed the mosque administrations to ensure the implementation of preventive measures, necessary to control the spread of COVID-19.

The president and leading clerics singed a 20-point agreement to allow prayers in mosques on certain safety conditions.

Saudi Arabia ends death penalty for crimes committed by minors

Agencies

Dubai: Saudi Arabia's King Salman has ordered an end to the death penalty for crimes committed by minors, according to a statement by a top official.

The decision comes on the heels of another ordering judges to end the practice of flogging, replacing it with jail time, fines or community service and bringing one of the kingdom's most controversial forms of public punishment to a close.

King Salman's son and heir,

penalty for at least six men from the country's minority Shiite community who allegedly committed crimes while under the age of 18, including Ali al-Nimr, who had participated in anti-government protests. Such activity carries terrorism-related charges in the kingdom for disturbing order and disobeying the ruler.

In a document seen by The Associated Press, the royal decree orders prosecutors to review cases and drop punishments for those who've already served the maxi-



Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, is seen as the force behind the kingdom's loosening of restrictions and its pivot away from ultraconservative interpretations of Islamic law known as Wahhabism, which many in the country still closely adhere to.

The crown prince has sought to modernize the country, attract foreign investment and revamp Saudi Arabia's reputation globally. He's also overseen a parallel crackdown on liberals, women's rights activists, writers, moderate clerics and reformers. The 2018 killing of Saudi writer Jamal Khashoggi in Turkey by agents who worked for the crown prince drew sharp criticism internationally.

The latest royal decree by King Salman could spare the death

mum 10 years.

However, the decree states that terrorism-related cases of minors will be tried differently. It was not immediately clear whether these cases would be bound by the 10-year prison limit.

Last year, Saudi Arabia executed a young man convicted of crimes that took place when he was 16 years old. Amnesty International said Abdulkareem al-Hawaj was found guilty of offences related to his participation in protests in Shiite-populated areas of Saudi Arabia.

Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have long called on the kingdom to abolish the use of the death penalty, particularly for crimes committed by minors. — AP

Pak PM Replaces Awan with Asim Bajwa as PR Man

Islamabad, Apr 27 (PTI) Pakistan Prime Minister Imran Khan on Monday changed his media team for the second time since coming to power in 2018 amid mounting criticism of his government for failing to address the key issues of the country.

Prime Minister Khan appointed Senator Shibli Faraz as the new information minister of the country. Faraz is the son of eminent Urdu poet late Ahmad Faraz.

Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) for information and broadcasting Dr Firdous Ashiq Awan was also removed and was replaced by former military spokesman Lt Gen (retired) Asim Saleem Bajwa.

She was appointed as the SAPM for information and broadcasting on April 18, 2019, after the Cabinet reshuffle.



Minister for Science Fawad Chaudhry, who was the first information minister of Khan, confirmed the new appointments.

"Truly an honourable and dignified man @shibliaraz has been appointed new Information minister of Pak, and brilliant @AsimSBajwa appointed SAPM on info both 'll make a great team.... all the best," Chaudhry said in a tweet.

Bajwa served as Director General of the Pakistan Army's media wing, Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR), when General

Raheel Sharif was the Army chief.

He was credited for making Sharif a larger than life figure and transforming the working of the ISPR.

Bajwa is also serving as the chairman of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) authority.

The changes were made to blunt the perception that the media handling of the government was not good and its work was not being properly highlighted.

However, many analysts still wonder how the new team would deliver until the common people feel the benefit of the steps taken by the government.

"The way these change have been made will not give a good impression and help the cause of the government," analyst Ayaz Amir told Dunya TV.

Trump's Disinfectant Remark Refuses to Go

US President Donald Trump's remarks that disinfectants could potentially treat coronavirus patients remaining in the news after four days of them being made was "bothering", a key member of the White House Task Force on Coronavirus has said.

"I think it bothers me that this is still in the news cycle, because I think we're missing the bigger pieces of what we need to be doing, as American people, to continue to protect one another," Dr Deborah Brix, member of the White House Task Force on Coronavirus, told CNN in an interview.

