



Maximum : 18°C
Minimum : 11°C
Humidity : 83%

SUNSET
Today 07:25 PM
SUNRISE
Tomorrow 05:30 AM

OBSERVER

23rd year OF PUBLICATION

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COVID-19: WORLD'S GREATEST ONLINE LEARNING EXPERIMENT

When we were told over the Lunar New Year holiday that schools in Hong Kong would be closed to prevent the spread of a then still-distant illness, I went through all the stages of grief. Shock, denial, anger, bargaining. I settled on depression for a good while. With three primary-age children, my vision of juggling a new job, school, chores and a bad-tempered dog was one of Brueghelian pandemonium. I had little faith in the quality of education my kids would receive online. Four months in, my scepticism has in large part faded. What's allowed me to accept, and then

.....PANORAMA
P5

News Digest

20 TH RAMAZAN		
	IFTAR TODAY	SEHRI TOMMORROW
FIQAH HANAFIYA	07:27	03:54
FIQAH JAFARIYA	07:36	03:52

Video Shows Cops 'Vandalising' Shops

Srinagar: A video purportedly showing policemen damaging shops and houses of people in a village in Jammu and Kashmir's Budgam district after a deputy superintendent of police got injured in clashes there last week has gone viral on social media. In the little over two-minute video, the policemen are seen vandalising and ransacking the shops and houses of civilians in Nasrullahpora, a village 11 ● P-02

Govt Forces Launch CASO In Kathua

Jammu- State forces have launched a search operation following information about movement of suspected persons in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district, officials said on Wednesday. On receiving the information that some people saw movement of suspected persons in the Sandroon forests belts of Bani tehsil, police and the army launched a cordon and search operation on Tuesday, they said. ● P-02

Army Vehicle Hits Civilians, 2 Injured

Srinagar: Two civilians were injured after an army vehicle hit them in Batamalo area of the uptown city on Wednesday. According to reports, an army vehicle (18B129772L) hit and injured a fruit vendor and his friend near Tengpora locality of Batamalo today. The two identified as Shabir Ahmed Bhat of Bemina and Muneer Ahmed Sheikh of Khanshab Budgam were removed by soldiers to the SMHS hospital here for treatment. The doctors treated the two ● P-02

Accidental Fire Creates Panic At PCR

Srinagar: Panic gripped the highly fortified police control room (PCR) here in this capital city on Wednesday after a policeman's gun went off accidentally. According to the reports, service rifle of a policeman present in IRP barrack went off accidentally triggering panic in the highly guarded PCR this afternoon. Though the bullet didn't harm anyone but the cops rushed to the spot to ascertain the facts. The cop whose rifle went off is affiliated with 6th Battalion Indian Reserve Police ● P-02

Another Covid-19 Death In J&K, Toll Rises To 11

75-Year-Old Jammu Man's Sample Returns Positive Day After Death At Home

SRINAGAR- A 75-year-old man from Jammu on Wednesday became 11th victim of the novel coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir, official sources said.

They said that septuagenarian died at his residence at Preet Nagar Digiana. However, the family took him to GMC Jammu where doctors declared him brought dead on arrival and decided to take his samples for Covid-19. The body was later kept in mortuary to await the reports, they said.

Medical Superintendent GMC Jammu Dr Dara Singh said that the man was brought dead around 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday. "His sample was taken and body was shifted to mortuary," he said, adding, "the sample returned to be positive for Covid-19 today." The body would now be handed over to the family after following covid-19 protocol.

With this fatality, 11 persons have died due to the disease so far in Jammu and Kashmir ● PAGE 02



7 Cops, 2 Patients Among 37 More Test Positive

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Seven policemen, two patients were among thirty-seven persons who tested positive for the novel coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday, taking the number of infected people across

the Union Territory to 971.

"Thirty-seven new cases have been reported from Jammu and Kashmir in the last 24 hours," the officials said, adding that eleven more patients have recovered and were discharged from various hospitals.

While 30 were reported from Kashmir, 7 others came Covid-19 positive from ● PAGE 02

Govt Says Over 40,000 Stranded Residents Brought Back Home

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Over 40,000 people from Jammu and Kashmir stranded in various parts of the country due to the coronavirus lockdown have been brought back home, officials said on Wednesday.

A total of 39,825 residents of the union territory were brought back to their home through buses, while 3,217 stranded people reached Udhampur on three special trains from Karnataka, Goa and Delhi, an official spokesperson said.

As many as 169 persons will

reach Srinagar from Dhaka, Bangladesh, on a special flight, he said.

The administration has assured that all the residents of the union territory stranded in Bangladesh will be brought back to their homes.

"The first flight from Bangladesh with 81 students arrived in Srinagar on May 8 and the second flight with 169 students arrived on Tuesday. To date, 419 students from Bangladesh have arrived in J and K," the spokesperson said.

Upon their arrival in Srinagar, the students were screened and their samples were taken ● PAGE 02

Panel Submits Report On Poplar Cutting, Govt 'Examining'

Agencies

SRINAGAR: A committee, to examine all aspects relating to the Russian Poplar trees including the impact of the pollen and fluff from these trees on the spread of the novel coronavirus, has submitted its report, government had informed the J&K High Court.

"The committee's report is being considered by the authorities," submitted Amit Gupta, Additional Advocate General representing the J&K government before a division bench of Chief Justice Gita



Mittal and Rajesh Oswal.

"Let the decision be taken in terms of our order dated 10th April 2020 and placed before us before the next date of hearing," the court said and posted the matter on May 20. Headed by Dr. Mohit Gera (IFS), ● PAGE 02

DIPR Sacks 45 Employees Despite Ministry Order

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir Department of Information and Public Relations (DIPR) has sacked 45 employees in sheer violation of the advisory issued by the Ministry of Labour and Employment against the termination of employees during the ongoing Covid-19 lockdown.

In an order issued on May 5, the Director Information disengaged 45 stringers, most of them from Kashmir region, working as reporters, translators and cameramen in the department for over



five years. The move of terminating the services of these 45 employees come in wake of the GAD circular issued on May 24, 2019. The circular had directed that "Any person engaged on need basis shall be immediately disengaged" "Whereas stringers (reporters,

translators, cameramen and hired editor films) were empanelled/hired/engaged by the department subject to the condition that it will not confer any right or entitlement to any regular service or future permanent appointment in the department against ● PAGE 02

PSA Detention Of Shah Faesal Extended

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Bureaucrat-turned-politician Shah Faesal will remain in detention under the controversial Public Safety Act after the authorities extended it by three months on Wednesday evening.

The Home department of J&K this evening extended detention of Faesal by three months, barely hours before it was set to ● P-02

Cop Uncle Of Slain Budgam Boy 'This's A Cold-Blooded Murder'



Auqib Javeed

BEERWAH, BUDGAM — The uncle of slain youth killed by Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) in the Kawoosa area of Budgam in Kashmir on Wednesday contested police and paramilitary claim that his nephew fled two checkpoints when fired upon.

Ghulam Hassan Shah, Assistant Sub-Inspector in Jammu and Kashmir Police, was travelling along with the slain youth identified as Me'rajuddin Shah, when their car was attacked.

"This is a cold-blooded murder," Shah told Kashmir Observer.

"Mehraj was fired from point-blank range," he added. "Jammu and Kashmir police and CRPF jointly killed my nephew out of sheer frustration."

On Wednesday morning, Shah, a resident of Beerwa Budgam, asked Me'raj to drop him at Srinagar's Police Control Room (PCR), where he is currently posted and was waiting for his dead nephew's body when this story was written.

"On reaching near a Naka at Kawoosa village," Shah said, "I showed my identity card to a J&K Police Hawaldar and insisted that I should be allowed to move. Telling us to go, the policeman signalled at CRPF jawan who immediately opened fire on us. The bullet pierced the chest of my nephew and within no time he lost a lot of blood."

However, Budgam Police in its statement said the slain civilian travelling in a vehicle jumped from two Naka points in Kawoosa, Narbal after which CRPF men fired at him. ● PAGE 02

Political Parties Condemn Killing, Demand Probe

Political parties in Kashmir on Wednesday condemned the killing of a civilian by CRPF personnel in Budgam district and called for an impartial enquiry to punish the guilty. Peer Mehrajuddin was killed when CRPF personnel opened fire on his vehicle. He was rushed to SMHS hospital in the city where he succumbed to his injuries, according to police. Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee (JKPCC), in a statement, strongly condemned the killing of Mehrajuddin. "The firing should have been avoided. The loss of innocent lives has the potential to lead to further alienation of the people," the JKPCC said. ● P-02

Labour Party Says Kashmir Position Remains Unchanged

Support, Recognise UN Resolutions: Starmer
Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: Britain's Labour Party has said that its position on Kashmir remains unchanged and the party supports and recognises resolutions passed by the United Nations over the vexed issue between the two nuclear armed nations.

"Our position on Kashmir has not changed, we support and recognise previous UN resolutions on the rights of the Kashmiri people but maintain that if we are to find a lasting settle-



ment, to end this conflict, that can only be achieved if India and Pakistan working together, with the people of Kashmir," Labour leader Keir Starmer wrote Muslim Council of Britain (MCB), which sought a clarification from him, according to a report published by ● PAGE 02

8PM Package: 'When Will It Be Actually Distributed', Netizens Ask

Swati Joshi

THE fifth televised address during pandemic by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Tuesday night mostly drew social media flak on the use of vocabulary. As the virtual world got flooded with puns and memes, Kashmiris expressed their difficulty in understanding the speech.

Even in mainland India, many people took to their social media accounts to share their opinions on the package.

One netizen hoped that the package also didn't turn out to be a "jumla".



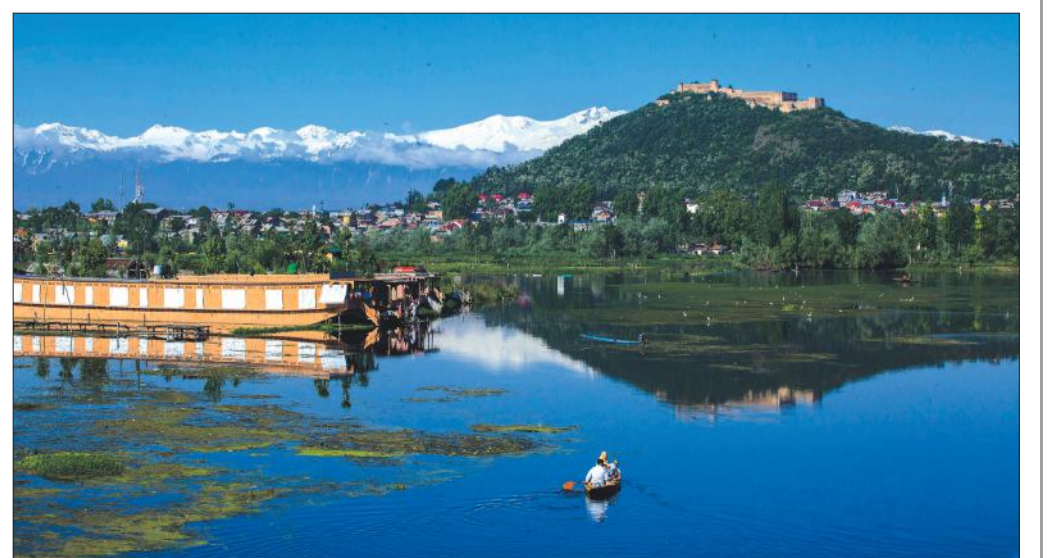
A netizen tracking the timing of the address came up with a witty observation: Rs. 20 lakh

crore relief package in the year 2020 at 20:20 hours. Since PM Modi announced the

new package, a netizen wrote, he might fulfill the old promise of depositing Rs 15 lakh to every citizen's bank account

In 2014, a package of Rs 15 lakh to every citizen was promised by Narendra Modi while campaigning for the Lok Sabha elections.

In the 33-minute address, PM Modi appreciated the way India converted the crisis into an opportunity. "India's fundamental thinking provides a ray of hope to the world," he said. Considering the impact of the contagion, PM Modi encouraged people to buy and promote local products. He encouraged people to become vocal for the local. ● PAGE 02



AS TRAFFIC REMAINS off the roads due to lockdown, a man rows his boat in Nigeen Lake of Srinagar on Wednesday. Pic Abid Bhat

From Front page...

No Stamping Of Boarding Pass, Flyers Can Take 350 Ml Of Hand Sanitiser In Flights: BCAS

NEW DELHI: The aviation security regulator BCAS said on Wednesday the CISF personnel would not be stamping any passenger's boarding pass anymore during the pre-embarkation security check (PESC) at airports and a flyer could now take up to 350 ml of hand sanitiser with him in flights.

The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS), in the first order accessed by PTI, said every airport operator will have to ensure that there are enough CCTV cameras at an appropriate height in the PESC area to record the identity of a passenger and his or her boarding pass.

