



Maximum : 26°C
Minum : 14°C
Humidity : 60%

SUNSET
Today 07:40 PM
SUNRISE
Tomorrow 05:19 AM

WHAT WENT WRONG WITH
OUR WORLD

If recent weeks have shown us anything, it's that the world is not just flat. It's fragile. And we're the ones who made it that way, with our own hands. Just look around. Over the past 20 years, we've been steadily removing man-made and natural buffers, redundancies, regulations and norms that provide resilience and protection when big systems — be they ecological, geopolitical or financial — get stressed. We've been recklessly removing these buffers out of an obsession with short-term efficiency and growth, or without thinking at all. At the same time, we've been behaving in extreme ways — pushing against, and breaching, common-sense political, financial and planetary boundaries. And, all the while, we've taken the world technologically from connected to interconnected to interdependent — by removing more friction and installing more grease in global markets, telecommunications systems, the internet and travel.....

.....OPINION

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News Digest

Man Killed After
Tractor Turns Turtle

Baramulla: One person was killed while two others sustained injuries on Thursday when the tractor they were traveling in turned turtle in Pattan area of north Kashmir's Baramulla district. Three persons in a tractor were heading towards paddy fields when the driver lost control near Wanigambala village of Pattan and the tractor turned turtle, officials said. "All the injured were rushed to Trauma Hospital Pattan where one among them was shifted to SMHS hospital in Srinagar," they said, adding that the injured man, however, succumbed to his injuries on way to the hospital. The deceased has been ● P-02

Power Consumers Get
More Time To Pay Dues

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir Government on Thursday announced to extend the duration of amnesty scheme for the electricity consumers to pay their pending bills. As per a fresh order issued today, the Power Development Department (PDD) extended the last depositing date of first installment from May 31, 2020 to June 30, 2020 and that of 2nd installment from June 30, 2020 to July 31, 2020. Similarly, the last date for 3rd installment, fixed as July 31, 2020, has been extended till August 31, 2020.

However, the order states that other terms and conditions shall remain the same as mentioned in previous orders.

Bear Captured In
Handwara Village

Srinagar: The wildlife officials on Thursday captured a bear that had appeared in a village in north Kashmir's Handwara. According to the reports, panic gripped Chogal village of Handwara on Wednesday night after the locals spotted a bear roaming in the village. The locals, reports said informed the wildlife department officials and sought their help to capture the beast. In-charge wildlife officer for north Kashmir, Mohammad Maqbool Baba said that the bear was captured after being tranquilized in the village. "The bear would be released in the higher reaches," he said. (KINS)

Police Files Case After
Apple Trees Axed

Srinagar: Police on Thursday filed a case after over three dozen apple trees were chopped in orchards in south Kashmir's Anantnag district. According to reports, unknown persons on the intervening night of Wednesday-Thursday chopped over three dozen apple trees in orchards in Mehanda area of Srigufwara sending shock waves among the orchardists. The orchards belonged to Abdul Rahim Bhat, son of Ghulam Ahmad Bhat, Abdul Rahim Rathar, son of Abdul Samad and Abdul Rashid Rathar, son of Fatha Mohammad Rathar, all residents of village Mehanda in Srigufwara. Meanwhile, police have registered a case and started ● P-02

Ladakh Stand-Off:
Army Moves 60
Bofors Guns To LAC

Observer Monitoring Service

SRINAGAR: As the end to stand-off between the two nuclear countries seems nowhere in sight, the Indian army has moved around 60 Bofors guns to the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in eastern Ladakh to meet any 'aggression' by the Chinese troops, India Today reported Thursday.

According to the report, the Indian army has transported 60 Bofors artillery guns from Leh town to the forward positions along the LAC to foil any misadventure by the Chinese troops who have reportedly occupied an area of around 60 sq kms. The army, report said have chosen Bofors guns because of its results in the high altitude warfare, especially during the Kargil 1999 conflict with Pakistan.

The report further says that army wants the issue to be resolved through negotiations but at the same time they maintain that construction activity in the areas close to LAC won't be stopped. ►PAGE 02



A File photo of Bofors guns in Kargil, courtesy India Today

Chinese Troops Wanted
Deeper Incursion, Says Report

The Chinese troops wanted to do a further deeper incursion into Eastern Ladakh before the Indian troops foiled their attempt, reveals a report submitted by the security agencies to the government. Security agencies have submitted a detailed report to the Modi-led government on the Chinese military build-up in Eastern Ladakh, news agency ANI reported today. The official report has given out details about the Chinese ● P-02

Bar To Challenge Mian
Qayoom's Detention In SC

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: The Jammu and Kashmir High Court Bar association on Thursday decided to file a special leave petition (SLP) before the Supreme Court of India to challenge the detention of its incarcerated President Mian Abdul Qayoom and also the judgment passed by the High Court in his case.

The decision to move an SLP before the Supreme Court challenging the detention of Qayoom under PSA and the judgments of single and double bench of J&K High Court was taken during a meeting of Bar's Executive Committee today, a spokesperson said.



The meeting attended by several senior advocates discussed the fallout of judgment passed by LPA bench comprising Justice Vinod Chatterji Koul and Justice Ali Mohammad Magrey in the detention case of Qayoom.

Qayoom was detained ►PAGE 02

HC Seeks Details On
Manner Of Covid-19 Testing

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir High Court has sought details from the government as regards the manner in which Covid-19 samples are being collected, the time taken for transporting them to the laboratories and the schedule on which test reports are obtained.

Hearing a petition on its own motion Chief Justice Gita Mittal and Justice Rajesh Oswal took cognizance of a news report dated May 25 May which the court observed discloses a time gap between the taking of samples for COVID-19 infections and the receipt of the test reports.

"Some of the security personnel who were tested and found infected were deployed in discharge of public functions," the court observed, adding, "For instance, there is reference to a police constable of the 19th Battalion of the Indian Reserve Police who was on duty at Lakhanpur in Kathua District, a BSF constable and an Army jawan."

Before proceeding in the matter, the court issued notice to the Secretary, Health and Medical Education Department, UT of Jammu and Kashmir to place on record, in a tabulation, the manner in which samples for COVID-19 testing are being collected, the manner and the time taken for ►PAGE 02

Medical Officer
Suspended For
'Negligence'

SRINAGAR: Authorities on Thursday suspended a medical officer for his alleged negligence in handling coronavirus situation in the frontier district of Kupwara.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Handwara ordered suspension of the Medical Officer Dr. Irfan, in-charge of RRT Handwara who has been accused of "creating problems for the administration". "The Block Medical Officer Handwara directed (you) to explain your position within six hours, as you were frequently creating problems for the administration," the order reads.

The officer had been accused of "releasing several inmates without seeing their ● P-02

No Link Between IAF Airstrip
And Ladakh Stand-Off: Div Com

CONSTRUCTION WORK in progress on IAF airstrip in south Kashmir's Bijbehara on Thursday. Pic Shah Junaid

Agencies

SRINAGAR: Construction of a 3.5-kilometre air strip along the Srinagar-Jammu national highway in Anantnag district has fuelled speculations that the emergency landing strip was be-

ing constructed in response to the stand off between Indian and Chinese armies in Ladakh region.

However Divisional Commissioner Kashmir P K Pole Thursday said that the work on the runway in Bijbehara area by the Indian Air Force (IAF) is not ►PAGE 02

Transporters Meet
Officials, Defer Strike

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Private transporters in Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday night postponed their proposed strike after holding a meeting with some government officials here.

Earlier during the day, the private transporters had announced the suspension of tanker and truck services in the union territory, saying their doors are open if the J-K administration is interested in addressing their genuine demands through negotiations.

We have decided to postpone the proposed strike after an hour-long meeting with Transport commissioner and Deputy Commissioner Jammu. They also managed firewood for helping the KP family to cremate the deceased. ►P-02

Covid-19 Claims Life
Of Elderly Srinagar
Man, Toll Reaches 35

HEALTH WORKERS carrying the body of a Covid-19 deceased in Srinagar outskirts. KO File Photo, Abid Bhat

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Two days after he tested positive for coronavirus, a 60-year-old man from Srinagar's Noorbagh area on Thursday died of Covid-19, taking the death toll due to the virus in Jammu and Kashmir to 35, officials said.

Dr Salim Tak, Medical Superintendent CD hospital said that the sexagenarian was referred from SMHS hospital here two days ago after he tested positive for the novel coronavirus.

"He died today at CD hospital.

He had pleural effusion (sometimes referred to as 'water on the lungs')," he said.

With the latest fatality, the death toll due to the virus in J&K has gone upto 35- 31 in Kashmir, 4 in Jammu.

So far Srinagar district with eight deaths due to the virus has highest fatalities, followed by Baramulla seven, Anantnag five, Kulgam four, two each from Shopian, Budgam and Jammu while one death each has been reported from Bandipora, Kupwara Doda and Udhampur. (With GNS inputs)

HE DIED TODAY AT CD HOSPITAL.
He had pleural effusion (sometimes referred to as
'water on the lungs').Single-Day Jump Of 285 Cases
In J&K, Tally Crosses 3000 Mark

Coronavirus cases in Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday crossed 3000 mark after recording biggest ever single day spike of 285 new cases, raising the total number of infected persons in the Union territory to 3142. "285 new COVID-19 cases were detected in J&K. While 222 of them are from Kashmir, 63 are from Jammu," the officials said. Among fresh cases, 49 cases were ● P-02

Muslims Help Cremation Of
Kashmiri Pandit Woman

Agencies

BANDIPORA: Keeping the age-old tradition of communal harmony and brotherhood alive, Muslims Thursday performed the last rites of a Kashmiri Pandit woman who passed way this morning in north Kashmir's Bandipora district.

Amid the coronavirus lockdown, scores of Muslims including women assembled at village Kuloosa of Bandipora district to perform the last rites of KP woman Rani Bhat wife of Moti Lal Bhat. Witnesses said that Muslim women could be seen mourning the death as the deceased was close to them for years together.

Soon after the news of death spread in the village, Muslims made special arrangements to performing last rites of deceased. They also managed firewood for helping the KP family to cremate the deceased.

"It is our duty to help neighbours



irrespective of their religion," Abdul Rehman, a villager said.

He said that the KP woman passed away in the wee hours. "Keeping social distancing norms in mind, we visited the bereaved family one by one and expressed our condolences," he said, adding that, "We have not helped them today. We have been helping them for centuries and they have been helped us too. We will always help them and always live with them and keep out age old tradition of communal harmony intact." ►PAGE 02

J&K Govt Notifies Rules For
Appointment To Class IV Jobs

Observer News Service

JAMMU: The General Administration Department (GAD) of the Jammu and Kashmir administration on Thursday notified rules for the appointment to Class IV posts under the accelerated recruitment process in the Union Territory.

According to a notification issued here today by the General Administration Department of the Union Territory of J&K, the Government has notified Jammu and Kashmir Appointment to Class-IV (Special Recruitment) Rules, 2020 for appointment to Class IV posts in the UT of J&K.

As per the notification, these rules

shall apply to all Class IV posts borne on the establishment of any department or service of the Government or any Government Company, Organisation, and Body specifically owned or controlled by the Government and, for which the Accelerated Recruitment process is to be adopted as may be notified by the Government from time to time.

The Rules state that all Administrative Departments shall frame an indent of vacancies of Class-IV posts, by way whatever nomenclature called, as they exist, on a cutoff date to be notified by General Administration Department, under direct recruitment quota in different cadres. The Administrative ►PAGE 02

Poor And Pestering: 2G-Online Classes 'Killing Curiosity' In Kashmir

Sajad Bhat | Jyotsna Bharti

EVERY morning, as clock strikes 10, Sameena, 16, becomes alert, as her Budgam-based teacher appears on her mobile screen for an online lecture. With a fresh gusto, she keeps looking forward to it — mainly as an escape route from her weary routine. Holding a marker in his hand and standing in front of his white board, her teacher delivers lecture on high notes, seeking reassurance, every now and then: "You get my point, Beta?" Even as she joins the online cho-

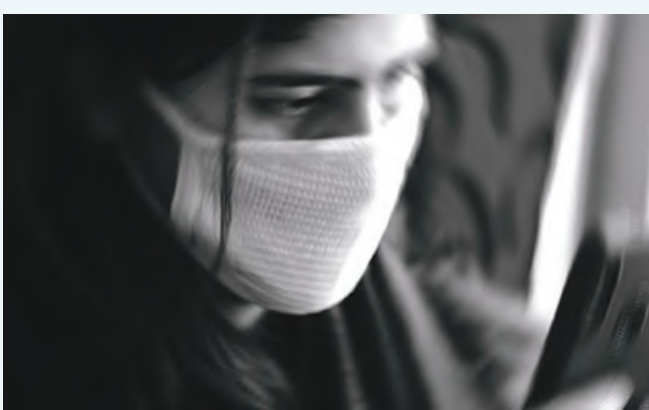
rus, "Yes, sir", she ends the lecture, an hour later, on a sulking note.

"What else would you do, if your mandatory class is becoming an everyday headache for you," Sameena, a Class 9 student, from Srinagar's Nowgam, said.

"The grainy video, the frequent drop calls, the background noises, the poor sound quality, and the unreadable words on the board get on your nerves, and make the entire learning process a pestering experience."

Why Is It happening?

"What better results can one expect from 2G network," Shakeel



Shuja, a Srinagar-based teacher who daily gives three online lec-

tures from his home, said.

"The entire process driven by the slow-internet merely makes us teachers as some talking heads. We can't even read the proper facial expressions and body language of our students on mobile screens. This is pathetic. We're running these online classes for the heck of it, as 2G internet defeats the very purpose of the learning process."

Despite drawing a biting bad press and repeated online protest, the administration in the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir keeps issuing a fortnightly update on the 4G network. ►PAGE 02

From Front page...

Centre's SOP For Offices; Employees From Containment Zones Should Be Allowed To Work From Home

NEW DELHI: Any employee residing in a COVID-19 containment zone should be allowed to work from home and not attend office till the time the area is de-notified and that period will not be counted as leave, the Union health ministry said on Thursday.

According to SOP issued by the ministry against the backdrop of the government's plans to open up the economy, an entire office building need not be closed if one or two cases of COVID-19 are reported there and work can resume after disinfection as per the laid down protocols.