Trump on Wednesday had suggested the possibility of studying injecting disinfectants into COVID-19 patients or bringing UV light "inside" their bodies to kill the deadly virus, drawing immediate flak from health experts while a leading disinfectant producer urged people not to listen to such dangerous speculation.

Brix, a leading doctor specialising in HIV/AIDS immunology, said the dialogue should focus on asymptomatic cases and not on the president's remarks.

"We should be having that dialogue about this unique clotting that we're seeing. We are



the first country that really had young people to this degree. Italy and Europe is about eight years older than us, as a median age.

"So, this is the first experience of this virus in an open society, where we really can understand what's happening to every different age group. These are the things that we should be talking about and focusing on," Brix said.

"As a scientist and a public health official and a researcher, sometimes, I worry that we don't get the information to the American people that they need, when we continue to bring up something that was from Thursday night," she said.

Google releases doodle games to play and stay at home

Whether you are working from home or staying in isolation, say goodbye to your boredom, for Google will showcase a new game based on a past doodle every day, starting Monday.

The company will choose from the numerous mini-games it has featured on its search homepage over the years. Google will release 10 of its most popular doodles over two weeks.

All of these doodle-based games have been preserved and archived on the Google Doodle Blog.

The company is staggering the games over two weeks to ensure that each day's game has a variety of players.

Doodles in the past years have had multiplayer support. Like the Google Doodle in celebration of the Mexican bingo-like game Loteria, which allowed the user to play the game with friends or with random players online.

Coronavirus Death Toll Rises To 886 In India, Cases Climb To 28,380: Health Ministry

The number of COVID-19 cases climbed to 28,380 and the death toll due to it rose to 886 in the country on Monday, registering a record increase of 60 deaths in 24 hours, according to the Union Health Ministry.

There has been a spike of 1,463 cases since Sunday evening.

The number of active COVID-19 cases stood at 21,132, while 6,361 people have recovered, and one patient has migrated, the ministry said.

Thus, around 22.41 per cent of patients have recovered in the country so far.

The total number of cases includes 111 foreign nationals.

A total of 60 deaths were reported since Sunday evening, of which 19 fatalities were reported from Maharashtra, 18 from Gujarat, eight from Rajasthan, seven from Madhya Pradesh, two

ed three COVID-19 deaths each.

Bihar has reported two deaths, while Meghalaya, Himachal Pradesh, Odisha and Assam have reported one fatality each, according to the ministry data.

According to the Health Ministry data updated in the evening, the highest number of confirmed cases in the country are from Maharashtra at 8,068, followed by Gujarat at 3,301, Delhi at 2,918, Rajasthan at 2,185, Madhya Pradesh at 2,168, Uttar Pradesh at 1,955 and Tamil Nadu at 1,885.

The number of COVID-19 cases has gone up to 1,177 in Andhra Pradesh and 1,002 in Telangana.

The number of cases has risen to 649 in West Bengal, 523 in Jammu and Kashmir, 511 in Karnataka, 469 in Kerala, 313 in Punjab and 289 in Haryana.

Bihar has reported 277 novel coronavirus cases,



each from Karnataka, West Bengal and Uttar Pradesh, and one each from Punjab and Tamil Nadu.

Of the 886 deaths, Maharashtra tops the tally with 342 fatalities, followed by Gujarat at 151, Madhya Pradesh at 106, Delhi at 54, Rajasthan at 41, and Andhra Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh at 31 each.

The death toll reached 26 in Telangana, 24 in Tamil Nadu while West Bengal and Karnataka have reported 20 deaths each.

Punjab has registered 18 fatalities so far. The disease has claimed six lives in Jammu and Kashmir, four in Kerala while Jharkhand and Haryana have recorded

while Odisha has 108 cases. Eighty-two people have been infected with the virus in Jharkhand and 51 in Uttarakhand.

