



Maximum : 19°C
Minimum : 10°C
Humidity : 67%

SUNSET
Today 07:18 PM
SUNRISE
Tomorrow 05:38 AM



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COVID-19: BLOOD CLOTTING SIGNIFICANT CAUSE OF DEATH IN COVID-19 PATIENTS

Clinician-scientists have found that Irish patients admitted to hospital with severe coronavirus (COVID-19) infection are experiencing abnormal blood clotting that contributes to death in some patients. The research team from the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland found that abnormal blood clotting occurs in Irish patients with severe COVID-19 infection, causing micro-clots within the lungs. According to the study, they also found that Irish patients with higher levels of blood clotting activity had a significantly worse prognosis and were more likely to require ICU.....

.....LIFE & TIMES
P6



News Digest

11 TH RAMAZAN		
IFTAR	SEHRI	TOMMOROW
FIQAH HANAFIYA	07:20	04:05
FIQAH JAFARIYA	07:30	04:03

SMC Refutes Home Quarantine Orders

Srinagar: The Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) on Monday refuted media reports claiming that the city's civic body has issued directive to officials to go for home quarantine after a corporator's brother tested positive for coronavirus. Commissioner, SMC, Gazanfar Ali said today that the news that surfaced after the brother of a corporator was tested positive for Covid-19 was factually incorrect. "No such directives were received by my office neither have

Covid-19: 80-year-old Woman, 11 Others Recover

Srinagar: An octogenarian woman and three non-locals were among twelve people on Monday discharged from a hospital here after recovering from the deadly coronavirus infections. According to an official spokesperson, twelve people, including three non-locals were discharged today from SKIMS Medical College Hospital Bemina after recovering from the contagious disease. Five of them are residents of Baramulla, two each from Srinagar and Bandipora, one from south

10 CRPF Men Hurt After Vehicle Turns Turtle

Srinagar: At least ten CRPF personnel on Monday were injured after the vehicle they were travelling in, turned turtle in Beerwah area of central Kashmir's Budgam district. A vehicle carrying personnel of CRPF 159 Battalion met with an accident this morning near Ohangam village of Beerwah after the driver reportedly lost control over his vehicle before it turned turtle, reports said.

Ex-Militant's Brother Held With Arms

Srinagar: An alleged militant associate carrying arms was arrested in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, reports said Monday. A joint team of army's 46 RR, special operations group (SOG) of police and the personnel of 53 BN CRPF detained an alleged militant associate and recovered hundreds of round of AK 47 rifle and one grenade at a checkpoint near Sheeri Police station, news agency KNS

3 CRPF Personnel Killed In Militant Attack In Handwara

Physically Challenged Teenager Dies In Cross Fire

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Two days after five security personnel were killed in an encounter in Handwara, a militant strike left three CRPF personnel dead in Qazilabad area of the same town falling in the frontier Kupwara district.

According to reports, unidentified militants fired upon the personnel of CRPF 92 battalion at Wangam area around 5:32 pm Monday. The paramilitary troops, returned the fire triggering off an encounter.

In the exchange of fire, two CRPF men were killed and three others injured. One among them succumbed before he could be taken to the hospital for treatment, reports said.

When the gunfire ceased, body of a teenager was spotted around half a kilometre from the shootout site. He was identified as a 14-year-old boy Hazim Shafi Bhat, a student

of 7th standard, of Khipora village. "He along with other boys in the area had taken animals for grazing. While others fled, he could not as he was physically handicapped. He could not even properly talk and would occasion-

CISF Man Hurt In Srinagar Attack

Central Industrial Security Forces (CISF) personnel on Monday was injured after militants lobbed a grenade towards the Power Grid station in Nowgam area of the city outskirts. A police officer confirmed the incident and said one CISF man received minor splinter injuries in

ally fell down," Mohammad Ray-ez, his immediate neighbour told local news agency GNS.

Govt Says 4G Can't Be Restored In J&K: SC Reserves Judgement

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: The Centre and the UT administration justified in the Supreme Court on Monday the restriction on 4G service in Jammu and Kashmir saying high speed internet might be used for sending information about troop movement, and referred to Saturday's encounter between militants and security personnel in Handwara.

The top court, dealing with PILs seeking restoration of 4G services in the UT, said it has to deal with the legal question of ensuring balance in view of health and security concerns raised by the petitioners and the governments.

The submissions of the Centre and the UT were opposed before a bench, headed by Justice N V Ramana, by senior lawyers Salman Khurshid and Huzefa Ahmadi who were representing parties seeking restoration of 4G, on grounds such as



right to access doctors is an inherent under article 21 (Right to Life) of the Constitution and it's deprivation should be judged in view of the coronavirus or Covid-19 pandemic.

They also alleged that the right of children to access schools through the high speed internet

service have been hampered.

The bench, which also comprised Justices R Subhash Reddy and B R Gavai, heard arguments of both sides including that of Attorney General K K Venugopal and Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, for the Centre and the Union Territory re-

spectively, and reserved the verdict. During the over 2-hour hearing, held via video conferencing, Venugopal said the government's policy decision should not be questioned as the restriction was meant to protect the entire population of the state and not only patients.

Militants are being pushed into the country. Yesterday, there were some tragic incident, Venugopal said, adding that videos of the troop movements can be shared with the enemy by using 4G and there was no denial of the fact that security of the state was considered while taking such a decision.

He said that fixed line internet was already permitted in the UT and the authorities can keep a check on any militant propaganda and urged the court that the PILs be examined by keeping the larger public interest of national security in mind.

The law officer said sovereignty of the nation and the state

DURING THE OVER 2-HOUR HEARING, HELD VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING, Venugopal said the government's policy decision should not be questioned as the restriction was meant to protect the entire population of the state and not only patients.

Civil Secretariat Reopens In Srinagar

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The Civil Secretariat, seat of the Jammu and Kashmir government, started functioning from the summer capital of Srinagar on Monday, as part of a nearly 150-year-old biannual practice known as the Darbar Move.

It Governor Girish Chander Murmu inspected the ceremonial guard of honour at the civil secretariat lawns here in the morning as offices opened here after closing in Jammu in the last week of April.

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, employees from Jammu region will be working from their homes, while only a limited number of employees will be attending

Govt Declares Kashmir Valley, 2 Jammu Districts As Red Zones



Press Trust Of India

JAMMU- The Jammu and Kashmir administration has declared the entire Kashmir valley and three district of Jammu region as "red zone" based on overall

assessment of the coronavirus situation and expected movement of stranded persons to the union territory.

The classification of districts was given in an order issued by Chief Secretary BVR

2-Year-Old, ATM Guard And Six Kin Among New Cases

Observer Monitoring Desk

Coronavirus cases continue to show an increasing upward trend in Jammu and Kashmir as twenty five more people, including a 2-year-old boy, a mother-daughter duo and an ATM guard and his

J&K Govt Announces Night Curfew To Tighten Lockdown

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR- The Jammu and Kashmir administration on Monday announced a night curfew from 7 pm to 7 am everyday during the third phase of the ongoing lockdown to curb the spread of COVID-19 in the Union Territory.

"Prohibitions (Curfew) on movement in ALL areas between 7 PM and 7 AM. No movement without passes. Medical emergencies exempted," government spokesman Rohit Kansal said in a tweet.

Chief Secretary B V R Subrahmanyam issued a detailed order on permissible and non-permissible

activities during the lockdown period from Monday to May 17.

"The movement of individuals for all non-essential activities between 7 pm and 7 am is barred. District Magistrates shall issue specific prohibitory orders in this regard under Section 144 of CrPC," the order said.

According to the order, suspension on air travel will continue except for medical services, air ambulances, security purposes and those purposes permitted by the home ministry.

Train services and all road transport services for passengers shall also remain suspended

India Protests Pak Court's Order On Gilgit-Baltistan Polls

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: India has conveyed its protest to Pakistan over an order by that country's Supreme Court allowing the conduct of general elections in Gilgit-Baltistan.

The Ministry of External Affairs said Pakistan was told that entire Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, including areas of Gilgit and Baltistan, are an integral part of India and that Islamabad should immediately vacate the areas under its "illegal occupation".

In a recent order, the Pakistan Supreme Court allowed the amendment to the Government of Gilgit-

Baltistan Order of 2018 to conduct the general elections in the region.

"India demarched senior Pakistan diplomat and lodged a strong protest to Pakistan against Supreme Court of Pakistan order on the so-called 'Gilgit-Baltistan,'" the MEA said in a statement.



Pak Rejects Indian Protest, Says GB Disputed Territory

Pakistan on Monday summoned a senior Indian diplomat to convey its rejection of what it called India's "baseless and fallacious contention" regarding a verdict by Pakistan's Supreme Court on the holding of general elections in Gilgit-Baltistan. The move came hours after India said it has conveyed its strong protest to Pakistan over Islamabad's

Army Chief Warns Pak Over Any Cross-Border Misadventure

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: In a stern warning to Pakistan, Army Chief Gen MM Naravane said India will respond appropriately and with "precision" to any acts of cross-border misadventure unless Islamabad gives up its policy of state-sponsored militancy and coercing people in Kashmir to follow its "Azadi narrative".

The chief of the 1.3 million-strong Army said Pakistan is still following a "myopic" and "limited" agenda of pushing militants into Kashmir and called the country a "global risk" to peace and stability.

Referring to the Handwara encounter, Gen. Naravane said India is proud of Col Ashutosh Sharma, the

Commanding Officer of 21 Rashtriya Rifles battalion, and four other security personnel who

India, Pak Troops Exchange Fire On LoC

India and Pakistan troops on Monday exchanged heavy gunfire along the line of control (LoC) in two sectors of Rajouri district in Jammu and Kashmir. "At about 1600 hours today, Pakistan army initiated unprovoked ceasefire violation by firing with small arms and shelling with mortars along LoC in Nowshera sector," a defence spokesperson said

Two Covid-19 Women Deliver Healthy Babies

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Two pregnant ladies who tested positive for coronavirus last week, delivered healthy babies on Monday at the Sub District Hospital (SDH) Sopore town of Baramulla district.

The two COVID-19 patients hailing from Old town Baramulla and Nowpora Sopore today delivered healthy babies at the hospital, news agency KNO reported.

Block Medical Officer (BMO) Sopore, Dr Asif said Gynecology department at Sopore Hospital headed by Dr Abdul Wahid, Dr Kashif performed the surgeries of the twin patients, adding that both the babies including

When Trolley Became Bier: Post-Script Of Two Pregnant Kashmiri Women

Auqib Javed

SHERBAGH, ANANTNAG — Old towners stood dazed on their windows on 3 May 2020, as dirges sung by some passing women on street shattered the plagued silence of their strife-battered neighbourhood. Held hostage in homes by pandemic, the weary residents saw a trolley being pushed by a howling family, heading home as pallbearers.

The mourners were carrying their dead daughter, Shakeela Akhtar of Salai Panznulla area of Anantnag, along with the unborn child in her womb. She was 30.

As dawn rose on Sunday, she developed a minor complication in the labour room in the sub-district hospital (SDH) Seer, and was shifted to the Maternity and Childcare Hospital (MCHH), Sherbagh.

Shekeela's inconsolable cousin blamed doctors for delaying her emergency treatment. "By the time she was shifted to MCHH, she was declared brought dead," her cousin said.

And with that, what was supposed to be a merrymaking occasion became a mourning event.

The devastated family shortly stepped out on the streets with their daughter lying pale and lifeless on a



trolley. The family's wailing walk to home was filmed by a resident and put it out on social media, where it became an instant rage.

"The woman had pregnancy at a matured stage with silent labour," Dr Zahoor Ahmad, Block Medical Officer (BMO) Mattan, said.

Soon, as the family protested, the BMO put the medical officer, Dr. Ridwana and staff nurse Zareefa Akhtar, under suspension, with the inquiry pending regarding the case.

"Prima facie, medical negligence that warranted immediate suspensions," additional district magistrate, Anantnag, Syed Yasir said on Twitter. "Further action shall follow after enquiry outcome."

Terming the incident as the "most unfortunate", Deputy Commissioner Anantnag Bashir Ahmad Dar, said the dead body was taken away by relatives, "fearing they will have to wait for

Court Orders Police Probe Into Death Of 2 Pregnant Women

SRINAGAR- District Legal Service Authority (Principal District & Sessions Judge Anantnag) on Monday ordered SSP of the south Kashmir district to hold an enquiry into the death of two pregnant women allegedly due to medical negligence. "...this authority cannot watch the proceedings as a mute spectator. This authority is required to initiate an enquiry in the matter and ensure that those found guilty should be brought to book so that the faith which people have lost in the working of the administration is reposed and restored," the judicial officer Pervaiz Hussain Kachroo said in an order.