However, if there is a larger outbreak, the entire building will have to be closed for 48 hours and all the staff will work from home till the building is adequately disinfected and is declared fit for re-occupation, the ministry said in its 'SOPs on preventive measures to contain spread of COVID-19 in offices'.

Offices in containment zones will remain closed except for medical and essential services and only those outside will be allowed to open up, the ministry said.

According to the SOP, any officer or staff residing in containment

zones should inform the same to the supervisory officer and not attend office till the zone is denotified. They should be permitted to work from home and it will not be counted as leave period.

Hand hygiene (sanitizer dispenser) and thermal screening provisions should be put in place at the entrances mandatorily and only asymptomatic staff/visitors should be allowed, it said.

People above 65, those with co-morbidities and pregnant women are advised to stay at home, except for essential and health purposes, and the office

management should facilitate the process, the SOP said.

All officers and staff will be allowed entry only if they are using face cover/masks and these should be worn at all times on the office premises, it said.

Drivers should maintain social distancing and prescribed 'dos and don'ts' related to COVID-19. It should be ensured by the service providers and officers that drivers residing in containment zones are not allowed to drive vehicles, the SOP stated.

The interior of the vehicles should be disinfected using 1

per cent sodium hypochlorite solution/spray and the steering, door handles, keys, etc. should be properly disinfected.

As per the SOP, routine issue of visitor/temporary passes should be suspended, and visitors with proper permission of the officer they want to meet should be allowed after being properly screened.

Meetings, as far as feasible, should be done through video conferencing and large gatherings prohibited, it said. "Offices and other workplaces are relatively close settings, with shared spaces like work stations, corridors, elevators, stairs, parking

places, cafeteria, meeting rooms and conference halls etc and COVID-19 infection can spread relatively fast among officials, staffs and visitors. "There is a need to prevent spread of infection and to respond in a timely and effective manner in case suspect case of COVID-19 is detected in these settings, so as to limit the spread of infection," the ministry said.

Listing the SOP, the ministry highlighted the need for maintaining effective and frequent sanitation within the premises, with a particular focus on lavatories, drinking

Ladakh Stand-Off: Army...

India Today reported that huge construction activity has been taken up, including on the road connecting Leh town with Daulat Beg Oldi. A Bridge is also being built along the Shyok River, a tributary of the Indus River.

The construction work that was halted due to coronavirus and the lockdown following it, have been resumed and sped up, the report said. Workers from different areas have been taken to the construction sites to finish the projects sooner.

The aim of making roads and bridges, the report says was a developmental issue for the locals and would make their travel easy, the report said, adding, it will also help soldiers to carry weaponry and other material to LAC easy.

The report further says that Chinese sides have shown some flexibility, and the Lieutenant General level meeting is taking place on June 6 at Chushul-Moldo, one of the two designated meeting points in Ladakh to reach an agreement. The Indian delegation will be led by Leh based 14 Corp Commander Lt. Gen. Harinder Singh.

The two neighbors are locked in a tense face-off for over four weeks in Pangong Tso Lake, Galwan Valley, Demchok and Daulat Beg Oldie in Eastern Ladakh.

Both the countries deployed additional troops after a violent clash left scores of soldiers injured from both sides.

The trigger behind the faceoff was Beijing's stiff opposition to New Delhi's move to construct a key road around the Pangong Tso Lake, besides laying another road stretch, connecting the Darbuk-Shayok-Daulat Beg Oldie road in Galwan Valley.

Even as some 5,000 reported Chinese troops have appeared in Ladakh, the Indian version is that Chinese troops crossed the LAC, with vehicles and equipment, to block road construction by India. The India-China border dispute covers the 3,488-km-long LAC. China claims Arunachal Pradesh as part of southern Tibet, while India contests it.

Chinese Troops Wanted...

build-up in different sectors from the topmost area including the Daulat Beg Oldi sector and the Pangong Tso sector, ANI quoting sources said.

The sources further said the government has also been apprised by the agencies on how the Chinese could so swiftly build up in these areas and manage to bring in troops in such large numbers. Starting from the first week of May, the official report says China has been able to bring in more than 5,000 troops in the Eastern Ladakh sector along the Line of Actual Control.

"Initially, they surprised the Indian side by the heavy troop movement but then India also started matching it by rushing in troops from its reserve division trained in high altitude warfare," the report says.

"This was in addition to the troops already deployed in the Ladakh sector as part of the 3 Division based in Karu. Since the first week of May, the Chinese who are sitting inside Indian territory at some places on the LAC, there has not been any change in the ground situation and multiple face-offs had taken place between the soldiers of both sides," it adds.

As per the assessment, the official report says Chinese troops wanted to do a further deeper incursion into the Indian side but the timely deployment of troops by Indian forces did not allow that to happen.

Militants Attack Police ...

The injured, he said was referred to Anantnag hospital, reports said.

Block Medical Officer Kulgam Dr. Nighat said that Ahmad who is working as basic health worker at Yaripora Sub District Hospital was critically injured. She said that Ahmad, a resident of Wanpoh, has been shifted to GMC Anantnag. "His condition remains critical," she added.

Soon after the attack, police and army have cordoned off the area and started searches in the area to nab the attackers.

Single-Day Jump Of 285...

reported from Kulgam, 35 from Shopian, 27 from Anantnag, 29 from Baramulla, 25 each from Srinagar & Udhampur, 19 from Kupwara, 14 from Pulwama, 15 from Bandipora, 11 from Jammu, six from Rajouri, five each from Budgam & Kishtwar, four each from Ganderbal & Poonch, three each from Kathua, Reasi, Doda & Samba, they said.

They said 57 persons who tested positive are travellers.

The number of confirmed cases has now reached 3,142, out of which 2,407 are in Kashmir, while 735 are in Jammu, the officials said.

There are 2,059 active cases of the coronavirus disease in J&K — 1,488 in Kashmir and 571 in Jammu — and 1,048 (888 from Kashmir and 160 from Jammu) patients have recovered, according to officials.

The J&K has witnessed 35 COVID-19 (31 from Kashmir, 4 from Jammu) deaths so far, including the one that took place on Thursday.

Muslims Help Cremation...

In Kulosa village of Bandipora, there are almost over a dozen KP families, who didn't flee when majority of Pandit community members deserted Kashmir in 1990. Since then, the two communities are sharing a great bond of friendship and harmony.

Muslims of the area gathered in large numbers at the house of deceased amid social distancing and later helped the bereaved family to take the body of the deceased to the cremation ground for final rites. The locals of the village also prayed for the departed soul and expressed solidarity with the family members of deceased—

Bar To Challenge Mian...

on August 5 last year when BJP-led central government abrogated J&K's special status and bifurcated into two Union Territories. Qayoom is currently lodged at Tihar Jail and is suffering from many ailments

"During the course of deliberations it came to be noticed that fall out of the judgment so passed shall have far reaching consequences on detention matters of individual members of the society leaving no scope for an individual or organisation to show even little bit of dissent based on ideology of a person or group of persons," the Bar spokesperson said.

The judgment, he said also left no scope to call in question the 'arbitrary exercise of power' with a view to silence the voices of voiceless.

"The judgment it was stated also provides a blank cheque to be enchased by executive as and when they would deem fit as the judgment leads to believe in a system that thrives on punishing thoughts and belief and leaving it open for executive to act as judge, jury and executioner in total violation of the norms setup in the constitution," the spokesperson said.

He said the meeting also took note of the fact that very few cases were being taken up for consideration under the category of 'extremely urgent matters' leaving lot of scope and time to deal with other urgent matters including liberty matters, which are gathering dust in the registry for want of final hearing and in the meanwhile the period of detention gets expired rendering the petitions in-fructuous.

"The association also considered the taking of appropriate steps for regular opening of courts subject to guidelines to be followed, the difficulty faced by lawyers community in approaching the bank located within court premises be made accessible to the lawyers as is being done in case of judicial employees," the spokesperson said.

The meeting also impressed upon the Chief Justice to look into the grievances of the advocates about hearing of liberty and other matters and making scope for hearing cases categorised other than 'extremely urgent matters' and period within which cases are being listed after filing be minimised , together with considering opening of courts in physical mode at earliest, the spokesperson added.

HC Seeks Details On ...

transporting them to the laboratories for testing and the schedule on which test reports are obtained.

"Let a report in this regard be placed before this court before the next date of hearing," the court said and listed it for consideration on June 10.

"Inasmuch as Ms. Monika Kohli is assisting us in COVID-19 matters, we appoint her as Amicus Curiae in this matter as well," the court added. (GNS)

Medical Officer Suspended

daily test reports."

"It has been reported that you released eight inmates from Quarantine Centre established at Degree College Handwara, without seeing daily test reports of inmates. There is gross negligence on your part," the order reads.

"Keeping in view the impact of pandemic upon the general public, your behaviour has put the whole administration on the back foot as the hard-earned efforts have been badly affected by your action," it adds.

Pending enquiry into the matter, the official has been placed under suspension with immediate effect and directed to report Sub-District Hospital Tangdhar. "The charge-sheet will follow", the order adds.

No Link Between IAF ...

a new project and rather an old project that got stalled due to the winter.

"There is no connection of work on three-kilometre runway in South Kashmir by the IAF with Indo-China standoff. This has no link with any other issue. It was an old project on which work was suspended due to the winter," Pole said.

Amid the India-China stand-off in Ladakh, the Indian Air Force (IAF) has started construction of a 3-kilometer long runway along the Srinagar-Jammu National Highway (NH-44) in Bijbehara area of district Anantnag.

The construction work started on Monday and is going on fast pace. "The runway is being constructed by the Air Force," Major General, A Sengupta, General Officer Commanding (GOC), Awantipora-based Victor Force had stated while addressing a press conference.

Transporters Meet Officials,

would be addressed, Chairman of All J&K Transport Welfare Association (AJKTWA) T S Wazir told PTI.

The agitating transporters, who among other things are seeking an economic package for the industry to overcome the coronavirus-driven crisis, also expressed displeasure over the government move to increase the road or token tax on the old vehicles registered before August 3, 2019 with the concerned transport authorities.

"Jammu and Kashmir has received a new gift in the shape of double token tax at a time of COVID crisis after the recent increase in rate of tax on sale of petrol and diesel, while no attention is paid on our genuine demands, Wazir had said.

Wazir, who led a strong protest demonstration for the second straight day here, had accused the administration of forcing them on the roads and said we have kept our doors open for negotiations .

Besides the relief package for the drivers, cleaners and other allied workers of the transport industry badly affected by the lockdown, the association is demanding among other things a revision in passenger fare, freight charges to the extent of at least 50 per cent, waiving interest of the loans taken by transporters for vehicles and waiving insurance and other fees during the lockdown period besides withdrawing of toll plazas in J&K.

The Jammu and Kashmir government increased the rate of tax on sale of petrol and diesel in the Union Territory by Rs 2 per litre and Rs 1 per litre, respectively. The new rates came into effect from June 1.

"When the Centre bifurcated the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir into two UTs, an assurance was given that all the benefits under UT status will be given but unfortunately nothing of the sort had happened so far. The other UT does not pay passenger tax and there were also no toll plaza's. We are being strangled here," Wazir had said.

The association went on a chain hunger strike near Tawi bridge here on Tuesday but were physically lifted by police citing violation of lockdown guidelines.

J&K Govt Notifies Rules...

Department shall thereafter forward a consolidated indent to the General Administration Department. While framing the indent, the concerned Administrative department shall ensure that the provisions of the Jammu and Kashmir Reservation Act, 2004 and rules framed there under are strictly complied with, the General Administration Department shall, based on the indent forwarded by the Administrative Departments, prepare a consolidated vacancy of Class IV (category wise) and refer it to the Service Selection Board, the Service Selection Board shall make selection to the posts referred to it by the General Administration Department as per the procedure prescribed under these rules.

Defining the selection process, the Rules say that the Service Selection Board shall advertise all UT Cadre, Divisional Cadre and District Cadre posts referred under rule 4 by way of a single Advertisement Notice, the Board shall invite applications for the said posts from the persons who are Domiciles of the Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir, and are within the prescribed age and possess minimum and Maximum educational qualification as prescribed in Notification SRO 99 of 2008: Provided that a relaxation of five years in the upper age limit shall be provided to the candidates who claim the benefit of additional weightage as casual workers, provided further that the application form will be entertained by the Service Selection Board on the basis of a declaration made by the candidate in the application form and no testimonial including Domicile Certificate will be required to be submitted along with the application form, the Board shall make selection to the UT Cadre, Divisional Cadre and District Cadre posts on the basis of a written test and no oral test shall be conducted, as already notified under SRO 404 dated 15th September, 2018.

The notification further read that for UT CADRE there will a total of 100 marks exam and the criteria for selection shall be Written Test of 85 marks. Candidates whose family member neither is nor has been in Government service, including in PSUs/Boards/Autonomous Bodies, etc substantially owned and controlled by the Government will be given weightage of 05 marks; Widows, divorced women, judicially separated women and orphan girls (certificate to be issued by Tehsildar) will get 05 marks and Casual worker engaged for five years or more (For this purpose, proof in terms of wages for a minimum of five years will be required, and the certificate to this effect shall be countersigned by District or Divisional Head of the Office where the candidate has worked) will get 05 marks.

Likewise, for Divisional Cadre there will a total of 100 marks exam and the criteria for selection shall be Written Test of 80 marks. Candidate of the Home Division (to be determined as per Domicile Certificate) will get 05 marks; Candidates whose family member neither is nor has been in Government service, including in PSUs/Boards/Autonomous Bodies, etc substantially owned and controlled by the Government will get 05 marks; Widows, divorced women, judicially separated women and orphan girls (certificate to be issued by Tehsildar) will get 05 marks and Casual worker engaged for five years or more (For this purpose, proof in terms of wages for a minimum of five years will be required, and the certificate to this effect shall be countersigned by District or Divisional Head of the Office where the candidate has worked) will be given 05 marks.

Similarly, for DISTRICT CADRE there will a total of 100 marks exam and the criteria for selection shall be Written Test of 75 marks. Candidate of the Home Division (to be determined as per Domicile Certificate) will get 10 marks; Candidates whose family member neither is nor has been in Government service, including in PSUs/Boards/Autonomous Bodies, etc substantially owned and controlled by the Government will get 05 marks; Widows, divorced women, judicially separated women and orphan girls (certificate to be issued by Tehsildar) will get 05 marks and Casual worker engaged for five years or more (For this purpose, proof in terms of wages for a minimum of five years will be required, and the certificate to this effect shall be countersigned by District or Divisional Head of the Office where the candidate has worked) will get 05 marks.

