



Maximum : 25°C  
Minimum : 13°C  
Humidity : 55%

SUNSET  
Today 07:35 PM  
SUNRISE  
Tomorrow 05:22 AM

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## DO GOOD GRADES AND MARKS MATTER?

THERE'S hardly a field, domain or discipline that has not been affected by the Covid 19 pandemic. One such field is that of education which has been hit at all levels- primary, secondary and tertiary. While attempts have been and are being made to deliver education non-conventionally- online through zoom and other channels- but it is not the same thing as the 'bricks and mortar' stuff- that, actual and real class room learning. What may accrue from this is that in the future there might be a synthesis of online and real, classroom learning. But, all this obscures one important aspect of learning and teaching- grades, marks and the grading system(s).....

.....OPINION  
**P4**

## News Digest

### Covid-19 Cases In Ladakh Rise To 54

Leh- Another person tested positive for the novel coronavirus in Leh district, taking the number of cases in Ladakh to 54 on Wednesday, the Health Department said. The active cases of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) rose to 11 — nine in Kargil and two in Leh districts. Forty-three patients have been discharged from hospitals after recovery, officials said. The department has received 297 sample reports on Tuesday. A total of 588 samples were sent to the National Centre ● P-02

### 2 Held For Assaulting Health Workers

Srinagar: Police on Wednesday arrested two people for allegedly misbehaving and assaulting health workers at a hospital in north Kashmir's Baramulla district. Arif Dilawar Khan and Ghulam Nabi Tantray, both residents of Pattan were arrested after they entered Trauma Hospital and started capturing video there, reports said. When employees objected and asked them not to disturb them, they allegedly misbehaved with them and one of them even assaulted a health professional. Following the incident, ● P-02

### SUV Crushes

#### Woman To Death

Srinagar: A woman was killed and another injured on Wednesday after being hit by an SUV in Chattergam area of central Kashmir's Budgam district. A Hyundai Creta vehicle hit two women near Suthsoo area of Chattergam this morning leaving both of them injured, reports said. The injured women were removed to Srinagar's Bone and Joint Hospital for treatment. However, one of the women succumbed to her injuries at the hospital. The condition of another is said to be stable. ● P-02

### 3 Gamblers Held From Habbak: Police

Srinagar: Police on Wednesday claimed to have arrested three alleged gamblers in a raid in Habbak area of the city. Following an input, a police team raided a gambling site in Habbak and apprehended three gamblers from the spot, a police spokesperson said. He said an amount of Rs 4,180 and playing cards were recovered from the spot. The police spokesperson said that a case FIR No. 93/2020 under relevant sections of ● P-02

### Sopore Youth Dies Of Electric Shock

Srinagar: A youth on Wednesday died of electrocution at his house in Sopore town of Baramulla district. 21 year-old Sajjad Ahmad Kanwal of Sher Colony got electrocuted when he was trying to repair electricity wire on the rooftop of a building in Sopore this morning, reports said. The injured youth was rushed to the Sub-District hospital Sopore for treatment. However, the ● P-02

## Top Army Brass Discusses Ladakh Face-Off

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Top commanders of the Indian Army on Wednesday began deliberations on key security challenges facing India, including the tense standoff between Indian and Chinese troops in Ladakh.

The three-day conference is being presided over by Chief of Army Staff Gen M M Naravane.

The commanders are also expected to delve into the overall situation in Jammu and Kashmir.

However, the main focus will be on the situation in eastern Ladakh where Indian and Chinese troops are locked in an eyeball-to-eyeball face-off in sensitive areas like Pangong Tso, Galwan Valley, Demchok and Daulat Beg Oldie, government sources said.

"All aspects of India's security challenges, including along borders with Pakistan and China, will be discussed at length by the commanders," said a senior military official on condition of anonymity.

Both India and China have significantly increased their



Image for representation

### Trump Offers Help To Diffuse 'Raging' India, China Tension

In a surprise move, US President Donald Trump on Wednesday offered to "mediate or arbitrate" the raging border dispute between India and China, saying he was "ready, willing and able" to ease the tensions, amid the continuing standoff between the militaries of ● P-02

### 'Overall Stable, Controllable': China On LAC Situation

China on Wednesday said the situation at the border with India is "overall stable and controllable", and both the countries have proper mechanisms and communication channels to resolve the issues through a dialogue and consultation. ● P-02

presence in all sensitive areas in the region, in an indication that neither side is ready to back off.

The situation in eastern Ladakh deteriorated after around 250 Chinese and Indian ● PAGE 02

## After Joke, Altaf Bukhari Says, His Political Promotion An 'Imagination'

Jyotsna Bharti

NEW DELHI: Cooling his heels in the blistering capital where the political mercury is soaring at the moment, Altaf Bukhari is playing it cool and calm, despite his name as the chief of the so-called advisory council—seen as a political local face replacing bureaucratic non-local advisory group in J&K—doing rounds and creating new whispers and flutters in the valley.