"In order to hold an enquiry in the matter and to find out the cause which resulted in the death of the

lady who died (on Sunday) and also the lady who died at Bijbhara Hospital who were not apparently provided medical treatment at the hospitals, I direct worthy SSP Anantnag to hold an enquiry into this matter as well as in the earlier matter where a pregnant lady died at Bijbehara Hospital after giving birth to stillborn twins," the court said.

The SSP Anantnag has been asked to either hold an enquiry by himself or by any other officer but not below the rank of SP.

"The enquiry shall be concluded within a period 15 days," the authority ordered.

If on inquiry medical negligence was established, then those responsible for medical negligence must be brought to book and

From Front page...

3 CRPF Personnel Killed In Militant Attack In Handwara

His uncle Haji Ghulam Mohammad Bhat said the body was found almost half a kilometre from his residence.

The family termed reports dubbing him as militant as “very unfortunate.” “He could not properly walk or talk. How can he be a militant,” Bhat said.

PRO CRPF Kashmir Assistant Commandant Junaid Khan said that two of his men were killed on the spot while one more died later on the way to the hospital.

A police officer said the teenager was killed in “cross-firing” between militants and the security personnel

The officer identified the CRPF men killed in the attack as Constable Santosh Mishra, Constable Chandra Shekhar and Ashwani Kumar Yadav.

Soon after the attack, additional reinforcement of army, SOG and CRPF rushed to the spot and launched a massive search operation to trace out the militants.

The CRPF killings came two days after five security personnel including, an army colonel, a major and two soldiers, along with a SOG sub-inspector, were killed in one of the deadliest operations for the security forces in the Valley.

The 12-hour operation took place in Handwara also in Kupwara district.

Earlier seven soldiers were killed in two separate encounters in North Kashmir this month.

Five soldiers were killed in a fierce encounter with militants on April 4 in Keran sector of Kupwara.

North Kashmir had by and large remained peaceful till last year when Kashmir was striped of its semi autonomous status and state downgraded into a union territory.

CISF Man Hurt In Srinagar Attack...

the attack. Meanwhile, the government forces cordoned off the whole area and launched searches to nab the attackers.

Govt Says 4G Can't Be Restored In J&K...

was seriously affected due to militant activities.

Matters of policy should not be interfered and it must be left to the government, Venugopal said.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta said that the restrictions were necessary and moreover, internet was working in the UT through land lines which is traceable and cannot be misused for anti-national activities.

Mobile phones are used and thrown away, he said, adding that the review committee will take the decision on the restoration of the 4G.

The law officer said initially there was complete lock down and later movement is being allowed to some extent and the decisions are being made at the ground level by persons concerned.

Ahmadi, appearing for one of the petitioners, referred to the orders passed by the UT administration on curbing of internet speed and said nothing substantial can be done by using 2G.

The senior lawyer said that doctors are unable to access information about COVID treatment in the UT, where there was 701 COVID cases as on date.

The right to access information is inherent under Article 21 and deprivation of fundamental rights has to be judged in the light of the fact that there was a pandemic and the rights of persons to access doctors and of children to access schools are restricted, he said.

The bench said there was no dispute with regard to the fact that 4G is very fast as compared to 2G, but the legal question was of balance.

There are health concerns and security concerns and the government was raising security concerns, the bench said.

It said that the authorities have said that the people can rely on landline broadband connections which are more than one lakh in the UT.

Ahmadi alleged that rights to livelihood and access to tele-medicine have been affected and people have been denied the right to connect with their friends and family.

Senior advocate Khurshid said that private schools are under the government directions to provide education via video-conferencing which cannot be provided due to the lack of internet speed

The UT, on its affidavit, said that there has been a weekly review of the situation but none of the review orders or information as available in public domain, the lawyer said.

Earlier, the UT administration, in its affidavit, had said that militant modules operating within Jammu and Kashmir and their handlers from across the border incite people by transmission of fake news.

It had said there were well founded apprehensions of misuse of internet for propagation of militant activities and incitement through the circulation of inflammatory material particularly fake videos and photos as also co-ordination of activities that are inimical to security and public order.

The submissions were made in response to PILs including the one filed by Foundation for Media Professionals seeking restoration of 4G internet services in the Union Territory in view of prevailing Covid-19 pandemic.

Prior to this, the top court had issued notices to the Centre and Jammu and Kashmir administration on the PILs seeking restoration of 4G internet services in the Union territory.

Civil Secretariat Reopens In Srinagar...

office in Srinagar.

Although the Union territory is under a lockdown since the third week of March, the local administration had spruced up the city to welcome the LG's administration to Srinagar.

The lane markers on the city roads were given a fresh coat of paint, while the dust and mud accumulated for the past several months had been removed.

The Civil Secretariat and other Darbar Move offices function in Srinagar for six months of summer and in Jammu, for the remaining six months of the year.

The practice was started by Maharaja Gulab Singh 148 years ago to escape the extreme heat of Jammu during summers and biting cold of winters in Srinagar.

However, the practice has been continued by elected governments post-Independence in order to provide access to the people of both regions -- by turns -- to the seat of power in the state.

The state government spends crores of rupees to shift voluminous records between the two capital cities twice a year, besides paying a similar amount as allowance for the several thousand employees who shift base with the government.

There have been demands from various quarters to abolish the practice and set up permanent civil secretariats in Jammu and Srinagar cities so that people can get redressal to their problems round the year while saving substantial amount of the public exchequer.

Govt Declares Kashmir

Valley, 2 Jammu Districts...

Subrahmanyam on Sunday night.

The Union Health Ministry had classified four districts of Jammu and Kashmir -- Srinagar, Bandipora, Anantnag and Shopian -- in red zone.

The Centre has allowed the administration of States and Union Territories (UTs) to classify additional districts as red or orange zones. However, States and UTs are not allowed to lower the zone classification of a district.

As per the order issued by the Jammu and Kashmir administration, entire Kashmir valley, which comprises ten districts has been declared as red zone.

In Jammu region, three districts of Jammu, Samba and Kathua are in red zone, it said.

While four districts of Jammu region -- Udhampur, Reasi, Ramban and Rajouri -- are in orange zone, Doda, Kishtwar and Poonch are in green zone.

The other guidelines issued by the chief secretary were more or less based on the MHA order issued on May 1 for the third phase of lockdown from May 4 to May 17.

As per the guidelines, the government has allowed movement of individuals in vehicles only for permitted activities, with a maximum of two passengers, besides the driver in four-wheelers, and with no pillion rider in case of two-wheelers.

Intra-district movement of individuals is also allowed in orange zone in individual vehicles with similar restriction of passengers in four and two-wheelers, on the basis of passes issued by the district authority. Taxi and cab aggregators are permitted to ply with one driver and two passengers only while e-commerce activities (home delivery etc) are permitted for essential services and goods," the order said,

“Private offices can operate with up to 33 percent strength as per requirement with remaining persons working from home, the order said.

In green zone districts, all activities which are permitted in orange zone, will be allowed, it said.

Other activities permitted in green zones included opening of all shops except those prohibited across the Union Territory.

The activities which will remain prohibited in the entire UT include all domestic and international air travel of passengers, except for medical services, air ambulance, security purposes or for purposes permitted by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

All schools, colleges, universities, educational and training coaching institutions etc. will also remain closed across the UT till March 17 but online and distance learning will be permitted.

All passenger movement by trains, except for security purposes or for purposes permitted by the MHA will remain prohibited, the order said.

As per the government order, all cinema halls, shopping malls, gymnasiums, sports complexes, swimming pools, entertainment parks, theatres, bars, liquor shops, restaurants, auditoriums, assembly halls and similar places will remain shut.

The movement of individuals for all non-essential activities has been prohibited between 7 pm and 7 am.

The order said district magistrates will issue specific prohibitory orders under Section 144 of CrPc. However, persons above 65 years of age and those with co-morbidities, pregnant women and children below the age of 10 years will stay at home except for meeting essential requirements or for health purposes.

Hospitality services other than those used for housing health, police, Government officials, healthcare workers, stranded persons and quarantine facilities will remain closed.

All social, political, sports, entertainment, academic, cultural, religious functions and other gatherings will remain prohibited in the entire UT. All religious places and place of worship will be closed for public. Religious congregations are strictly prohibited, it said.

2-Year-Old, ATM Guard And Six Kin Among New Cases...

six kin on Monday tested Covid-19 positive, taking the number of people infected in across the Union Territory to 726.

20 out of the 775 samples taken at the Valley's premier SK institute of medical sciences Soura today came out positive, reports said. Among those twenty, 12 are residents of Baramulla, four from Budgam and two each from Shopian and Bandipora districts.

At the Chest Disease hospital here, four people tested positive for coronavirus, including 17-year-old girl and her 39-year-old mother from Wandroo Mohalla in Rainawari besides 47-year-old man from Reshipora Pulwama and a teenager from Surankote Poonch, attendant of a bed-ridden patient admitted to Super Speciality Hospital Shreenbagh here.

District Magistrate Poonch Rahul Yadav said that the teenager was residing at Chandigarh and had gone to Srinagar to see his brother.

All those who tested positive in Baramulla district are from two families, one comprising of seven members including 39-year-old ATM guard, his wife, two sons, daughter-in-law and two brothers from Sheerbagh Kanlibagh area while other is from Hardchillo Tanmarg--8-year-old girl, 50-year-old man and his 22-year-old son besides two males, one of them aged 32 and other 40 respectively, news agency GNS reported.

Deputy Commissioner Baramulla Dr G N Itoo said that the ATM guard at Gulnarpark and his entire family was already under quarantine while contact tracing has been started.

Regards four persons who tested positive in Budgam, sources said include 24-year-old man from Haploo Nagam while three others--boy (11), 24-year-old youth and 35-year-old man are from Charari Sherief, all contacts of previous patients.

Shopian district's positive cases include 23-year-old and 21-year-old youth from Heerpora, one of the most affected areas in the southern Kashmir district.

The Bandipora district reported two cases—one of them a 2-year-old boy and other a 32-year-old man from Naid Khai, both contacts of previous COVID-19 patients.

The Jammu district also reported a fresh case from Satwari area, they said.

With these cases, Bandipora has 130 positive cases followed by Srinagar and Anantnag have 109 cases each, Baramulla 103 , Shopian 83, Kupwara 66, Budgam 30, Ganderbal 14 (no active case), 11 Kulgam and Pulwama 9.

Similarly, Jammu has 27 positive cases and all but one of them have recovered followed by Udhampur 20, Samba 7, Rajouri 4 while Kathua, Kishtwar, Ramban, and Reasi districts have one case each and except for Kishtwar all of them are 'active positive'

Over 77,000 people have been kept under surveillance including those who are either in government established quarantine facilities or in home isolation

J&K Govt Announces Night Curfew To Tighten Lockdown.

the order said.

"All schools, colleges, universities, educational/ training/ coaching institutions etc. will remain closed. However, online/ distance learning shall be permitted," the order reads.

Hospitality services, cinema halls, shopping malls, gymnasiums, sports complexes, swimming pools, entertainment parks, theatres, bars, liquor shops, restaurants, spas, saloons, parlours, barber shops and auditoriums and assembly halls shall also remain closed, the order said.

India Protests Pak Court’s

Order On Gilgit-Baltistan...

"It was clearly conveyed that the entire Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, including the areas of Gilgit and Baltistan, are an integral part of India by virtue of its fully legal and irrevocable accession," it said.

The MEA said the government of Pakistan or its judiciary has no locus standi on territories "illegally and forcibly" occupied by it.

"India completely rejects such actions and continued attempts to bring material changes in Pakistan occupied areas of the Indian territory of Jammu and Kashmir," it said.

"Instead, Pakistan should immediately vacate all areas under its illegal occupation," it added.

The MEA said Pakistan's recent actions can neither hide the "illegal occupation" of parts of union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh by it nor the "grave human rights violations, exploitation and denial of freedom" to the people residing in these areas for the past seven decades.

Pak Rejects Indian Protest, Says GB Disputed Territory.

efforts to bring "material change" to territories under its "illegal and forcible" occupation after the country's top court allowed holding of elections in Gilgit-Baltistan.

In a recent ruling, the Pakistan Supreme Court allowed the government to amend a 2018 administrative order to conduct general elections in the region. The Gilgit-Baltistan Order of 2018 provided for administrative changes, including authorising the Prime Minister of Pakistan to legislate on an array of subjects.

In Islamabad, the Foreign Office said in a statement that a senior Indian diplomat was summoned to convey Pakistan's rejection of India's baseless and fallacious contention against the apex court verdict on Gilgit-Baltistan.

It said Pakistan clearly conveyed that the Indian statement over Jammu and Kashmir as an 'integral part' of India" had no legal basis whatsoever".

"The entire state of Jammu and Kashmir is a 'disputed' territory and is recognised as such by the international community, the FO added.