More than 13 CISF personnel, who were posted at airports in Delhi, Mumbai and Ahmedabad,

have tested positive for COVID-19 till date.

This order has been issued in view of the "prevailing situation of COVID-19 pandemic and countermeasures being taken to contain its spread by touch/contact", stated the BCAS.

The second order issued by the BCAS on Wednesday said passengers are being advised to use hand sanitiser frequently amid the spread of coronavirus infection.

"Therefore, it has been decided that passengers boarding an aircraft will be allowed to carry in his or her hand baggage or on his or her person liquid hand sanitiser up to 350 ml," the second order stated.

Generally, not more than 100 ml of liquid is allowed in the



hand baggage of an air passenger. All scheduled commercial passenger flights have been suspended since March 25 when the Modi government imposed a lockdown to curb the coronavirus pandemic. However, repatriation flights, medical evacuation flights and cargo flights have been allowed to operate.

"It has been decided to dispense with the procedure of stamping the passengers' boarding pass that is being done by Aviation Security Group (ASG)/Airport Security Unit (APSU) after completion of PESC of the concerned passenger, till further orders," the first order stated.

Both the APSU and the ASG are part of the Central Industrial

Security Force (CISF), which provides security at more than 60 airports across the country.

In its order to airports, airlines and other stakeholders, the BCAS said, "The airport operator shall ensure that the requisite monitoring system of high definition fixed CCTV Cameras and supporting infrastructure are maintained all through at PESC points at an appropriate height so that boarding pass of the passenger and his/her identity are digitally recorded."

"The CCTV recordings shall be preserved for 30 days, as per established practice," it added.

The novel coronavirus has infected over 75,000 people and killed around 2,400 in India till now.

Centre's Economic Package A 'Big Zero', It Has Nothing For States: Mamata

KOLKATA: West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee on Wednesday slammed the Union government, claiming the special economic package announced by it has nothing of help to states and is "a big zero".

Banerjee alleged that the central government was "misleading the people" during the COVID-19 crisis and was planning to "fi-

nancially lockout" states.

"The special economic package announced by the Union government is nothing but a big zero. It is an eyewash to fool the people. There is nothing for the unorganised sector, public spending and employment generation," she said while addressing a press conference here.

She alleged that Prime Minister

Narendra Modi and Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman were speaking in different voices over the state of the economy.

The Rs 20 lakh crore special economic package was announced by the prime minister during his address to the nation on Tuesday evening and the initial details of the stimulus were unveiled by Sitharaman on Wednesday.

"Yesterday, when the PM announced the Rs 20 lakh crore package, we were hopeful that the interest of states will be looked into, the FRBM limit would be increased. But today, after the Union finance minister made the announcements, it was found that everything that was said yesterday was a bluff," Banerjee said.

With No Transport Available For Onward Journeys, Scores Left Stranded On Roads Outside Delhi Station

NEW DELHI: Scores of people, who arrived here on the first batch of trains since the partial resumption of railway services amid the novel coronavirus-induced lockdown, were on Wednesday left stranded on roads outside the railway station with no transport available for onward journeys.

Special trains from Ahmedabad, Patna, Mumbai and Howrah reached the New Delhi Railway Station before 9 am on Wednesday.

The Indian Railways resumed passenger train operations from May 12, initially with 15 pairs of trains, weeks after these were suspended due to the lockdown.

Railway authorities said all passengers were compulsorily screened and given hand sanitisers at entry and exit points, and in trains.

Though the train journey remained smooth for most of the passengers, their excitement to

reach home disappeared as they stepped out of the station premises.

The norms of social distancing went for a toss as hundreds gathered in the limited space outside the station, even as police personnel were seen making announcements in this regard using speakers fitted on motorcycles and cars.

There was no bus, cab or any other transport option available for onward journeys.

Another Covid-19 Death In J&K, Toll Rises To 11...

—9 of them in Kashmir and two in Jammu division.

The Srinagar district has reported 4 of the deaths, highest in any district, followed by Baramulla (3), one each in Bandipora, Anantnag, Udhampur and Jammu. (GNS)

7 Cops, 2 Patients Among 37 More Test Positive

Jammu division, they said.

21 of the fresh cases were reported positive by the officials at the Chest Diseases Hospital here. Out of 1163 samples processed at the CD Hospital's Microbiology Lab and 21 came out to be Covid-19 positive.

Eight samples received from District Police Lines Anantnag came out to positive and include that of a follower, two SPOs as many Head Constables, a Constable, a Selection-Grade Constable and a woman, wife of a cop. Except for the woman, none had come in contact with any positive patient, sources told news agency GNS.

The other cases include six from Seer Hamdan— one 40-year-old woman and five men, two of them aged 30-years-old while three others include 38-year-old, 40-year-old and 45-year-old respectively.

Besides cases include a woman from Naibasti, 70-year-old from Frisal and 49-year-old of Mohammad Pora Kulgam, patients admitted to orthopedic ward GMC Anantnag besides 55-year-old man from Khatitaj.

Two cases include 26-year-old and 27-year-old women, whose samples were received from SDH Kokernag, they said.

Nodal officer for coronavirus control at SKIMS, Dr G H Yattoo, said that out of 1726 samples tested at viral diagnostic lab of the tertiary care hospital, 13 came out to be positive.

Professor Farooq Jan, Medical Superintendent SKIMS, told GNS that seven of them are from Budgam—24-year-old male and 24 and 25-years-old women from Loripora, 23-year-old woman and two man—aged 35 and 45 years old from Watkul and a 21-year-old man from Zaipora, five from Basoli Jammu and one from Baramulla—27-year-old from Dangiwachi.

Of the total number of cases reported so far, 874 are from Kashmir and 97 from Jammu. Eleven people (nine in Kashmir and two in Jammu) have died and 466 patients (409 from Kashmir and 57 from Jammu) have recovered. The number of active cases stands at 494 (456 in Kashmir and 38 in Jammu), they added.

More than 1 Lakh people have been kept under surveillance including those who are either in government established quarantine facilities or in home isolation.

Moreover, 11 more COVID-19 patients have recovered and discharged from various hospitals, two from Jammu division and nine from Kashmir Division.

'This's a Cold-Blooded Murder' ...

"A convoy of army at that point in time was passing through the adjacent road and fearing a sabotage, the CRPF jawan of C/141, manning this Naka, fired warning shots," Pankaj Singh, Srinagar-based CRPF spokesman, told Kashmir Observer.

"This civil car was driving in the wrong direction of the road and that was even more alarming. When the car didn't stop, despite warning shots, the jawan fired at the car and in turn, the driver was hit on his left shoulder."

Many CRPF men, Singh said, were killed at Nakas, including in Pulwama last year. "People have to understand and cooperate with us," he said.

But the cop uncle of the slain youth rubbishes these claims. "This is a blatant lie," Shah said. "They want to cover-up the crime. I am myself a police officer. Why won't I stop my car? Truth is, we stopped our car and then the jawan fired upon us. Had we fled from the spot, our car would have been damaged after they fired upon us."

The youth was shifted to Srinagar's SHMS in a critical condition, where Dr Nazir Choudhary, medical superintendent of the hospital, declared him brought dead.

Me'raj was a class 12th dropout and was running a Khidmat centre at his village. He is survived by 3 brothers and 3 sisters. He was just 15, when his mother died.

"Even if he had fled from the Naka," Owais Ahmad Shah, Me'raj's cousin, told Kashmir Observer, "the forces could've fired warning shots in air or fired at his tyres. Was killing the only option?"

Political Parties Condemn Killing, Demand Probe

The party demanded a probe into the circumstances, which led to the killing of the civilian in order to fix the responsibility.

While reacting to the incident, the PDP called for an inquiry. "Shooting a civilian dead cannot be how a democracy operates. Eagerness of few trigger happy individuals to replicate Delhi Police model of destruction & violence in Budgam is detestable. An enquiry should be initiated & guilty taken to task," the party tweeted.

Former chief minister Omar Abdullah termed the incident as unfortunate.

"Very unfortunate. The circumstances surrounding this shooting need to be impartially investigated & findings made known. My condolences to the family of the deceased," he tweeted.

Labour Party Says Kashmir Position Remains

Hindustan Times.

Starmer, according to the report, added in the letter to MCB: "As I outlined in my leadership campaign, my approach to international relations will be to always promote peace and put human rights first."

"I will also ensure that (shadow foreign secretary) Lisa Nandy follows up on this correspondence and reached out to you to discuss how we can ensure the voices of our Kashmiri communities contribute to Labour's policy making processes", he added.

The HT report further says that Starmer's remarks came after he met party MPs and others, particularly those of Pakistan origin last week, who protested against his view that the dispute was a matter for India and Pakistan to resolve, and that he intended to focus on building "even stronger business links with India".

In his first meeting with the Labour Friends of India (LFI) group on April 30, Starmer had said Kashmir was "a bilateral issue for India and Pakistan to resolve peacefully. He had also said that the issues of the sub-continent should not be allowed to divide communities in United Kingdom.

Govt Says Over 40,000 Stranded Residents...

for COVID-19 testing, he said.

Of the total 39,825 returnees till date, 10,743 came from Punjab, 18,111 from Himachal Pradesh, 10,971 from other states and UTs including Delhi, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana, Chhattisgarh, Uttarakhand, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Assam and Madhya Pradesh, as per an official communique by Commissioner Secretary, Jal Shakti, Ajeet Sahu.

The fourth train from Goa carrying 697 stranded passengers is expected to reach Udhampur by this evening, the spokesperson said.

Commissioner Secretary, Industries and Commerce, Manoj Kumar Dwivedi, who is also the Nodal Officer for management of return of stranded people at Udhampur, and District Development Commissioner, Piyush Singla are personally monitoring the facilities being extended to the passengers during their de-boarding and movement to their home districts at the Udhampur railway station, he said.

Panel Submits Report On Poplar Cutting, Govt ...

Principal Chief Conservator of Forests and HoFF, the members of panel included Farooq Ahmad Gillani (Chief Conservator of Forests, Kashmir), Dr. Mushtaq Siddiqi (Vice-Chancellor, Islamic University of Science & Technology), Dr. Naveed Nazir Shah (HoD, Pulmonary Medicine, Government Medical College, Srinagar), Zubair Ahmad Shah (Conservator of Forests, Srinagar), Dr. Tariq H. Masoodi (Dean, Department of Forestry, SKUAST, Kashmir) and Mehraj-ud-din Malik (Regional Director, Social Forestry, Kashmir).

The Chairman of the Committee was also authorized to co-opt any other expert(s) in its deliberations.

The panel was formed following the Court's order on April 10 last, directing the Chief Secretary to constitute it to examine the impact of the pollen and fluff from the poplar trees and the desirability of felling poplar trees amid coronavirus

pandemic.

The court had passed the orders days after almost all deputy commissioners in Kashmir ordered axing of the "female" poplar trees.

"Significantly a grave error is pointed out which is to the effect that female poplar trees have been directed by the authorities to be felled on account of the "pollen" generated by them. This by itself is a basic mistake," the court had observed.

"Pollen is generated by the male of the specie and not by the female tree. Therefore felling of the female of the Species would not have any impact," the court had said.

It was also pointed out, the court observed, that the fluff carries the seed and not pollen.

"The two reports brought to our notice by refer to views of several experts doubting the correctness of the statement that the fluff generated by the poplars could be effecting respiratory diseases or would impact spread of the COVID-19 infection," the court had observed, adding, "The Committee which is constituted would examine all aspects relating to the matter including the impact of the pollen and fluff from the poplar trees, the desirability of felling poplar trees (also called Russian Poplar) and related issues.

The Committee, the court had said, shall suggest all necessary steps, including felling of trees, if necessary. "The Committee shall complete its deliberations expeditiously within a time frame to be fixed allotted by the Chief Secretary. Its report shall be forwarded to the Secretaries of the Departments of Health and Medical Education as well as Forests."

The Secretaries, Health and Forest Departments have been directed by the court to take a considered view on the committee's report and place the same before the Chief Secretary for consideration at the earliest. "The final recommendations shall be placed before us at the earliest (now on May 20)," the court added. (GNS)

DIPR Sacks 45 Employees Despite Ministry Order...

any permanent or temporary vacant posts and such engagement will be purely on need basis and will be discontinued by the department at any point of time without giving any notice," reads the DIPR order.

"Whereas, after examining the matter, the Administrative Department vide letter no ID/Estt/30/2015 dated 30.04.2020 has communicated to this office that the stringers engaged temporarily by the information department against non-existing posts should be disengaged forthwith. The instructions issued by the GAD by the circular No.30-GAD of 2019 dated 24.05.2019 be strictly followed by all the departments," it adds.

Meanwhile, the disengaged stringers have made a representation to Lt Governor GC Murmu to seek his intervention.

Making a fervent appeal, the terminated employees say that during their stint, they were given key assignments; including covering Advisors to hon'ble Governor, besides covering several other vital events including visits of several high profile personalities like President of India, Prime Minister, Home Minister, hon'ble Chief Justice of India and Press council of India.