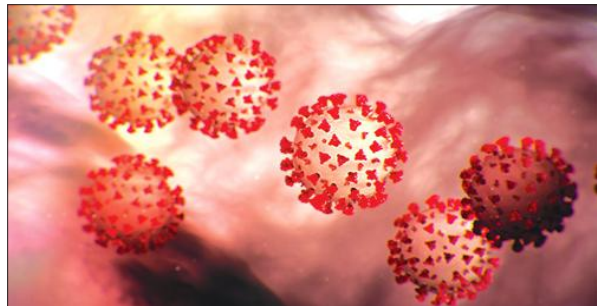
Himachal Pradesh has 40 cases, Chhattisgarh has 37 and Assam has registered 36 infections each so far.

Andaman and Nicobar Islands has 33 COVID-19 cases while Chandigarh has 30 cases and Ladakh has reported 20 infections so far.

Meghalaya has reported 12 cases, Puducherry has eight cases while Goa has seven COVID-19 cases.

Manipur and Tripura have two cases each, while Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh have reported a case each.

Virus Enters Andhra Raj Bhavan: 4 Staff Test Positive



Amaravati: Andhra Pradesh Raj Bhavan reported four coronavirus cases while a parliamentarian's family in Kurnool district was said to have at least six patients as 80 new COVID-19 cases were across the state in the last 24 hours, taking the overall tally to 1,177 on Monday.

While the government bulletin gave only the overall numbers without any other details, official sources revealed

that four staff members of Governor Biswabhusan Harichandan were afflicted with

the virus.

A local newspaper quoted the MP as saying that six of his family members, including his 83-year old father, tested positive for coronavirus. Krishna district reported 33 fresh cases in the last 24 hours, followed by Guntur (23) and Kurnool (13).

The COVID-19 toll remained at 31 while four patients

were discharged from hospitals in Chittoor and West Godavari districts.



The government said that it is taking care of psycho-social issues in shelter homes where migrant workers are staying and experts and counsellors from Central mental health institutes are visiting there. (pic credits: PTI)

'Migrants Don't Need To Go Home, It'll Defeat Very Objective Of Lockdown': Centre To SC

NEW DELHI: Jagran News Desk: The Centre on Sunday told the Supreme Court that the migrant workers don't need to travel to their native places during the lockdown, as it would defeat the "very objective of the preventive measure taken by the government."

Assuring that the government is taking care of their and their family members' daily needs wherever they are, the Centre warned that allowing migrants' movement would lead to a surge in number of coronavirus cases in the country.

"In view of the steps taken by the government, it is submitted that there is no necessity for migration of workers to shift from places of their occupation to the place of their residence and rush back to their villages. Their daily needs are being taken care of wherever they are working and the daily needs of their family members were being taken care of at their respective villages," the government told the apex court, as reported by news agency PTI.

Also Read | Coronavirus Pandemic: PM Modi interacts with CMs on 'graded' lockdown exit plan, Megha-

laya calls for extension

The government, which filed a second status report in the apex court in response to a plea by advocate Alakh Alok Srivastava, said that to obviate the difficulties faced by low wage-earners in the organised sector, cash transfer under PM Garib Kalyan Yojana has been made.

The migrant workers are allowed to withdraw EPFO money advance, said the government while adding that it is taking care of psycho-social issues in shelter homes where migrant workers are staying and experts and counsellors from Central mental health institutes are visiting there.

"As per the latest statistics furnished by the state governments and Union territories, 37,978 relief camps have already been set up by state governments and Union Territories and genuine NGOs. Nearly 14.3 lakh persons have been housed in these camps. In addition to the above, 26,225 food camps have also been opened giving food to nearly 1.34 crore persons," the government said.

The Centre said that directions have been issued to district administration and superintendent of police

to ensure migrant workers and other poor people who are living in rented accommodation are not compelled to pay rent by their landlords.

"If any landlord flouts this direction, they shall be liable for action under the Disaster Management Act," it said.

It said that as per the order of apex court passed on March 31, a fact-check unit has been set up under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to check fake news.

The affidavit said, "In view of the on-going efforts by the central government, presently the spread of COVID-19 in India is much slower than as has been observed in several other countries."

The prompt measures particularly social distancing and lockdown have halted the spread of disease in the country so far, it added.