Army Chief Warns Pak Over

Any Cross-Border Misadventure

laid down their lives saving civilians from militants at a village in Handwara in north Kashmir on Saturday night.

"I would like to emphasise that Indian Army will give proportionate response to all acts of infringement of ceasefire and its (Pakistan's) support to militancy. The onus remains with Pakistan to bring peace in the region," the Chief of Army Staff said.

"Unless Pakistan gives up its policy of state sponsored terrorism, we will continue to respond appropriately and with precision," he added. After the Pulwama attack, India effected a doctrinal shift in its counter-terror policy by bombing a Jaish-e-Mohammad facility deep inside Pakistan.

Gen Naravane said the recent infiltration attempts by Pakistan along the Line of Control in Jammu and Kashmir showed that Pakistan is not interested in battling the coronavirus pandemic and is still following its 'own myopic and limited agenda of pushing militants inside India."

"Even in the hinterland, Pakistan backed militants are resorting to targeting innocent civilians with an aim to coerce them into following their Azadi narrative. Pakistan claims to be a friend of Kashmiris; I want to ask what sort of friend resorts to killing and spreads fear," he asked.

There have been frequent incidents of ceasefire violation by Pakistani state since India announced its decision to withdraw special status of Jammu and Kashmir and bifurcate the state into two Union Territories in August last year.

On implementation of recommendations of anti-terror watchdog FATF by Pakistan, Gen Naravane said the country has sought to "blindside" the international community by making superficial changes and amendments to its "non-existent" checks on terror financing and money laundering.

"It still continues to employ proxies to inflict terror and violence not only inside India but also in Afghanistan where it supports the Taliban militarily and financially," he said.

"The sudden spurts in violence against Afghan security forces are indicative of the illegal and illicit drug and money laundering networks that fuel the conflict," Gen Naravane added.

He also referred to Pakistan removing names of "hardcore militants from the watch list", saying it proves that Islamabad still believes in exporting militancy as an instrument of state policy.

"The low priority given to the Pakistani citizens by its own government and the army is apparent by the exponential rise in cases and massive shortages of medical equipment and supplies in Pakistan," he said.

Gen Naravane said even during an India-initiated SAARC video conference, Pakistan's "narrow-mindedness" was on full display when it used the platform to complain about "non-existent" violations of human rights in Kashmir instead of finding ways to keep its citizens safe from the pandemic.

"The increased intensity of ceasefire violations by the Pakistan army, where its targets innocent civilians on the LoC, just shows that the country is a global risk and is not interested in providing relief to its own citizens," he said.

The Army Chief also said that Pakistan has been trying to mislead the international community on the situation in Kashmir. "It is unfortunate that while the world has got together to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, Pakistan has resorted to firing heavy calibre artillery and killing of innocent Kashmiris to garner international attention," he said.

India, Pak Troops Exchange Fire On LoC...

here.

"Pakistan targeted Sunderbani sector also and initiated unprovoked ceasefire violation at 1630 hours today. Indian Army is retaliating befittingly," the official added.

He said cross-border shelling was going on when last reports were received.

However, there was no immediate report of any casualty in the shelling on the Indian side, the official said.

There was fear and panic among villagers along the LoC in Rajouri, Poonch and Kupwara since three civilians were killed last week in the cross-LoC shelling.

Two Covid-19 Women Deliver Healthy Babies...

boy and a girl are fine.

The officials said samples of babies could not be taken yet. "We are monitoring their condition," they said.

According to gynecologists, both the positive cases (ladies) were nine-months pregnant and were tested positive on April 27 and April 30. The doctor said both the mothers are also fine.

Court Orders Police Probe Into Death Of 2 Pregnant Women

the action as warranted under law may be initiated against any delinquent official, the authority added. "The SSP Anantnag shall also submit the periodical report to this authority," it added.

When Trolley Became Bier:

Post-Script Of Two Pregnant

burial if sample is taken for covid test".

The shocking incident soon became a rallying cry for justice, with National Conference Member of Parliament from Anantnag Justice (retd) Hasnain Masoodi demanding time-bound inquiry and action warranted in light of the results of the inquiry.

"There should be no eye-wash or cover-up as due to willful negligence of the doctors, a mother and a yet to be born baby have lost their lives," CPI (M) leader Mohammad Yousuf Tarigami, said, demanding an FIR against the culprits without any delay.

The Congress party and Jammu and Kashmir Apni Party (JKAP) also demanded a time-bound and a fair probe into the incident.

Perils of Red Zone

The word "Red Zone" may hunt 35-year old Javid Ahmad Paddar throughout his life.

He vividly remembers how the word echoed in Anantnag's MCCH on April 25, where his wife delivered dead twins and, shortly died, leaving the family devastated.

Around 6AM that day, Paddar's 32-year old wife had developed a severe pain.

Padar's brother-in-law, Mohammad Ashraf, along with few women relatives rushed to the local gynecologist who used to treat her throughout pregnancy.

"He kept his phone off but we managed to reach to his house," Ashraf told Kashmir Observer.

"To our utter shock the doctor refused to treat her saying that she belongs to Red Zone."

Following this, the family somehow contacted the higher-ups directing the doctor to do the surgery at the Doroo hospital. "Even then the doctor stood adamant, and told us to take the patient to MCCH, Sheerbagh," Ashraf recalled.

The family without wasting any more time rushed to MCCH, Sheerbagh. It was around 7:30 AM, Ashraf remembered.

"As soon as the hospital authorities came to know that we came from Red Zone, they create hue and cry. Everybody began cursing us," Ashraf recalled.

The family was locked-up into two separate rooms and the patient was shifted to general ward.

For over two hours, Ashraf said, no doctor, nurse or any paramedical staff came to see her.

"Even her blood pressure wasn't checked," he said. "We were treated as Acahoot (untouchable)."

Ashraf's wife was somehow allowed to be with the patient and quoting his wife, he said, the patient delivered the first child at 12:30 PM without any surgery, followed by another one. They died soon, along with their mother.

She left behind two daughters, aged 5 and 7.

"Following her death, my wife was forced to clean the bed-sheet where my sister had delivered babies," Ashraf said.

When the doctors came to know that the deceased was from a Red Zone, they took her samples for tests. A day after, reports declared the deceased woman as Covid-19 positive.

By then, the hospital had already handed over the body to the family. A large number of people attended her funeral in Kharpoora, now a declared as "hotspot" in Anantnag.

Hospital administration now faces allegations of mismanagement in what are clear violations of WHO guidelines.

An enquiry is already underway, Principal Government Medical College, Anantnag, Shaukat Jeelani told Kashmir Observer.

Even District Legal Service Authority (Principal District & Sessions Judge Anantnag) on Monday ordered SSP of the south Kashmir district to hold an enquiry into the death of two pregnant women allegedly due to medical negligence.

With sharp rise in the number of Covid-19 cases, the J&K government last week directed surveys in each district to identify pregnant women and plan for their treatment in case of an emergency.

However, a trolley carrying a dead pregnant woman in Anantnag on May 3 only exposed the chinks in the existing medical emergency response system.

SMC Refutes Home Quarantine Orders...

my office issued any order in this regard." Ali said

He said that the Commissioner's Office has no contact with the concerned corporator as his office is in a separate building.

Ali further said the SMC works were going in full swing amid the pandemic and all the preventive measures were being taken by the officials including use of protective gears and sanitizers.

"The Commissioner said that it will be encouraged if anyone having contact with the concerned corporator goes into self-quarantine till his test reports are received," SMC Commissioner, as per an official spokesperson said.

Meanwhile, SMC Commissioner today convened a meeting of senior officials to review various works being carried by the Corporation.

"On the occasion, threadbare discussions was held on proper functioning of the drainage system, sanitation works, removing of encroachment on water bodies and river banks and the installation of high-mast lights in the city," the official spokesperson added.

Covid-19: 80-year-old Woman, 11 Others Recover

India's Kerala and two from Indian capital New Delhi.

Among those discharged today is an 80-year-old woman from worst hit Gudi Jehangir village from Bandipora. She was admitted with Covid-19 Pneumonia and Respiratory Distress last month.

"With this the percentage of recovery of patients treated for COVID 19 in SKIMS Bemina (JVC), has reached 56 %," the official spokesperson added.

10 CRPF Men Hurt After Vehicle Turns Turtle...

Ten CRPF men received injuries in the road accident.

All the injured security personnel were removed to SDH Beerwah for treatment. Their condition was said to be stable, reports said.

Ex-Militant’s Brother Held With Arms...

reported.

The arrested youth has been identified as Umer Mushtaq Khan of Sopore. The report says that he is brother of a slain militant Kaleem-ullah, who was killed along with Pakistani militant Naveed Jatt in an encounter.

The report further says that police have registered a case FIR number 18/20 and started further investigations in this regard.

LG asks for prioritizing Wular dredging, resuming flood protection works

Srinagar: Lieutenant Governor, GC Murmu on Monday chaired a high level meeting of officers to review flood preparation and response mechanism in place in Kashmir division.

Speaking on the occasion, Lieutenant Governor stated that the Government shall have to be fully prepared to deal with any eventuality that may arise due to a flood like situation. He called upon the Irrigation & Flood Control department, Divisional Administration, Srinagar Municipal Corporation and SDRF to devise flood management and mitigation plans immediately. LG impressed on taking proactive measures to augment effective flood preparation and response.

Stressing on foolproof flood preparedness, the LG directed concerned to take up all urgent works immediately to ensure that works are completed in time for prompt flood response. Instructions were also given on raising of embankments at all vulnerable spots, dredging of flood channels and stocking of sand bags and keep men and machinery in ready mode to deal with flood like situation emerging anywhere in the Valley. LG urged for strengthening of flood monitoring system with installation of solar operated CCTV's, advanced flood alertness, installation of automatic rain recording and flood gauges at identified locations.

Directions were passed for strengthening of 24x7 flood control room with all arrangements for prompt relief and rescue operations. LG said that the capacity of Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) at Hari Niwas should be augmented, made fully functional and it should be connected with other control rooms through hot line communication facility.

While reviewing pace of execution of flood related works, LG directed resuming work on Shariefabad and Naidkhai bridges at an earliest, which would help remove obstructions in the flow of water, he asked for facilitating the contractors by mobilizing manpower and material supplies for these projects to ensure that work is commenced im-



mediately while taking all necessary precautions like social distancing, providing masks and protective gear to the work force.

LG emphasized on resumption of dredging work in all water bodies including flood spill channel, river and lakes and removal of encroachments on water channels. He directed on prioritizing dredging of Wular lake and asked the concerned to ensure manual dredging under MGNREGA to generate mandays for locals during Covid-19 lockdown.

In view of social distancing protocol, presently in place, he directed concerned to increase capacity of evacuation centres used as rescue shelters for the affected people at the time of floods. He instructed for putting in place all the arrangements including masks, sanitizers and other supplies of personal hygiene. Special teams including that of doctors shall be designated for all vulnerable areas and rescue shelters in advance. SDRF was instructed to ensure training of personnel from Police and Home Guards for prompt response during floods.

During the meeting, SMC was directed to ensure immediately de-clog-

ging of all rain storm drains in the city besides installation of solar powered high mast lights in all flood prone areas for the hassle-free evacuation during floods. Instructions were given for procurement of disinfectants to be used in the event of floods to contain water borne diseases.

He also directed for printing of SOPs in a book-let form with contact details of all concerned officers, officials and designated teams.

He said that CAMPA funds can be used for building check dams in catchments areas to prevent flood like situations.

As advance flood mitigation plan, LG instructed concerned to ensure that all installed machinery is shifted to upper floors of hospitals and other essential government buildings in low lying areas including civil secretariat. Regarding protection of important installations like Telephone Exchanges, and other Lifeline buildings, LG instructed that important equipment be relocated so that critical equipment does not get submerged in the event of floods.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief Secretary directed the concerned departments to activate the advance warning systems pertaining to weather alert,

evacuation alert. He stated that the capacity of Rescue Shelters has to be augmented with all critical equipment like tents, standby power, fuel and essential items like ration, drinking water. He said that rescue teams should be in high level of preparedness and mock drills should be conducted. Chief Secretary said that a senior Secretary-level officer based in Srinagar shall be assigned the task of monitoring the flood preparedness activities of all concerned departments. He said that manpower plan outlining officials to be put on job, duties assigned and their contact numbers should be prepared.

Earlier, Commissioner Secretary, Jai Shkati Ajeet Kumar Sahu, through a power point presentation deliberated upon the flood preparation, mitigation and response plan. He said that there is advanced flood alert system in place and work on increasing intake capacity of water bodies is being focused across the valley. He informed that Flood Plain Zone mapping is being completed and it would be shared with the concerned Departments. He added that the Jhelum's carrying capacity has been raised from 32000 cusec to 42000 cusec and the target is to take it to 60000 cusec.