"During the period, we covered all major events, meetings and functions of the Raj Bhavan, Chief Minister's Office, Cabinet Ministers from the previous Government, along with other Government functionaries as desired by the department. Besides routinely covering the entire business of assembly, GST Conclave held at Srinagar, Back to Village Programme—an ambitious programme of the Government, besides facing all odds, we remained available on duty post August 05 developments in the State," the letter written to LG reads.

The stringers have urged LG to intervene so that the extension of their services could be grant at the earliest.

"We humbly hope that our concerned Department is also directed to prepare a comprehensive job policy at an earliest, so that our professional services are acknowledged and permanent employment is provided to us," they added.

It is pertinent to mention that the Ministry of Labour and Employment in a March 20 communication had advised all state and UT administrations not to terminate employees in the face of a "catastrophic situation due to outbreak of Covid-19."

PSA Detention Of Shah Faesal Extended...

expire news reports said.

Faesal, who was detained in August last year after BJP-led Central government abrogated Article 370, was booked under PSA on February 14 after spending six months in jail under the

Criminal Procedure Code(CrPC)

Earlier, the government extended detention of Mehbooba Mufti, Naeem Akther, Sartaj Madni and Ali Muhammad Sagar. Several mainstream leaders including PC chairman Sajad Lone also remain under house detention after they were released from MLA hostel in February this year.

8Pm Package: 'When Will It Be Actually Distributed',

However, complaining about the internet ban in Kashmir, a netizen said that he could not be vocal for the local because if he became vocal internet would be shut down in the valley.

Expressing his disappointment with the speech one netizen tweeted that the PM's address did not talk about the death of migrant workers.

Since the lockdown has been implemented the migrant workers are rendered unemployed.

Though the government has promised to look after their needs, many cases were reported where the migrant workers were suffering from non-availability of rations.

Some even compared the PM's intimidating vocabulary with Congress MP Shashi Tharoor who is known for the use of abuse words like farrago (confused mixture), Lalochezia (the emotional relief gained from using abusive language), Hippopotomonstrosesquipedaliophobia (fear of long words) and many more.

Starting the address at 20:00 hours, PM Modi took 20 minutes to announce the economic package, prompting a pun from a netizen.

"Today's speech of PM Modi flashbacked me of my board exams," recollected one of the netizens, adding that he wrote two pages to answer a seven-mark question to get at least five marks.

Apart from memes and jokes, many netizens had some hard questions about the package.

"India did not have the resources for a big bang fiscal package," as per the narrative spun by the finance ministry over the past 45 days, opined a netizen.

Notably, India took a 1.5 bn loan from Asian Development Bank (ADB) to fight against the coronavirus pandemic. Considering India had to take a loan to fight the crisis, the netizens questioned from where the PM Modi is getting 20 lakh crore.

Video Shows Cops 'Vandalising' Shops...

kms away from here, in central Kashmir's Budgam district.

In the video, which has gone viral on social media, the police personnel are seen taking out goods from several shops and destroying them.

The alleged incident took place on Friday last week after Deputy Superintendent of Police Fayaz Hussain sustained a head injury during stone-pelting by miscreants in the locality.

The locals have alleged that the policemen vandalised and ransacked several houses, shops and cars, and also destroyed household goods.

There was no comment from police over the alleged incident as Inspector General of Police (IGP), Kashmir, Vijay Kumar did not respond to calls and messages on his number.

Govt Forces Launch Caso In kathua...

operation is still going on, the officials said.

Some shepherds informed the village head that they saw in the upper reaches movement of suspected persons, who were armed, they said.

The village head informed police about it and subsequently the army and the police rushed to the area and launched the operation, the officials said.

Army Vehicle Hits Civilians, 2 Injured...

injured. Their condition is stable, news agency KNT reported.

Accidental Fire Creates Panic At PCR...

Force, news agency KNT reported.

HC 'Deeply Concerned' About How Public Is Required To Conduct After Easing Of Lockdown

Agencies

Srinagar: Jammu and Kashmir High Court on Wednesday said that it was "deeply concerned" about the manner in which the public could be required to conduct itself after reduction of the restrictions post-lockdown.

"It is absolutely imperative that the public is educated about the same as well in advance," a division bench of Chief Justice Gital Mittal while hearing Public Interest Litigations including one on its own motion.

"Institutions and establishments including, commercial and industrial establishments, need to know as to the manner they would be permitted to work after the reduction/removal of the lockdown restrictions," the court said, adding, "It would appear that the authorities have not even begun to apply their minds to these issues."

It rejected the report "purporting" to be on the issue of the "removal of lockdown - desirable public response - provision of information".

Earlier, as per global news service, Amit Gupta, additional advocate gen-



eral on behalf of Atal Dulloo, Financial Commissioner and Health & Medical Education Department submitted a status report.

"This report still does not deal with the issue on which the authorities were required to apply their mind," the court said, observing that it only details the steps already taken.

"It appears that the issue of what would be the desirable public response post removal of the lockdown has not been examined," the court added.

"We had directed the Director Information to place before us the strategy with regard to dissemination of the information on this issue. No report is forthcoming from the Director Information," the court said. Ultimately, the court directed the Secretary, Health and Medical Education Department, Secretary, Social Welfare Department, Director Information and the Member Secretary of the Jammu and Kashmir State Legal Services Authority to have a meeting within one week and formalize an

action plan on these issue "which shall be placed before us positively before the next date of hearing."

Meanwhile, Vishal Sharma, Assistant Solicitor General of India, said that he has received a letter dated May 12 from Ashok Kumar Paul, Under Secretary to the Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, which he could not place on record. He prayed for short adjournment to do so and the court allowed his prayer. The matter pertains to Personnel and Clinical Establishments (Prohibition of Violence and Damage to Property) Bill.

Meanwhile Dr. Nissar-ulHassan, President Doctors' Association Kashmir, submitted report as regards views on violence against healthcare worker.

Meanwhile, in view of a report submitted by the Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, the court observed that it would appear that the Government was sensitive to the welfare and needs of stranded migrants, contract labourers and visitors etc. "They shall continue to render all assistance to these persons and take all necessary steps as may be required." (GNS)

Admin to expanding network of Grocery stores, wholesale supplies in City

SRINAGAR, MAY 13: District Administration, Srinagar finalised measures to augment the existing network of delivery of groceries, food items and vegetables with special emphasis and focus on mandatory home-delivery, hygiene and precautions required in view of COVID containment SOPs.

It is pertinent to mention here that 25 Administrative Zones were notified earlier, comprised of inter-departmental representatives, to address local issues related to essential services, supplies, commodi-

ties and local needs, with active involvement of local representatives. A total of 39 major stores were notified, to begin with, for supply and delivery of groceries. Another, 40 stores were later notified at zonal level taking the number to 79. Meanwhile, in coordination with local business representatives and resident associations the zonal committees have been authorised for operationalisation of such 2-3 stores in every zone either on rotational basis with fixing business days. In case of red zones strict precautions are to be put in place.

ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
AWANTIPORA, KASHMIR.
Tele: 01933-247954/247955. Website: www.islamicuniversity.edu.in.

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

On behalf of the Vice-Chancellor Islamic University of Science and Technology, Awantipora, J&K, Expression of Interest is invited from the interested resourceful consultants registered with the Indian Council of Architects New Delhi, having sufficient experience in the field of Architecture to offer their services for project consultancy of 3rd phase of proposed projects at IUST campus as per terms and conditions of the Tender document available at website www.islamicuniversity.edu.in

Last date of submission of technical bid: **28th May 2020**, before 1400 hours.
No: IUST/EW/CVL/20/113Sd/-
Dated: 11-05-2020 **Executive Engineer**

Div Com Reviews Flood Preparedness, Mechanism To Tackle Any Exigency

Srinagar: Divisional Commissioner Kashmir, Pandurang K Pole today convened a meeting to review the flood preparedness and mechanism put in place to tackle 2014 flood like situation.

The meeting was attended by Chief Engineer I&FC, General Manager BSNL, Kashmir, Business head Reliance JIO, Bharti Airtel, Vodafone and Idea, besides other concerned officers.

The meeting held detailed discussion on the measures undertaken to combat any flood like situation and mechanism put in place for flood management.

The meeting was informed that Irrigation and Flood Control department (I&FC) has taken various initiatives including installation of Automatic Water Level Recorders (WLRs) at various locations on River Jhelum at Sangam, Pampore, Ram Munshi Bagh & Asham and at its major tributaries including Sind, Lidder, Doodganga, Vaishaw & Rambiar. Besides, department is further expanding network of Automatic WLRs across the valley to obtain instant data.

The Divisional Commissioner directed the officers to adhere to the guidelines of National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Government of India to minimize vulnerability to floods and consequent loss of lives, livelihood systems, property and damage to infrastructure and public utilities. He also stressed telecom companies to follow SOPs laid down by NDMA and asked them that bulk SMS services should be made available for dissemination of warnings to the people preferably residing in low lying areas on real time basis, at the time of exigency.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER Mechanical Irrigation Division Baramulla

Fresh Short term e-Tender
NIT No: E- 05 of 2020-21

For and on behalf of Lt. Governor of Jammu & Kashmir, sealed e-tenders in two covers, affixed with ₹ 6.00 revenue stamps, are invited from experienced, reputed and registered firms/ genuine manufacturer/authorized distributors/dealers/workshop owners / SSI Unit holders with manufacturing authorization for the following work:

S. No.	Name of work	Cost of tender document	Estimated Cost (₹ in Lacs)	Earnest money	Validity of offer	Major Head	Tender ID
1.	REPAIRS TO 60 HP, 980 RPM, 3-PHASE SQUIRREL CAGE INDUCTION MOTOR AT LIFT IRRIGATION SCHEME BURN-GATE.	₹ 100.00	₹ 0.60	₹ 1,200	60 days	M&R	2020_IFC_96616_1
2.	REPAIRS TO 100 KVA HT/LT DISTRIBUTION TRANSFORMERS AT LIFT IRRIGATION SCHEME CHAINABAL.	₹ 100.00	₹ 0.39	₹ 7,80	60 days	M&R	2020_IFC_96616_2
3.	REWINDING OF 05 HP, 3-PHASE PRIMING PUMPING UNIT AT LIFT IRRIGATION SCHEME KP PAYEEN.	₹ 100.00	₹ 0.10	₹ 2,00	60 days	M&R	2020_IFC_96616_3
4.	IMPROVEMENT/RESTORATION OF HT LINE AT VARIOUS LIFT IRRIGATION SCHEMES OF SUB-DIVISION PATTAN.	₹ 100.00	₹ 0.51	₹ 1,020	60 days	M&R	2020_IFC_96616_4
5.	Electrical and Mechanical work to be carried out Lift Irrigation Scheme Darpora	₹ 100.00	₹ 0.44	₹ 8,80	60 days	M&R	2020_IFC_96616_5
6.	Electrical & Mechanical work to be carried out Lift Irrigation Scheme Delina Main.	₹ 100.00	₹ 0.49	₹ 9,80	60 days	M&R	2020_IFC_96616_6

The tenders consisting of qualifying/eligibility criteria, technical specifications, general and commercial terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the website <https://jktenders.gov.in> from **12-05-2020 (04:30 pm)**.

The bids shall be submitted in electronic format on the website <https://jktenders.gov.in> from **12-05-2020 (6:00 pm) to 19-05-2020 (6:55 pm)**. The bids uploaded on the website up to due date and time will be opened on the time and date, in the office of the **Executive Engineer, Mechanical Irrigation Division Baramulla** in presence of the bidders who wish to attend. In case offices happen to be closed due to holiday, or any other reason, on the schedule date of opening, the bids will be opened on the next working day at the scheduled time and venue.

The complete bidding shall be online. The bidders must upload their active mobile No.'s & mail ID.

Prequalification bids shall be opened online in the office of the **Executive Engineer, Mechanical Irrigation Division Baramulla** on **20-05-2020 at 3:00 pm** after which the financial bids of qualifying bidders shall be opened on the same day. The **pre bid meeting** regarding clarification shall be held in the office of the Executive Engineer Mechanical Irrigation Division Baramulla on **15-05-2020 (11:00 am)**.

The bids for the work shall remain valid for a period of 180 days from the date of opening of bids.

No. MIDB/CC-05/415-24
Dated: 09-05-2020

DIPK-687/20

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Mechanical Irrigation Division Baramulla

GOVT. OF JAMMU & KASHMIR
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER IRRIGATION & FLOOD CONTROL DIVISION GANDEBAL NEAR GIRAJ ----Pin:191201
Phone: - 0194-2416246; FAX 01942416246; Email: exenifcdganderbal@ifckashmir.com

EXTENSION NOTICE

For E-NIT No-3 of 2020-2021 issued under No: 160-210 Dated: 29-04-2020

Due to closure of internet facility in Kashmir valley by Government of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, the dates for above noted ENIT is hereby extended as per the following schedule.