The Rules further explain that 'Family' means brother, sister and parents of the candidate only and no one else; and Casual worker' will consist of persons who are working as Daily Rated Workers, or engaged through a Hospital Development Fund and Local Fund or are Adhoc/Contractual/Consolidated workers.

For all those candidates who avail benefit of having no family member in government service, including in PSUs/Boards/Autonomous Bodies, etc substantially owned and controlled by the Government, the claim will be verified and authenticated by the Sub-Divisional Magistrate of the concerned jurisdiction after being shortlisted for selection.

Candidates will be required to indicate their order of preference for allotment against all UT, Divisional and District cadre vacancies at the time of application: provided that a candidate who has not indicated any such preference fully or partially, will be deemed to have agreed to any allocation of post in any vacancy to such candidate, as shall be made by the Board.

Meanwhile, the Chapter-III of the Rules elaborate on the procedure for preparation of select list by the Board:

The Board shall shortlist candidates in the ratio of upto 1:4 of the advertised vacancies on the basis of aggregate marks obtained by the candidate on the basis of criteria prescribed under rule 5.

The short-listed candidates will be required to produce relevant documents, including Domicile Certificate, as mentioned in the advertisement notice and the Board shall, after verification, prepare separate select lists for the UT cadre, two divisional cadres and twenty district cadres, combined across all departments for each cadre, on the basis of merit-cum-preference filled up by the candidate in the application form as outlined in sub-rule (5) of rule 5 of these rules, based on an allocation procedure to be prescribed by the government: provided that a candidate shall be selected against one post only in the cadre allotted to the candidate on the principle of merit-cum-preference.

For allocation of departments, the Board shall recommend Department wise Select List in each cadre (UT/Divisional/District) to the General Administration Department, based on an allocation procedure to be prescribed by the government.

The Government in the General Administration Department, for the reasons to be recorded, may not accept the select list received from the Board and return the same to the Board for reconsideration.

The General Administration Department shall, thereafter, forward

the select list, category wise and cadre wise, to the concerned Administrative Departments equivalent to the number of vacancies requisitioned by each department.

The Administrative Department shall issue appointment orders in respect of all cadres, subject to verification of character antecedents and other standing instructions issued by the Government in this regard.

Regarding Wait list; the Board shall draw a separate wait list for each combined cadre (UT/Divisional/District cadres) equal to the number of selected candidates in each cadre which shall remain in force for a period of one year. The Government, for the reasons to be recorded, may extend the validity of the waiting list for another six months.

The combined wait list shall be maintained by the Service Selection Board separately.

In case any vacancy remains unfilled due to non-joining, the Administrative Department shall immediately and not later than three months inform the General Administration Department. The General Administration Department shall consolidate the vacancies that accrue due to non-joining and forward the same to the Service Selection Board, which shall forward a list of candidates next in merit in the General Administration Department after following the procedure as adopted at the time of framing the Select List.

Chapter-IV of the Rules states: The Conditions of Service- Rules 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 of the Jammu and Kashmir Special Recruitment Rules, 2015 shall mutatis mutandis apply to the appointment made under these rules.

Use of these Rules for specialized posts- the procedure prescribed in these rules, with modifications, may be made applicable to such other posts, having specialized functions/qualifications, as may be notified by the Government from time to time.

Overriding effect of the Rules- notwithstanding anything contained in any other rule, notification or statutory order, these rules shall be in supersession of all rules/notifications/statutory orders issued on the subject.

Poor And Pestering: 26...

Citing 'sovereignty and security of the country', among other reasons, for maintaining the status quo on the high-speed mobile internet in J&K, they keep extending the deadline.

Even the judiciary recently put the ball in the court of the executive, which banned it in the first place, for a 4G review.

But as the deadlock refuses to end, Kashmiri students—most of whom had last visited school on August 4, 2019, a day before New Delhi abrogated the special status of J&K and plunged the region into the communication crisis—are growing weary indoors.

"We've now stopped even complaining about it," said Sadaf Mirza, a Class 12 student, who regularly suffers from the poor-network driven online tutorials.

"Somewhere down the line, the current regime wants Kashmiris to beg for everything — even for a basic thing like internet. It's clear that they want to send out a message that beggars can't be choosers."

Notably, New Delhi justified the abrogation move last summer, saying it'll create a highway for development in J&K.

"They made the entire country and world believe that they're foreseeing a developed Kashmir where children are no more suffering for education, where college students are given all the right to go to college without hindrance, where people would be allowed to live with dignity and harmony," Mirza continued.

But the reality is something else.

From 10 months, said Omer Lateef, a college-goer from Sopore, the promised development is nowhere seen.

"The internet connection they promised is getting snapped off anytime they want," continued Lateef, a Humanities student.

"The plight of Kashmiri students is not even considered. Their future is uncertain and vague right now. The one important thing which helps a society to grow is education, which in this part of the world has been long quarantined."

Students Elsewhere

At the same time, students from the mainland are progressing in pandemic without facing the internet hitch and hiccup.

Goutham Ramesh, a student from Coonoor, Tamil Nadu has already finished an online course — he calls 'a big boost' for his career.

"The course I finished consists of 24 video lectures—with an average time of 16 minutes per lecture," Ramesh told Kashmir Observer.

"It requires good internet connection, since it's not downloadable content. You've to take the classes on Udemy [an American online learning platform for students]. I received a certificate after completing my course."

Similarly, Minu Nair, from Ernakulam, Kerala, is busy exploring her career amid COVID crisis.

"Considering the whole job war going on right now, I'm learning digital marketing to boost my career," Nair said.

"I already did a few digital marketing courses like Social Media Marketing: Strategy and Optimisation, Google Search Ads or Google Online Fundamentals. There's so much to learn from the internet."

These days, Ryan Jena, a journalism student from Rayagada, Odisha, is taking part in many online workshops.

"A world without internet is meaningless," Jena said. "I say this because of the progressively rushing world around me."

She has been taking up workshops online, ever since the lockdown has commenced.

"This time has given us all enough time to retrospect and I've been working on myself, as a budding writer, photographer, and a self-taught musician," Jena said.

"The internet has definitely been helpful during this lockdown and much before that too. My heart goes out for those who don't have these privileges, which I think is every individual's right."

Man Killed After Tractor...

identified as Ghulam Hassan Khan, son of Abdul Ahad Khan of Wanigambala—(KNO)

Police Files Case After ...

investigations.

"We have registered a case under FIR number 38/2020 and investigation has been started to expose the culprits," SHO Police Station Srigufwara said. (KNO)

Int'l flight from Jeddah arrives at Srinagar with 143 passengers

Observer News Service

JAMMU, JUNE 4: As part of government's initiative to evacuate Jammu and Kashmir residents stranded abroad amid lockdown, an Air India flight from Jeddah with about 143 passengers on board arrived at Srinagar Airport today.

Meanwhile, on Day 11 of resumption of operation of routine domestic operations in Jammu and Kashmir, 21 domestic flights with 1788 passengers on board today arrived at Jammu and Srinagar Airports.

A total of 290 passengers aboard 8 regular commercial flights arrived at the Jammu Airport while 13 domestic flights

with about 1498 passengers and 01 International flight with 143 passengers on board landed at Srinagar Airport today.

After arrival, all the passengers were tested for the COVID-19 virus and transported to their destinations at both the airports amid strict observance of all necessary preventive protocols.

The Government has made elaborate arrangements for the arrival, screening, sampling and proper transportation of the passengers to the quarantine centers taking special care of guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) prescribed by the Union Ministries of Civil Aviation and Health and Family Welfare.



A total of 290 passengers aboard 8 regular commercial flights arrived at the Jammu Airport while 13 domestic flights with about 1498 passengers and 01 International flight with 143 passengers on board landed at Srinagar Airport

Police arrests 2 Butchers for selling meat at exorbitant rates

Srinagar: Acting tough against the shopkeepers for selling items on the inflated rates, Police in Srinagar have arrested two butchers for selling meat at exorbitant rates.

Officers in the jurisdiction of Police Station Nigeen along with Tehsildar North and CAPD officials held market checking and have arrested two butchers identified as Mohd Shafi Magrey and Mukhtar Ahmad Kalla both residents of Dhobigat Hazratbal for selling meat at exorbitant rates. Both the shops were sealed by the concerned Magistrate. Both the accused butchers have been arrested

and shifted to PS Nigeen where they remain in custody.

Accordingly, case FIR NO. 98/2020 under relevant sections of law has been registered at PS Nigeen and further investigation into the matter has been initiated. Moreover, a fine of Rs 2000 has also been recovered by the concerned officers from the erring shopkeepers for selling items at higher rates.

Police have requested the traders and shopkeepers not to indulge in overpricing, black marketing, hoarding or any violation of essential commodities otherwise strict action under law will be taken against the violators.

J&K Bank extends relief under 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' to borrowers

Srinagar, Jun 4: With a view to extend relief to its borrowers under the Central Government's recently announced Special economic and comprehensive 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' package, J&K Bank has directed all its operative levels to expedite the processing of loans under the Central Government's newly announced scheme "Guaran-

teed Emergency Credit Line (GECL)". The scheme is part of special economic and comprehensive package, amounting to Rs 3 lac crore Collateral-free Automatic Loans for Businesses, including MSMEs hit due to COVID19 and need additional funding to meet operational liabilities built up, buy raw material and restart business.

Samoon reviews Education Investment Policy 2020

SRINAGAR, JUNE 4: Principal Secretary, School Education, Dr Asgar Samoon today chaired a meeting here to discuss the implementation of Jammu and Kashmir Education Investment Policy 2020.

The meeting was attended by representatives from the universities, Education department, private stakeholders and other officers.

During the meeting, the Principal Secretary directed the authorities and other stakeholders to explore possibilities to attract private investors for establishing private universities in Jammu and Kashmir.

He directed the various stakeholders to come up with suggestions for ensuring the implementation of Jammu and Kashmir Education Investment Policy 2020. He said that universities have a great role to play in skill development and the need of the hour is to work in tandem with the industrial demand.

Laying the ground for attracting private investors, the government said that an empowered 'Single Window Clearance Body' will be created and operationalized for granting time bound approvals and clearances for setting up of new private schools/ residential schools/ colleges/technical education institutes/ universities.

It was given out in the meeting that the government has created land banks for establishing educational institutes with particular emphasis on entrepreneurship.



During the meeting a detailed presentation was given by Director School Education Kashmir giving out the details of the Jammu and Kashmir Investment Policy 2020. It was given out in the meeting that education Investment Policy is aimed at restoring the educational ecosystem balance in the UT and to enhance the educational infrastructure in Jammu and Kashmir, so that the students do not migrate elsewhere to study. The government would provide handholding support throughout the process of setting up educational initiatives in the UT and due preference will be given to reputed players in the field of education, willing to set up universities in Jammu and Kashmir.

Under the new investment policy, the government will facilitate the technical institutions to collaborate with various industries to identify skilling needs in an individual domain and design specific courses tailored to the requirements of the same. To upskill the students with the relevant do-

main specific hard and soft skills, a 'Hands-on Skilling Program' based on hub and spoke model of implementation will be envisaged.

To create innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem in schools and colleges of the UT, establishment of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Cells (IEC) will be encouraged in higher educational institutions. Funds shall be allocated to individual IECs to undertake various activities on ideation, innovation and entrepreneurship in their respective campuses.

The government aims to create a world-class educational ecosystem in Jammu and Kashmir by fostering the spirit of creativity and nurturing a culture of scientific temper and critical thinking.

Under the new education investment policy, an educational City will be set up under the category of Mega Project with smart schools, engineering colleges, technical education institutes, multidisciplinary colleges among other things.

Covid-19 back in Bandipora DC appeals people stay indoors

Ward 05, Ward 06 of Bandipora town declared red zones

BANDIPORA, JUNE 04: Deputy Commissioner Bandipora, Ravinder Kumar Wednesday made a fervent appeal to the residents of Bandipora to stay indoors and adopt precautionary measures religiously to avoid getting infected by the Coronavirus.

The Deputy Commissioner made this appeal after more positive cases were detected in past few days in the district.

The detection of more cases has forced the district administration to put the order under abeyance that allowed shopkeepers to reopen their business establishments in phased manner and the markets were soon closed again in the town following detection of positive cases.

The DC appealed the people to continue to adopt precautionary measures with special focus on social distancing staying indoors for their own safety besides taking all precautionary measures communicated by the health experts including use of masks and maintaining personal hygiene.

He said the war has not yet ended and people need



to be alert and cautious for their well being, he however assured the people that all measures are being taken by the district administration to provide better healthcare facilities to affected people.

The DC also appealed people to voluntarily come forward if they have come in contact with positive patients.

Meanwhile, The authorities on Thursday declared Two Municipal Wards in Bandipora town as "red-zones" and their surrounding localities as "buffer zones" after more persons tested positive to COVID-19 infection.

Deputy Magistrate Bandipora, Ravinder Kumar

issued the orders declaring Ward No 05 and Ward No 06 of Bandipora town as Red Zone while adjoining villages including Kaloosa, Ajar, Watpora, Patushay, Onagam, Panzigam, Watrina, Nusoo, Sonerwani, Papchan, Madar and Lankreshpora were declared as Buffer zones.

The said order was issued in view of more positive cases reported from Nebpora in Bandipora town. "It has become imperative to initiate restrictive measures under section 144 CrPC for immediate prevention of danger to human life, health and safety," reads the order issued by District Magistrate Bandipora.