12 more patients discharged from SKIMS, Bemina after recovering from Covid-19



SRINAGAR, MAY 04: SKIMS Medical College Hospital Bemina informed that 12 more COVID-19 patients were discharged from the hospital after recovering from the contagious disease.

Among the 153 COVID Positive patients admitted for treatment at SKIMS Medical College Hospital after being referred from various hospitals across the valley, 05 belong to Baramulla, 02 to Srinagar, 02 are from Bandipora, 01 patient from Kerala and 02 from Delhi.

The discharged patients were seen off by the Principal, SKIMS Medical College along with the DMS, Sanitation Superintendent and Senior Secu-

rity Supervisor to boost their confidence and do away with any social stigma.

With this the percentage of recovery of patients treated for COVID 19 in SKIMS Bemina (JVC), has reached 56 %. It is worthwhile to mention that one female patient from Gund Jehangir, Dist Bandipora aged above 80 years with COVID Pneumonia and Respiratory Distress also recovered and has been discharged.

The Principal complimented the staff particularly Doctors, Nurses, technical, MRD and other paramedical staff including sanitation and security staff for delivering remarkable services.

50 kanal forest land retrieved in Pahalgam, 4 employees suspended

Agencies

Srinagar: In an anti-encroachment drive, authorities on Monday retrieved around 50 kanals of forest land and suspended four employees for helping the violators to carry out illegal fencing around the encroached land.

Reports reaching GNS said that some locals in nexus with some employees encroached around 50 kanals of state forest land at Aru, Pahalgam nearly a fortnight ago.

A team of officers led by

Chief Executive Officer Pahalgam carried out a surprise inspection at the site today and retrieved the land.

"During the site inspection of undersigned along with AEE, PDA, JEs today, it has been observed that some encroachers have illegally encroached upon 50 kanals of land at Aru. As per enquiry, four officials have assisted the violator for carrying out illegal fencing on state/forest land," reads an order issued by Chief Executive Officer PDA Pahalgam.

The employees, according to CEO Pahalgam, include

Mohd Ismail Wani (Works Supervisor), Bashir Ahmad Magray (Road Supervisor), Ghulam Hassan Dar (SLW) and Mushtaq Ahmad Khan (SLW). "In view of the above, pending enquiry in to their conduct and involvement of these four officials are hereby suspended with immediate effect and salary of JE concerned for the month of May 2020 has (been) kept on hold," the order, a copy of which lies with GNS, reads.

Meanwhile, the CEO said a few days ago that they have also demolished two huts in Pahalgam. (GNS)

LAWDA demolishes several illegal constructions, encroachments, seizes illegal construction material

SRINAGAR, MAY 04: A demolition drive was launched by the Lakes and Waterways Development Authority under the supervision of Enforcement Officer in the Saidakadal, Ashaibagh and Dhoobi Ghat Shalimar areas in which 03 illegal constructions and structures were demolished.

The demolition squad razed 01 double storey house, 01 single storey house, Tin walling, seized tin sheets and timber besides, removing illegally dumped earth filling with



the help of departmental JCB and trippers.

It has been observed that unscrupulous elements taking advantage of COVID-19 lockdown and are resorting to illegal constructions and encroachment.

The people residing within the LDA jurisdiction are warned not to go for any sort of illegal constructions and encroachment. As the Enforcement wing will continue with demolition of illegal constructions.

Moreover the Tripper/Load carrier owners are directed not to carry any type of illegal construction material in the prohibited area of Dal/Nigeen Lake without proper permission from the concerned agencies.

In times of COVID, "Netshell Software Solutions" offers free of cost application to schools to continue studies from home

Agencies

Srinagar: In the challenging times triggered by COVID-19, Netshell Software Solution has taken a decision to support education sector by developing an mobile/web application which is easy to use and completely dynamic as per the requirement of an educational institute.

The best part of the application is that it is light weight which is instrumental in working on 2G networks.

In an effort to support the educational institutes across the state we are offering the subscription of the application / Web portal free of cost till 31st of December 2020.

The mobile application has been designed keeping in mind users who are not familiar with using mobile applications. The application will help the schools to upload assignments / Syllabus / latest News in different forms and the same will be available for usage by different students con-

nected using the mobile application / Web portal.

Keeping in mind the present situation all the processes involving installation and customization of the mobile application for different educational institutions the organization will provide all the required support in order to bridge the gap between a student and teacher through online mode.

The representatives of the company also stated they are offering the mobile application to Government

Schools across the state.

"We will configure and install the application within two days for a particular school" he said , adding that every school will have separate application with their name on google play store and will be provided a web version for the same.

One can visit www.edushell.in for more details and can download the demo of mobile application by clicking the link—(KNO)

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



HIGHWAY STATUS



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



HIJRI
CALENDAR
11 Ramazan
1441

PRAYERS

FAJR	4: 06
ZUHR	12: 28
ASR	5:19
Magrib	7:20
ISHA	8:51

This Day In History

- 1260 - Kublai Khan, grandson of Genghis Khan, becomes ruler of the Mongol Empire
- 1494 - On 2nd voyage to New World Christopher Columbus sights Jamaica, landing at Discovery Bay
- 1640 - English Short Parliament rises
- 1646 - King Charles I surrenders in Scotland
- 1762 - Russia & Prussia sign Treaty of Saint Petersburg ending the Seven Years War
- 1789 - French Estates-General meets for the first time since 1614 at Versailles, summoned King Louis XVI
- 1862 - French army intervenes in Puebla, Mexico: Cinco de Mayo
- 1864 - Battle between Confederate & Union ships at mouth of Roanoke
- 1864 - Battle of Wilderness, Virginia (Germania Ford, Wilderness Tavern)
- 1877 - Indian Wars: Sitting Bull leads his band of Lakota into Canada to avoid harassment by the United States Army under Colonel Nelson Miles
- 1920 - German-Latvian peace treaty signed
- 1920 - Polish troops occupy Kiev
- 1921 - Miniature newspaper published (Brighton Gazette 10 x 13 cm)
- 1932 - Japan & China sign a peace treaty
- 1936 - Italian troops occupy Addis Ababa
- 1942 - British assault on Diego Suarez, Madagascar
- 1942 - US begins rationing sugar during WW II
- 1943 - Postmaster General Frank C Walker invents Postal Zone System
- 1944 - Mahatma Gandhi freed from prison
- 1944 - Soviet offensive against Sebastopol, Crimea
- 1945 - Netherlands & Denmark liberated from Nazi control
- 1945 - Uprising against occupying SS troops in Prague
- 1945 - World War II: Admiral Karl Dönitz, leader of Germany after Hitler's death, orders all U-boats to cease offensive operations and return to their bases
- 1948 - 1st squadron of jet aircraft aboard a carrier
- 1955 - Indian parliament accepts Hindu divorce
- 1955 - US performs nuclear test at Nevada test Site
- 1955 - West Germany is granted full sovereignty by its three occupying powers
- 1956 - World championships of judo are 1st held in Tokyo
- 1957 - Adolf Scharf elected president of Austria
- 1964 - Separatists riot in Quebec
- 1965 - First large-scale US Army ground units arrive in South Vietnam
- 1972 - Alitalia DC-8 crashes west of Palermo Sicily; killing 115
- 1976 - Train collision at Schiedam, Netherlands, kills 24
- 1979 - Voyager 1 passes Jupiter
- 1980 - Siege at Iranian Embassy in London ends as the SAS and police storm the building
- 1986 - Hall of Fame & Museum announced to be built in Cleveland
- 1987 - Congress begins Iran-Contra hearings
- 1987 - France performs nuclear test at Mururoa atoll
- 2005 - Tony Blair's Labour Party is re-elected for a third consecutive term in UK general election
- 2006 - The government of Sudan signs an accord with the Sudan Liberation Army
- 2012 - Japan shuts down its nuclear reactors leaving the country without nuclear power for the first time since 1970
- 2012 - 17 people are killed and 47 missing after a flash flood in Nepal
- 2014 - China announces it will upgrade Ethiopia's infrastructure in an effort to improve a China-Africa strategic partnership
- 2015 - Scientists announce the discovery of the oldest & most distant galaxy known to man, EGS-zs8-1
- 2015 - Archaeornithura meemannae, the oldest known prehistoric bird, is discovered

From KO Archives

KU Controller Exams dies after fall

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR- Controller of Examinations in Kashmir University Dr. Abrar Hussain Khan today reportedly fell to his death from third floor of a building during an inspection on the campus at Hazratbal here, official sources said.

Khan was inspecting (he third floor of a building, under construction and to be used as a store for examination material When he walked over a fragile fibre glass which broke down, the sources said.

They said Khan hit the cupboards before hitting the concrete floor and died on the spot. Police has taken cognizance of the incident and investigation has been initiated in this regard, a senior-police official said.

Kashmir University will remain closed for the day on Thursday to mourn the untimely death of Dr Abrar. Dr Abrar Hussain who was professor of law had acted earlier in the capacity of Dean Faculty of Law.

He had also served the university in various other capacities including as its Registrar and Chairman Distance Education

(Kashmir Observer, 05 May, 2005)

KASHMIR OBSERVER

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Easing The Lockdown

From May 4 onwards, India has started third phase of lockdown for another two weeks. According to latest figures, the total number of coronavirus cases have passed 40,000 with as many as 1,306 fatalities. So, the flattening of curve that was expected to come about in the forty days of lockdown hasn't happened prompting the government to extend the cessation of activity for another two weeks.

The new lockdown order, however, states that only a limited number of activities will remain prohibited across the country, irrespective of the zones, including travel by air, rail, metro and inter-state movement by road; running of schools, colleges, and other educational and training and coaching institutions. In addition the government has barred social, political, cultural, religious and other kinds of gatherings.

The movement of individuals in all zones for all non-essential activities has been strictly prohibited between 7 pm and 7 am. Local authorities, the order states, shall issue orders imposing Section 144 and ensure strict compliance.

As is apparent, unlike phase 1 and phase 2 lockdowns, the government has taken steps towards a graded reopening of the economy. Industrial activities have been allowed under strict instructions to observe social distancing. Similarly, all agricultural activities – sowing, harvesting, procurement and marketing operations in the agricultural supply chain are permitted.

These are important relaxations as it's not possible for the government to completely shut down the economy. At stake are crores of jobs. The micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME) which across an estimated 5 crore units employ around 11 crore people have been hardest hit. The MSMEs also constitute a large part of the manufacturing in the country as also the exports. This makes up a big chunk of the Gross Domestic Product. So, the government has to not only let this sector gradually reopen but also provide it a significant stimulus support.

Also, with the three successive extensions of the lockdown, the government's options to go for a further extension are limited. 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, as the effort seems to have been now. At the same time, government can't afford to further delay the stimulus package that should have come by now.

OTHER OPINION

Changing Colours

On May 1, the Union home ministry extended the nationwide lockdown — scheduled to end on May 3 — by two weeks. The third phase of the lockdown will, however, be less stringent than that experienced by the country in the past 40 days. In 603 of the 733 districts, designated green and orange zones, markets other than malls can re-open, factories and industrial units can resume operations, self-employed people such as domestic helps and barbers can go back to work, and e-commerce in non-essential items can recommence. But the fine print of the relaxation measures has left several states dissatisfied. Their grouse largely pertains to the red zones, the 130 districts which have been deemed as COVID-19 hotspots and therefore, placed under the maximum restrictions stipulated in the home ministry's directive. Punjab Chief Minister, Amarinder Singh, for instance, has contended that several areas that have no COVID-19 cases, Nabha for example, have found themselves ineligible for relaxations because they happen to be located in red zone districts. The West Bengal government has also termed the Centre's assessment of such zones in the state as "erroneous". And Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has argued against designating entire districts as red zones — only the containment zones, areas with a high caseload in hot spot districts, should be subject to strident restrictions, he said.

That 319 districts, more than half the districts in the country — green zones — have not had a single COVID-19 case in three weeks does testify to the success of the lockdown from a healthcare standpoint. A further 284 districts do not have a high caseload, the orange zones. However, epidemiologists have consistently emphasised that lockdowns do not frame the endgame in the battle against the virus. Hotspots can change, the infection can recede from some areas and spread to new ones. Kejriwal, too, underscored the need to view the pandemic from such a dynamic perspective when he said that "what is a green zone today can turn red". The Centre does allow states to re-designate green zones as orange and red zones. It also allows them the freedom to classify red areas as orange zones. But it does not give them the flexibility to relax the lockdown in areas within the hotspot districts. The Delhi CM underlined the limitations of this approach when he asked: "If a district has 50 villages and 40 cases emerge in one, why should the entire district be declared a red zone?"

States and local authorities dealing with the infection at ground level are the best placed to understand its spatial vagaries. It's, therefore, imperative that they have a say in drawing the boundaries of the areas that have to be opened up. The details of the red, orange, green zone scheme need constant review and revision from such a perspective.