01	Bid submission Date End	16-05-2020 16:00 P.M
02	Bid opening Date	18-05-2020 11:00 A.M

All other terms and conditions shall remain same as laid down in E-NIT No: 03 of 2020-21 issued by this office.

No: 280-99
Dated: 9-5-2020
DIPK-686/20

Executive Engineer,
Irrigation & Flood Control Division,
Ganderbal

Govt Of Jammu And Kashmir
Department of Sheep Husbandry
Office Of The Deputy Director Sheep Breeding Farm Daksum
(Store Sec.)
Email: sbfdaksum@gmail.com

QUOTATION

Short term quotations affixed with revenue stamps of Rs.2/- are invited from reputed distributors for supply of powdered iodized salt (common salt) quoting rats/Quintal for the year 2020-21 at Sheep Breeding Farm Daksum by or before 18-05-2020 up to 3 pm. The quotation should be addressed to Dy. Director Sheep Breeding farm Daksum and those received after due date & time shall not be accepted. The quotations shall be opened by the committee framed for the purpose on the same day or any other date convenient to committee.

No: - SBF/D/Stores/2020-21/174-76
Dated:-09/05/2020

DIPK-680/20

Deputy Director
Sheep Breeding Farm
Daksum

DIAL-EMMA



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

AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311 ✈

RAILWAYS

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

HIGHWAY STATUS

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



HIJRI CALENDAR
20 Ramazan
1441

PRAYERS

FAJR	3: 55
ZUHR	12: 27
ASR	5:20
Magrib	7:27
ISHA	9:01

This Day In History

- 1264 - Battle of Lewes, 2nd Barons' War: Simon de Montfort the younger, Earl of Leicester, defeats English King Henry III
- 1509 - Battle of Agnadello, French beat Venetians in Northern Italy
- 1664 - Turkish Grand Vizier Köprülü Fazıl Ahmed attacks 120,000 Donau soldiers
- 1702 - England & Netherlands declare war on France & Spain
- 1702 - Swedish troops under King Charles XII occupy Warsaw
- 1811 - Paraguay gains independence from Spain (National Day)
- 1853 - Gail Borden, land surveyor, newspaper publisher and inventor, patents his process for condensed milk
- 1861 - The Canellas meteorite, an 859-gram chondrite-type meteorite, strikes the earth near Barcelona, Spain
- 1862 - Adolphe Nicole of Switzerland patents chronograph
- 1863 - American Civil War: The Battle of Jackson, Mississippi takes place
- 1868 - Japanese Boshin War: end of the Battle of Utsunomiya Castle, former Shogunate forces withdraw northward to Aizu by way of Nikk
- 1897 - Great Britain signs treaty with Emperor Menelik II of Abyssinia
- 1907 - Sweden adopts universal suffrage for elections to its lower house and proportional representation for both houses
- 1921 - Mussolini's fascists obtain 29 parliamentary seats in Italian elections
- 1939 - Lina Medina becomes the world's youngest confirmed mother in medical history at the age of five.
- 1944 - British troops occupy Kohima
- 1944 - General Rommel, Speidel & von Stulpnagel attempt to assassinate Hitler
- 1945 - Physician Joseph G. Hamilton injects misdiagnosed cancer patient Albert Stevens (CAL-1) with 131 IKBq (3.55 uCi) of plutonium without his knowledge. Stevens lives another 20 years, surviving the highest known accumulated radiation dose in any human
- 1948 - Israel declares independence from British administration
- 1948 - Jordan's Arab League captures Atarot, north of Jerusalem
- 1948 - US grants Israel de facto recognition
- 1948 - Golda Meir (Goldie Meyerson) is one of the signatories of Israel's independence declaration
- 194 - US President Harry Truman signs bill establishing a rocket test range at Cape Canaveral
- 1955 - US performs nuclear test at Pacific Ocean
- 1955 - Warsaw Pact is signed by the Soviet Union, Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Hungary, Poland & Romania
- 1960 - USSR launch 1st (unmanned) space capsule
- 1965 - 2nd Chinese atom bomb explodes
- 1968 - Beatles announce formation of Apple Corp
- 1970 - The Red Army Faction is established in Germany.
- 1973 - Skylab launched, 1st Space Station
- 1973 - US Supreme court approves equal rights to females in military
- 1975 - French press reports massive deportation from Cambodia
- 1975 - US forces raid Cambodian island of Koh Tang to free Mayaguez ship
- 1975 - US performs nuclear test at Nevada Test Site
- 1981 - NASA launches space vehicle S-192
- 1982 - Guinea adopts constitution
- 1989 - Demonstration for democratic reforms in Beijing's Tiananmen square
- 1991 - World's Largest Burrito created at 1,126 lbs
- 1995 - Dalai Lama proclaims 6-year-old Gedhun Choekyi Nyima 11th reincarnation of Panchen Lama, Tibet's 2nd most senior spiritual leader

From KO Archives

'Colourful weapons' to quell protests now

SRINAGAR - All protesters welcome to Srinagar. For moving away from batons and bullets, the police here Tuesday introduced cannons that spray coloured water on mobs and leave the stain-on clothes as "criminal" evidence.

The first to face this new 'weapon' against violent demonstrations were hundreds of local traders who staged a protest against value added tax (VAT) in the state.

Police turned the cannons on as the group marched, shouting slogans against the Mufti Muhammad Saeed government. "The cannon throws water of various colours at the protesters. It is not easy" to remove the stains from the clothes," said a senior police officer laying down the advantages of the new weapon.

"There is no chance of pro-testers' death unless there is a subsequent stampede. And once the colours stain the clothes they cannot claim they didn't participate in the demonstration" he told IANS.

Police had to think of the cannons as unruly mobs on streets have become a daily routine here.

"Under section 144 of the criminal procedure code (CrPC), an assembly of five or more people is unlawful. Thus dealing with demonstrations is something the local police have to live with," another police officer said.

For over 1 years now because of insurgency, magisterial orders under section 144 of CrPC have been in force in all cities and towns of Kashmir.

Police firing at crowds has often stepped up public anger and created political controversies.

Now, the cannons purchased for Rs 2.1 million are expected to come in handy.

Spraying cold water, these will be specially effective in the winters when temperatures drop below zero.

"A cannon can easily disperse a crowd of up to 4,000 people. There is an additional facility of throwing rubber bullets if the water fails to do the trick." Javid Mukhdoomi, inspector general of Kashmir said. (IANS). (Kashmir Observer, 14 May, 2005)

KASHMIR
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Stimulus Package, At Last

Prim minister Narendra Modi has announced a stimulus package of Rs 20 lakh crore to ease the devastating fallout on the economy of the prevailing Covid-19 crisis. In an address to the nation on Tuesday, the PM said that the package was geared to make India self-reliant. The PM's address came a day after he held a marathon six-hour meeting with chief ministers during which several states sought an extension of the lockdown. Others pitched for further easing of restrictions and more say in determining which districts should fall under red, orange and green zones.

In his address, the PM Modi said the fourth phase of the lockdown will be in a new form, making a case for taking the Covid-19 into stride. He said, and rightly so, that we can't let our lives remain confined around the disease. And the best way to fight the disease, the PM said, was to wear masks and maintain social distancing.

On Wednesday, the finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman spelled out granular details of the PM's package. She announced a facility of Rs 3 lakh crores collateral-free automatic loans for business, including micro, small and medium enterprise (MSMEs). This has made borrowers with up to Rs 25 crore outstanding and Rs 100 crore turnover eligible. Loans will have 4-year tenure with a moratorium of 12 months on principal repayment. Besides, there will be 100 per cent credit guarantee cover to banks and NBFCs on principal and interest. This will enable 45 lakh MSME units to resume business activity and safeguard jobs. A large part of the package, around Rs 8.04 lakh crore, will be the additional liquidity injected into the system by the Reserve Bank of India through various measures.

This is the biggest stimulus package announced by the union government so far and it should go a long way to cushion the impact of Covid-19. At the same time, the government will have to find a way out of the lockdown. The new rules for the lockdown 4.0 will be announced before May 18 and it will include the suggestions by the Chief Ministers. Truth is the government is in no position to go on extending the lockdown. It has to work towards a graded exit from it in the interest of the economy. Millions have already lost jobs and a prolonged shutdown of the economy will only pile on the misery. While stimulus package will offer a relief, for economy to get back on feet, the government has to be open to.

OTHER OPINION

Building trust

From claiming that the Aarogya Setu app is unhackable, to suggesting that it must be the safest app ever because millions are downloading it — they are compelled to, actually — to issuing fresh guidelines to safeguard the privacy of users, the government has come a long way, tacitly acknowledging the trust deficit and the need to address it.

Trust is an essential ingredient for the success of Aarogya Setu in helping to contain the pandemic, because it must acquire a critical mass of users to be of any use. On Monday, an order by the empowered group on technology and data management, set up by the national executive of the Disaster Management Act, established the protocol for handling data by the various bodies involved in the management of the COVID-19 outbreak. Outside that circle, the data may be shared only with the research community in anonymised form. Breaches will attract penalties according to relevant sections of the Disaster Management Act, besides other applicable laws.

The government has fixed security flaws in data handling detected by a French white hat hacker, limited the purpose of data collection to dealing with the pandemic, and restricted the types of data which may be collected and the period for which it may be held. And crucially, by promising punitive measures, the order sets to rest public anxieties about privacy. Problems about technology are not adequately addressed by technology — by claiming that software is hacker-proof, for instance. It is best addressed by the law, by the certainty of liability and the penalties thereby attracted.

But perhaps this order should be read as a first step towards a law, as a letter of intent rather than a compact. Justice BN Srikrishna, who headed the committee which had produced the first draft of the Personal Data Protection Bill, has pointed out that the order is not lawful — supportive legislation is required by Aarogya Setu, rather than merely an order by the executive. On May 1, the ministry of home affairs had made the app mandatory for employees in the public and private sector, and in government. Local authorities were urged to secure complete coverage in containment zones. The Noida police then extended it to everyone, threatening imprisonment and fines for non-compliance. These may be emergency interventions, but the app now requires legislative backing. In the absence of an underlying law, it would remain vulnerable to legal challenge.

The Indian Express

SC Will Always Have To Reign Supreme

BASIT AMIN MAKHDOOMI

THE principles of Natural Justice are a precious sacrament that has been adorned since ages by all the democratic and progressive nations of the world. The term Principle of Natural Justice (PNJ), derived from the expression "Jus Natural" of the Roman Law which though does not have force of law as they may or may not form part of statute but they are necessarily to be followed.

The adherence to principle of natural justice as recognised by all civilised states is of supreme importance when a judicial, quasi-judicial or an administrative body embarks on determining disputes between the parties, or any administrative action involving civil consequences is an issue. These principles provide minimum protection of the rights of the individual against the arbitrary procedure that may be adopted while adjudicating upon matters affecting civil rights. Natural Justice recognises two principles of natural justice...

Nemo Judex in causa sua (No man shall be a judge in his own cause). Audi Alteram partem (hear the other side).

Nemo Judex in Causa Sua, a Latin maxim is attributed to the great seventeenth century jurist Sir Edward Coke, an English barrister, judge, and politician who is considered to be the greatest jurist of all times. This principle of impartiality roughly translated into English means nobody shall be a judge in his own cause or in a cause in which he is interested. Popularly known as the Doctrine of Bias, the principle prescribes that the authority sitting in judgment should be impartial and act without bias and this in turn instils confidence in the system as justice should not merely be done but seen to be done.

This essential pillar of justice, sacrosanct in all civilised societies seems to have been ignored when the Hon'ble Apex Court directed for constitution of a Special Committee to be headed by Secretary Ministry of Home Affairs and comprising of Secretary of Ministry of Communications and the Chief Secretary of Jammu & Kashmir to look into the prevailing circumstances and determine the necessity of the continuation of the restrictions in Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. The top court directions came on pleas filed by Foundation for Media Professionals, Soayib Qureshi and Private Schools Association of Jammu and Kashmir seeking restoration of 4G in the Union Territory 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.

Even though the court might have justified its impediments in passing orders on restoring 4G in J&K keeping in view the need Apex Court expressed to balance the rights of the citizens with national security concerns, but delegating its constitutional responsibilities of adjudication upon issues concerning fundamental rights to a party which is a stakeholder to the matter appears to be inconsistent with principles of natural justice.

It is no rocket science to comprehend the outcome this exercise will unfurl for those who knocked its doors seeking safeguard of their constitutional rights.