On March 31, the apex court had asked the Centre to prevent migration of people due to coronavirus and set up within 24 hours a portal for disseminating real time information on the pandemic to counter the panic being spread through fake news.

(With PTI inputs)

ICMR Tells States To Stop Using Rapid Antibody Test Kits From Two Chinese Firms

The country's apex health research body ICMR on Monday asked states to stop using the COVID-19 rapid antibody test kits procured from two Chinese companies and return them to be sent back to the suppliers.

In an advisory sent to chief secretaries of all states and Union Territories on Monday, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) said it "evaluated the kits of Guangzhou Wondfo Biotech and Zhuhai Livson Diagnostics in field conditions. The results have shown wide variation in their sensitivity, despite early promise of good performance for surveillance purpose".

"In view of this, states are advised to stop using these kits, procured from the above mentioned companies and return them to be sent back to the suppliers," it said.

The health ministry on its part issued a statement saying that after receipt of some supplies, ICMR has conducted quality checks on these kits in field conditions.

"Based on scientific assessment of their performance, the order in question (Wondfo) along with order in respect of another make found under-performing have been cancelled," it said.



"It is stressed that ICMR has not made any payment whatsoever in respect of these supplies. Because of the due process followed (not going for procurement with 100 per cent advance amount), Govt does not stand to lose a single rupee," the ministry said.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has alleged that some people were indulging in profiteering while supplying rapid test kits for COVID-19 to the government.

In its advisory, the ICMR said that several states have procured rapid antibody test kits and on their de-

mand, the ICMR also provided these kits with clear instructions that they are to be used only for surveillance purpose.

Some states have raised issues regarding their performance during the testing exercise that they have undertaken.

Additional Director General of ICMR G. S. Toteja advocated that RT-PCR throat/nasal swab test is the best use for diagnosis of COVID-19. RT-PCR test detects the virus early and is the best strategy to identify and isolate the individual, the advisory said. PT

Entrance Exams Only After The Lockdown Ends: HRD Ministry



NEW DELHI: The entrance exams to different technical education courses will be held only when the lockdown ends, the Human Resource Development Ministry said on Monday.

No dates for conducting entrance tests for different courses for medical, engineering, management and other streams have yet been announced.

Even the exams conducted by the Union Public Services Commission have not been held due to the nationwide lockdown.

HRD Minister Ramesh Pokhriyal 'Nishank' said on Monday that exams like Joint Entrance Examination and National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test and management courses will be held only when the situation normalises.

Pointing out that the entrance exams for technical courses have only been postponed, the Minister appealed to the students not to panic in the given situation but rather utilise the time they have gained due to the lockdown to prepare well for the coming exams.

He pointed out that study

material had been made available online for the benefit of students across the country.

The Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions has announced that it will undertake periodic review of the dates for the possible conduct of UPSC exams, which require candidates to travel across the country during normal times, keeping in mind the social distancing and other norms.

Combined Higher Secondary Level Examination (Tier I) 2019, Junior Engineers (Paper I) Examination 2019, Stenographer Grade C and D Examination 2019, and Combined Higher Secondary Level Examination 2018 skill testing will be conducted once the lockdown ends on May 3, 2020.

The conduct of all examinations across the country were stopped after the nationwide lockdown was imposed from March 24 midnight.

The HRD Ministry has said that the candidates would be intimated 10 days in advance before the conduct of the remaining board examinations of Class X and XII. — IANS

One Million It Staff Will Continue Work-From-Home Post-Lockdown: Kris Gopalakrishnan



BENGALURU: More than one million information technology employees are expected to continue to work from home even after the coronavirus-inflicted lockdown situation returns to normalcy, says IT industry veteran Senapathy (Kris) Gopalakrishnan.

The former President of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) said the IT services industry has actually managed to transition people to work from home during the 'stay-at-home' period.

"And that was not a trivial task. A large number of people who have to be supported with technology infrastructure to work from home; business processes will have to be changed, with client permission," the co-founder of IT services firm Infosys Ltd told PTI.