Indian Express



Covid-19 Pandemic & Human Security

SAAD HAFIZ

There is an instant need for a social safety net for people impoverished and marginalized by sudden and severe health and economic crises. The longer-term remedial measures are re-starting the economy by supporting businesses, employment, and incomes, protecting workers in workplaces, and finding solutions between government, workers, and employers.

The catastrophe triggered by COVID-19 has spread fear like no other event in recent memory. It has put the spotlight on indecisive leadership, bumbling governments, and misguided priorities. Right now, the daunting task is to stop the spread of the virus, and helping the sick and the needy.

But few occurrences offer more potent ground for a re-thinking of what is human security. That security lies in reducing poverty, providing growth, and opportunity, access to education, affordable health care, a cleaner environment, and human rights. The crisis offers a chance to fashion human security in the lives of the people and not in the weapons that states have. In short, improved conditions for the human family.

More and more, the shattering events over the last few weeks — infection, death, lock-downs, hunger, and economic meltdown — have tested the traditional concept of national security. That people are secure when states have military, political, and economic power. The crisis proves that existing security structures cannot protect citizens against a rare threat that transcends borders, devastates countries, and disrupts lives. Yet despite the worldwide disruption, the cost of the pandemic in human and material terms will be nowhere near the ravages of wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Syria.

Looking back at it, the uncontrolled defense spending and unbridled militarism have been a criminal extravagance. The trillions spent on national security haven't made people safer. Expensive and lethal weapon systems lie idle while hospitals grapple with a lack of ventilators, doctors, and masks. Both major arms sellers and buyers are paying a big

price for their unpreparedness for a pandemic.

It is a fact that even the wealth of rich countries hasn't come to good use either. Like never before, global economic inequalities are evident laying bare the hollow claims of economic progress. In all nations, millions of the most vulnerable are suffering from the economic impact of the crisis. And the health crisis will sink multi-million more people into poverty as growth rates plummet exposing the basic weaknesses of the least ready countries.

There is an instant need for a social safety net for people impoverished and marginalized by sudden and severe health and economic crises. The longer-term remedial measures are re-starting the economy by supporting businesses, employment, and incomes, protecting workers in workplaces, and finding solutions between government, workers, and employers. Additionally, poverty reduction, checking the excesses of capitalism, and conflict resolution can play a role in offsetting the inequalities of globalization and reduction in the human costs of violent conflicts.

More important than ever is that democracies must avoid an escalation of political demagoguery. This leads to polarization, scapegoating, and xenophobia. It fans the flames of political and religious divisions. Right now open societies have a good opportunity to offer a contrast to the furtive behavior of authoritarian states. States like China and Iran where negligence and concealment have worsened the spread of the pandemic.

The same restraint holds in international relations. In the last century, already savaged by the Second World War, the U.S.S.R. and the United States started a new military and political con-

frontation. The Cold War polarized the world into US and Soviet client states. It encouraged adversarial responses, authoritarian tendencies, and interventionist impulses round the globe. This era ended with the dissolution of the Warsaw Pact, and the U.S.S.R. allowing freedom to the people under communist rule.

Unlike the hostile actions during the Cold War which endangered humanity, this is a time to pursue the principles of non-aggression, non-interference, respect for independence, equality, and peaceful co-existence. Being a common threat, COVID-19 has given another chance to countries with the same or different social systems to build and grow friendly relations. To create a balanced order in which no power can act with impunity, states find effective ways to find peaceful solutions to outstanding historical issues and disputes in the world and commit to solidarity and cooperation. To paraphrase Aaron Sorokin, a world without walls doesn't need men with guns to guard it.

The effort to improve human security needs a merging of resources. It requires a common try and united fight rather than every nation is for itself. It is unlikely, though that altruistic motives will suddenly drive elites who control the global agenda to change the irrational priorities so cruelly exposed by the pandemic. The main reason for this is, of course, is that it would mean a reduction in their monopoly on power. Our collective challenge is to find the political means to challenge the entrenched status quo to have a safer world.

The writer is an analyst and commentator on politics, peace, and security issues. He can be reached at shgcci@gmail.com



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Domicile Fears!

Though it was obvious after stripping of the autonomous status of J&K in August 2019 that New Delhi was eyeing something big on Kashmir front but no one would have imagined that it would do so when the whole world was battling the spread of an invisible enemy Covid-19.

On first of April 2020, Ministry of Home Affairs brought up new domicile law which grants permanent residency rights, access to owning and buying property, jobs for anyone who has resided in the erstwhile state for a period of 15 years. This new domicile law added a new dimension of uncertainty and added to anxiety and insecurity

of the people of Kashmir. Many youth indeed took to social media to express their fears of losing livelihood.

Following a backlash from youth and more importantly from Hindu dominated Jammu province, including from BJP and the newly formed Apni Party (JKAP), the law was changed overnight to reserve all types of jobs for domiciles but that was all pre-planned act by New Delhi to give political leeway to newly formed JKAP and to make youth less angry in BJP's own constituency of Jammu.

The hastily amended new domicile law allows permanent residency rights and jobs to those who have resided in the erstwhile state for last 15

years or studied for a period of seven years and appeared in class 10 or 12 examinations in educational institutions located in the region. It also allows permanent residency rights to central government officials and their children who have served the erstwhile state for 10 years. With this one thing which comes out as more worrying and is raising eyebrows is, how transparent will be the process of issuing domicile certificate in one of strife torn J&K where corruption is almost institutionalised.

It is to mention that the jobs were never an issue behind the abrogation of Art 370. Many believe the real motive was to induce demographic

change in the India's only Muslim majority state. Indications are that New Delhi will gradually move more IAS and other higher rank officers in the territory administration who will keep necessary files with them and reduce the influence of local officers and people to minimal.

This appears to be a classic example of settler colonialism where a country first robs the aspirations, then land, culture, environment and finally identity.

Dr Inzmam Khan
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Over Parenting, Under Parenting- How We Make Children Suffer



SAIQA JAN

The negative aspect goes to the people who think that being a parent itself means being a God, irrespective of whether the child believes in their God ship or not. Such are the people who think that they have every right to force, compel, enact, and apply any rule, any law, any principle upon their children irrespective of it being positive or negative for the development of their children's belief in them. Such are people who need to follow a set of standards and rules for parenting.

Parents; every time someone uses this term for themselves or for others, I wonder what do they actually mean by it? How do they perceive the term? What does the term actually mean for them? How do they understand and interpret what parents actually are to a child?

Is it simply an act of being a caregiver to a gamete which resulted in a child? Or do they perceive it as something more than that? Is it completely a biological responsibility or is there any other aspect related to it? Do parents act as parents because their society, religion, biology and morals have taught them to be so? Or do they act as parents because they want to be for a reason much more divine than one can understand, like affection, care, love, belongingness towards the same gamete?

I have heard people saying that "parents are the only selfless beings on the face of the earth that one can have," but is it really so? Can the theory be applied to each and every person who has been a parent or who is going to be a parent? Do people use those big phrases and quotes about parenting out of personal experience or simply because they have been listening to all those densely deep words throughout the generations and have simply been made to believe in them rather than acting upon them?

All the quotes, phrases, definitions, explanations regarding what parents are and how parents should be. The description of do's and don'ts for parenting set by the society simply accounts for two possible aspects of parenting; either positive or negative.

Positive for people who will understand that the role of being a parent to a child is somewhat like that of a God to a believer who does not know anything other than believing, and knowing the fact that God only exists in a heart of a believer, so to keep themselves a God forever they have to keep the child a believer forever.

The negative aspect goes to the people who think that being a parent itself means being a God, irrespective of whether the child believes in their God ship or not. Such are the people who think that they have every right to force, compel, enact, and apply any rule, any law, any principle upon their children irrespective of it being positive or negative for the development of their children's belief in them. Such are people who need to follow a set of standards and rules for parenting.

But the question which arises here is, which standards should one follow to become an ideal parent? Because clearly whatever the standards are every child needs a separate set of them for his/her respective parents, because every child is different and needs different kind of attention, love and care from the folks.

Who will set the bars and rules? For parenting is not a requirement of two adults who give birth to an infant, but it is the requirement and the necessity of the infant who has just been brought into the world to which he/she is completely unknown to. But the people who claim themselves to be parents, do they really see the world from the eyes of their children? Are they able to see themselves as their children see them? The answer is No, not as long as they leave their God ship and try to see what a believer actually asks from them.

Right from birth the child knows nothing about the external world, but as the child grows, it learns about everything that surrounds it, sometimes by means of questioning, sometimes by means of imitating and modeling, sometimes by means of observation and interpretation, sometimes by means of reinforcements and punishments. But all these activities which a child does, the center of focus remain the parents.

Parents should give their children hope and help them overcome failures instead of sending them on a guilt trip

From teaching them to learn through babbling with them, from reading the poems and stories to making the values and morals clear to their children. Parents greatly influence the overall development of their children, ranging from their psychological, biological as well to their social aspects of life. Though children are born in this world with their own type of temperament it's the parents who



influence the children on how to give voice to their unique temperament in consideration with the external world.

Parents influence children both directly as well as indirectly, and that influence will lead the child to be either adaptive or maladaptive in the society, after all, it's the society we have to fit in as we are the social beings. A child when born is like a clean slate which has nothing written over it, but as the child grows it takes words from people, especially parents and writes the words on this slate, those words determine his/her entire life.

Life of people who lived earlier was much simpler and easier than our lives are today. As our lifestyles changed, our needs, desires, modes of expression changed as well and so did the issues between parents and children.

We cannot expect the process of parenting to be always smooth as butter or soft as silk, but it can sometimes be rough, or roughest than expected. In today's world parenting has become one of the greatest issues, and what is ironic is that we pay little or no attention to the issues with parenting.

People always find problems and faults within children, their demands, their needs, their actions, but do they actually pay attention to the fact that everything the children do is a reflection of what their parents taught them, be it directly or indirectly. A child is like a mirror to the parents, the mirror imitates and acts exactly the one who is standing in front of it, so have you ever considered that the faults you see in your children are somehow or somewhere your shortcomings?

Being a parent does not only mean taking care of a child's financial matters or enacting laws and rules over children, or giving them the education or providing them with clothes or food. The role of a parent does not end on all these activities, but it goes beyond such things. Most people think that they gave their children the education, the money, the clothes, the food, got them settled and married them off and think that they did their job well, but is that all? Does a child just need all that? Or is there something more a child expects from his/her parents?

I would say that if parents fail on providing the materialistic things to their children they should never fail on giving their children the support and hope they need. It is important for children so that they make their lives better and transform themselves into better individuals. Support does not mean physical presence, but being with them in literal terms. Support is talking to children when they need someone to talk to rather than shutting them out every time they start to make a point. Providing them with a shoulder when they need to cry rather than making them feel neglected. Giving them the love they crave for rather than letting them go and search for it somewhere else. Listening to them when they start talking about something and trying to understand where you lack behind according to them instead of thinking that you are always right and they are always wrong.

Parents should give their children hope and help them overcome failures instead of sending them on a guilt trip and thus pushing them even further towards a total failure. It is necessary that you attend to your children while they want you to, rather than making them feel unwanted in your life.

Being a parent means being there for your children emotionally, mentally, as well as physically. If children get the required love and attention from their parents, they will never go out in search of love and care elsewhere. It's not like punishing is bad or putting limits and boundaries on your children is bad, but instead of treating your children as criminals or run away convicts, a healthy punishment will do the magic, a healthy conversation will change a lot of things and can work wonders which infusing negative feelings will never do. Making your children feel ashamed of their failures and mistakes will only distance them even more away from you, rather sit with them, make them understand where they are mistaken, where they have gone wrong. Instead of yelling at them and telling them that "you can never be better" tell them that, "I believe in you and you can do better than this".

Parents need to understand the concepts of good parenting, over parenting and under parenting. One should be able to distinguish between the three to see where they actually are taking their children.

Parents need to understand the concepts of good parenting, over parenting and under parenting. One should be able to distinguish between the three to see where they actually are taking their children.

When parents develop effective parenting skills, they are able to take the initiative in filling the generation gap. When parents start to understand where to place boundaries, where to encourage,

and where to discourage, then their children will not get spoiled. In this way, they become good parents. When people do not know how to be a good parent, the distance between the two develops. As the distance develops, solving the issues becomes even more difficult for the child, because the development of the feeling of not being listened to and not being understood already impacts the developing psyche of the child leaving a mark and a grudge against parents forever.

Parents usually seem to be complaining about the fact that their children do not listen to them, that they do not follow what they are asked to, so the fault lies with children's behaviour, that they do not listen to and follow.