Bukhari's name as a chief advisor—if not minister—of the council, a virtual cabinet, surfaced after BJP leader Ram Madhav spoke about "allowing" full-fledged political process in J&K.

"The advisory council in UT helps the Lieutenant Governor (LG) in the day-



File Pic

to-day administration," a report quoting former Secretary-General of the Lok Sabha, P.D.T. Acharya, said.

However, the real power is vested in the LG, the report said. "The head of the advisory council cannot get the power of the CM. The advisory council also cannot make laws. The Constitution allows the President to administer UT through LG, but only the Parliament has the power to make law."

Once this new political arrangement starts administering J&K, the report said, Statehood—one of the two political pitches raised by the new political force in the valley—will be restored. "In fact," the report said, "this [advisory council] is part of a larger deal with the state's political class."

Notably, a group of defectors that Bukhari leads as the Apni Party chief had based its politics around

Domicile Law and Statehood demand. This new political pack had apparently followed the footsteps of Muzaffar Baig, the senior unionist, who had said that 'it's time to move on from Article 370'.

Barring slight intervention that it sought from home minister Amit Shah, Bukhari-led outfit largely stood silent on the new controversial law that triggered the fears of demographic changes in J&K recently.

Reportedly, around 12 members will be part of the Bukhari-led council, with the likes of Usman Majid, Vijay Bakaya, Sunil Sharma, Sunil Sethi and Chowdhary Zulfikar Ali being sworn in as early as late June.

If it shapes up, many say, advisory council ● PAGE 02

**NOTABLY, A GROUP OF DEFECTORS THAT BUKHARI LEADS** as the Apni Party chief had based its politics around Domicile Law and Statehood demand. This new political pack had apparently followed the footsteps of Muzaffar Baig, the senior unionist, who had said that 'it's time to move on from Article 370'.

### KCCI Urges Govt To Evacuate Kashmiris Stranded Abroad

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Kashmir Chamber of Commerce and Industry on Wednesday urged government to evacuate hundreds of Kashmiris stranded in various foreign countries due to coronavirus lockdown.

In a statement issued here, a spokesperson said that KCCI has been receiving distress messages from stranded members of the business community and even students from various places especially Dubai, Mascat and Kyrgyzstan. ● P-02

### Govt Rejigs Admin, 3 DCs Among 10 Officers Shifted

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir government on Wednesday ordered reshuffle in the bureaucracy by transferring ten officers, including three deputy commissioners in the Valley.

As per an order issued here by the government, Ravinder Kumar (IAS), Managing Director, SIDCO, holding additional charge of Managing Director, JK Trade Promotion Organization, has been transferred and posted as Deputy Commissioner, Bandipore.

### Advisor Bhatnagar's Duties Assigned To Sharma

The Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday assigned charge of departments held by advisor Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar to advisor KK Sharma till the former remains ● P-02

G.A. Sofi, Director General, Libraries, J&K, has been transferred and posted as Commissioner of Enquiries, J&K. ● PAGE 02

### 2 More Covid-19 Deaths In Valley, J&K Toll At 26

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR- Two more people have died due to novel coronavirus in Kashmir Valley, officials said on Wednesday. These fatalities take the death toll due to the disease in the Jammu and Kashmir to 26—23 in Valley and 3 in Jammu.

One among the victims includes a 70-year-old man from Sarnal Anantnag who died yesterday at GMC Anantnag and report came out positive posthumously, sources said.

The other is a 55-year-old resident of Fateh Kadal Srinagar who had tested positive earlier this month and ultimately died of cardiac arrest, they said.



Principal GMC Anantnag, Dr Showkat Jeelani, said that septuagenarian man from Sarnal with underlying ailments like pneumonia was admitted to the hospital on May 25. "He died yesterday and his sample was taken while in hospital which came out to be positive today," he added, he said that body

### 162 More Test Covid-19 Positive

Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday recorded biggest ever daily spike coronavirus cases as 162 more people tested Covid-19 positive, taking the total number of cases across the Union Territory to 1921, officials said. ● P-02

was detained at mortuary and would be handed over as per the Covid-19 protocol.

Meanwhile, a 55-year-old man from Fateh Kadal ● PAGE 02

### Pak Army Says Indian Spy Drone Shot Down

Press Trust Of India

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Army claimed on Wednesday that it shot down an Indian "spying quadcopter" for allegedly violating the airspace along the Line of Control.

The incident happened in Rakhchikri Sector of the LoC, according to military spokesman Major General Babar Iftikhar.

He said that the "Indian spying quadcopter" had intruded 650 ● P-02

### Rs 223 Crore Bank Fraud: HC Rejects Plea Of Ex-Chairman

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir High Court on Wednesday rejected plea of former chairman J&K State Cooperative Bank, seeking quashing of FIR against him filed by the Anti-Corruption Bureau in the whopping 230 crore fraud case.