Subject Matter Bias:

The Apex Court has itself in a catena of petitions upheld that any interest or prejudice will disqualify an adjudicator from hearing the case. When the adjudicator or the judge has general interest in the subject matter in dispute on account of his association with the administration or private body, he will be disqualified on the ground of bias if he has intimately identified himself with the issues in dispute. To disqualify on the ground there must be intimate and direct connection between the adjudicator and the issues in dispute. The rule against bias strikes against those factors which may improperly influence a judge against arriving at a decision in a particular case. This rule is based on the premises that it is against the human psychology to decide a case against his own interest. The basic objective of this rule is to ensure public confidence in the impartiality of the administrative adjudicatory process. A closer view of this matter reveals that recent consecutive orders of extension of 4G Internet bans in J&K were issued by Principal Secretary Home and since J&K being a Union Territory the governance apparatus directly reports to the Ministry of Home Affairs through its Home Secretary. Keeping all this in hindsight our Hon'ble Apex Court in its wisdom directs for constitution of a committee, headed by whom? Our Home Secretary, To do what? Review its own orders... this all generates ample force to push these orders to become per incuriam in nature.

Proctor of Rights:

The constitution of India is a magnanimous and sacrosanct document which has bestowed upon us certain rights which are extremely fundamental to Human Nature. These Fundamental rights are considered essential for intellectual, moral and spiritual development of individuals. This inalienable nature of these Fundamental rights made it imperative for the constitution makers to consign their protection to an apex level institution, and no other institution than our Supreme court could have undertaken this responsibility. Chief Justice Harilal Kania had said at the inauguration of the Supreme Court that the court must be "quite unapproachable by the legislature or the executive authority in the performance of its duties".

Article 32 entitles people to directly approach the highest court for the enforcement of these rights. B.R. Ambedkar called this article the very soul of the constitution. Chief Justice Patanjali Sastri observed in V.G. Row (1951) that the Supreme Court has been assigned the role of a sentinel on the 'qui vive'. It is both the first court as well as the court of last resort for the protection of rights. When a litigant approaches this protector, deep inside he has a firm belief that the forefathers of his destiny who entrusted this institution with enormous powers will stand

up for him and resurrect his rights and liberties trampled by the rich and the powerful. On the contrary if he witnesses his protector shying away from his basic duties, dejection dooms his idea of a democratic India his forefathers envisioned for him.

Uphold our Liberties:

The apex courts in foreign lands have set a very high bar for us to emulate when it comes to championing the rights of its citizens. In UK, its Supreme Court stood against its executive when PM Boris Johnson arbitrarily announced suspension of UK Parliament for five weeks at the height of the Brexit crisis. The 11-judge panel of the UK Supreme Court unanimously then declared, "The decision to advise the Queen to discontinue parliament was unlawful because it had the effect of frustrating or preventing the ability of parliament to carry out its constitutional functions without reasonable justification. A similar thing was noticed when 4 Judges dissented when US Supreme Court narrowly in 5-to-4 vote upheld President Trump's ban on travel from several predominantly Muslim countries. These incidents are a reminder to the bulwark of our rights to stand up for us despite all kinds of pressure it keeps complaining about. The diversity of this country is going through a very tough time when certain segments of our society are feeling vulnerable because of the shifting dynamics of the political issues, thereby having a huge bearing on the psychology of the large electorate of this country. Hate is being sowed on prime time television debates and extremism is being decorated with jingoism and machoism. With all this toxicity in our surrounding environment upon whom can a vulnerable citizen of this country pin his hopes, with a warm assurance that it will stand up for him and his sacrosanct fundamental rights. Apparent delay in hearing contentious issues like Article 370, Citizenship Amendment Act undermines the paramountcy that this institution is bestowed with. The recent nomination of former CJI Ranjan Gogoi to the Rajya Sabha within four months of his superannuation from the Supreme Court has further eroded the confidence of the common man.

Montesquieu, the great French judge and political philosopher in his theory of separation of powers, prescribes that the three pillars of democracy ie executive, legislative & the judiciary should always maintain independence in their respective zones albeit with frequent checks and balances. He warned if all the three legislative, executive and judicial powers are combined and given to one person or one organ, the concentration of power becomes so big that it virtually ends all liberty and establishes despotism of that person or organ. We hope the protector of our constitution will stand up to its responsibilities and uphold the trust that forefathers of this nation reposed in it for keeping alive the democratic ideals of this great nation.

—Author practises law at
J&K High Court and can be
reached at: Makhdoomi13@gmail.com



OBSERVER MAIL

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

MAIL YOUR LETTERS

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Social Service As Part Of Education

Education is essentially a social process. It cannot be carried on in isolation from society. Its primary aim is to help an individual to bring out and realise his or her latent powers, potentialities and thus to develop the personalities to the full.

An individual apart from society is figment of the imagination. Individual is part and parcel of society and must be educated as such, so that he or she grows up into a useful member of the society. One of the best ways of educating an individual is by creating in him or her a sense of unity and belongingness with the people and by extension with the society. No amount of preaching and text book moralising would make a student feel one with

society in the same way as actual participation in the affairs of society will. Social service is thus the best form of education; it is part and parcel of creative education which helps a student to live creatively.

Many ignorant people mistake education for mere book-learning. Character formation and learning through direct experience of life observation and action are perhaps more important than cold and lifeless books. Social service provides opportunities for "learning by doing". Mahatma Gandhi's scheme of basic education and John Dewey's philosophy of education emphasise practical action as a part of education.

When students are asked to serve the society, they are filled with sense



of responsibility. They are self motivated to understand the problems of their society so as to suggest solution for its problems. They can thus take active and constructive part in

conquering illiteracy, ignorance, disease, and other related problems. It is necessary to interfere with the class room studies. Students can be asked to help in social and economic reconstruction by doing their bit during vacations. They can understand trips to the under development and backward areas and organise projects and programmes of adult education, demonstration in agriculture process, and lessons in personal and social hygiene. They can launch campaigns against societal inertia and corruption. Thus they can stir and galvanise the masses towards purposeful and concerted activity for national reconstruction.

Farhan Kitab
javaidfarhan2@gmail.com
Srinagar

COVID-19: World's Greatest Online Learning Experiment

Once lockdown is over kids may have shorter classroom schedules, but more learning hours

CLARA FERREIRA MARQUES

When we were told over the Lunar New Year holiday that schools in Hong Kong would be closed to prevent the spread of a then still-distant illness, I went through all the stages of grief. Shock, denial, anger, bargaining. I settled on depression for a good while.

With three primary-age children, my vision of juggling a new job, school, chores and a bad-tempered dog was one of Brueghelian pandemonium. I had little faith in the quality of education my kids would receive online.

Four months in, my scepticism has in large part faded. What's allowed me to accept, and then embrace, the educational havoc wrought by the virus has been its unexpected impact on my middle son, a 9-year-old on the autism spectrum.

First, we need to adapt schools to work better online, even when classrooms are open. Early-childhood instruction has to be grounded in core numeracy and literacy, and it's true plenty of motor skills are best taught in person, but online options can encourage more independent, problem-based learning, where children solve challenges themselves.

With a more flexible approach, he's been able to cover the curriculum with a combination of live and recorded assignments provided by school, and find space for niche interests in a more creative, student-led set-up. We've recruited outside support that has helped to reinforce corners of math which eluded him first time around. Our new, fuzzier world allowed him to catch up, and thrive.

My son's experience with remote learning is in many ways exceptional - but it may also provide clues to how school systems around the world can harness the potential of technology to improve outcomes for all students. The quality of education students have received during this crisis has been uneven.

Digital divide

The digital divide, and the related homework gap, are painfully real. Wealthier parents can afford to stay home; they are more educated and better able to support their children; they have enough laptops, steady Wi-Fi and live in homes where there's a modicum of personal space.

In Hong Kong, nearly 97 per cent of less-well-off children in a March survey by the The Society for Community Organisation reported problems with distance learning, much of it related to poor internet connections. Even those who overcome that obstacle cannot always unlock online opportunities without extra help.

That doesn't mean that the greatest learning experiment in history is doomed to fail. There's a very real possibility we will see more disruptions, whether driven by extreme weather or pandemics, and we can't afford to have hundreds of millions of children falling behind.

With the right infrastructure, it's possible to rethink academic structures that have in many ways been unchanged since the Victorian period, and come out with options that are more inclusive and flexible. It won't be cheap, but in the age of multi-trillion fiscal stimulus, it may be the best investment we make.



Almost everyone I've spoken to, from head teachers to students and parents, has expressed frustration over the abrupt switch to virtual schooling during the current health crisis. Most institutions were ill-prepared to move to online instruction.

In part, this comes from our over-optimistic views of how easy it is to teach and learn online. That's not new: Radio, then television, and later mass open online courses, were also supposed to provide high-quality free education for all, yet haven't quite lived up to expectations.

Distance learning comes with inherent limitations. In China, online tuition is a 500 billion yuan, or nearly \$71 billion industry, but even at that size, virtual lessons don't make the bricks-and-mortar alternative irrelevant. Schools help children turn into self-sufficient beings that can thrive in society.

Physical schools matter

They teach and model good study habits. They also allow parents to work, and in many places, they mean shelter and nutritious food that is otherwise unavailable. Physical schools played these critical roles before the pandemic, and these functions will be even more essential after it passes.

And yet the traditional schoolroom is far from perfect, as students with learning challenges know. It's also unclear if the current model is the one best suited to produce the workers of the future.

Sugata Mitra, a computer programmer-turned-educational researcher famous for his Hole in the Wall experiments in India, argues that the current set-up is the product of an imperial era, geared to-

ward training human computers with neat, legible handwriting and quick arithmetic. Our modern economy, on the other hand, requires innovative, collaborative, problem-solving workers.

So what kind of system should we aspire to build, when the pandemic ebbs?

First, we need to adapt schools to work better online, even when classrooms are open. Early-childhood instruction has to be grounded in core numeracy and literacy, and it's true plenty of motor skills are best taught in person, but online options can encourage more independent, problem-based learning, where children solve challenges themselves.

Some of this happens already, but the virtual tools we are now all familiar with open up more choices as they get older, plus the possibility of collaboration across schools and ages. Better yet, by leaning into this sort of activity when stuck at home, we overcome the pedagogical limitations of wall-to-wall Zoom lessons.

As we figure out how to get there, it's encouraging that one consequence of this outbreak has been increased collaboration among teachers, schools, students and parents, to identify best practices. In Hong Kong, that's been fostered by the Centre for Information Technology Education, but also through countless informal Facebook groups.

Second, we need to recognise that successful online teaching requires helping hands. We know from past studies and current experience that hybrid or blended teaching - a combination of online classes and more engaged, in-person and group work - produces the best outcomes, so the role of human assis-

tance should not be a surprise.

It becomes crucial, though, when designing a set-up able to include children who are vulnerable, or have special needs of any kind.

Times of disruption

For me, it was a semi-retired teacher who lives nearby and has the patience to handle both my child's intense interest in Medieval history, and his struggle with more abstract mathematical concepts. A willing grandmother supported too, via FaceTime. Online platforms, with support from local authorities and schools, can make this kind of supplemental instruction accessible to many more, ensuring we don't leave kids lagging in times of disruption.

A policy proposal from Reform Scotland, a think tank, suggests connecting sheltered-in-place retired teachers with children who have educational gaps, special needs or are otherwise at risk.

Countless retired or trainee nurses around the world have answered the call to serve during this pandemic; it's reasonable to assume that many former teachers would do the same.

Finally, getting good outcomes online, as in the classroom, requires planning. Hong Kong schools, stung by closures during protests last year, were better equipped to deal with the transition to online learning than counterparts elsewhere. Substantial, sustained public investment will be necessary to get educators, families and students ready for next time.

What to spend on? We need to start by getting a better understanding of the technological disparities students face - schools very often have no idea how kids are set up at home - and then provide equipment, and access to the right software, much of which already exists.

Then comes the support. For teachers, that's extra tech (and tech teaching) skills. For children, that's investing in those willing helpers, virtual or otherwise. Absent trained educators, governments can provide guidance so even relatives and community members play a similar role.

Once released from shelter-in-place orders, we might find our children have shorter classroom schedules, but more learning hours. They may have more agency, and move more easily between online and offline options.

Having witnessed the social divisions laid bare by the pandemic, we may finally widen access to assistance that closes the attainment gap. Not a revolution, but a welcome evolution.

For us in Hong Kong, in our fourth month of home-working and e-learning, there has been no miracle, and plenty of difficult days. None of this has miraculously fixed my son's attention span or his ability to do messier word problems.

He is, though, more relaxed, in charge of his own time (now a necessity), thrilled with his projects and the obstacles he's overcome. He's almost cracked fractions, too. Just don't ask him about the best thing about homeschooling. He'll just say it's the food.

Clara Ferreira Marques is a columnist covering governance issues. Previously, she was an associate editor for Reuters.

Bloomberg

Post-script: Tanvir-ul-Ahad, The Unsung Hero of Kashmir Journalism

IZHAR NAZIR ALI

When a boy-next door from Kupwara arrived to cut his journalism teeth in Srinagar, he didn't take much time to emerge as the Samaritan scribe whose stories reflected truth of times and brought smiles on the strife-battered faces of people. As the young man breathed his last on Monday, his former colleague recalls his unassertive legend in Kashmir journalism.