But why does this happen? There would be a reason for it for sure, but instead of finding out the reason our parents usually start the blame game, use harsh words, even beat up children at times, and behave harsh and rude, but does that help? Do their children start behaving well?

No, instead they shift to more aggressive and non-conforming behaviours, they indulge in anti-social activities, drug abuse, substance abuse, get involved with wrong peer group. A child while growing up passes through different levels and different types of stresses and pressures, be it family pressure, peer pressure, educational pressure, or any other type of stress, and in all that stress, all a child needs is someone who can hold his/her hand and guide him/her through.

Parents need to understand that no matter what the age of their children may be, they still lack in patience and experience as compared to them, so the parents cannot expect their children to behave exactly the way they want them to, but they can help them to achieve the required behaviour and guide them through it, if only they understand that they need to be a little flexible with their children. They need to give them a little space and time of their own to perceive things in terms of their own ways of understanding and perception.

Now, you may think I am putting the blame on parents here, but understand that the point here is, parents are not always wrong, but so aren't their children. Their children are as human as they are, just the way parents feel disgusted when children don't listen, the children might feel the same, just the way they get angry on their children's actions, the children might get angry too, after all, it's a two-way relationship, functioning on the principle of give and take, what you give them, you will definitely take that back. Raising a child is like yielding a crop; you harvest exactly what you yielded.

You cannot expect your children to be respectful until and unless you are not respectful to them, you cannot expect your children to show care and interest towards any affair when you have been disinterested in their affairs all along.

The most common parenting mistake is that parents make their children feel that they should be indebted to them for they raised them, educated them, gave them food and money but does it really have to be a debt? Can it not be love? Can it not be care? Can it not be that my son I have loved you all along and for that, I would want you to listen to me for I have experience over things while you don't, instead of I have paid all your expenses till now so you will follow my orders.

Can we not just make parenting simple by changing our way of conversing with our children? Instead of making them robots by giving them commands and expecting them to follow them. Can we not simply treat them as humans by asking them to do things by being kind, generous and loving? Is loving and being kind to one's own child that difficult?

Or have we just misunderstood the concept of love for authority? Have we become so God-like in our parenting process that we don't care and value the opinion of our child regarding a life that he/she lives?

We need to understand that we being parents can only make guesses and jump to conclusions about why and how our children do things while actually they are the ones out there suffering, coping with things, and trying to live up to expectations people stamp them with.

Instead of pressurizing and stressing the children, can't parents be the hope and support a child looks for?

With this question, I will leave the rest of the thinking to you. Introspect, reflect, and understand if you can do something even better today to make your child speak and open up to you and have a healthy conversation with you.

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Parents should give their children hope and help them overcome failures instead of sending them on a guilt trip

COVID-19

BLOOD CLOTTING SIGNIFICANT Cause Of Death In COVID-19 Patients



Agencies

Clinician-scientists have found that Irish patients admitted to hospital with severe coronavirus (COVID-19) infection are experiencing abnormal blood clotting that contributes to death in some patients. The research team from the

Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland found that abnormal blood clotting occurs in Irish patients with severe COVID-19 infection, causing micro-clots within the lungs. According to the study, they also found that Irish patients with higher levels of blood clotting activity had a significantly

worse prognosis and were more likely to require ICU admission. "Our novel findings demonstrate that COVID-19 is associated with a unique type of blood clotting disorder that is primarily focussed within the lungs and which undoubtedly contributes to the high levels of mortality being seen in patients with CO-

VID-19," said Professor James O'Donnell from St James's Hospital in Ireland. In addition to pneumonia affecting the small air sacs within the lungs, the research team has also hundreds of small blood clots throughout the lungs. This scenario is not seen with other types of lung infection

and explains why blood oxygen levels fall dramatically in severe COVID-19 infection, the study, published in the British Journal of Haematology said. "Understanding how these micro-clots are being formed within the lung is critical so that we can develop more effective treatments for our patients, particu-

larly those in high-risk groups," O'Donnell said. "Further studies will be required to investigate whether different blood-thinning treatments may have a role in selected high-risk patients in order to reduce the risk of clot formation," Professor O'Donnell added. According to the study, emerg-

ing evidence also shows that the abnormal blood-clotting problem in COVID-19 results in a significantly increased risk of heart attacks and strokes. As of Friday morning, the cases increased to 20,612 cases in Ireland, with 1,232 deaths so far, according to the Johns Hopkins University.

High BP Drugs Safe For Patients With COVID-19 Disease: Study



Agencies

NEW YORK- Despite concerns expressed by some experts, common high blood pressure drugs did not increase the risk of contracting COVID-19 or of developing severe disease in a new study of 12,594 patients. Published online in the New England Journal of Medicine journal, the study was launched in response to a joint statement issued by the American Heart Association, the American College of Cardiology, and the Heart Failure Society of America. It urgently called for research to answer a question raised by past studies: do high blood pressure (anti-hypertensive) drugs worsen COVID-19 patient outcomes? Led by researchers from New York University (NYU) Grossman School of Medicine, the study found no links between treatment with four drug classes - angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors, angiotensin receptor blockers (ARBs), beta blockers, or calcium channel blockers -- and increased likelihood of a positive test for COVID-19. "Understanding the relationship between these commonly used medications and COVID-19 was a critical public health concern," said lead investigator Harmony Reynolds, associate director of the Car-

diovascular Clinical Research Center at NYU Langone Health. "Our findings should reassure the medical community and patients about the continued use of these commonly prescribed medications, which prevent potentially severe heart events in their own right," he added. Further, the study found no substantial increase in risk for more severe illness (intensive care, use of a ventilator, or death) with any of the treatments in patients with the pandemic virus. The study revolves around drugs that act on the renin-angiotensin-aldosterone hormonal system, which influences blood pressure. Central to this system is the signaling protein angiotensin II, levels of which are controlled by angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE). Angiotensin II narrows blood vessels to increase blood pressure, and the study drugs counter that, either by blocking ACE-induced increases in angiotensin II, or the ability of ACE to interact with its receptor signaling partners on cells. SARS-CoV-2, the current pandemic virus, has been shown to connect to ACE2 on lung cells, a first step toward viral infection. This led to concern in the field that ACE inhibitors and ARBs might increase or worsen COVID-19 infection.

How To Stay Healthy And Boost Immunity During Ramazan

Agencies

This year, with the holy month of Ramazan being marred by a global pandemic, concerns about staying healthy while fasting seem to have increased manifold - the worry is not without reason; we need a strong immune system to lessen our chances of contracting the dreaded Covid-19. So, how do we go about Ramazan this year? In times of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is vital to maintain an optimal immune strength, say dietitians. This means, we need to be watching what kind of food groups we turn to, to ensure replenishment of lost nutrients. "While several studies have indicated that fasting or cutting back on calories can actually enhance the activity of our T-cells and boost our immunity, it is important to get adequate nutrition when ending the fast," Gulf News quotes Zeina Younes, Clinical Dietician at the Dubai Diabetes Centre. Keeping that in mind, here are some dos and don'ts of eating in Ramazan to ensure that whatever you eat for sehri or

iftar keeps you healthy and your immune system in prime condition. **Be mindful of macro, micro nutrients** As reported by Gulf News, we need to consume adequate amounts of all the macro-nutrient groups like proteins, carbohydrates, fats and water for efficient metabolism. Not just that, but we also need to be aware of our intake of micro-nutrients like vitamins, enzymes, minerals and trace elements to build up an efficient immune network. How do we make sure we're taking the right kinds of macro and micro-nutrients in our diet? "A donut and a plate of mixed stir fry vegetables with quinoa or brown rice might give you the same calories. But a donut is fried and has a very high glycaemic index with a very small portion size, which makes it poor in nutrition. It will make you feel hungry again. Whereas the plate of complex carbohydrates with vegetables has a low glycaemic index and is rich in vitamins, minerals and fibre. It will provide far greater nutrition and boost your immune system," explains



Archana Bajju, clinical dietician at Burjeel Hospital Abu Dhabi. **Strike a balance of proteins** Bajju recommends that we incorporate a healthy balance of both plant and animal protein in our diet. "While we focus on animal sources of protein, it is essential to include legumes, lentils and pulses in your diet and have one portion of plant-based protein in your diet at least once. In case of animal protein, choose lean protein such as eggs, dairy, fish or chicken and have it grilled, pan fried or baked. Too much oil

can destroy the nutritional element," she says. While our body also needs fat, it derives that part of its nutrition from fats in the oils and nuts we choose in our diet, so any excess source of fat is not the best idea - this would include fried food and fatty meats. "We must include nuts and seeds in our diet for source of healthy fats. In case of oils, we must choose from olive ground-nut, sesame, mustard and other oils, but we must rotate these in our cooking for best results and

also use small amounts only," recommends Bajju. Here's a simple checklist to ensure a healthy Ramazan, as compiled from Gulf News. 1) Avoid all processed and packed foods loaded with salt and sugar. 2) Try to include more fruits and vegetables that are rich in Vitamin B, C, E, A and D. 3) Eat fresh foods everyday including fruits, vegetables, legumes, lentils, whole, milk products and lean protein choices (egg, chicken, fish, meat). 4) Replace fried foods and sugary desserts and try healthy cooking methods like steam, poach, bake, sauté, stir-fry etc. 5) Use minimal salt for cooking and instead add herbs, spices, lemon, garlic and other seasonings. 6) Trim off the visible fat from the meat, skinless chicken is best. Include good protein choices for iftar and sehri. 7) Drink lots of water. Choose low fat dairy, coconut water, herbal teas and soups for hydration. 8) Stay active whenever possible at home by taking small walks, climbing stairs, doing stretches etc.

This Is The Reason Why Loud Noise Is Bad For Your Health

Agencies

Whether it is loud machinery at work, a busy freeway, a nearby airport or loud music, many people are exposed to high levels of noise, say researchers, adding that exposure to loud noise is not only annoying but also bad for your health. Large studies have linked noise exposure to various health problems in people. Now, two new mouse studies provide new insight into how this type of noise exposure can lead to high blood pressure and cancer-related DNA damage. "Our new data provide additional mechanistic insights into these



adverse health effects, especially high blood pressure and potentially cancer development, both leading causes of global death," said study researcher Matthias Oelze from the University Medical Centre of Mainz in Germany. Published in The FASEB Journal, the research found that healthy mice exposed to four days of aircraft noise were more likely to develop high blood pressure. For mice with pre-established

high blood pressure, this noise exposure aggravated heart damage because of a synergistic increase of oxidative stress and inflammation in the cardiovascular and neuronal systems. In another study, the researchers observed that the same noise exposure induced oxidative DNA damage in mice. This damage led to a highly mutagenic DNA lesion that was previously associated with the development of cancer in other settings. They are currently conducting several studies on the health effects of noise, including interactions of pre-established cardiovascular diseases with noise as well as behavioural effects of noise exposure in mice.

People With Brown Fat May Burn 15% More Calories, Here's How

Agencies

Short-term cold exposure may help people with brown fat burn 15 per cent more calories than those without brown fat, say researchers. Brown adipose tissue, or brown fat, is one of two types of fat that humans and other mammals have. Brown fat's primary role in the body is to burn off heat. It is often called good fat. Unlike white fat, brown fat burns calories through fatty acid oxidation and heat production and is considered a promising target in the fight against the obesity epidemic. According to the study, published in the journal Attachment and Human Behaviour, white adipose tissue or white fat is responsible for obesity



and harder to burn off. It is commonly known as bad fat. "This data improves our understanding of how brown fat works in humans. We found that individuals with active brown fat burned 20 more kilocalories than those without," said study's corresponding author, Florian W Kiefer from the University of Vienna in Austria. The research team identified two groups using a PET (Positron emission tomography) scan--those with and without active brown fat.

Pak summons senior Indian diplomat over Gilgit-Baltistan issue

Sajjad Hussain

Islamabad: Pakistan on Monday summoned a senior Indian diplomat to convey its rejection of what it called India's "baseless and fallacious contention" regarding a verdict by Pakistan's Supreme Court on the holding of general elections in Gilgit-Baltistan.

The move came hours after India said it has conveyed its strong protest to Pakistan over Islamabad's efforts to bring "material change" to territories under its "illegal and forcible" occupation after the country's top court allowed holding of elections in Gilgit-Baltistan.

In a recent ruling, the Pakistan Supreme Court allowed the government to amend a 2018 administrative order to conduct general elections in the region. The Gilgit-Baltistan Order of 2018 provided for administrative changes, including authorising the Prime Minister of Pakistan to legislate on an array of subjects.

The Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi said on

Monday that a demarche was issued to a senior Pakistani diplomat lodging a strong protest over the court ruling and clearly conveying that the entire union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, including the areas of Gilgit and Baltistan, are an integral part of India.

The MEA said the government of Pakistan or its judiciary has no locus standi on territories "illegally and forcibly" occupied by it.