The 223 crore scam was unearthed by the Bureau in March this year, involving many bank officials, including the ex-chairman Mohammad Shafi Dar and Hilal Ahmad Mir, the chairman of non-existent Cooperative Society named River Jhelum Cooperative house Colony at



Shivpora Srinagar, who was arrested on May 18. The ACB has already filed a case against Dar, Mir and other accused. Dar had moved court seeking quashing of the FIR registered against him by the ACB. He had also sought direction to the ACB to restrain from interfering with the management of J&K Cooperative Bank or "harass" him. ● PAGE 02

### J&K Govt Extends Ban On High Speed Internet Till June 17

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Ignoring the calls for resumption of 4G internet services in the Union Territory over coronavirus pandemic, the Jammu and Kashmir Government on Wednesday extended ban on high speed internet till June 17, claiming that reports suggest spurt in cross-LoC infiltration by militants.

"The reports suggest rise in the infiltration of (militant) during the coming weeks due to the onset

of summer and melting of snow, which gets facilitated through use of Voice on Internet Protocol (VOIP) and encrypted mobile communication, being used by the operatives/anti-national elements to communicate with their handlers from across the border," Shaheen Kabra, Principal Secretary Home Department said and ordered the continuation of ban on high-speed internet till June 17.



He said that the order has been passed by him on consideration of the overall security scenario and the reports of the law enforcement agencies inter-alia bringing out the necessity of speed-related restrictions ● PAGE 02

### Restrictions Eased In City's 13 Containment Zones

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The district administration on Wednesday eased restrictions in city's 13 areas declared containment zones earlier to combat the spread of coronavirus.

In a handout issued today, an official spokesperson said that after a detailed review of Red Zones and comprehensive analysis of COVID containment efforts, the District Disaster Management Authority, Srinagar approved removal of perimeter restrictions from 13 Containment Zones qualifying under the

lad down guidelines.

The areas where perimeter restrictions has been removed include erstwhile Red Zones Khayam, Natipora, Chhatabal, Jawahar Nagar, Hakah Bazar Hawal, Alamdard Colony, Boatman Colony Bemina, Ahmed Nagar, Tenggpora bypass, WatalKadal, Takanwari, BreinNishat and Goripora. The district continues with 23 Containment (Red) Zones.

"District Magistrate, Srinagar, Shahidulqab Choudhary said that perimeter restrictions involving blockade of roads and lanes ● PAGE 02

## Dal Lake's 'Wonder Women' Playing Crisis-Managers In Lockdown

Swati Joshi

SHE first picked up her daily routine at the age of 5, when she followed her mother's footsteps. That was half a century ago. And now, at fifty-five, Haleema continues to carry her 'labour of love', with an untiring spirit. Her religious devotion has helped the conflict-battered community to survive some tough times, especially when Srinagar, as poet Agha Shahid Ali described it, would hunch "like a wild cat: lonely sentries, wretched in bunkers at the city's bridges, far from their homes in the plains, licensed to..."

Haleema sets off at daybreak, rowing her boat on backwaters of Dal Lake, to reach her floating garden. Her early morning shift coincides with the start of the iconic lake show.

Over 50 Shikaras, laden with fruits and vegetables, throng the famous floating vegetable market every day. A major tourist attraction, this dawn bazaar of Dal Lake has reportedly an annual turnover of about Rs. 35 crores.

This "vegetable bowl" of Srinagar shot to fame in 1960s, when a Japanese photographer featured it in a tourist guide.

Shortly after their shift at the

all-weather floating market, these boatmen return home, only to take vegetables to the street market. This tradition, over the period of the time, has sustained Srinagar's food chain.

And to maintain this routine, Kashmiri women play a significant role.

"For many inhabitants of Dal Lake, cultivating fruits and vegetables is the major source of income," Haleema says. "While mostly men take them to market, women spend most of their time in nurturing the crops."

Amid pandemic lockdown, these vegetable gardens are ensuring 'uninterrupted' supplies to Srinagar.

And the women workforce behind this crisis-mitigating activity has al-



PTI Pic

ready become heroes for the society held hostage by the fair-weather

Srinagar-Jammu Highway. "These lake gardens produce

enough for all seasons for the consumption of the city," says Hajira, a 43-year-old vegetable grower in Dal Lake. "Especially, during winters, when the highway mostly remains closed due to bad weather, these gardens come to the rescue of the entire community."

But for the strife-ridden society, which often finds itself in the clutches of curbs and curfews, these women often play the role of crisis managers.

Be it 2008 land agitation, 2010 street protests, 2014 floods, 2016 unrest, or 2019 abrogation clampdown, they kept the food supplies active in the city.

Even today, when the world is dealing with the COVID curbs, these women are maintaining the 100-year floating market as well as ensuring the uninterrupted vegetable supply in Srinagar.

According to a study by Srinagar's historic SP College, total 31 vegetables, including cucumber, tomatoes, spinach, radish, carrots, onion, brinjal, cauliflower, cabbage and pumpkin, are grown in Dal Lake by Hanji community, Dal dwellers.

With time, Hajira continues, women farmers have also started coming out with their own vegetable-laden Shikaras. The growing dominance of these women ● PAGE 02