ON a cold afternoon of December 2008, I bumped into a young, clean-shaven boy in his early twenties. He was jotting down notes on a piece of scrambled paper while talking to someone over phone. It was my first day of a new job after my previous newsroom became a shut shop.

Once he finished his phone call, he greeted me with Salam and smile. "I'm Tanvir-ul-Ahad, a reporter here," he curtly introduced himself.

The next four years I spent with him at the office were fun filled, exciting and nerve cracking. Tanvir was our mid-day meal planner and would never keep us hungry.

I remember how he would pool money from my friends and colleagues, Omar Sultan, Marouf Ahmad and Hamid Ashraf, to buy either a chicken or a biryani for all of us at the office. He made even the boring days exciting with his wit and humour. At times, he made me burst with laughter by saying, "I love you, sir!"

During these 12 years, I've known Tanvir as a versatile, bold and fearless reporter. One who had guts to report daring stories, someone who would take the people in the corridors of power head-on.

He created a niche in Kashmir journalism with his hard hitting stories. Global News Agency or GNS founded by Tanvir was among the most reliable, authentic and quick news wire to come up in the Valley.

He was a calm person and had a passion for reporting. The curious scribe loved taking challenges. And on many occasions, he put himself in difficult situations.

It will take me days and weeks to



write about the courage of this man, who has left a scar on my heart and mind with his untimely death. However, I must narrate a few instances for those who don't know him personally.

A year after he started GNS, Tanvir carried a series of stories on a two-week face-off between militants and army in Shala Batu area of Keran Sector in September-October 2013.

In one of his stories, Tanvir wrote about a few posts being captured by the militants. However, this didn't go well with the security establishment. He was summoned by intelligence agencies in Srinagar and grilled for hours about the sources. While Tanvir stood by his story, he didn't reveal his sources.

Army had claimed to have killed "eight infiltrators" during the two-week stand-off, which many media houses in New Delhi had termed as another Kargil intrusion.

Tanvir always put his heart and

mind in stories. He had a nose for news and was extremely focused on the critical details required for a news story. His reporting skills were unmatched. He always went a step ahead in filing stories that really mattered to common people. Money and fame never bothered him.

He would have had hundreds if not thousands of bylines for the exclusive stories he did during his career as a journalist spanning over 15 years. He was a selfless soul. He carried on with his work with sincerity, honesty and dedication till his last breath.

In December 2015, Saudi Arabian intelligence agencies arrested my neighbour, who was working as a driver in Riyadh. When Tanvir came to know about it, he rang up everyone in the state and outside to seek truth. He also made ISD calls to the Kashmiri boy's employer, the Indian and Saudi embassies to know the charges against

the boy. He followed this story vigorously until the boy was released in 2016.

I never saw him as happy as he was when the boy finally reached home. Tanvir was a kind-hearted person and believed only in spreading smiles and love. He never compromised his integrity. He sided with the truth even when he had to face a brunt for reporting facts. For me, he will always remain an unsung hero of Kashmir journalism.

Apart from being an exceptionally good reporter, Tanvir was a noble soul, a friend who would risk everything to take you out of any messy situation. For me, he was a quick fix of everything. I can't remember a single instance when I asked Tanvir to help and he didn't. He was always at the forefront whenever I or any of our friends faced any difficulty in life.

Only on last Tuesday, he shared a story idea with me. He insisted I do it because he knew I had done such stories in the past. I promised him that we both will go for the story once the pandemic ends. But alas, he didn't keep his promise.

On the night of Monday, May 11, Tanvir passed away leaving his family, friends and acquaintances in shock. As a friend, however, I let him down.

I didn't attend his marriage, nor his funeral.

But as fate would have it, before lockdown, I borrowed Tanvir's laptop since mine was not working fine.

Never in my wild dreams had I thought that someday, I will use his laptop for writing his own obituary.

Rest in peace, friend!

Izhar Nazir Ali is

News Editor at Kashmir Observer

LOSS OF GREEN SPACE Linked To Higher Health Risks In India



A ANALYSIS BY SEX REVEALED THAT WOMEN suffered more than men in the health impact of the loss of green space.

Agencies

Urban development leading to a reduction in green space may be associated with an increase in several cardiometabolic risk factors such as hypertension, obesity and hyperglycaemia in India, warn researchers.

The research team investigated the association between land use changes involving the conversion

of natural and crop to built-up land use and cardiometabolic risk factors in a peri-urban area south of Hyderabad undergoing urbanisation. The study, published in the Environmental Health Perspectives, also explored the possible mediating roles of air pollution, physical activity and stress in these associations. It included health data from

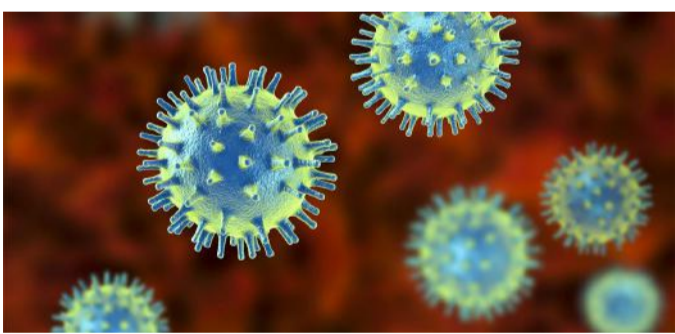
over 6,000 adults and the authors analysed changes in land use over a 14-year period across an area of 700 square kilometre using classification methods based on satellite remote sensing data from Landsat missions. The cardiometabolic risk factors studied included blood pressure, triglycerides, cholesterol and fasting glucose, and participants answered survey questions

about their lifestyle and stress indicators. The findings showed that a fast increase in built-up land use within 300 metres of a person's residence was associated with an increase in metabolic risk factors. People whose neighbourhoods experienced faster urban development compared to those whose neighbourhoods did not change had higher blood pres-

sure (both systolic and diastolic), waist circumference and fasting glucose values. In connection with the link between urban development and increased cardiometabolic risk, the study has shown that this association may, in part, be mediated by an increase in air pollution and a reduction in physical activity due to the loss of green space close to the residential areas.

Analysis by sex revealed that women suffered more than men in the health impact of the loss of green space. A possible explanation for this disparity could be differences in mobility patterns because women spend a substantially larger portion of the day close to their homes (74 per cent) than men (52 per cent), the researchers said.

Disease Control Strategies Impact Evolution Of Spreading Viruses: Study



Press Trust Of India

Disease control strategies employed by governments can dramatically alter the evolution of pathogens like the novel coronavirus, according to a study which says such measures can change the extent of symptoms a spreading virus causes in infected individuals. The study, published in the journal PNAS, examined the pros and cons of silent transmission on the long-term survival of a virus. According to the researchers, including those from the Princeton University in the US, the rapid spread of SARS-CoV-2 throughout the world is fuelled in part by the virus' ability to be transmitted by people who are not showing symptoms of infection. The findings, they said, could inform how public health experts plan control measures such as quarantines, testing, and contact tracing, adding that such strategies themselves may alter the evolutionary course of pathogenic viruses. In the current study, the scientists sought to understand if viruses transmitting without symptoms enable the pathogen to infect greater numbers of

people, or if the lack of symptoms lessen transmission and reduce the pathogen's long-term survival. "An asymptomatic stage for various reasons could provide certain benefits to the pathogen," said Bryan Grenfell, study co-author from Princeton University. "With the COVID-19 crisis, the importance of this asymptomatic phase has become extremely relevant," Grenfell said. He said that viruses, like more complex organisms, can also evolve by natural selection. Mutation of the viral genome generates new variants of the pathogen, and if these changes benefit their transmission, then that strain of the virus will spread, the researchers explained. As mutants spread across a population, they said, the strains with strategies that contribute to their success survive, while those with infection methods that don't promote their transmission -- such as killing the host before the virus can transmit to new susceptible individuals -- will eventually die out. "Viral evolution involves a tradeoff between increasing the rate of transmission and maintaining the host as a base of transmission," said Simon Levin, another co-author of the study from Princeton University.

Multitasking In The Workplace Can Lead To Sadness, Fear

Agencies

WASHINGTON D.C.[USA] - According to a new study aimed at understanding what shapes the emotional culture of a workplace. Researchers have found that while juggling through multiple tasks -- from writing papers to answering emails and tackling all that at once and the constant interruptions can actually create sadness and fear and eventually, a tense working environment. According to the study's senior author Ioannis Pavlidis, director of Computational Physiology Laboratory at the University of Houston, "Not only do people experience stress with multitasking, but their faces may also express unpleasant emotions and that can have negative consequences for the entire office culture." Pavlidis, along with Gloria Mark at the University of California Irvine, and



Ricardo Gutierrez-Osuna at Texas A&M University, used a novel algorithm, based on co-occurrence matrices, to analyze mixed emotions manifested on the faces of so-called knowledge workers amidst an essay writing task. One

group answered a single batch of emails before they began writing, thus limiting the amount of distraction, while the other group was frequently interrupted to answer emails as they came in. The findings are published in the

Proceedings of the 2020 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems. "Individuals who engaged in multitasking appeared significantly sadder than those who did not. Interestingly, sadness tended to mix with a touch of fear in the multitasking cohort," Pavlidis said. "Multitasking imposes an onerous mental load and is associated with elevated stress, which appears to trigger the displayed sadness. The simultaneous onset of fear is intriguing and is likely rooted to subconscious anticipation of the next disruption," he added. Because multitasking is a widespread practice, the display of these negative emotions can persist throughout the workday for many people. It is this ubiquitous, continuous and persistent character of the phenomenon that renders it such a dangerous 'climate maker', the researchers emphasized.

Healthy Eating In Childhood Cuts Heart Disease Risk Later

Agencies

Researchers have found that healthy eating behaviours in childhood may reduce the risk of, overweight, obesity and cardiovascular disease later in life. Published in the Journal of the American Heart Association, the study focused on providing evidence-based strategies for parents and caregivers to create a healthy food environment for young children that supports the development of positive eating behaviours and the maintenance of a healthy weight in childhood. Allowing children to choose what and especially how much to eat within an environment composed of

healthy options encourages children to develop and eventually take ownership of their decisions about food and may help them develop eating patterns linked to a healthy weight for a lifetime, according to the study authors. "Parents and caregivers should consider building a positive food environment centred on healthy eating habits, rather than focusing on rigid rules about what and how a child should eat," said study researcher Alexis C Wood from the Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, US. The statement suggests that parents and caregivers should be positive role models by creating an environment that demonstrates and supports

healthy food choices, rather than an environment focused on controlling children's choices or highlighting body weight. Parents and caregivers should encourage children to eat healthy foods by: providing consistent timing for meals, allowing children to select what foods they want to eat from a selection of healthy choices, serving healthy or new foods alongside foods children already enjoy. Regularly eating new, healthy foods while eating with the child and demonstrating enjoyment of the food, paying attention to a child's verbal or non-verbal hunger and fullness cues and avoiding pressuring children to eat more than they wish to eat.

This Enzyme In Men Make Them More Vulnerable To COVID-19, Claims Study

Agencies

After several studies revealed that men are more vulnerable to COVID-19 infection, evidence from a new larger research of several thousand patients shows that men have higher concentrations of angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE2) in their blood than women, a molecule that enables the novel coronavirus to infect healthy cells in men. This may help to explain why men are more vulnerable to COVID-19 than women, according to the researchers. The study, published in the European Heart Journal, also found that heart failure patients taking drugs targeting

the renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system (RAAS), such as angiotensin-converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitors or angiotensin receptor blockers (ARBs), did not have higher concentrations of ACE2 in their blood. "Our findings do not support the discontinuation of these drugs in COVID-19 patients as has been suggested by earlier reports," said study co-author Adriaan Voors from the University of Groningen in the Netherlands. Some recent research suggested that RAAS inhibitors might increase concentrations of ACE2 in plasma -- the liquid part of blood -- thereby increasing the risk of COVID-19 for cardiovascular patients taking these drugs.

Wuhan To Test City's Entire 11 Million Population For COVID-19 Amid Fears Of Rebound

Press Trust Of India

Wuhan: Wuhan, the Chinese city where the deadly novel coronavirus emerged in December last year, has decided to test the city's entire 11 million population after new cases were reported for the first time in weeks, sparking fears of the second wave of the virus attack.

The city has prepared a 10-day plan to test all its residents after six new coronavirus cases were reported in a residential community, official media reported on Tuesday.

Hubei province and its capital Wuhan on April 8 lifted a prolonged lockdown clamped on January 23 as the disease spread through the region like wildfire.

In all 4,512 people, including 3,869 in Wuhan, have died due to the COVID-19 in over three months of the devastation caused by the vicious virus.

Hubei province had reported 68,134 confirmed COVID-19 cases in total, including 50,339 in Wuhan.