"Now I am told that 90 to 95 per cent of people in many of the larger (IT) organisations are working out of home. And that transition has been smooth and done very, very quickly. They have figured that out and I think this will now become part

and parcel of the business continuity processing, planning in the future," Gopalakrishnan said.

The Chairman of early stage startup accelerator and venture fund, Axilor Ventures, also said that many of the smaller Indian startups have found that they are as effective working out of home and are now wondering whether they require permanent office space at all.

"We (India's IT services companies) are not going back to business as usual," he said, adding, firms would do a rethink on the office space they would require and "how we need to deliver services in the future."

Gopalakrishnan believes at least 20-30 per cent of IT employees would continue to work from home even after the lockdown is lifted and the situation returns to normalcy. That accounts for about 1.2 million people, he said noting that four million professionals work in India's IT-Business Process Outsourcing sector as per industry body NASSCOM figures.

NEWS MAKER

SC Dismisses Plea For Free Calls, Data Usage Facilities During Lockdown

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court has trashed a plea seeking directions to the Centre and other authorities to ensure free unlimited calling, data usage, and Direct To Home (DTH) facilities for users to ease "psychological stress" during the nationwide lockdown. A bench of Justices N V Ramana, S K Kaul, and B R Gavai which was hearing the plea through video-conferencing apparently said, "What kind of petitions are being filed?"

According to the PTI report, the petitioner, advocate Manohar Pratap, told the bench that he would withdraw the plea. The advocate has also sought a direction to

the health ministry to take the required steps to deal with increasing psychological pressure on individuals due to the lockdown or being kept in quarantine.

The plea had sought directions to the Centre and the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) to invoke relevant terms of agreement of licenses granted to DTH service providers and ask them to provide completely free and unlimited viewing facility of their channels and contents during the lockdown, which has been extended till May 3.

During the 21-day nationwide lockdown, several telecom players have taken



steps to help customers deal with this situation.

In March, Reliance Jio has announced complimentary 100 minutes of calls and 100 text messages till 17 April. The company has said that users will continue to receive incoming calls even after the validity expires, according to a Livemint re-

port. Earlier, even Airtel announced that it will extend its validity for users till 17 April. The telecom company claimed that it was doing so in order to serve its customers in low-income areas.

Similarly, the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL) decided that prepaid SIMs will not be discontinued till April 20. For outgoing calls, a 10 incentive has been provided automatically so that the poor and the needy people continue to work, according to ANI.

And now BSNL has extended the validity of its 'Work@Home' promotional broadband plan until May 19, according to me-

dia reports. The plan was launched in March to offer free Internet access to BSNL landline customers. The plan provides up to 10Mbps download speeds with a cap of 5GB data on a daily basis to all BSNL landline subscribers to promote social distancing and encourage subscribers to work from home - limiting the spread of the coronavirus outbreak.

A total number of novel coronavirus cases in India neared the 28,000-mark on Monday with more than 800 deaths in India. The total number of confirmed Covid-19 cases rose to 27,892, including 20,835 active cases and 6,184.

Delhi Riots: Jamia Alumni Body Chief Arrested Under UAPA

NEW DELHI: The president of Jamia Millia Islamia Alumni Association has been arrested under the stringent UAPA in connection with the riots in north-east Delhi in February, officials said on Monday.

Shifa-Ur-Rehman, also a member of Jamia Coordination Committee, was booked under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA) for alleged involvement in the riots and was subsequently arrested by the Special Cell of the Delhi Police on Sunday, they said. "We had technical evidence against him which



suggests that he incited mobs during the riots. He was also seen in the CCTV footage which was collected from the riot-affected areas. We have checked his call record details and WhatsApp messages and found more evidence which suggests his involvement in the riots," a senior police officer said. According to the police, he

was produced in a city court which remanded him in police custody for 10 days for further interrogation in connection with the case.

So far, 10 people have been arrested by the special cell of the Delhi police for alleged involvement in the communal riots. Earlier, Jamia Millia Islamia students Meeran Haider and Safoora Zagar were also arrested under the Act for allegedly hatching a conspiracy to incite the communal riots. While Zagar is the media coordinator of Jamia Coordination Committee, Haider is a member of the committee.