In Islamabad, the Foreign Office said in a statement that a senior Indian diplomat was summoned to convey Pakistan's rejection of India's "baseless and fallacious" contention against the apex court verdict on Gilgit-Baltistan.

It said Pakistan clearly conveyed that the Indian statement over Jammu and Kashmir as an 'integral part' of India "had no legal basis whatsoever".

"The entire state of Jammu and Kashmir is a 'disputed' territory and is recognised as such by the international community," the FO added.

Sikh Doctors In UK Complain About Forced Beard Shaving

Press Trust Of India

London: British Sikh doctors are campaigning for a better procurement strategy by the National Health Service for personal protective equipment required on the frontlines of the coronavirus pandemic in hospitals after a number of them were forced away from key roles due to their beards.



The Sikh Doctors Association had reports of at least five Sikhs being moved out of their usual shift rota at the NHS hospitals for refusing to shave their beards and failing a so-called fit test of critical facial protective gear.

"These doctors got in touch with us in some distress for being forced out of their usual roles, which was causing tension among colleagues as they had to cover their work," said Dr Sukhdev Singh, chairperson of the Sikh Doctors Association.

The problem arose due to a shortage of specialist facial protective masks called Powdered Air Purifying Respirators (PAPRs), which is a hood respirator required in critical areas such as intensive care units. The fit tests and equipment need to be geared towards all staff needs, including orthodox Sikhs with turbans and beards, he said.

All the individual cases of the five British Sikh doctors have since been resolved through acquisition of PAPRs, a more expensive but reusable kit costing around GBP 1,000.

The association is now working with individual NHS Trusts and more widely with the NHS England to ensure there is greater awareness around procuring such specialist protective gear in sufficient quantities well in time. The regular cloth FFP3 masks would not work with beards, a factor that could impact other communities such as Muslims as well.

The system of procurement cannot continue blindly. There has to be greater interaction and surveys done to ensure that specific staff requirements are taken on board so that there is sufficient stock of the right kind of PPE available in times of crisis such as a pandemic, added Singh.

Sikh Council UK has also been liaising with the NHS England alongside the association over the issue and had written to Sir Simon Stevens, chief executive officer of NHS England, last month seeking his intervention over greater clarity on fit tests and taking religious sensitivities into account.



Global Coronavirus Cases Surpass 3.5 Million, Although Rate Slowing

Agencies

Sydney: Global coronavirus cases surpassed 3.5 million on Monday, with deaths nearing a quarter of a million, although the rate of fatalities and new cases has slowed from peaks reached last month, a Reuters tally shows.

North America and European countries accounted for most of the new cases reported in recent days, but numbers were rising from smaller bases in Latin America, Africa and Russia.

Globally, there were 84,004 new cases over the past 24 hours, according to the Reuters tally that is based on official government data, taking total cases to just over 3.5 million.

That compares with around 3 million to 5 million cases of severe illness caused annually by seasonal influenza, according to the World Health Organization (WHO).

Still, while experts say actual coronavirus cases are likely higher than current reports, the trajectory falls far short of the Spanish flu, which began in 1918 and infected an estimated 500 million people. Deaths related to Covid-19,

the disease caused by the new virus, stood at 245,992. The first death was reported on January 10 in Wuhan, China, after the virus emerged there in December.

The daily rate of new cases worldwide has been sitting in a 2%-3% range over the past week, versus a peak of around 13% in mid-March, prompting many countries to begin easing lockdown measures that have upended businesses and crippled the global economy.

The loosening of restrictions has proved controversial, as experts debate the best strategy to ensure there is no large "second wave" outbreak.

Health officials have also expressed concern about the rising case numbers in countries where there is a shortage of testing and a lack of medical facilities.

While the number of new cases has come off a peak of 104,495 reported in a single day last week, it is still at around 80,000 to 90,000 cases per day globally.

Lifting lockdown?

In the United States, around half the country's state governors partially re-

opened their economies over the weekend, while others, including New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, declared the move was premature.

In Britain, Prime Minister Boris Johnson, who battled Covid-19 last month, said on Sunday the country was over the peak but it was still too early to relax lockdown measures.

Even in countries where the suppression of the disease has been considered successful, such as Australia and New Zealand which have recorded daily rates of new infections in the low single digits for weeks, officials have been cautious.

Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison has predicated a full lifting of curbs on widespread public adoption of a mobile phone tracing app and increased testing levels.

Experts caution that both cases and deaths from Covid-19 are almost certainly underreported. Cases may cause only mild symptoms and not everyone with symptoms is tested, while most countries only record hospital deaths, meaning deaths in private homes and nursing homes have not yet been included. — Reuters

As lockdown curbs ease, South Korea throws open malls

Agencies

Seoul: At a glitzy Chanel boutique in downtown Seoul, Kim Soo-yeon joined dozens of others in festive shorts and flare dresses, her eyes out for a clutch purse she had coveted for weeks during the coronavirus pandemic.

One floor down in the Lotte Department Store, long lines of shoppers thronged bakeries and a health-supplement store while staff restocked shelves with freshly baked cakes.

"I'm out shopping for the first time since the Lunar New Year holiday" in January, said 29-year old Kim, showing off the clutch she bought for just over 1 million won (\$820), as she hastily put on a face mask to talk to a reporter. "It's so warm and so good to be out finally."

From malls in Seoul to jammed expressways leaving the capital to South Korea's

southern vacation island of Jeju, shoppers and travellers crowded malls and beaches on the first long weekend since the country began easing coronavirus curbs last month.

With early-summer weather helping retail therapy return with a vengeance, the term "bobok sobi" - revenge shopping - has trended on the nation's social media, as people rush to make purchases delayed by social-distancing rules.

After an initial explosion in infections made South Korea the first major outbreak outside China from the virus and COVID-19, the disease it causes, the authorities have limited the spread with widespread testing, intensive contact-tracing and tracking apps, avoiding the long lockdowns seen in many countries.

Seoul began easing curbs on April 19 and has still managed to bring down new daily

infections from over 900 in late February to around 10 in the past week. The government will relax the rules further from Wednesday, prime minister Chung Sye-kyun said on Sunday.

"Revenge shopping" quickly spread online after Wu Xiaobo, an economist from neighbouring China, was cited discussing the emergence of "revenge consumption" in February.

A South Korean blog post on Wu's forecast was widely shared, while news outlets increasingly have used the term to describe the bounce-back in spending.

In Jeju travellers crowded the sandy beaches, ate Korean-style barbecue and hit the golf courses, many abandoning face masks and recent separation norms, to enjoy 20-degree Celsius (70 Fahrenheit) weather.

Iranian Worshippers Attend Religious Services At Drive-In Venues During Pandemic

Agencies

Tehran: This screen grab from the video footage shows a man reading the Holy Qur'an inside his car at a drive-in religious service.

Worshippers are attending religious services at drive-in venues in Tehran, as mosques in the country have shut down during Ramadan in order to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

Footage from Sunday shows around 3,000 worshippers, according to the venue's manager, attending a service

said a worshipper named Hamidreza Moradi, who added that "families can attend [the service] together without having a face-to-face or direct contact. They can sit and enjoy this ceremony."

Another worshipper named Maedeh Mirzaei thinks that such services are "far better [than] online or television ones," as those "cannot give that pure feeling of it, but this ceremony makes us feel that we are at religious places."

Iran has registered more than 96,000 confirmed coronavirus cases, with over 6,100



in their cars.

"This is the best idea that could be done in this regard,"

people having died with the virus, according to Johns Hopkins University.

Columbia, Brown, Cornell Among 26 Us Varsities Sued As Online Classes Fail To Impress

Agencies

Washington: Higher education in the US is expensive and has led to crippling financial debt for a lot of youngsters—so much so that one of the main campaign promises of the erstwhile presidential election candidate Bernie Sanders was to waive student loans. So, when students who've paid a bomb for the famed campus experience at premier universities were sent home to learn online during the coronavirus

same professors who teach on campus, officials have said, and they're still earning credits toward their degrees.

Grainger Rickenbaker, 21, who filed a class-action lawsuit against Drexel University in Philadelphia, said there's little interaction with students or professors and some classes are being taught almost entirely through recorded videos, with no live lecture or discussion.

Other students report similar experiences elsewhere. A complaint against the Universi-



pandemic, they didn't feel they got their money's worth.

Now, students at more than 25 US universities are filing lawsuits against their schools demanding partial refunds on tuition and campus fees, saying they're not getting the calibre of education they were promised.

The suits say students should pay lower rates for the portion of the term that was offered online, arguing that the quality of instruction is far below the classroom experience.

Colleges, though, reject the idea that refunds are in order. Students are learning from the

ty of California, Berkeley, says some professors are simply uploading assignments, with no video instruction at all. A case against Vanderbilt University says class discussion has been stymied and the "quality and academic rigor of courses has significantly decreased."

In a case against Purdue University, a senior engineering student said the closure has prevented him from finishing his senior project, building an airplane. "No online course can simulate the applicable, real-world experience" he hoped to gain from the project, the complaint says.

How Spain's free taxis helped fight the virus

MADRID: In Madrid's deserted streets with paying customers scarce, taxi drivers running doctors from house-to-house or taking the sick to hospital have become an essential service, their free rides helping frontline medics fight the virus.

Although their role has been largely anonymous, healthcare staff say it has been essential as Spain has battled the worst of an epidemic that has killed close to 25,000 people.

Explainer: Why has Spain been hit so hard by the coronavirus pandemic?

In Madrid, by far the worst-hit area, more than 500 taxi drivers signed up to volunteer through the PideTaxi app, and they have run more than 100,000 free trips.

"I work on the days when I



can, then if they need any help and I'm the closest, the app pings and off I go," says Gaby Saez, 45, who has spent the past six weeks behind the wheel since Spain imposed a strict national lockdown on March 14.

Despite the risks, he says he's not afraid, just ultra-careful, wearing a mask and gloves and scrupulously disinfecting

his taxi after every single trip.

"At times like these, we all have to do our bit, even if what we can do is very limited."

With taxi services made freely available to staff at 266 medical centres across the region, medics have been able to visit patients at home, easing pressure on primary healthcare services.

"Health centres request a

taxi so they can make home visits to the elderly, to those needing treatment or people with Covid," says PideTaxi president Andres Veiga.

The idea was to reduce the number of people going to health centres to stop them picking up the virus or passing on the infection to medical staff.

"A taxi might do 10 or 20 visits a day with healthcare staff. Instead of patients going into the health centres, the doctors or nurses go to see them," he said.

"Being able to take a taxi has made a big difference in stopping the spread of the virus, helping contain it and preventing medical staff from becoming infected." EU health chiefs at the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control say measures to prevent transmission in healthcare facilities "are an immediate priority".

'Corona-Freedom': A white horse takes a stroll



Every morning, white mare Jenny leaves her stable to stroll through her Frankfurt neighbourhood. Bringing trams to a halt and smiles to people's faces, the free-roaming horse is brightening up the coronavirus lockdown for many.

"She goes wherever she wants, she has no limits," said Werner Weischedel, Jenny's owner.

NEWS MAKERS

Sensex Crashes Over 2,000 Pts As US-China Tensions Resurface



MUMBAI: Equity benchmark Sensex plummeted 5.94 per cent or 2,002 points on Monday, tracking massive selloffs in global markets amid rising US-China tensions.

After a highly volatile session, the 30-share BSE index settled at 31,715.35, plunging 2,002.27 points, or 5.94 per cent.

Similarly, the broader NSE Nifty suffered a heavy loss of 566.40 points, or 5.74 per cent, to settle at 9,293.50.

ICICI Bank was the top laggard in the Sensex pack, sinking over 10 per cent, followed by Bajaj Finance, HDFC, IndusInd Bank, Axis Bank and Maruti.

Shares of Reliance Industries fell over 2 per cent after the oil-to-telecom conglomerate on Thursday posted its biggest ever drop in quarterly net profit.

Its net profit in January-March dropped 37 per cent to Rs 6,546 crore, the lowest in three years.

Meanwhile, earlier in the day, Silver Lake - one of the world's largest tech investors - agreed to invest Rs 5,655.75 crore to buy a 1.15 per cent stake in Jio Platforms.

Bharti Airtel and Sun Pharma were the gainers in the BSE index.

According to Narendra Solanki, Head- Equity Research (Fundamental) at Anand Rathi, the domestic markets opened lower taking negative cues from its global peers in Asia.

Claims by the US with regard COVID-19 sparked fears of a renewed trade war and fresh tussle with China over its role in the pandemic spread.

Although the major mar-

kets in Japan and China were closed for holidays, stocks in other Asian markets fell as tensions between the US and China weighed on investor sentiment, Solanki said.

Bourses in Hong Kong and Seoul were plunged up to 4 per cent, while stock exchanges in Europe opened with significant losses.