Besides reporting new clusters of cases, Wuhan also reported 650 asymptomatic cases.

Asymptomatic cases refer to people who are tested COVID-19 positive but develop no symptoms such as fever, cough or sore throat. However, they pose a risk of spreading the disease to others.

Peng Zhiyong, director of the intensive care unit of the Zhongnan Hospital of Wuhan University, told the state-run Global Times that he has not received the details of the testing plan.

He said testing everyone would be costly, so the testing is very likely to focus on key groups and communities such as close contacts of patients and their family members, medical staff, the elderly and those with pre-existing medical conditions.

Yang Zhanqiu, deputy director of the pathogen biology department at the Wuhan University, expanded the scale of its testing in April and tested targeted groups of people.

"About three to five million residents have been tested and proved healthy, and thus Wuhan is capable to test the remaining 6 to 8 million in 10 days."



U.S. President Donald Trump looks over at National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Dr. Anthony Fauci as CDC Director Robert Redfield looks on as the president returns to the daily coronavirus task force briefing at the White House in Washington, U.S.

Fauci Warns Of 'Suffering And Death' If US reopens too soon

Press Trust Of India

Washington: Dr Anthony Fauci, the nation's top infectious disease expert, is warning Congress that if the country reopens too soon during the coronavirus pandemic, it will result in needless suffering and death.

Fauci is among the health experts testifying to a Senate panel. His testimony comes as President Donald Trump is praising states that are reopening after the prolonged lockdown aimed at controlling the virus' spread.

Fauci, a member of the coronavirus task force charged with shaping the response to COVID-19, which has killed tens of thousands of people in the U.S., is testifying via video conference after self-quarantining as a White House staffer tested positive for the virus.

With the U.S. economy in free-fall and more than 30

million people unemployed, Trump has been pressuring states to reopen.

Fauci, in a statement to The New York Times, warned that officials should adhere to federal guidelines for a phased reopening, including a downward trajectory of positive tests or documented cases of coronavirus over two weeks, robust contact tracing and sentinel surveillance testing of asymptomatic people in vulnerable populations, such as nursing homes.

"If we skip over the checkpoints in the guidelines...then we risk the danger of multiple outbreaks throughout the country," Fauci wrote.

"This will not only result in needless suffering and death, but would actually set us back on our quest to return to normal."

Other senior health officials scheduled to testify before the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions com-

mittee will also appear via video link after going into self-quarantine, following their exposure to a White House staffer who tested positive. The chairman of the committee, Republican Sen. Lamar Alexander of Tennessee, also put himself in quarantine after an aide tested positive. He'll participate by video, too.

Besides Fauci, of the National Institutes of Health, the other experts include FDA Commissioner Dr. Stephen Hahn and Dr. Robert Redfield, head of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, along with Adm. Brett Giroir, the coronavirus testing czar at the Department of Health and Human Services.

Even before the gavel drops, the hearing offers two takeaways for the rest of the country, said John Auerbach, president of the nonprofit public health group Trust for America's Health.

Pompeo In Israel To Talk Annexation As Palestinian Rage Boils Over

Agencies

Washington: The US secretary of state is in the Israeli-occupied territories to discuss Tel Aviv's plan to annex Palestinian land under a controversial plan by US President Donald Trump, among other topics.

Mike Pompeo arrived in Israel on Wednesday on his first foreign trip since Washington began enforcing a lockdown against the new coronavirus outbreak.

Shortly after arrival, he held a meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is scheduled to be sworn into office again on Thursday. The top US diplomat is also set to sit down for talks with opposition leader Benny Gantz.

Pompeo had earlier outlined the talking points of the meetings in remarks to Israel Hayom daily. "This meeting is important enough to hold face to face," he said.

In a statement alongside Pompeo, Netanyahu claimed the new Israeli administration presents an opportunity "to promote peace and security based on the understandings I reached with President Trump in my last visit in Washington."

In turn, Pompeo voiced support for Israel's atrocities

in the occupied Palestinian territories, saying the regime had the "right to defend" itself.



Prior to his arrival, clashes broke out between Palestinian protesters and Israeli forces in the occupied West Bank. A Palestinian teenager was killed amid the skirmishes in the city of al-Khalil (Hebron).

In January, Trump outlined the main points of a self-styled plan for the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. The Palestinians have already rejected what Trump has called the "deal of the century."

The scheme proposed Israel's annexation of the Jordan Valley and about 30 percent of the Palestinian territory of the West Bank, including the settlements that the regime has set up there since occupying the land in 1967. More than 600,000 Israelis live in over 230 settlements built in the West Bank since the occupation.

Work And Exercise Restrictions Ease In England



Agencies

London: People living in England have more freedom to leave their homes from Wednesday and to go to work if necessary in the first stage of an easing of the coronavirus lockdown.

The pandemic has killed more than 36,000 people in Britain, according to official statistics, and despite a fall in deaths and hospitalisations, officials are still concerned, particularly by the death rates in care homes.

Prime minister Boris Johnson announced on Sunday a gradual easing of the lockdown, which would be dependent on keeping infection rates down.

Residents in England are now able to drive to the countryside, play tennis or golf, see one friend in a public space or visit a garden centre.

But they must at all times remain two metres away from other people, risking a £100 pound fine if they break the rules.

Millions of people who are unable to work from home

should also go back to their jobs, under the plan unveiled by Johnson.

Transport minister Grant Shapps urged those returning to the workplace to "cycle or walk" if possible.

"We are asking people to be very sensible and not flood back to public transport," he told Sky News.

"Even with all the trains and buses back to running when they are, there will not be enough space," he added.

People in England can also move house while home viewings are also allowed for the first time since the country shut down on March 23, with more than 450,000 buyers and renters currently caught in limbo.

The easing of restrictions comes as the government attempts to revive the economy, which fell two percent in the first quarter, its worst drop in since the 2008 financial crisis.

The situation is different in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, with people still being asked to "stay at home".

Pak Decides Not To Enforce Indefinite Lockdown

Press Trust Of India

Islamabad: Pakistan prime minister Imran Khan's close aide on Tuesday said that the government could not enforce an indefinite lockdown due to the absence of any timeline about the end of novel coronavirus crisis, as the number of COVID-19 patients in the country jumped to nearly 33,000.

Addressing the media after the Cabinet meeting chaired by Khan, Information minister Shibli Faraz said that the government resources were not enough to sustain the pressure of an indefinite lockdown.

"Given the situation, if we can do both - protect our lives and keep businesses running - that would be the best; we don't have any other options," the minister said.

Faraz also expressed concern at the large number of people



coming out after lockdown was relaxed but warned that the people should follow guidelines and maintain social distancing.

"If people continue getting ill, then it will have a bad effect on our hospital capacity and limitations," he said.

He said that Planning minister Asad Umar briefed the Cabinet meeting about the COVID-19 crisis and the efforts of the government to deal with the situation after easing of the lockdown.

Earlier, Umar chaired the meeting of National Command and Operations Centre (NCOC) which discussed the safety of the health workers and the situation after easing of lockdown.

Prime minister Khan tweeted that the NCOC was also apprised by officials of the health ministry about a plan to launch the campaign 'WE CARE' for the protection of the healthcare workers.

The move comes after at least 440 healthcare workers across Pakistan, including 70 nurses, tested COVID-19 positive and eight health workers died.

Meanwhile, the coronavirus cases in Pakistan jumped to 32,916. Punjab province registered 11,868 patients, Sindh 12,610, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa 5,021, Balochistan 2,158, Islamabad 716, Gilgit-Baltistan 457 and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir 86 patients.

UN chief strongly condemns 'horrific' attack on maternity hospital in Afghanistan

Press Trust Of India

United States: UN chief Antonio Guterres has strongly condemned the "horrific" attack on a maternity hospital in Afghanistan that killed at least 14 people, including two newborn babies, saying that those who carry out such unacceptable crimes must be held accountable.

Militants attacked the Sad Bistar maternity hospital in the Afghan capital Kabul on Tuesday, killing 14 people, including two newborn babies, their mothers and an unspecified number of nurses.

In a separate attack on the same day, a suicide bomber targeted a funeral ceremony in the country's Nangarhar province, a hotbed of the Islamic State group, killing at least 24 people and injuring 68.

The secretary-general strongly condemns the horrific attack (Tuesday) on a hospital in Kabul, which killed and wounded dozens of people, including women and children, a statement issued by the UN



chief's spokesperson said.

Guterres expressed his deepest sympathies to the families of the victims and to the government and people of Afghanistan.

He reiterates that attacks against civilians are unacceptable and that hospitals, medical facilities and personnel have special protection under the international humanitarian law. Those who carry out such crimes must be held accountable, the statement said.

The United Nations stands

in solidarity with the people and government of Afghanistan and remains committed to supporting an Afghan-led peace process that will end the conflict, it said.

Guterres is also following with concern the escalation of violence in the country as attacks claimed scores of lives in Balkh, Khost, and Nangarhar provinces, it said.

The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in a tweet expressed shock and revulsion over the attacks.

The UN Humanitarian Coordinator in the country, Toby Lanzer, was outraged by the attack on the hospital, a 100-bed facility, which was full of patients and medical staff when the assault took place.

It beggars belief that such a heinous act could be committed when Afghanistan is being ravaged by the COVID-19 pandemic, he said in a statement.

According to the Johns Hopkins University data, the coronavirus has infected nearly 5,000 people in the country and claimed over 125 lives.

NEWS MAKERS

Kerala doctor dies in UK after long battle with coronavirus

London: An Indian-origin doctor has died in the north-east of England after a long battle with the deadly coronavirus.

Dr Poornima Nair, a 55-year-old Keralite from Delhi worked at the Station View Medical Centre in Bishop Auckland in County Durham of England.

She died at the University Hospital of North Tees Hospital at Stockton-on-Tees after a long battle with COVID-19.

Nair is believed to be the tenth General Practitioner (GP) to die on the frontlines of the UK's medical community fighting the coronavirus. The highly contagious infection has claimed the lives of over

32,000 people in the country.

"The practice is very sorry to announce to our patients the death of our much loved and valued colleague and friend Dr Poornima Nair," the medical centre said in a message.

"Dr Nair passed away after a prolonged COVID-19 illness, which she fought with her great strength of character. We are all devastated and upset by this tragic news and hope you will join with us in our thoughts and prayers," it said.

Tributes have been pouring in for the doctor on social media from friends, colleagues and others known to the general practitioner (GP). She had been on ventilator support for a few days



Poornima Nair

before she succumbed to the disease this week.

"Dr Nair was a well-known and extremely valued member of our community, serving as a doctor at Station View Medical Centre. She will be heavily missed by all that knew her, and my

thoughts and prayers go out to her friends, family, and colleagues at this sad time," the local Bishop Auckland MP, Dehenna Davison, said in a Facebook post.

One of Nair's many patients thanked her for saving her mother's life.

She wrote: "Rest in Peace Dr Nair. Absolutely outstanding doctor. Saved my mum's life 10 years ago without doubt, after undiagnosed life-threatening illness. Our whole family will always be grateful to you for ensuring my mom saw the rest of her life. I'm so sad yours has been cut short. Sending all our love to your family and work colleagues who will no doubt be missing you already."

113-year-old Spanish woman survives coronavirus

Madrid: A 113-year-old woman, believed to be the oldest person living in Spain, has beaten the coronavirus at a retirement home where several other residents died from the disease, the residence said Tuesday.

Maria Branyas, who was born in the US, became infected in April at the Santa Maria del Tura care home in the eastern city of Olot, where she has lived for the past 20 years, and fought the respiratory illness off in isolation in her room.

"She survived the disease and is doing fine," a spokeswoman for the residence told reporters, adding Branyas had only displayed mild symptoms.



three, was isolated in her room for weeks, with only a single employee in protective gear allowed in to check on her, according to Catalan regional television TV3, which broadcast images of the centenarian.

"She feels good now, she took a test last week and the result was negative," the spokeswoman said without giving further details.

Branyas, a mother of

three, was isolated in her room for weeks, with only a single employee in protective gear allowed in to check on her, according to Catalan regional television TV3, which broadcast images of the centenarian.

TDS TCS Rate For Non-Salary Payments Cut By 25 Pc Till Mar'21 ITR Filing Deadline Extended To Nov'20

NEW DELHI: The government on Wednesday slashed TDS/TCS rate for non-salary payments to residents by 25 per cent for the remaining months of the fiscal and extended the due date for filing income tax returns for 2019-20 till November 30, 2020.

lakh crore in disputed taxes are locked in various appellate forums. This amount is the equivalent of 82 per cent of the government's direct tax revenue in 2018-19.

This is the second extension given to taxpayers for availing the Vivad Se Vishwas scheme. In March, the validity of the scheme was extended till June 30.

Sitharaman further said all pending refunds to charitable trusts and non-corporate business and professions, including that of proprietorship, partnership, LLP and cooperatives shall be issued immediately.