Government of Jammu & Kashmir
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
SEWERAGE & DRAINAGE DIVISION No: 1st SULIMAN COMPLEX
DALGATE SRINAGAR

Notice Inviting e-Tendering
GIST of e-NIT No: 03 of 2020-21

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, J&K State e-tenders are invited on item rate basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K State Govt, and other State / Central Government for the following work:-

		Position of Funds: Demanded				
S. No	Name of work	Est. cost {Rs. In lacs} Including Departmental Supply	Earnest Money (In rupees)	Cost of T/ doc. (In rupees)	Time of completion in days	Class of contract
1.	Laying of 250mm dia sewer line including manholes at Saidapora chowk towards Grid Station Wanganpora RD-330 to RD-768m for Pilot Sewerage Scheme Khushalsar	45.53	91060/=	2200/=	2 Months	"A&B"
2.	Laying of 300mm dia sewer line including manholes at Saidapora chowk towards Grid Station Wanganpora RD-0 to RD-330m for Pilot Sewerage Scheme Khushalsar	40.70	81400/=	2000/=	2 Months	"A&B"
3.	Laying of 350mm dia RCC pipe sewer incl. construction of manholes from RD-0 to RD-115mtrs along Old Zoonimar Road Pilot Sewerage Scheme Khushalsar	22.33	44660/=	1200/=	1 Month	"B&C"
4.	Laying of 450mm dia RCC pipe sewer incl. construction of manholes from RD-230 to RD-380mtrs along Old Zoonimar Road Pilot Sewerage Scheme Khushalsar	15.25	30500/=	1000/=	1 Month	"B&C"
5.	Construction of 250mm RCC Pipe sewer line including manholes at Saidapora Sangam Road near Aiwa Bridge, Achan Srinagar.	10.00	20000/=	800/=	20 Days	"C&D"
6.	Laying of 200mm dia RCC Pipe including manholes at Gilli Kadal Zoonimar near Graveyard Pilot Sewerage Scheme Khushalsar	9.90	19800/=	800/=	20 Days	"C&D"
7.	Laying of RCC 200mm dia Pipe Sewer at Bakshi Lane Syedpora Pilot Sewerage Scheme Khushalsar	7.10	14200/=	700/=	18 Days	"C&D"

1. The bidding documents consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, drawings. Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen / downloaded from the departmental website www.iktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given below:-

1	Date of publishing	29/05/2020
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	29/05/2020 to 20/06/2020 up-to 4:00 PM
3	Bid submission Start Date	29/05/2020 from 4:00 PM
4	Bid submission End Date	20/06/2020 up-to 4:00 PM
5	Date & time of opening of bids (online)	23/06/2020 at 11:00 AM or any other convenient date.

NO: SDDI/CC/55-67
Dated: 29-05-2020

Executive Engineer S&D Division 1st
Sulaiman Complex Dalgate Srinagar

DIPK-1270/20

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
13 Shawwal
1441

PRAYERS

FAJR	3: 37
ZUHR	12: 29
ASR	5:28
Magrib	7:41
ISHA	9:22

This Day In History

- 754 - Friezen murders bishop Boniface & over 50 companions
- 1257 - Kraków, Poland, receives city rights.
- 1284 - Charles of Salerno is captured by Roger of Lauria during a naval battle in the Gulf of Naples, part of the Sicilian Vespers uprising
- 1288 - Battle of Woeringen: Reinald I vs Jan I
- 1305 - Archbishop Bertrand the Got of Bordeaux elected Pope Clement V
- 1507 - England and Netherlands sign trade agreement
- 1625 - Spanish troops under Spinola conquer Breda
- 1716 - England and Emperor Karel VI signs military treaty
- 1752 - Prince William of Orange becomes Knight of Garter
- 1794 - US Congress passes the Neutrality Act, banning Americans from serving in foreign armed forces
- 1798 - The Battle of New Ross: The attempt to spread United Irish Rebellion into Munster is defeated.
- 1827 - Turks capture the Acropolis and take Athens during Greek War of Independence
- 1832 - Anti-monarchist forces launch an uprising in Paris, starting the unsuccessful June Rebellion
- 1882 - Storm & floods hits Bombay; about 100,000 die
- 1902 - Emperor Wilhelm II responds to growing demands from Polish and other Slavic peoples living within German territory by calling for more 'Germanization' of the slavs
- 1916 - The Sheriff Hussein proclaims a revolt of the Arabs in the province of Hejaz, an action that undermines the Turkish Empire
- 1917 - 10 million US men begin registering for draft in WW I
- 1940 - Battle of France begins in WW II
- 1942 - USA declares war on Bulgaria, Hungary & Romania
- 1945 - USA, UK, USSR, France declare supreme authority over Germany
- 1959 - The first independent government of the State of Singapore is sworn in with Lee Kuan Yew as Prime Minister
- 1963 - State of siege proclaimed in Iran, Ayatollah Khomeini arrested
- 1967 - Six-day war begins between Israel and the neighboring Arab states of Egypt, Jordan and Syria
- 1975 - Egyptian president Anwar Sadat reopens Suez Canal (closed since 1967)
- 1980 - Soyuz T-2 carries 2 cosmonauts to Salyut 6 space station
- 2017 - Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Egypt sever ties with Qatar, citing its support of terrorist groups, Yemen, the Maldives and Libya follow suit

From KO Archives

No power on Earth can change Kashmir status: Farooq

'I Never Go To Pakistan, Never Ever Play Golf With Hurriyat Leaders'

Observer News Service

Srinagar - National Conference (NC) Patron Farooq Abdullah today asserted that no power on Earth can change the present status of Jammu and Kashmir, saying it will continue to remain a part of India.

I consider this part of Kashmir as part of India and that part of Kashmir as part of Pakistan. I cannot see any other solution ever working than this whether Prime Minister Manmohan Singh says anything or Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf, "Dr Abdullah said before the start of the one-day TAG Heuer Golf tournament here.

"We must accept one thing for final and that is Jammu and Kashmir belongs to India and no power on Earth can change it...Nothing is going to change and let us be honest about it," the former Chief Minister added.

About the Hurriyat leaders visit to Pakistan and Pakistan-administered Kashmir (PaK), he said they are welcome to go anywhere, but nothing is going to come out of this visit either.

The separatists have also said that they do not expect much from their visit, he added.

The Hurriyat leaders are themselves divided. They blame each other for many things. They will just go. Kha pi ke aa jayenge... Kuch bag m i layenge aur kuch hawala se aa jayega (They will bring some with them and the other will come through hawala)," Dr Abdullah claimed.

Dr Abdullah then NC leader said he did not expect anything substantial coming out of the peace process. "Where is the peace process? Innocent people get killed everyday. India is not going to give up Kashmir and Pakistan will not settle without Kashmir. So where is the settlement?" he asked.

However, Dr Abdullah advocated that borders should be made immaterial so that people can go and come and trade between the two sides promoted.

He also expressed dissatisfaction over the performance of the Mohammad Sayeed government in the state.

(Kashmir Observer, 05 June, 2005)

KASHMIR
OBSERVER

Printed & Published by Sajjad Haider on behalf of the
Kashmir Observer LLP
Published from: # 5- Boulevard, Srinagar-190001
Printed at: KT Press Pvt. Ltd, Rangreth Ind Area, Srinagar.
RNI Registration No: 69503/98
Postal Registration No-L/159/KO/SK/2014-16
Editor-in-Chief : Sajjad Haider
Legal Counsel: Tasaduq Khwaja
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Defer Reopening Schools

The Centre has asked the Jammu and Kashmir administration to defer its decisions on reopening of schools. The direction came from Union Minister of State in the Prime Ministers Office Dr Jitendra Singh following anger among people over reports that the administration was planning to reopen schools in the union territory from June 15. Though the government has to yet to make a formal announcement on the date of reopening of schools, it had recently called upon schools to ensure safety measures to arrest spread of coronavirus to students and staff. Director (Finance) in the school education department had asked the directors of school education in Kashmir and Jammu to instruct heads of all government schools to provide a pair of reusable masks and a pair of gloves to every student and ensure availability of 1000 ml hand sanitisers and 1200 ml liquid soap at entry point of each government school. The opening of schools has also become a political issue with National Conference's provincial president Devender Rana asking the UT administration to take a decision regarding reopening after consultation with parents. He has asked the government not to take chances with the health of children and check whether the schools have adequate infrastructure and training to implement Covid 19 precautions.

Schools have been closed since mid-March shortly after Coronavirus was declared a pandemic around the world. The contagion has plunged Kashmir into yet another lockdown, barely a month after the previous lockdown had been eased somewhat. The lingering lockdown, the longest in the world, has taken a massive toll on the education of the children. Schools had opened just for a fortnight when the region ran into Covid-19 lockdown.

Making education further difficult is that the government has eased the earlier sweeping internet clampdown to a grudging access to only a slow-speed 2G internet for the general population. As a result, children in Kashmir can't even study online or access online coaching or classrooms. The best solution to lack of schooling for the government was to restore 4G internet in the union territory. This would have ensured the easy access to online education to students. Use of communication technology would have thus obviated the need for a hurried reopening of schools. But while the government is refusing to restore the high-speed internet, it is taking steps to reopen schools, a fraught move under the circumstances. More so, when Covid-19 cases are spiking in the union territory. Reopening schools would expose the children to the infection. Schools lack the adequate infrastructure to protect the children. It would also be impossible to make the students follow the safety precautions. This is therefore not the right time to reopen schools. Government should wait for the contagion to be reigned in before children can go back to school.

OTHER OPINION

A backward turn

Ever since the prime minister's speech exhorting the country to march towards an Atmanirbhar Bharat, there has been an unease: That lurking behind the rhetoric of "self-reliance" was an attempt to reorient the economic structure towards ensuring "self-sufficiency" by falling back on the decades-old failed policy of import substitution. Subsequent calls by the government to citizens to buy Indian, and the setting up of "targets" towards building self-reliance in certain sectors so that "unnecessary" imports can be reduced, indicate that the shift towards protectionism, that began over the past few years with the NDA government raising tariffs — threatening to undo decades of trade liberalisation — may be underway.

Protectionism ends up creating an inefficient and high-cost domestic manufacturing sector, while leading to poor allocation of resources. The Indian experience of the second half of the last century should have provided enough proof to drive this point home. Such a policy stance helps neither consumers nor producers. Yet, it is almost as if policy-makers are choosing to forget the lessons learnt, and are determined to ignore the immense economic benefits to the country and citizens post 1991. In all likelihood, tariff hikes will be the first line of defence against "unnecessary" imports. Once this door is opened, it creates space for lobbying by domestic players to keep in place the protections, which, once imposed, will not be removed easily.

A more appropriate policy response is to focus on boosting competitiveness — building infrastructure, ensuring cheap power, reforming land and labour markets, and creating conditions for companies to compete in global markets. India should be striving to embed itself in global value chains, not becoming more inward-looking. Companies, especially in the post COVID world, looking to shift away from China, will look for policy stability. They are unlikely to relocate to countries that are susceptible to sudden tariff impositions. Further, as research has shown, India's trade balance has widened in part due to imports of raw materials, intermediate products, and capital goods, implying that the imposition of tariffs will also hurt export competitiveness. India needs to raise its share in world trade beyond 2 per cent. Doing so requires greater trade liberalisation. The country needs to reduce tariffs, be part of trade agreements, not head down a slippery slope in the opposite direction.

The Indian Express

The coronavirus that caused SARS was hosted by bats and palm civets. It jumped to humans because we had been pushing and pushing high-density urban population centers more deeply into wilderness areas, destroying that natural buffer and replacing it with monoculture crops and concrete.

THOMAS L. FRIEDMAN
New York Times

What went wrong with our world

We must learn from Covid crisis and manage the unavoidable effects of climate change

If recent weeks have shown us anything, it's that the world is not just flat. It's fragile.

And we're the ones who made it that way, with our own hands. Just look around. Over the past 20 years, we've been steadily removing man-made and natural buffers, redundancies, regulations and norms that provide resilience and protection when big systems — be they ecological, geopolitical or financial — get stressed.

We've been recklessly removing these buffers out of an obsession with short-term efficiency and growth, or without thinking at all.

The latest coronavirus is aptly named SARS-CoV-2 — with emphasis on the number 2. We don't yet know for sure where this coronavirus that causes the disease COVID-19 came from, but it is widely suspected to have jumped to a human from a wild animal, maybe a bat, in Wuhan, China

At the same time, we've been behaving in extreme ways — pushing against, and breaching, common-sense political, financial and planetary boundaries.

And, all the while, we've taken the world technologically from connected to interconnected to interdependent — by removing more friction and installing more grease in global markets, telecommunications systems, the internet and travel.

Direct flights from Wuhan

In doing so, we've made globalisation faster, deeper, cheaper and tighter than ever before. Who knew that there were regular direct flights from Wuhan, China, to America?

Put all three of these trends together, and what you have is a world more easily prone to shocks and extreme behaviours — but with fewer buffers to cushion those shocks — and many more networked companies and people to convey them globally.

This, of course, was revealed clearly in the latest world-spanning crisis — the coronavirus pandemic. But this trend of more frequent destabilising crises has been building over the past 20 years: 9/11, the Great Recession of 2008, COVID-19 and climate change.

Pandemics are no longer just biological — they are now geopolitical, financial and atmospheric, too. And we will suffer increasing consequences unless we start behaving differently and treating Mother Earth differently.

Note the pattern: Before each crisis I mentioned, we first experienced what could be called a "mild" heart attack, alerting us that we had gone to extremes and stripped away buffers that had protected us from catastrophic failure. In each case, though, we did not take that warning seriously enough — and in each case the result was a full global coronary.

"We created globalised networks because they could make us more efficient and productive and our lives more convenient," explained Gautam Mukunda, the author of "Indispensable: When Leaders Really Matter."

"But when you steadily remove their buffers, backup capacities and surge protectors in pursuit of short-term efficiency or just greed, you ensure that these systems are not only less resistant to shocks, but that we spread those shocks everywhere."

Covid crisis

I don't think that I need to spend

much time on the COVID-19 pandemic, except to say that the warning sign was also there. It appeared in late 2002 in the Guangdong province of southern China. It was a viral respiratory illness caused by a coronavirus — SARS-CoV — known for short as SARS.

As the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website notes, "Over the next few months, the illness spread to more than two dozen countries in North America, South America, Europe, and Asia" before it was contained.

More than 8,000 people worldwide

is that some five months after this coronavirus jumped into a human in Wuhan, more than 100,000 Americans were dead and more than 40 million were unemployed.

Climate Catastrophe

You have to be in total denial not to see all of this as one giant flashing warning signal for our looming — and potentially worst — global disaster, climate change.

I don't like the term climate change to describe what's coming. I much prefer "global weirding," because the weather getting weird is



Coffins are placed on scaffolding awaiting burial due to the coronavirus emergency in Italy

became sick, including close to 800 who died. The United States had eight confirmed cases of infection and no deaths.