Back home, sentiments also remained downbeat after the country's manufacturing activity growth declined sharply in the month of April 2020, amid national lockdown restrictions to help stem the spread of coronavirus infections, he added.

The headline seasonally adjusted IHS Markit India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) fell to 27.4 in April, from 51.8 in March, reflecting the sharpest deterioration in business conditions across the sector since data collection began over 15 years ago.

According to analysts, the market has realised that the cascading effect of the extended restrictions on the domestic economy and corporate earnings is much more than anticipated.

The government on Friday extended the nationwide lockdown till May 17.

The death toll due to COVID-19 in India rose to 1,373 and the number of cases climbed to 42,533 in the country, according to the health ministry.

The global tally of coronavirus infections was over 35 lakh, with around 2.47 lakh deaths.

Meanwhile, the rupee depreciated by 64 paise to provisionally settle at 75.73 against the US dollar.

International oil benchmark Brent crude futures were trading 2.95 per cent lower at USD 25.66 per barrel.

Govt To Facilitate Return Of Indians From Abroad From May 7



NEW DELHI: The Union government will facilitate the return of Indians stranded abroad, the process for which will begin from May 7 in a phased manner.

In a statement, the Home Ministry said only asymptomatic people would be allowed to travel and it would be arranged by aircraft and naval ships, adding that the facility would be available on a payment basis.

After their arrival in India, a medical examination would be conducted on everyone and they would, subsequently, be put under quarantine for 14 days, either in a hospital or in an institutional facility, the Ministry said.

"The Government of India will be facilitating the return of Indian nationals stranded

abroad on compelling grounds in a phased manner. The travel would begin from May 7," it said.

The government has prepared the standard operating protocol (SOP), and the Indian embassies and high commissions were preparing a list of distressed citizens, according to the Ministry.

"This facility will be made available on payment basis. Non-scheduled commercial flights will be arranged for air travel," the Ministry added.

"Medical screening of passengers will be done before boarding the flight, and only asymptomatic passengers will be allowed to travel. During the journey, they will have to follow the protocols, such as the health protocols issued by the Health Ministry and the Civil Aviation Ministry," it said.



Never Talked Of Charging Migrant Workers; 85 Pc Fare Borne By Railways, 15 Pc By States: Centre

NEW DELHI: The government has not talked about charging anything from migrant workers as 85 per cent of the transportation cost is borne by the railways and 15 per cent by state governments, the Centre said on Monday amid a row over the national transporter allegedly charging the workers for ferrying them home during the COVID-19-induced lockdown.

The government also said the process of transporting the stranded migrant labourers was being coordinated by states "except for one or two states".

Asked if the migrant labourers were being charged for being ferried home, Joint Secretary at the Health Ministry Lav Agarwal said as far as migrant labourers are concerned, the guidelines have clearly stated that under the infectious disease management one should stay where he or she is.

"Based on the request given from states for particular cases, permis-

sion was given to run special trains. Be it government of India or the Railways, we have not talked about charging from workers. Eighty-five per cent of the transportation cost is borne by the Railways, while states have to bear 15 per cent of the cost," he told reporters.

"Based on the request of the states the process that started, under which limited number of stranded migrant labourers have to be transported for a particular reason, is being coordinated by the state governments, except for one or two states," Agarwal said.

At the daily briefing on the COVID-19 situation, Agarwal also said that in the last 24 hours, 1,074 COVID-19 patients have recovered, the highest number of recoveries in one day.

The recovery rate stands at 27.52 per cent with 11,706 COVID-19 patients cured till now, he said.

Agarwal said in the last 24 hours, 2,553 novel coronavirus cases were reported, taking the number of overall

cases to 42,533. The total number of active cases stands at 29,453, he said.

The joint secretary also said that the COVID-19 curve is relatively flat as of now and it was not right to talk in terms of when the peak would come.

"If we collectively work then the peak might not ever come, while if we fail in any way we might experience a spike in cases," he said.

Amitabh Kant, Chairman of the Empowered Group dealing with civil society, NGOs, industries and international partners, said in 112 aspirational districts, "we worked with the collectors and in these 112 districts only 610 cases have been reported which is two per cent of the national level infection".

In these 112 districts, 22 per cent of India's population resides, he said.

In a few districts like Baramulla, Nuh Rachi, Kupwara and Jaisalmer more than 30 cases have been reported, while in the rest of the places very few cases are there, Kant said. — PTI

RBI May Extend Moratorium On Loans By Another 3 Months

NEW DELHI: With the further extension of the nationwide lockdown, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is considering a proposal for extending the moratorium on bank loans by another three months to help people and industry impacted by the ongoing lockdown to contain COVID-19.

Suggestions from various quarters, including from the Indian Banks' Association, have come for the further extension of the moratorium and the RBI is actively considering them, according to sources.

The government, on Saturday, extended the lockdown for further two weeks till May 17 with certain relaxations in red, orange and green zones.

Income stream would not resume due to the continuation of the nationwide lockdown, the sources said, adding that so many entities and individuals would be unable to service their debt in these circumstances at the end of the present moratorium period ending on May 31.

So, the extension of moratorium by another three months would be a practical approach from the regulator, a senior public sector bank official said. It will help both borrowers and banks in these difficult times, the official added.

The RBI had, on March 27, allowed banks and financial institutions to offer a moratorium of three months on payment of instalments of all term loans



outstanding as on March 1 to help mitigate the hardship faced by borrowers.

"All commercial banks (including regional rural banks, small finance banks and local area banks), co-operative banks, All-India Financial Institutions, and NBFCs (including housing finance companies and micro-finance institutions) ("lending institutions") are being permitted to allow a moratorium of three months on payment of instalments in respect of all term loans outstanding as on March 1, 2020," the RBI had said.

Accordingly, it had said the repayment schedule and all subsequent due dates, as also the tenor for such loans, might be shifted across the board by three months.

As a result of this moratorium, individuals' EMI repayments of loans taken were not deducted from their bank accounts, providing much-

needed liquidity.

The loan EMI payments will restart only once the moratorium time period of 3 months expires.

RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das, on Saturday, held a meeting with public and private sector banks where the issue of loan moratorium was also reviewed.

Credit flows to different sectors of the economy, including liquidity to non-banking financial companies, microfinance institutions, housing finance companies, mutual funds, etc, and post lockdown credit flows including the provision of working capital, with special focus on credit flows to the MSMEs were also deliberated.

The Supreme Court, earlier this week, directed the RBI to ensure that its March 27 guidelines, directing lending institutions to allow a three-month moratorium to all borrowers, is implemented in letter and spirit. PTI

Investor Wealth Plummets Rs 5.15 Lakh Crore As Market Tanks



NEW DELHI: Investors witnessed a wealth erosion of Rs 5.15 lakh crore in BSE-listed companies in morning trade on Monday tracking a heavy selloff in the market, with benchmark Sensex plunging over 1,700 points.

The BSE barometer tanked 1,752.55 points to a low of 31,965.07 in the early trading session.

Led by the weak trend in the equity market, the market capitalisation of BSE-listed companies fell by Rs 5,15,308.99 crore to Rs

1,24,26,311.83 crore.

ICICI Bank was the top laggard in the Sensex pack, tumbling nearly 9 percent, followed by IndusInd Bank, Bajaj Finance, Tata Steel and HDFC.

Sun Pharma was the sole gainer in the BSE index.

The selloff in other Asian equities also played major lower in dragging sentiments lower.

During the last week that was holiday-shortened, the BSE barometer rallied 2,390.40 points or 7.63 percent.

Plasma Therapy No Magic Cure For Coronavirus: Experts



NEW DELHI: The convalescent plasma therapy is no "magic bullet" to deal with coronavirus, and only large-scale controlled trials can ascertain its efficacy as part of the treatment strategy, top medical experts said on Monday, even as several states are considering the use of the therapy to treat critically-ill COVID-19 patients.

The therapy involves taking antibodies from the blood of a person who has recovered from COVID-19 and transfusing those antibodies into an active coronavirus patient to help kickstart the immune system to fight the infection.

The Health Ministry last week warned against its use, saying that the plasma therapy for treatment of coronavirus patients is at an experimental stage and has the potential to cause life-threatening complications.

However, some state governments, including Rajasthan, Punjab, Maharashtra and Delhi have shown keenness for plasma therapy treatment, and the Centre has permitted few states to perform plasma therapy on a limited number of COVID-19 patients.

Top medical experts feel it should not be looked upon as something that could make a "huge difference" in the treatment of COVID-19 and only randomised controlled trials can prove its efficacy as an important treatment strategy.

Director of AIIMS, Delhi, Randeep Guleria said there have been very few convalescent plasma therapy trials as far as COVID-19 is concerned,

and only in very few patients it has shown some benefit.

"It is just one part of the treatment strategy. It helps improve the person's own immunity by giving what we call passive immunity because the antibodies in the plasma enter the blood and try to help fight the virus in the afflicted individual. It is not something which will dramatically make a difference," Guleria told PTI.

There is no study to suggest that "it is a magic bullet" or it will make a dramatic difference, but it is part of the armamentarium of treatment that physicians have along with other drugs, the senior pulmonologist said.

ICMR has already called for a proposal and a large number of institutes have enrolled for the convalescent plasma therapy trials, he said.

"Important issue to remember is that not everyone's plasma can be given, you also have to test the blood—whether it is safe and also has enough antibodies. So, you have to have an antibody testing mechanism which is being done by NIV (National Institute of Virology), Pune, to show that the plasma you are giving has enough antibodies" Guleria said.

Research should be done on a multi-pronged treatment strategy and should not be focused on only one strategy, the AIIMS Director said.

"You will need to give it to a large number of individuals, more than 200 or 300 people and then analyse the data..We should go ahead in research mode giving it to more people and do a proper well conducted study so as to know one way or the other," Guleria said.

NEWS MAKER

Haryana Cadre IAS Officer Resigns, Cites 'Personal Safety On Government Duty' As Reason



A 2014-batch IAS officer of the Haryana cadre resigned on Monday, citing 'personal safety on government duty' as the reason for it.

The Opposition Congress termed her resignation 'shocking', asking Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar

if it was not a "proof of his failure".

Rani Nagar (35), currently posted as Director, Archives Department, sent her resignation to the state chief secretary, requesting to forward it to a competent authority in the Union government.

Nagar said she is also sending copies of the resignation letter to the president, prime minister, Haryana governor and the chief minister through e-mail.

"The reason for submitting this resignation is the

personal safety on government duty," she said in a letter to the chief secretary.

"I do hereby most humbly submit to you my resignation from the post of Indian Administrative Service with immediate effect, that is effective from May 4, 2020, forenoon," she wrote.

The letter was also posted on her Facebook page. She later left Chandigarh for her hometown Ghaziabad.

Recently, Nagar had posted on her Facebook page that she will resign after the coronavirus lockdown was lifted.

Nagar had come into limelight in June 2018, when she had accused an additional chief secretary-level bureaucrat of harassing her, a charge denied by the officer.

In December 2017, when she was posted as the sub-divisional magistrate of Dabwali in Sirsa district, police had lodged a case of trespass against an unidentified person on her complaint.

Nagar had then posted a video on her Facebook page, alleging that police "failed to initiate a prompt action" on her complaint.

Congress Will Pay For Rail Travel Of Every Needy Migrant Worker: Sonia Gandhi

NEW DELHI: The Congress on Monday said its state units will bear the cost of rail travel of needy migrant workers and labourers stranded at their workplaces due to the coronavirus-induced lockdown and seeking to return home.

Congress president Sonia Gandhi in a statement announced the party's decision and said this would be the Congress' humble contribution in standing shoulder to shoulder with these workers, who are the backbone of the country's economy.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi also said in a tweet in Hindi, "On the one hand, the Railways is charging ticket fares from labourers stranded

in other states, while on the other hand, the Railway Ministry is donating Rs 151 crore to the PM-Cares Fund. Just resolve this puzzle."

Sonia Gandhi also accused the central government and the Railways of completely ignoring the demands made by the Congress for ensuring the safe and free travel of migrant workers and labourers to their homes.

"There needs to be provisions for the safe and free rail travel of migrant workers and labourers to their hometowns. However, despite our repeated demands, the central government and the Rail Ministry have chosen to completely ignore the same."

"The Indian National Congress

has, therefore, taken a decision that every Pradesh Congress Committee shall bear the cost for the rail travel of every needy worker and migrant labourer and shall take necessary steps in this regard," she said in a statement.

She said this will be the Congress' humble contribution in service of the compatriots and to stand shoulder to shoulder in solidarity with them.

Congress treasurer Ahmed Patel tweeted, "As directed by Congress President, in my capacity as Treasurer (AICC) I request Pradesh Congress Committees to mobilise all possible local resources to help migrants purchase tickets to get back home."