Stating that the income tax department has already cleared Rs 18,000 crore worth of refunds where the quantum due was up to Rs 5 lakh, she said, "Now we are saying that the pending refunds of all these, many of whom can be very small... all their refunds will be given immediately."

With regard to extension of the income tax returns filing deadline, Sitharaman said all ITRs for 2019-20 fiscal which were to be filed by July 31 and October 31, 2020, will now have to be filed by November 30, 2020.

Also, the deadline for filing tax audit report has been extended by a month till October 31, 2020.

Currently, individuals and other non-corporate taxpayers not subject to tax audit or transfer pricing are required to file ITR by July 31.

Corporate taxpayers and other non-corporate taxpayers subject to tax audit (including partners/ directors of firms/ companies subject to tax audit) but not subject to transfer pricing are required to file ITR by October 31. These ITR filing deadlines has been extended till November 30.

Corporate and other taxpayers subject to transfer pricing are required to file ITR by November 30 and for them there has been no change in due date.

The extension of ITR filing deadline would ease the compliance burden for taxpayers, she added.

"From tomorrow till March 31, 2021, the TDS/TCS rates have been reduced by 25 per cent of the existing rate... This shall also apply to all payments for contracts, interest, rent, dividend, commission or brokerage... all of these will be eligible for 25 per cent rate reduction."

"This reduction would release nearly Rs 50,000 crore in the hands of the people who would have otherwise paid it as TDS," Sitharaman said.

Also, the direct tax dispute resolution scheme -- Vivad Se Vishwas -- has been extended by six months till December 31, 2020.

Under the scheme, where the taxpayers' appeals are pending before appellate forums, high courts and the Supreme Court, he will have the option to settle the dispute on payment of 100 per cent tax (125 per cent in search cases) and get complete waiver of interest and penalty if he pays by December 31.

Further, where arrears are related to disputed interest or penalty only, then 25 per cent of disputed penalty or interest will have to be paid if the payment is made by December-end.

As many as 4.83 lakh direct tax cases involving Rs 9.32



EQUITY BENCHMARK SENSEX rallied over 1,400 points in opening session on Wednesday as Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Rs 20 lakh crore stimulus package.

Markets Back To Winning Ways On Stimulus Lift; Sensex Reclaims 32K-Mark

MUMBAI: Snapping a two-session losing streak, the BSE Sensex vaulted 637 points on Wednesday as investors cheered the government's Rs 20 lakh crore stimulus package for the coronavirus-hit economy.

After rallying 1,474.36 points during the day, the 30-share benchmark surrendered some gains to settle 637.49 points or 2.03 per cent higher at 32,008.61.

Similarly, the NSE Nifty jumped 187 points, or 2.03 per cent, to finish at 9,383.55.

Indices retreated from intra-day highs as participants awaited details of the stimulus package from the finance minister, traders said.

Axis Bank was the top gainer in the Sensex pack, spurting 7.02 per cent, followed by UltraTech Cement, L&T, ICICI Bank, SBI, M&M and Bajaj Finance.

Only four index constituents ended in the red--Nestle India, Sun Pharma, HUL and Bharti Airtel, shed-

ding up to 5.38 per cent.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi had on Tuesday announced the new financial package on top of the previously announced measures for a combined stimulus of Rs 20 lakh crore to revive demand and jumpstart growth.

"The much-awaited stimulus package announced by the PM cheered the investors on Wednesday which triggered a decent up move in the benchmark as well."

"The index witnessed a huge gap up opening and it remained range-bound thereafter. Most sectoral indices, barring defensive, participated in the move and posted handsome gains," said Ajit Mishra, VP - Research, Religare Broking Ltd.

BSE capital goods, industrials, bankex, realty, finance and basic materials indices rallied up to 5.08 per cent, while healthcare, FMCG and telecom closed lower.

Broader midcap and smallcap in-

dices climbed up to 1.97 per cent.

Giving details of the stimulus package in a post-market hours press briefing, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced Rs 3 lakh crore collateral-free automatic loans for businesses, including MSMEs, as well as Rs 30,000 crore liquidity facility for NBFCs, among other measures.

Meanwhile, global markets were mixed as investors took stock of the gradual reopening of coronavirus-related shutdowns.

Bourses in Shanghai and Seoul ended with gains, while Hong Kong and Tokyo closed in the red.

Stock exchanges in Europe started off with significant losses.

On the currency front, the rupee appreciated by 5 paise to provisionally close at 75.46 against the US dollar.

International oil benchmark Brent crude futures slipped 1.30 per cent to USD 29.59 per barrel. PTI

Karnataka Likely To Open Gyms, Fitness Centres, Golf Courses After May 17

Bengaluru: Karnataka Tourism Minister CT Ravi on Wednesday hinted at the government permitting opening of gyms, fitness centres and golf courses after May 17 when the third phase of the COVID-19 induced lockdown comes to an end.

"Today I met the chief minister and discussed opening of fitness centres, golf courses and giving permission for hotels to provide service... to encourage revival of tourism at local level while maintaining social distancing," he told reporters.

Stating that sportspersons' fitness will take a hit if fitness centres are not opened, the minister, who also holds the sports port-

too had come and submitted an appeal. I brought it to the notice of CM...We will give permission, ensuring safety," he added.

With all tourism activities having come to a standstill and all bookings cancelled, following the coronavirus-driven lockdown, the tourism department is focusing on promoting local tourism with the concept of "Love Your Native".

Ravi said he had drawn the chief minister's attention to a "survival and revival" plan for the tourism sector and added that the mindset will have to change towards "Love Your Native" concept, aimed at encouraging local tourism.



folio, said following the request by several of them, he brought it to the notice of the chief minister, who responded positively.

"CM has said we will give permissions to open gyms after May 17, while ensuring all safety precautions.

Also, golf is something where distance is usually maintained, they (golfers)

"Then comes inter-district with the concept 'Nodu baa Nammura' (Come, See Our City). After that we will consider inter-state and international tourists, while maintaining safety and hygiene," he said.

"We are also waiting for a central package. We expect tourism will get boost from it," he added. PTI

Delhi Police Opposes Plea In Hc To Transfer Tablighi Leader Maulana Saad's Case To NIA

NEW DELHI: Delhi Police on Wednesday opposed a plea in the Delhi High Court seeking direction that the NIA be handed over the investigation of a case against Tablighi Jamaat leader Maulana Saad for holding a congregation in alleged violation of the orders aimed at containing the spread of coronavirus.



A bench of Justices Sidharth Mridul and Anup Jairam Bhambhani, conducting the hearing through video conferencing, asked the petitioner to place the judgements in support of his plea to transfer the investigation from Delhi Police Crime Branch to National Investigation Agency (NIA).

The petition, filed by Mumbai-based lawyer Ghanshyam Upadhayay, has also sought direction to the NIA to investigate the matter in a time bound manner and the probe be monitored by the high court. It alleged that Delhi Police has failed to arrest the leader despite the lapse of considerable time.

Delhi government standing counsel (criminal) Rahul Mehra and advocate Chai-

tanya Gosain opposed the plea saying Delhi Police was conducting the investigation in a fair manner and argued that the petitioner has no locus standi to file the plea.

The court listed the matter for further hearing on May 28.

Advocates Subhash Jha and Yash Chaturvedi, representing Upadhayay, claimed that the crime branch of Delhi Police has miserably failed in tracing out/ apprehending/ arresting Saad despite lapse of considerable time and his photograph being published in electronic media.

It is virtually impossible for Maulana Saad to hide himself for such a long time and that too in the capital of the country. Performance of Delhi Police has been pathetic from the very inception and outset.

Army Considering Proposal To Allow Civilians In Force For 3 Years

NEW DELHI: The Indian Army is examining a proposal for allowing civilians to join the force for a three-year tenure, officials said.

At present, the Army recruits young people under short service commission for an initial tenure of 10 years.

"The Army is considering a proposal to allow civilians to join the force for a period of three years," an Army

spokesperson said in reply to a query.

The Army has been making various efforts to attract talented young people to join it.

Sources said the proposal is part of broad efforts to bring in reform in the 1.3-million-strong Army.

They said the broad contours of the proposal are yet to be finalised. PTI



Headline And A Blank Page: Chidambaram On Economic Package

Former Finance Minister and Congress leader P. Chidambaram on Wednesday morning panned the Centre, a day after Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced Rs 20 lakh crore package to boost the Indian economy.

Taking to Twitter, Chidambaram said PM gave us a headline and a blank page. "Naturally, my reaction was a blank! Today, we look forward to the FM filling the blank page. We will carefully count every ADDITIONAL rupee that the government will actually infuse into the economy."

In another tweet, the former finance minister wrote: "We will also carefully examine who gets what? And the first thing we will look for is what the poor, hungry and devastated migrant workers can expect after they have walked hundreds of kilometres to their home states."

"We will also examine what the bottom half of the population (13 crore families) will get in terms of REAL MONEY."

On Tuesday, the prime minister announced a special economic package of Rs 20 lakh crore for the country to become 'self-reliant' and deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.



"I announce a special economic package today. This will play an important role in the 'Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyan.' The previous announcements made by the government over COVID-19, decisions of RBI and today's package totals to Rs 20 lakh crore. This is 10 per cent of India's GDP," said Modi in his 5th address to the nation.

"The special economic package will have emphasis on land, labour, liquidity and laws. This economic package is for our labourers, farmers, honest tax payers, MSMEs and cottage industry," PM Modi said.

Starting Wednesday, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will announce details of the special economic package, Modi said.

NEWS MAKER

Property Dealer Held In Ghaziabad For Hiring Contract Killer To Shoot Dead His Wife

GAZIABAD: A day after his wife was shot dead, a property dealer in Loni area here was arrested for allegedly hiring a contract killer to kill her over suspicions that she was trying to usurp his land, police said on Wednesday.

Property dealer Haji Saleem hatched a conspiracy to kill his wife Divya Rana and hired a contract killer for the purpose as she was supposedly trying to capture 30 bigah land (12 acres) that he was looking to sell in Chirori town of Loni area, according to police.

had earlier worked with him. On Tuesday afternoon, Sanjiv reached Saleem's office and enquired about purchasing a plot of land in Chirori.

Senior Superintendent of Police Kalanidhi Naithani told PTI that Saleem and his wife Divya took Sanjiv to Chirori to show the plot in their car.

Saleem was driving the vehicle and Divya was sitting next to him while Sanjiv was in the rear seat, the SSP said.

When the vehicle reached the plot, Sanjiv apparently took out a gun and pumped bullets in Divya's back. After alighting from

the car, Sanjiv fled the spot on a motorcycle driven by his accomplice who was waiting for him.

When police detained Saleem for interrogation, he narrated the incident but went back on his words later. Upon pressing further, Saleem confessed to the police that he hired Sanjiv to kill his wife as he thought that she was trying to capture the land in Chirori town.

According to police, Saleem claimed that Divya had stopped him from going to his office many times in the past. Saleem was apparently irritated at his wife's undue interference in the

business and planned to eliminate her with Sanjiv's help for which he paid him money. She was Saleem's third wife and the couple had married in a court three years ago.

Divya succumbed to her bullet wounds while undergoing treatment, police said.

Saleem has been sent to judicial custody under IPC Sections 302 (punishment for murder), 34 (acts done by several persons in furtherance of common intention) and 120B (punishment for criminal conspiracy). Sanjiv and his accomplice are on the run, SSP Naithani added. PTI

Pregnant Woman Walks 196 Kms For 6 Days To Reach Mp Home From Gujarat

JAIPUR: It was a tough trail for a 9-month pregnant woman who walked 196 kilometres on foot, from Ahmedabad with her husband, son (1-year-old) and daughter (2-year-old) for 6 days to reach her native place in Madhya Pradesh's Ratlam.

Surprisingly, no one took pity on her condition throughout the way as she crossed district after district, checkpoint after checkpoint with an aim to reach her native place at the earliest.

However, it was her luck to get a few good samaritans at Dungarpur checkpoint, who seeing her plight, stopped her and offered her food and transportation

to help her reach her hometown. Dungarpur SDM Rajeev Dwivedi told IANS, "This woman, with her family, including husband and two kids, reached Dungarpur checkpoint on Monday evening. The staff at the location was stunned to see her feeble condition as she looked quite tired and lacked energy. When asked if she had food, she simply refused. It also seemed as if she was in pain."

The officials at the checkpoint hence informed the SDM and other officials. Soon a team of doctors from nearby medical checkpoint arrived at the location to review her medical condition. It was evident that she

was not in a condition to walk but had walked all along from Ahmedabad and hence they asked the family to rest overnight and offered them food and shelter. said Dwivedi.

Next was the task to get her e-pass done as she was going to another state.

"It being night, I directly informed the ADM Krishna Pal Singh Chauhan about the chain of events, then collected her details from checkpoint and got her e-pass formalities done from my mobile," Nayab Tehsildar Mayur Sharma made the report ready which was sent to the district collector for further approval.