The coronavirus that caused SARS was hosted by bats and palm civets. It jumped to humans because we had been pushing and pushing high-density urban population centers more deeply into wilderness areas, destroying that natural buffer and replacing it with monoculture crops and concrete.

It is important to note, though, that SARS was contained by July 2003 before becoming a full-fledged pandemic — thanks in large part to rapid quarantines and tight global cooperation among public health authorities in many countries. Collaborative multinational governance proved to be a good buffer.

Alas, that was then. The latest coronavirus is aptly named SARS-CoV-2 — with emphasis on the number 2. We don't yet know for sure where this coronavirus that causes the disease COVID-19 came from, but it is widely suspected to have jumped to a human from a wild animal, maybe a bat, in Wuhan, China.

Similar jumps are bound to happen more and more as we keep stripping away nature's natural biodiversity and buffers.

"The more simplified and less diverse ecological systems become, especially in huge and ever-expanding urban areas, the more we will become the targets of these emerging pests, unbuffered by the vast array of other species in a healthy ecosystem," explained Russ Mittermeier, the head of Global Wildlife Conservation and one of the world's top experts on primates.

What we know for sure, though,

what is actually happening.

The frequency, intensity and cost of extreme weather events all increase. The wets get wetter, the hots get hotter, the dry periods get drier, the snows get heavier, the hurricanes get stronger.

Weather is too complex to attribute any single event to climate change, but the fact that extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and more expensive — especially in a world of crowded cities — is indisputable.

The wise thing would be for us to get busy preserving all of the ecological buffers that nature endowed us with, so we can manage what are now the unavoidable effects of climate change and focus on avoiding what would be unmanageable consequences.

Because, unlike biological pandemics like COVID-19, climate change does not "peak." Once we deforest the Amazon or melt the Greenland ice sheet, it's gone — and we will have to live with whatever extreme weather that unleashes.

Technically speaking, globalisation is inevitable. How we shape it is not.

As the world gets more deeply intertwined, everyone's behaviour — the values that each of us bring to this interdependent world — matters more than ever. And, therefore, so does the "Golden Rule." It's never been more important.

Do unto others as you wish them to do unto you, because more people in more places in more ways on more days can now do unto you and you unto them like never before.

Thomas L. Friedman is a Pulitzer prize-winning journalist and author



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A concern that is both urgent and existential

World Environment Day is widely observed in more than 143 countries of the globe. It is popularly being called 'People's Day' to show their care and support for the earth and their environment. It is celebrated every year on 5th June. It is the United Nations prime vehicle for encouraging awareness and action to protect our environment. Organised first in 1974, it has been a major campaign for environmental issues ranging from marine pollution, human overgrowth and raising awareness about global warming, sustainable consumption and wildlife crime.

According to 'United Nations', the theme for 2020 World Environ-

ment Day is "Biodiversity-a concern that is both urgent and existential. Recent events from bush fires in Brazil, United States and Australia to Locust infestations across East Africa and now a global COVID 19 pandemic demonstrates the interdependence of human and webs of life in which they exist.

For healthy living environment plays an important role. It provides us air, food etc. It is correctly said that 'the difference between animals and humans is that animals change themselves for the environment but humans change the environment for themselves. Environment is just like our neighbourhood, its surrounding conditions influence us and modify growth and development. Since the theme of 2020 World Environment Day

is "Biodiversity ". Why should we care about biodiversity?

Biodiversity is the variation of earth's terrestrial, fresh water and marine species as well as their habitats. Biodiversity is vital to the survival of all life forms on earth and is also the cornerstone for the goods and services of the environment that allows human societies to thrive. Biodiversity provides us with the food, water and resources as well as services such as climate control, pollination, flood mitigation and cycling of nutrients. Ecosystems are relying on all parts from the smallest bacteria to the largest vertebrate. It is all interconnected. Some are producing oxygen that others use for breathing. Some provide food for larger species, which in turn become to even larger species. Every

living organism has a role to play in the maintenance of balance.

Currently as many as one million plant and animal species are at the risk of extinction, most of this is because of human activities. The decisions that people make now will determine the kind of world your future generations will inherit. The idea is to understand that young people have a role to play in protecting the loss of biodiversity and preserving nature for our future.

Amidst of the global COVID 19 pandemic, it is of crucial importance to realise the importance of nature. It is time to wake up. To take notice. To raise our voices. It is time to build back better for people and planet.

*Rayees Ahmad Kumar
Govt BHS Anderwan Ganderbal*

On June 5 every year, world observes international environment day. People from more than 100 countries observe this day. Promoted by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) the day is being observed since the year 1973. Above all the main purpose of observing this day is to spread awareness. The awareness about the conservation of our environment. It is our duty to protect our environment and stop all the exploitation that is destroying it. Because in the end, it is our basic need for our survival and our generations ahead.

Why do we need to observe the day?

Environment is crucial for our survival on this planet. It makes life sustainable. Without it, we cannot survive even for a day. For instance, our skin will burn, the lungs will rupture and our blood pressure will rise. We will not have food and water to survive. And this will also happen because of the imbalance of heat and atmospheric pressure. Thus it is important that we should take care of the environment. Also, abandon all the exploitation that we are causing to it. This day reminds us of our responsibilities towards that end.

What do we do on World Environment Day?

On the world environment day, we all take a day off from our work and join various campaigns to spread awareness about environment protection. Moreover, we all plant small saplings in a barren land so that it may grow and flourish in the land area after some years. Also, we take part in various processions to make people aware of this day. So that they may also take part in protecting our environment. Furthermore, in schools, the teachers teach the students the methods to plant a tree. The school provides buses to take the students to the jungles. There they come to know about the different types of plants and the types of vegetation in which they survive.

World Environment Day 2020

“Biodiversity” is chosen as theme for world environment day 2020 by United Nations (UN). Biodiversity is the variety of living organisms and their interactions with each other, i.e. life on Earth. The diversity linked to micro-organisms, different plants and animals is included in biodiversity. Bacteria, fungi and other microorganisms, bryophytes and the various plants, birds, insects, fish and humans are all the fundamental part of biodiversity. Biodiversity can occur in a very small particular area or in a very large area like the ocean. Biodiversity can be present in different ecosystems such as the desert ecosystem, the aquatic ecosystem and the terrestrial ecosystem, including the grassland ecosystem, the forest ecosystem, etc. Biodiversity is therefore present everywhere on earth.

Type of Biodiversity

There are three prime types of biodiversity viz, Genetic biodiversity, Species biodiversity and habitat / ecosystem biodiversity.

Genetic biodiversity: Genetic biodiversity is related to the genes of living organism and is the diversity within the specific species. Genes are responsible for transmission of certain factors or traits from one generation to the next within the same species, so genetic biodiversity has occurred within the same specific species. It is also called as within species diversity. Genes give unique characters or features to each individual species. Genetic biodiversity covers different varieties of a single species or a distinct population of a single species. For example, if we see animals like dogs and cats, there are thousands of different breeds available. Flower like rose, there are different varieties of roses of colours, shape and other characters available.

Species biodiversity: Species biodiversity occurs among different types of species (more than one different species) in a particular area or location. Here, the number of species is the basic unit for classification. Different organisms have different features and characters and that is why they cannot reproduce or



Conservation Of Biodiversity: Need Of The Hour

On This Day Of World Environment Day, Take A Pledge To Save Our Biodiversity

TAWSEEF A. MIR

interbred, therefore they are considered as different species. The organism that can be reproduced with each other is considered to be as single species. The diversity among the number of species and their different individual varieties that live in a particular area at a given time is called species biodiversity. Here, there may be changes in the type and numbers of species over time, period or session. So, in a particular area, there may be particular species such as horse, dogs, elephant, lion, particular birds, plants, etc and some of them may be more at particular location, then it is called as species richness.

Protect and maintain the important ecosystem from destruction by preserving natural resources, maintaining the crucial ecosystem process, minimizing use, optimizing consumption, avoiding waste and maintaining aids and survival systems.

Ecosystem biodiversity/ Habitat biodiversity: The ecosystem is the interaction and interrelation between different living organisms and its non-living environment. The species can be different in different environments from geological conditions and therefore the diversity linked to different types of ecosystem such as forest, desert, aquatic ecosystem is called ecosystem biodiversity.

Importance of biodiversity to humans

Over 8.7 million species on our planet have a specific ecosystem like a patch of wood. Healthy biodiversity ensures the stability of ecosystems by reducing the dependence of one species on another for food shelter and even the maintenance of the physical environment. One species can make a huge difference to an entire ecosystem. We would all prefer a lush green planet with lots of insect birds and flowers rather than a barren planet, but to really convince

people that biodiversity is important, we need to look at its economic value.

The World Conservation Union estimates that the goods and services provided by ecosystems represent around \$ 33 trillion a year, reduced by diversity. Millions, if not billions, of people face a future, as food suppliers are more vulnerable to pests and diseases, fresh water is scarce, and we have no drugs to cure life-threatening diseases.

Biodiversity protects the water resources it cleans; it controls the route to be followed and the stabilizer banks thus reducing the risk of flooding.

Biodiversity has also improved the quality of the soil again reducing the risk of flooding and increased fertility, so potential crop yields. We are currently taking a hundred billion kilograms of food from the oceans. If you don't keep these supplies, how are we going to replace food sources in the future and what about traditional and modern medicine.

Medicine biodiversity necessary for diseases like cardiovascular disease and diabetes. So many modern medicines are derived from wild species such as some pain relievers, heart medicines, anticancer medicines and diabetes treatments. There are so many other important species that have not yet been studied or discovered that could provide us with a generally important remedy or treatment. If we do not start to prevent biodiversity loss, we may never the chance to discover and develop this potentially life-saving drug.

Loss of biodiversity increases the spread of infec-

tious diseases. The epidemics of avian influenza with Ebola virus, malaria and corona virus Pandemic COVID-19 have all been attributed to human impacts on biodiversity. Biodiversity also help humans to generate income via tourism, Europe and Africa generates remarkable amount of income as agriculture, forestry and fishing combined, but even England has increased its animal species less and its landscapes less extreme than the value of the forest day of other countries or even estimated at around 1 billion pounds.

Conservation of biodiversity

The protection, management and preservation of genetic diversity, species and ecosystems are important and are also called biodiversity conservation. We must protect flora and fauna for the sustainable growth of individual species and of all types of ecosystems. As there is a strong interaction and relationship between the varieties of species, the ecosystem and the environment, they are interdependent. The richness of species, the ecosystem, the environment and the sustainable growth of life on earth are also called optimal conservation of biodiversity.

All over the world, biodiversity loss is observed due to habitat loss, global warming, climate change, excessive exploration of resources, illegal poaching of rear animals, deadly diseases, pollution of the environment, industrialization, urbanization, deforestation, etc.It is true that humans are the most beneficial species that benefit from almost all the benefits of biodiversity. Therefore, it is his primary responsibility to take corrective action against the damage caused by it and to improve biodiversity through scientific management.

The main objective of conserving biodiversity is to save life on earth, preserve all species, maintain the ecosystem and a healthy environment forever so that it remains healthy for the next generation as well. Conserving biodiversity is very important for maintaining the food chain, providing a healthy environment for varieties of species, including humans, and gaining support for our sustainable development.

Here are the main objectives of biodiversity conservation

- . Protect and maintain the important ecosystem from destruction by preserving natural resources, maintaining the crucial ecosystem process, minimizing use, optimizing consumption, avoiding waste and maintaining aids and survival systems.
- . Since humans are part of the biodiversity of the ecosystem, it is ethical to conserve biodiversity.
- . Protect and preserve the extinction of varieties of plants and animal species.
- . Promote the development of rear species, ensure the exploration of new species with their importance and their ecosystem for sustainable biodiversity.
- . Maintain the aesthetics of the Earth.
- . Since man is the main consumer of resources, the conservation of biodiversity requires economic and scientific advantages.

Biodiversity conservation challenges

- . There are still several species which are not yet discovered, the habitat of the servals and the landscapes are still not explored and therefore their effect on each other, ecosystem and species, is still unknown. In such circumstances, it is very difficult to develop indicators for measuring and monitoring the parameters of biodiversity.
- . Although the conservation of biodiversity in certain areas is regulated by legislation by declaring the area as a national park, sanctuaries, botanical garden,inclusion in all the relevant laws remains difficult.
- . Maintaining Ex-Situ conservation of biodiversity is costly economically.

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It Is Time To Heal The Environment

PRIYANKA SAURABH

Now the time has come, we need to hear the call of Mother Earth. If we have given earth the status of our mother, then we have to deal with her in that spirit. Otherwise, we have to bear the pain of the prophecy of Stephen Hawking. He believed that the days of us humans on earth are now complete. We have spent a million years here. Sooner or later, either a comet will come from somewhere and destroy it or the heat of the sun is going to swallow it or some epidemic will breakout and this earth will be emptied of all and everything on it.

After struggling through lockdowns, with a flood of new concerns and tensions, it's finally time to rest. It is certain that a sign of 'normalcy' is to return to our wounded earth and the environment. So this is the time to celebrate World Environment Day. We should come together and work towards the betterment of this planet.

The theme of this year's World Environment Day is 'Time for Nature'. To celebrate life, various species, imperatives earth supplies us free of charge. And to know this planet well, once again, we must dive into the infinite wisdom acquired through research and innovations. And once again, we must unravel the team, resolve, and work to improve the environment that frustrates us.

The coronavirus is a kind of signal in today's time, which leads us to the beauty of nature. This gives us an indication that if we want a clean and safe climate in this way, then in the future we will have to practice for an even bigger lockdown at our level, but without viruses like Covid-19. It also indicates that if we do not respect the rights of the environment, then we have to be ready to face the brunt of pandemics like COVID-19.

Global carbon emissions from the fossil fuel industry - the fossil fuse industry - could be reduced by a record 5 percent this year to 2.5 billion tonnes. The peak of the Coronavirus epidemic has caused the biggest drop in demand for this fossil fuel. Not only this, because of the epidemic, but unprecedented restrictions on travel, work, and industries have also ensured good days with good quality air even in our crumbling cities. In this sequence, the pollution and greenhouse gas emission levels have fallen in all continents.

The coronavirus epidemic has caused a global decrease in economic activity, although this is a major cause for concern, the reduction of human activities does have a positive effect on the environment. Now see, these days the number of industrial and

transport emissions and waste generation has come down and the average data is working to clear the pollutants in the atmosphere, soil, and water. This effect is also in contrast to carbon emissions, which rose to 5 percent after the global financial crash a decade ago.

The month of May, which typically records peak carbon emissions due to leaf decomposition, recorded what the minimum levels of pollutants in the air could be after the 2008 financial crisis. Not only India, but China and Northern Italy have also recorded a significant reduction in nitrogen dioxide levels in their country. As a result of the lockdown, there has been a tremendous improvement in the Air Quality Index in major cities of the world in March and April. The quality of air has improved substantially due to the formation of carbon dioxide (III 2), nitrogen oxide (Hr &), and related ozone (Hr 3) and reduced factory and road traffic emissions in particulate matter. At the same time, water bodies are also being cleaned and rivers like Yamuna and Ganga have shown very significant improvements since the implementation of a nationwide lockout.

In this situation, when all nations are almost shut in the shadow of the coronavirus, better implementation of environmental, transport and industry regulations have proved useful in reducing the hormonal effects of human activities on the environment, although such developments have led to global production. . Have given huge economic and social shocks in consumption and employment levels, but issues like air pollution and a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions are also related to this, so as long as the coronavirus crisis continues to reduce economic activity, carbon emissions are relatively Will be less If seen, this is a big and sustainable environmental improvement.

Deaths due to exposure to air pollution at the global level are almost equal in proportion to epidemics with 7 million deaths every year.

There should be a wake-up call in India

to overcome this problem. Yes, although the method of lockdown is not an ideal way to reduce air pollution, in the present condition it proves that air pollution is man-made and now we have also come to know that we are the only people who reduce pollution can do. The current coronavirus crisis is giving India opportunities to invest in a clean energy future, we have to capitalise on this opportunity. Short-term climate pollutants - including black carbon, methane, hydrofluorocarbons, and tropospheric ozone - are all-powerful climate cancers that promote global warming. They also significantly affect food, water, and economic security for large populations around the world. The effects of short-term climate pollutants represent a major development issue that seeks quick and significant global action, reducing short-term climate pollutant emissions. Mitigation measures are often accessible and cost-effective, and if implemented quickly, can prove to be immediately beneficial to the health and livelihood of millions of people along with the climate.

Through science on climate change, we have failed to recognise the danger to the public, which has led to the widespread denial of facts. The loss of habitat and biodiversity creates conditions for deadly viruses spreading in human communities and diseases such as Covid-19 and if we continue to destroy our land, we will also destroy the necessary resources we have, and thereby Our agricultural systems will also get a deep push.

There is no doubt that the drastic steps taken on climate change can reduce food and water shortages, natural disasters, and sea-level rise, thereby ensuring the safety of countless individuals and communities. is. Around the world, healthy people are changing their lifestyles to protect more sensitive people in their community. Similar dedication to climate change can drastically change our energy consumption.

In general - digging up fossil fuels, cutting forests, and igniting health for profit, conve-

nience, and consumption - is fueling destructive climate change. Now the time has come when precautionary steps should be taken to protect our earth by looking at the present conditions. From this perspective, the coronavirus is a symptom, a sign, that leads us to the beauty of nature. This gives us an indication that if we want a clean and safe climate like this, then in the future we will have to practice for even bigger lockdowns at our level, but without viruses like Covid-19. This indicates that if we do not respect the rights of the environment, then we have to be ready to face the brunt of pandemics like Covid-19.

Now the time has come, we need to hear the call of Mother Earth. If we have given earth the status of our mother, then we have to deal with her in that spirit. Otherwise, we have to bear the pain of the prophecy of Stephen Hawking, the greatest scientist of the modern age, and the astronomer who solved many mysteries of the universe. He believed that the days of us humans on earth are now complete. We have spent a million years here. The age of the Earth is now only two hundred to five hundred years. After this, either a comet will come from somewhere and hit it or the heat of the sun is going to swallow it or some epidemic will come and this earth will be emptied of all and everything on it.

According to Hawking, if a man has to survive for one or one million years more, he will have to take refuge on another planet except for Earth. Now, which planet will it be, it is yet to be discovered. The pace of this quest is very slow at the moment. Looking at the rapid pace of the Earth's weather, temperature and the conditions of life here, there is no reason to not trust his prediction. But yes after lockdown the way the condition of our Earth and the surrounding climate has changed if we draw a lesson from it a lot can change.

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Survey Shows Large-Scale Job Losses, Lower Food Intake Amid LOCKDOWN

THE FINDINGS PERTAIN ONLY TO THE SAMPLE and are not representative of the entire state. Findings should not be compared across states,"

Agencies

NEW DELHI- A survey conducted by the Azim Premji University has shown heavy job losses for informal and migrant workers in the four states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Odisha and Madhya Pradesh due to the lockdown.

The disruption in the economy and labour markets in these states is enormous. Livelihoods have been devastated at unprecedented levels during the lockdown and the recovery from this could be slow and very painful, the survey pointed out.

It found that Covid-19 and its associated safety measures, such as the lockdown since March 24, have taken a heavy toll on the economy, particularly on the

vulnerable informal and migrant workers and their families.

The survey measured levels of employment and earnings since the lockdown was imposed, and compared them to the situation prevailing in February. It covered self-employed, casual and regular wage/salaried workers.

The sample for the survey was selected using the networks of civil society organisation collaborators.

"The findings pertain only to the sample and are not representative of the entire state. Findings should not be compared across states," it said.

For the survey in Bihar (Rural) with 173 respondents, it said nearly half (46 per cent) of the respondents lost employment.

Casual wage workers were more severely affected, with eight in 10 casual workers losing jobs.

More women (55 per cent) lost employment compared to men (35 per cent). More SC/ST workers (58 per cent) lost employment compared to OBC workers (35 per cent). Nearly seven in 10 households had to reduce their food intake during the lockdown.

The SC/ST households were the worst affected in terms of food intake as 85 per cent of them were consuming less food than before.

Nearly two in 10 vulnerable households did not receive rations. More than half (56 per cent) of the vulnerable households did not receive Jan Dhan cash transfer. Four in 10 vulnerable households did not receive any cash transfer,

the survey said for Bihar.

For Jharkhand (Rural) with 458 respondents, the survey found that nearly six in 10 (58 per cent) respondents lost their employment. Casual wage workers were more severely affected with 76 per cent reporting loss of employment.

Nine in 10 farmers (89 per cent) were not able to harvest or sell their produce at full price. Four in 10 salaried workers (42 per cent) were not paid salaries or faced pay cuts during the lockdown.

For non-agricultural, self-employed workers and wage workers, who were still employed, average weekly earnings fell by two-third (65 per cent).

Nearly eight in 10 (77 per cent) households reported reducing

their food intake during the lockdown. Casual wage workers were more severely affected with nine in 10 (93 per cent) casual wage workers reporting reduced food intake.

Six in 10 vulnerable households did not receive Jan Dhan cash transfer and more than half (54 per cent) vulnerable households did not receive any cash transfer.

In Odisha, the survey of 503 respondents found that two-third (67 per cent) respondents reported losing their employment. The urban self-employed people were the worst-hit with nearly all of them (96 per cent) losing their employment.

The earnings of casual wage workers and non-agricultural self-employed people who retained their employment fell by

80 per cent.

Nine in 10 farmers were unable to harvest or sell their produce at full price. Eight in 10 households reported consuming less food during the lockdown than before. Urban households and migrants were more severely affected with nine in 10 reporting reduction in food intake.

The ration distribution was good with nearly nine in 10 households receiving rations. However, seven in 10 vulnerable households did not receive Jan Dhan cash transfer. A quarter of vulnerable households did not receive any cash transfer.

In Madhya Pradesh (Rural) with 525 respondents, the survey found that almost half of the respondents (48 per cent) lost em-

ployment during the lockdown, and the worst-hit were the casual workers, with 65 per cent of them losing their jobs.

More than seven in 10 farmers were unable to harvest or sell their produce at full price. One-fourth of households did not have money to buy even a week's worth of essentials. SC/ST households were more constrained as compared to OBC and general category households.

Seven in 10 households were consuming less food than before during the lockdown. As many as 45 per cent of all vulnerable households did not receive Jan Dhan cash transfer. Nearly four out of 10 (36 per cent) vulnerable households did not receive any cash transfer.

30 Forms Of Physical, Verbal Abuse Part Of Disciplining Efforts By Indian Households: UNICEF

Press Trust Of India

At least 30 different forms of physical and verbal abuse are reported as part of disciplining efforts by Indian households, according to a new study by UNICEF conducted in five states.

The study 'Parenting Matters: Examining Parenting Approaches and Practices' was conducted in two districts each in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Odisha, three districts in Rajasthan and four districts in Maharashtra.

The study outlines the various forms of violence against children resorted to in the household – physical violence (burning; pinching; slapping; beating with implements like stick, belts, rods) verbal abuse (blaming; criticizing; shouting; use of foul language); witnessing physical violence (towards one parent; to-



wards siblings; outside the family) and emotional abuse (restricting movement; denying food; discrimination; instilling fear).

"At least 30 different forms of physical and verbal abuse are reported as part of disciplining efforts. The punishment is a widely accepted method to discipline children for both boys and girls in families, schools and at the community level for both girls

and boys," the study said. The study also underlined that girls and boys are raised very differently from a very early age – with the burden of household chores, day to day restrictions, being imposed more on girls by fathers.

"Mothers are the main caregivers for children while fathers are much less involved. While male caregivers took children outdoors, mothers are more involved in en-

abling indoor stimulation through storytelling and singing, among others," the study said.

Speaking on the release of the report, Yasmin Ali Haque, UNICEF Representative in India said, "Our experience in Ebola crisis shows us that young children are more likely to experience violence, abuse and neglect as families struggle to cope, that could have a lifelong impact on them." "Awareness on positive parenting practices are relevant now more than ever to promote both mental and physical well-being of children. Supporting parents and caregivers to provide young children with nurturing care in times of crisis is essential," she said.

The study recommended building skills of frontline workers to better engage with caregivers. It also highlights the need for quality engagement of fathers in caregiving to support their child's development.

COVID-19 Plasma Therapy Safe, Without Adverse Side Effects: Study



Press Trust Of India

The clinical administration of the blood component plasma from recovered COVID-19 patients to those severely affected by the disease could be a safe option without adverse side effects, according to a study which may lead to better treatment protocols against novel coronavirus infection.

On March 28, researchers from the Houston Methodist Hospital in the US, began clinical trials to transfuse plasma from recovered COVID-19 patients into critically ill patients, they noted in a statement.

In the study, published in The American Journal of Pathology, the scientists described the clinical outcomes of the convalescent plasma transfusion trial, showing 19 out of 25 patients improving with the treatment, and 11 discharged from the hospital.

However, the study noted that a randomised clinical trial, with a large control group, is needed to validate the findings.

According to the researchers, this is the largest cohort worldwide assessed for outcomes pertaining to convalescent plasma transfusion for COVID-19, and is the first peer-reviewed publication on convalescent plasma use in the US.

While physician scientists around the world scrambled to test new drugs and treatments against the COVID-19 virus, convalescent serum therapy emerged as potentially one of the most promising strategies, said study co-author James Musser from Houston Methodist Hospital.

"With no proven treatments or cures for COVID-19 patients, now was the time in our history to move ahead rapidly," Musser added.

The scientists noted that the century-old therapeutic approach dates back to at least as early as 1918 to fight the Spanish Flu.

More recently, the researchers added that convalescent plasma therapy was used with some success during the 2003 SARS pandemic, the 2009 influenza H1N1 pandemic, and the 2015 Ebola outbreak in Africa.

They said early on in the COVID-19 pandemic, there were a handful of critically ill patients in China who showed improvement from plasma therapy, following which their team at Houston Methodist hospital targeted the COVID-19 virus with the procedure.

According to the study, the observed complications were consistent with findings reported for COVID-19 disease progression, and did not result from the

plasma transfusions.

The researchers said the study's findings were consistent with several other small case studies of convalescent plasma use for severe COVID-19 that have been recently reported.

Although the convalescent plasma therapy administered on the front lines at Houston Methodist was implemented for emergency treatment, they said there is an immediate need for controlled clinical trials to determine its efficacy. Citing the limitations of the research, the scientists said the study was a small case series and no control group was included. They said it is not clear if the 25 patients given convalescent plasma would have improved without the treatment, adding that all patients were treated with multiple other medications, including antiviral and anti-inflammatory agents.

"We cannot conclude that the patient outcomes were due solely to administration of convalescent plasma," the researchers noted in the study.

They said a randomised clinical trial would help address some questions, including whether patients would have better outcomes if plasma transfusions were administered sooner after the onset of symptoms.

Study Explains How A Fat Cell's Immune Response Makes Obesity Worse

Agencies

WASHINGTON D.C.: During obesity, a person's own fat cells set off a complex inflammatory chain reaction that can drive to disrupt metabolism and weaken immune response. This can potentially place people at higher risk of diseases and infections, including COVID-19.

The study was led by scientists at Cincinnati Children's and the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine and was published in Nature Communications.

The team reports that type I interferons, a class of substances produced by immune cells

also are produced by fat cells called adipocytes. These interferons drive a constant low-level, chronic immune response that amplifies "vigor" to a cycle of inflammation within white adipose tissue (WAT).

More commonly known as white fat, this is the type of fat that expands to form most of the unwanted bulges around our thighs, arms, and bellies.

This inflammation, in turn, appears to drive a cascade of cellular responses that promote obesity-related disease, especially type 2 diabetes and non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD).

"Our novel study reveals how Type I Interferon sensing

by adipocytes uncovers their dormant inflammatory potential and exacerbates obesity-associated metabolic arrangements," said Senad Divanovic, PhD, corresponding author and a researcher in the Division of Immunobiology at Cincinnati Children's.

"Further, our findings highlight a previously underappreciated role for adipocytes as a contributor to the overall inflammation in obesity," Divanovic added.

The new study shows how type I interferons operate along an axis of interaction with IFN receptors (IFNAR) to trigger a vicious cycle of inflammation.

Among the effects: changes in expression of several genes associated with inflammation, glycolysis, and fatty acid production.

For example, mice fed an obesity-inducing diet displayed an augmented type I IFN signature including increases in Ifnb1, Ifnar1, Oas1a, and Isg15 gene expression, the team reported.

Importantly, many of the metabolic changes documented in mice were found to be conserved in human adipocytes.

This activity was unexpected because until now most scientists have studied type 1 interferons in relation to viral infections and immune cell function.

Anti-Malaria Drug Touted By Donald Trump Ineffective At Preventing COVID-19: Study

Agencies

Washington, United States: Taking hydroxychloroquine shortly after being exposed to COVID-19 does not help prevent infection in a statistically meaningful way, scientists reported Wednesday following a clinical trial.

The medicine has been touted by US President Donald Trump, who has said he used it as a prophylaxis against the novel coronavirus.

But an experiment involving 821 people across the United States and Canada showed it did not work significantly better than a placebo for this purpose. The study was led by a team at the University of Minnesota, and their paper was published in the New England Journal of Medicine.

Researchers enrolled adults who had come into contact with someone who had a confirmed case of COVID-19 for more than 10 minutes at a distance of six feet (about two meters) or less.

The majority of them -- 719 -- were deemed to have had "high-risk" exposure because they wore neither a face mask nor an eye shield at the time, while the rest were "moderate-risk" because they covered their face but did not

have goggles.

All participants were randomly assigned to receive either hydroxychloroquine -- which is certified for use against malaria, rheumatoid arthritis and lupus -- or a placebo, within four days.

The researchers then looked at how many patients went on to develop COVID-19 over the next two weeks, which was confirmed either by a laboratory test or by clinical signs. They found that 49 of the 414 given the medicine got the disease caused by the coronavirus, compared to 58 of the 407 on the placebo.

This translates to 11.83 percent on the drug were infected, versus 14.25 percent on the placebo.

The absolute difference of about 2.4 percentage points in favor of the medicine was not considered statistically significant given the sample size, meaning it could have occurred because of chance.

Side effects were more common with hydroxychloroquine than with the placebo -- 40.1 percent versus 16.8 percent -- but no serious adverse reactions were reported.

"This randomized trial did not demonstrate a significant benefit of hydroxychloroquine as postexposure prophylaxis for COVID-19," wrote the authors.



US Defence Secretary Opposes Using Troops To Quell Protests

Agencies

WASHINGTON: US Defence Secretary Mark Esper said on Wednesday he was against using active duty troops to quell the protests for racial justice gripping the United States -- breaking with President Donald Trump's recent threat to deploy the military to restore order.

Tens of thousands of demonstrators had defied nighttime curfews in several US cities going into a ninth day of unrest to voice anger over the death of George Floyd, an unarmed, handcuffed black man killed by a white police officer last week in Minnesota.

But the demonstrations were largely peaceful and while there were tense stand-offs with law enforcement the protests did not feature the looting or clashes with police of previous days.

Trump has raised the possibility of invoking the rarely used Insurrection Act to deploy active duty soldiers against protesters but his Pentagon

chief came out firmly against the move on Wednesday.

Tens of thousands of demonstrators defy nighttime curfews in several American cities

"I've always believed and continue to believe that the National Guard is best suited for performing domestic support to civil authorities in these situations in support of local law enforcement," Esper said at a briefing.

"The option to use active duty forces in a law enforcement role should only be used as a matter of last resort and only in the most urgent and dire of situations," he said. "We are not in one of those situations now."

"I do not support invoking the Insurrection Act," Trump denied media reports that he was rushed for his safety to the White House bunker while protests raged in the streets outside.

"It was a false report," Trump told Fox News radio, before saying that he did go into the secure area for an "inspection" and only for a

"tiny, little, short period of time". According to The New York Times, Secret Service bodyguards took Trump into the bunker on Friday night and Fox News said he was also taken into the bunker on Sunday.

Reports of Trump taking shelter sparked a wave of online mockery, which is believed to have contributed to his decision on Monday to make a controversial walk across Lafayette Park -- just outside the White House grounds -- to visit the partly damaged church of St. John's.

Police violently dispersed mostly peaceful crowds of protesters to clear a path for Trump, and Esper on Wednesday sought to distance himself from his appearance at the photo opportunity.

"I do everything I can to stay apolitical," he said. "My aim is to keep the department out of politics." The photo op was loudly condemned by religious leaders, the president's political rivals, and onlookers around the country.

In War With US On Flights, China Blinks First

Agencies

Beijing: China on Thursday said foreign airlines blocked from operating in the country over virus fears would be allowed to resume limited flights, lifting a de facto ban on US carriers, a day after Washington ordered the suspension of all Chinese travel into and out of the US.

The apparent decision to step back by Beijing comes as tensions between the world's two superpowers are sent soaring by a series of issues including Donald Trump's accusations over China's handling of the pandemic, Hong Kong and Huawei.

The latest spat was rooted in the Civil Aviation Authority of China (CAAC) deciding to impose a limit on foreign airlines based on their activity as of March 12. Because US carriers had suspended all flights by that date their cap was set

at zero, while Chinese carriers' flights to the US continued.

On Wednesday the US said it would block Chinese passenger flights from June 16, raising concerns of another front being opened up in the economic titans' standoff.

President Donald Trump's administration will bar Chinese airline companies from flying to the United States effective June 16 in the latest tit-for-tat spat between Washington and Beijing. Conway G. Gittens has the details.

But the CAAC on Thursday said all foreign airlines not listed in the March 12 schedule would now be able to operate one international route into China each week.

Relations between Washington and Beijing have become increasingly strained in recent months after Trump accused China of causing the virus intentionally, while a plan

to impose a strict security law on Hong Kong has increased tensions substantially.

The US has also imposed restrictions on Chinese telecom giant Huawei and ordered a probe into the actions of Chinese companies listed on American financial markets.

For its part, Beijing has mocked the US stance on Hong Kong in light of civil rights protests across the US following the police killing in Minneapolis of George Floyd, an unarmed African-American man.

At the same time, China has gradually relaxed strict air travel caps on some foreign firms as the coronavirus outbreak in the country appears to be under control.

Beijing said last week it would almost triple the number of permitted flights to and from China in June following an outcry from Chinese stranded abroad.

Security Guard Stabs 37 Primary School Students, 2 Adults In China

Agencies

Beijing, China: A knife-wielding attacker wounded 37 students and two adults at a primary school in southern China on Thursday, officials said, with local media identifying a security guard as the perpetrator.

All the victims, including teaching staff, were sent to hospital but were not in a life-threatening condition, authorities in Cangwu County, Guangxi region, said.

The incident at the Wangfu Central Primary School happened at 8:30 am when children would normally arrive for class. The attacker, reportedly aged around 50, was "under control", the government said.

"37 students suffered mild injuries and two adults suffered more severe injuries. All of them were sent to a hospital for treatment, and none of their lives are in danger," it said.

Schools in the region had only reopened in May after being closed for months due to the coronavirus outbreak.

A number of schools in China have been hit by attacks in recent years, forcing authorities to step up security amid calls for more research into the root causes of such acts.

In November, a man climbed a kindergarten wall in southwest Yunnan province and sprayed people with a corrosive liquid, wounding 51 of them, mostly students.

Last September, eight schoolchildren died and two others were wounded in a "school-related criminal case" in the central Hubei province, with a 40-year-old man arrested.

A knife-wielding man killed two people and wounded two others at a primary school in central Hunan province in April last year.

In April 2018, a man killed nine middle school students as they were returning home, in one of the deadliest knife attacks seen in China in recent years.

A homemade explosive killed eight people and injured dozens outside a kindergarten in Jiangsu province in June 2017.

Kuwait Doesn't Want To Be An Expat-Majority Nation Anymore

Agencies

Kuwait City: Kuwait's Prime Minister has said the country's expatriate population should be more than halved to 30% of the total, as the coronavirus pandemic and a slump in oil prices send shudders through Gulf economies.

Foreigners account for nearly 3.4 million of Kuwait's 4.8 million people, and "we

citizens will make replacing many foreign workers difficult, especially in occupations Kuwaitis are reluctant to take up, and will lower overall consumption. On Twitter, some reacted with scorn.

"The percentage of domestic helpers alone is more than 50% of Kuwaitis, let alone the other residents," said Sajed Al-Abdaly, a prominent political columnist. "Some state-



have a future challenge to address this imbalance," Sheikh Sabah Al-Khalid Al-Sabah told the top editors of local newspapers on Wednesday, according to an official statement carried by state-run KUNA.

The comments are a rare public acknowledgement by the executive of one of Kuwait's most contentious issues, and follow a renewed push by lawmakers to reduce the number of overseas workers, particularly unskilled labour, with the economy under intense strain. MPs are proposing a quota system as well as replacing all expatriate government employees, estimated at 100,000, with Kuwaitis.

Critics of the approach point out that small pools of

ments are impossible for the moment they're made. Your Excellency, talk to our minds so that you can help us to believe in the seriousness of your proposition."

Gulf economies leveraged their oil wealth to expand their populations with foreign workers and build vibrant consumer societies. Saudi Arabia, alongside Germany, is the world's second-biggest destination for migrants, while the United Arab Emirates last year hosted more migrants than France or Canada, according to United Nations estimates. In Kuwait, at least 650,000 expatriates, mostly from the Philippines, India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, are employed as domestic workers alone.

NEWS MAKERS

George Floyd Was Infected With COVID-19, Autopsy Reveals

George Floyd, whose fatal encounter with Minneapolis police stirred a global outcry over racial bias by US law enforcement, tested positive for the coronavirus, his autopsy showed, but the infection was not listed as a factor in his death.

The official cause of death, according to the full 20-page report made public on Wednesday by the Hennepin County Medical Examiner's Office, was cardiopulmonary arrest while Floyd was being restrained by police taking him into custody on May 25.

The coroner ruled the manner of death to be a homicide. Four police officers since fired from their jobs for their role in the incident, which was captured on a bystander's cellphone video, are being



held on criminal charges, one of them accused of murder.

Charges against Derek Chauvin, the police officer who knelt on George Floyd's neck, have also been upgraded to second-degree murder.

The video showed that officer using his knee to press Floyd's neck into the street for nearly nine minutes while the 46-year-old victim gasped for air and repeatedly groaned, "please, I can't breathe." Floyd

was pronounced dead at a hospital a short time later.

The video immediately went viral on the internet, igniting nine days of nationwide protest and civil strife. Demonstrators have also taken to the streets overseas, from Germany to New Zealand.

The autopsy, in listing cardiopulmonary arrest as the cause of Floyd's death, also cited "complicating law enforcement subdual, restraint and neck compression."

The report listed several additional factors as "significant conditions" contributing to Floyd's death, including heart disease, high blood pressure and intoxication from the powerful opioid fentanyl, as well as recent methamphetamine use.

Indian-American Businessman Opens His Doors To Protestors, Hailed As "Hero" In US

Washington: An Indian-American businessman, who opened the doors of his home in Washington to over 70 people demonstrating against the custodial killing of George Floyd, has emerged as a hero after he helped some strangers, fed them and made sure they were safe in his house, according to US media reports.

The death of 46-year-old African-American Floyd last week in Minneapolis has led to one of the biggest civic unrest in the history of America.

Rahul Dubey, who has been living in Washington DC for the last 17 years, accommodated the large number of people in his house with some adjusting on the couch, some finding space in the rooms, while some were gratified to get rest even on the ledges of the bathtub.

"There's about 75 people in my

house. Some have got couch space. There's a family, a mother and daughter here, that I gave my son's room to so they get some peace and quiet. Yeah, even the ledges of the bathtub, and no one's bitching. They're happy, no, they're not happy. They're safe. They're cheering.

"They're backing each other," Mr Dubey, 44, told Esquire magazine in an interview on Tuesday.

The day after the Monday's protests, Mr Dubey, the owner of the Alvarez Dubey Trading Co., appeared in major news media outlets and was hailed as a saviour as those who took shelter in his house started tweeting about it.

"Rahul saved lives last night," one Black Lives Matter activist wrote on Twitter. "He ended this with an inspirational speech about not giving up and keeping up the peaceful fight. What a guy. Thank you Rahul."

Won't support evildoers: Snapchat won't recommend Trump anymore to users

San Francisco: Snapchat on Wednesday became the latest social network moving to curb the reach of US President Donald Trump, claiming the president has been inciting "racial violence."

The youth-focused social network said it would no longer promote Trump on its Discover platform for recommended content.

"We will not amplify voices who incite racial violence and injustice by giving them free promotion on Discover," a statement from Snapchat said.

The move came days after Twitter took an unprecedented stand by hiding a Trump post it said promoted violence, heating up the White House war with Silicon Valley and social media.

Snapchat parent Snap chief executive Evan Spiegel over the weekend sent a lengthy memo to employees condemning what he saw as a legacy of racial injustice and violence in the US.

Employers Claiming Incapacity To Pay Must Show Balance Sheet In Court: Centre To Supreme Court

NEW DELHI: The Centre has justified in the Supreme Court its March 29 direction asking private establishments to pay full wages to workers during the COVID-19 lockdown and said that employers claiming incapacity in paying salaries must be directed to furnish their audited balance sheets and accounts in the court.

In an affidavit filed in the Supreme Court, the government has said the March 29 directive was a "temporary measure to mitigate the financial hardship" of employees and workers, specially contractual and casual,



during the lockdown period and the directions have been revoked by the authority with effect from May 18.

The affidavit filed by the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) said the direction was fully in conformity with the provisions, scheme and objects of the Disaster Management Act and it is not ultra vires.

While requesting the top court to dispose of as infructuous the batch of pleas challenging the March 29 notification, the government said the "impugned notifications have outlived their life and adjudication of the same would only entail an academic exercise as it would not be in the interest of public to seek recovery of salaries paid to employees and

workers for the said 54 days".

The government said it would neither be in the interest of justice nor in public interest to adjudicate the validity of notification which operated only for 54 days - from March 25 to May 17 - to mitigate the financial hardships of crores of workers and employees. "In the event this court is not inclined to dispose of the present proceedings as having become infructuous and is inclined to adjudicate this matter on merits, the petitioners-employers must be directed to furnish proof of their incapacity to pay wages and salaries in terms of the

order dated March 29, 2020 by placing on record their audited balance sheets and accounts," the affidavit said.

The affidavit has been filed as the top court, while hearing the matter on May 26, had asked the Centre to file counter affidavit within a week on the issues raised in the petitions.

The MHA had passed an order on March 29 asking all employers to make payment of wages to their workers without any deduction for the period their establishments were under closure during the lockdown. The affidavit filed by the government has said that no material has been placed on record to establish the contentions raised in the petitions that employers are not in a financial position to pay their employees and workers.

Supreme Court Seeks Finance Ministry's Reply On Waiver Of Interest During Moratorium Period

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court today sought the Finance Ministry's reply on waiver of interest on loans during the moratorium period after the RBI said it would not be prudent to go for a "forced waiver of interest" risking financial viability of the banks.

The top court said there are two aspects under consideration in this matter - no interest payment on loans during the moratorium period and no interest to be charged on interest.

A bench of Justices Ashok Bhushan, Sanjay Kishan Kaul and MR Shah said that these are challenging times and it is a serious issue as on one hand moratorium is granted and on other hand interest is charged on loans.

The bench was hearing a plea, filed by Gajendra Sharma, in which he has sought a direction to declare the portion of RBI's March 27 notification "as ultra vires to the extent it charges interest on the loan amount during the moratorium period, which create hardship to the petitioner being borrower and creates hindrance and obstruction in 'right to life' guaranteed by Article 21 of the Constitution of India".



Mr Sharma, a resident of Agra, has also sought a direction to the government and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to provide relief in re-payment of loan by not charging interest during the moratorium period.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta, appearing for the Centre, said that he would like to file the reply of Finance Ministry on the issue and sought time.

Senior advocate Rajeev Dutta, appearing for petitioner Gajendra Sharma, said that now the cat is out of the bag as RBI is saying profitability of the banks is primary.

He referred to the recent order of the top court in the Air India matter on booking of middle seats on the non-scheduled flights to bring the stranded Indians from abroad. The court had said that economic interest is not higher than the health of people.



3 Huge Asteroids Headed For Earth As If 2020 Wasn't Bad Enough Already

SRINAGAR: Bushfires, a pandemic, cyclones, earthquakes: 2020 has come equipped with disaster pack. Asteroids have been flying past earth for the past few months. And now, this month, is set to see another round of these space rocks fly by close to earth.

NASA's Near-Earth Object (CEO) browser at the Centre for Near-Earth Object Studies (CNEOS) has revealed that a group of large rocks are going to be in Earth's close range from Saturday (June 6) onwards.

The mammoth space boulder, asteroid 163348 (2002 NN4) is the first of the large asteroids that will breach the Minimum Orbit Intersection Distance (MOID) of 0.05 AU (7.48 million kilometres). According to the NEO Close Approach data table, the asteroid 2002 NN4 will make its closest approach to Earth on June 6, at 3:20AM UTC. At its closest, the asteroid will reach a distance

of 0.034 AU, or 5.09 million kilometres. The asteroid 2002 NN4 is referred to as particularly deadly, since at its broadest part, it has a diameter of 570 metres - as big as the length of almost five football pitches put together, or Dubai's Entisar Tower, slated to be the fourth tallest building in the world. During the fly-by asteroid 2002 NN4 will be at relative velocity of 40,140 kmph.

Meanwhile, all above-mentioned figures and date looks scary, there is no reason to worry for now. The distance from which the two asteroids will pass by is close but safe. In fact, even at its closest point to Earth, it will be at a distance of over 13x the average distance between Earth and the moon.

Asteroid 2013 XA22

The other asteroid is 2013 XA22, which will breach the MOID on Monday, June 8 at 3:40PM UTC. Its approach will be significantly closer

than that of the 2002 NN4, coming to 0.019 AU (2.93 million kilometres) of Earth. Asteroid 2013 XA22 is a far smaller space rock - it has peak diameter of 160 metres, and will fly by at relative velocity of 24,050 kmph

ASTEROID 2010 NY65

The asteroid 441987 (2010 NY65) has also been studied extensively due to its proximal orbit to Earth, after having been discovered a decade ago. The asteroid 2010 NY65 will cross Earth on Wednesday, June 24, at 6:44AM UTC. It will breach the MOID at 0.025 AU (3.76 million kilometres) from Earth. The 2010 NY65 asteroid falls somewhere between the 2002 NN4 and 2013 XA22 asteroids in terms of diameter, with peak size of 310 metres in its diameter. The asteroid 2010 NY65 will have the highest relative velocity of 46,400 kmph among the three large asteroids set to come the closest to Earth during June.

Amid COVID-19, Investors Bet On Jio And Its Giant-Killer Playbook

MUMBAI: From its Silicon Valley-like campus near Mumbai, Indian billionaire Mukesh Ambani's Jio telecom carrier is emerging as a winner from changes in the way Indian consumers plug into a digital economy made more urgent by the coronavirus pandemic.

For Indian shoppers who prefer to order online, it is launching a grocery ordering service with Facebook Inc's popular WhatsApp messaging. For Bollywood fans who would prefer to avoid a crowded theater, it is readying same-day-release on the Jio platform.

Those plans had been in the making for months, but the pandemic has given them a shot in the arm. India's 10-week lockdown has also led to a surge in demand for data, boosting Jio's phone and broadband offerings.

And, over the past six weeks, the digital business of Ambani's Reliance Industries Ltd, known as Jio Platforms, raised a striking \$10 billion from global investors. The investments, including \$5.7 billion from Facebook and money from private equity firms Silver Lake, Vista Equity Partners, General Atlantic and KKR & Co Inc, value Jio Platforms, where Reliance last year announced it was consolidating its digital offerings, at roughly \$65 billion. They also put Jio on track toward a goal Ambani described last year: an eventual listing that would mark a milestone for his effort to unite the digital offerings of his sprawling conglomerate, from set-top boxes to e-commerce and home automation.



Reliance declined to make Ambani, Asia's richest man, available for interview or respond to a detailed list of questions.

But interviews with a dozen people familiar with the company's development efforts show how Reliance has pushed aggressive pricing for a one-stop digital commerce platform that incorporates features modeled on the American tech heavyweights it sees as rivals.

When Jio set out to launch a set-top box, it tasked a team with analysing - and in some cases replicating - some 100 features of an Apple TV set-top box last year, according to a person close to the project and internal Jio documents seen by Reuters. "Presentation and listing of menu items should be similar to Apple TV," one of the documents says, assigning the task a "Priority 1" rating. ne document compares the products' features, like average weight. Another includes instructions like "Matching the background theme of Launcher (home screen) to that of Apple TV."

Jio's set-top box comes included in its broadband plans, with the cheapest annual deal costing around \$110,

whereas Apple TV 4K is selling for around \$210 to \$230 on Indian e-commerce sites.

Apple Inc did not respond to requests for comment.

In other areas, Ambani has shown a willingness to bet big on emerging technology. In India, Jio was an early adopter of voice-over-LTE, which is more efficient than traditional networks. The company expects that to give it an edge in rolling out 5G services.

In partnership with Facebook's WhatsApp, Reliance has launched a new service that allows consumers to order from their local grocery stores at a time when many Indian consumers, like shoppers elsewhere, are trying to minimize trips to stores. The service was rolled out in April in three areas of Greater Mumbai.

TOTAL RELIANCE

Ambani dominates a dizzying array of sectors: Jio is India's leading telecoms carrier, Reliance Retail Limited is its top brick-and-mortar retailer, Reliance's Network18 Media & Investments Limited is one of its biggest news networks, and Reliance's Jamnagar is its largest oil complex.

His empire also produces films at Jio Studios and runs India's top soccer tournament, the Indian Super League.

By providing Indian consumers access to everything from groceries and clothes to banking and home automation via an integrated system running through Jio, Ambani hopes Reliance can become what he calls an "everything company."

Pak Rejects India's Concerns Over Reports Of Destruction Of Buddhist Heritage In Gilgit-Baltistan

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan, on Thursday, rejected India's concerns over reports of vandalism and destruction of the Buddhist heritage in Gilgit-Baltistan, saying they were "preposterous."

India, on Wednesday, conveyed its strong concern to Pakistan over reports of "vandalism, defacement and destruction of invaluable Indian Buddhist heritage located in the so-called Gilgit-Baltistan area of the Indian territory under illegal and forcible occupation of Pakistan."

External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Anurag Srivastava in New Delhi said "egregious activities" of this

and Kashmir," it claimed.

The Foreign Office also accused India of "distorting" the recent Report of the UN Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team (MT) on terrorism to "slander" Pakistan and create "complications" for the Afghan peace process.

According to the report, Pakistan-based terror groups Jaish-e-Mohammad and Lashkar-e-Taiba are engaged in trafficking fighters into Afghanistan who was threatening to derail the peace process in the war-torn country.

India, on Tuesday, asserted that the UN report had vindicated its long-standing



nature displaying contempt for the ancient civilisational and cultural heritage was "highly condemnable".

He said Pakistan must vacate the illegally occupied territory which belonged to India.

Srivastava, replying to a media query on the issue, said India had sought immediate access for its experts to visit the area in order to restore and preserve the invaluable archaeological heritage.

On Thursday, the Foreign Office said the Indian government's contentions concerning the Buddhist cultural heritage in Gilgit-Baltistan were "preposterous" and are part of "anti-Pakistan propaganda."

"The Indian allegations are contrary to the historical facts, international law and relevant UN Security Council Resolutions," the Foreign Office said in a statement.

"The regurgitation of false and preposterous Indian claims does not change the disputed status of Jammu

position that Pakistan remained the epicentre of international terrorism, saying terrorist entities and individuals continue to enjoy safe havens in that country.

"Pakistan categorically rejects India's malicious allegations, which are aimed at misleading the international community," the Foreign Office said.

It claimed that the report is based on briefings provided in Afghanistan to the MT by certain quarters who have long expressed scepticism about the Afghan peace process and said Islamabad has warned the world about the role of "spoilers" within and outside the war-torn nation.

"Pakistan has proposed the listing of several Indian terrorism facilitators on the UN Security Council's terrorism list along with evidence of their involvement in terrorism. We hope the Security Council will designate them soon," it added. PTI

Reliance Industries Closes Rs 53,124 Crore Rights Issue, Subscribed 1.59 Times

MUMBAI: Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) on Wednesday announced that it has achieved successful closure of Rights Issue of Rs 53,124.20 crore.

It was subscribed approximately 1.59 times adding up to an overall commitment of Rs 84,000 crore. The public portion of the rights issue was subscribed 1.22 times.

The Rights Issue Committee of the Board of Directors of the company will meet on June 10 to approve the basis of allotment of equity shares. The rights shares are expected to be listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) and National Stock Exchange (NSE) on June 12," RIL said in a release.

Commenting on the closure of Rights Issue, Mukesh Ambani, CMD of RIL said, "The success of RIL's Rights Issue, seen in the context of the prolonged nationwide

lockdown necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic, is also a vote of confidence, by both domestic investors, foreign investors and small retail shareholders, in the intrinsic strength of the Indian economy."

I have no doubt that the Indian economy will bounce back to follow a high-growth trajectory in the time to come, and make India leading digital nation in the world," he added.

The release said this is the first instance of Rights Entitlement (RE) being traded in demat form on the stock exchanges since SEBI introduced this platform and it was a resounding success.

It said a unique feature of RIL's Rights Issue was that "despite its record-setting magnitude, it was completed entirely on a digital platform, defying the formidable constraints imposed by the COVID-induced lockdown".



Construction Firms Wooing Migrant Workers With Air Tickets, Extra Payments

Unable to meet their deadlines due to labour shortage following return of migrant workers to their home states, several construction firms in Hyderabad have started wooing them back, offering flight tickets and also extra payments.

A senior official of a city-based infrastructure company said the shortage of workers is forcing companies to resort to poaching by luring them with lucrative offers.

Senior vice president of Prestige Group (business operations-Hyderabad) R. Suresh Kumar said one of their con-

tractors has booked flight tickets to bring back 10 carpenters from Patna to Hyderabad.

He justified the move saying that though the timeline for execution of real estate projects has been extended by the regulator RERA, some of the firms like his are determined to complete them possibly on time.

Currently, the Bengaluru-based Prestige Group is involved in three projects in Hyderabad.

"We had about 2,300 workers at our sites. Now, we have about 700. We are putting in all our efforts to see the required workforce is placed

at the sites. The aim is to see the projects are completed on time and the product delivered to the customer," he said.

The Telangana government had earlier said there were about 3.5 lakh migrant labourers working in the state before the lockdown.

However, most of them have gone back as the lockdown was continued.

Some even walked hundreds of kilometers to get back to their homes.

Though the Centre has allowed construction activity to start with the available labour at the work sites, the sudden

shortage of manpower is forcing some companies to resort to poaching.

"All are in desperate times. Poaching of workers also started as firms want to complete their projects and get back stalled bills," a senior official of a construction firm said.

An official of Andhra Pradesh Irrigation Department said about 1,200 workers at the Polavaram project suddenly left last month forcing Megha Engineering and Infrastructure Limited (MEL), the contractor for the project, to arrange special trains to bring labourers from other states.

To Preserve Sunanda Pushkar's Tweets, Shashi Tharoor Goes To Court

NEW DELHI: Congress MP Shashi Tharoor Thursday approached the Delhi High Court seeking direction to the police to take steps to preserve the Twitter account and tweets made by his wife Sunanda Pushkar prior to her death in 2014.

The application, which is likely to come up for hearing on June 8, said the tweets and Twitter timeline of Sunanda Pushkar is of utmost importance in the case and as she is not alive, there is an apprehension that the account and the tweets may be deleted.

They are a crucial right of Mr Tharoor to exonerate himself

from the alleged false charges levelled against him, it said.

Mr Tharoor, the sole accused in the death case of his wife, sought direction to the police to ask "Twitter India" to preserve Sunanda Pushkar's account till the pendency of the proceedings before the trial court.

The former Union minister was accused by Delhi Police under relevant sections of the Indian Penal Code (IPC).

The plea referred to Twitter's policies as per which it can delete the accounts of users who have been inactive for a long period of time.



"Further, in certain cases, if some authorised person or close relative of a deceased person contacts Twitter, the account of such deceased person can be deactivated. In such cases of deletion of account or deactivation of account, the tweets and contents of the Twitter timeline are lost forever," it said.

The application was filed in a pending petition seeking direction to the police to place before the trial court certain tweets of Sunanda Pushkar.

Mr Tharoor has claimed that the tweets clearly indicate that Sunanda Pushkar was not having any "suicidal ideation" as is sought to be alleged by the prosecution.