

YOU ARE  
OFFLINE.

HUMAN RIGHTS UNDER  
LOCKDOWN

The internet services were suspended in the State of Jammu and Kashmir (Now, the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, hereinafter “the valley”), as a pre-emptive step in August 2019. Since then internet services are not restored to the full extent in the valley. Although on the direction of the Supreme Court of India (SC) 2G services were restored in January 2020, the valley still suffers from arbitrary orders of the valley administration amidst COVID-19 pandemic. Following the national lock-down and other restrictive measures, a petition was moved to the SC to quash the order of the valley administration which suspended internet services. However, the SC on 11th May 2020, in FMP v UT of J&K, constituted a special committee to handle the issue at hand. The SC failed to appreciate human rights and allowed the government of India and the valley administration to cover the issue under the garb of national security.....

.....OPINION  
P4

NewsDigest

SMC Mayor Likely To Face Floor Test

Srinagar: As many as 51 corporators of Srinagar Municipal Corporation (SMC) are set to move a no- confidence motion against the Mayor JunaidAzimMattu. 51 corporators, who would move no- confidence motion attended a four-hour long meeting called by former Deputy Mayor, Sheikh Imran in Grand Mahal Shalimar, KNS reported. Quoting sources, the report says that the corporators will submit the no- confidence motion to SMC ● P-02

Man Held Over Social Media Post

Srinagar: Police on Wednesday arrested a man in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir for posting a 'sensitive' and 'objectionable' comment on social media. Balkrishan Bhat was arrested after the social media monitoring unit of police received information that he had made some sensitive and objectionable comments on Facebook, a police spokesperson said. "Taking cognizance of the matter, a case under FIR number 294/2020 ● P-02

Leopard Mauls Minor In Kulgam

Srinagar: A minor was mauled to death by a leopard in south Kashmir's Kulgam district sparking off protest by the locals against the wildlife department, reports said Wednesday. Five-year-old Umar Farooq Baba was attacked and critically injured by a leopard in his native village Manzgamon Tuesday evening, reports said. The beast tried to drag the injured child towards the jungle but the locals chased the beast away. The injured child, reports said was removed to the ● P-02

Girl Drowns In Kangan Canal

Srinagar: A teenage girl on Wednesday died of drowning in a canal in Kangan area of central Kashmir's Ganderbal district. 17-year-old Muneeza Bashir drowned into a canal near her house in Sumbal Bala area of Kangan this evening, officials said. Some passers-by saw the girl drowning in the canal and they immediately informed the police. Soon after the incident, local police and SDRF team launched a rescue operation to trace the girl, however a few hours later, the body was ● P-02

Dogs Bite 20 Bandipora Villagers

Srinagar: A pack of stray dogs on Wednesday went on a biting spree injuring over 20 people, including women in several villages of north Kashmir's Bandipora district. Stray dogs appeared in Mantrigam, Bonkoot, Badibeth and Tanghat villages of the district and attacked the passerby, including women, reports said. The locals came together and chased away the dogs but not before over 20 people were bitten. All the injured were removed to ● P-02

5 More Militants Killed In Shopian, 14 In Four Days

A scene from the encounter site in Shopian- KO photo by Shah Junaid

Observer News Service

Srinagar: After a day's break, five militants, including district commander of Hizbul Mujahideen were killed in a fierce gunfight with government forces in Shopian on Wednesday, taking the number of militants killed in the gunfights with armed forces in the last four days to 14 in the volatile south Kashmir district. "On the basis of a 'specific input' suggesting presence of militants, the Special Operations Group (SOG) of police, army's 44 RR and the personnel of CRPF 178 battalion laid a cordon around a huge apple orchard in Sugoo area of the district in the early hours of Wednesday, reports said. When the search team started advances, the militants present in the orchard

Abducted Man Found Dead

Police on Wednesday recovered body of a man, who was abducted by unidentified gunmen in south Kashmir's Shopian district on Tuesday. Body of Tariq Ahmad Paul was recovered today at Turkwan-gam area of the district with 'torture marks', a day after he was abducted from Pinjora village, reports said. Paul's house was damaged during Monday's encounter ● P-02

Militancy Must End: J&K DGP

Militancy has brought endless pain and suffering to the people of Jammu and Kashmir and it must end, Director of General of Police Dilbagh Singh said on Wednesday. Interacting with police personnel at the Police Cargo building here, he said J&K Police is working in that direction tirelessly, along with the Army and the Central ● P-02

INCRIMINATING MATERIAL INCLUDING ARMS AND ammuniton were recovered from the site of the encounter. All the recovered materials have been taken into case records for further investigation and to probe their complicity in other crimes,"

US Voices Concern Over Attacks On Minorities In India

Press Trust Of India

WASHINGTON: Voicing concern over the alleged attacks and discrimination against religious and ethnic minorities in India, an official American report said on Wednesday that the US officials have emphasised the need to ensure full protection to minorities as guaranteed under the Constitution. Mandated by the US Congress, the '2019 International Religious Freedom Report' that documents major instances of the violation of religious freedom across the world was released by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo at the State Department on Wednesday. India previously rejected the US religious freedom report, saying it sees no locus standi for a foreign government to pronounce on the state of its citizens' constitutionally protected rights. The India section of the report says that the US government officials underscored the importance of respecting religious freedom and promoting tolerance and mutual respect throughout the year with the ruling and opposition parties, civil society and religious freedom activists, and ● P-02

Missing Soldier's Body Found In Dam

Srinagar: The body of a soldier on Wednesday was retrieved from a dam in the border town of Uri in Baramulla district, five days after he went missing. The body of Afsar Singh of army's 5 Jatt regiment was recovered today from a dam in Boniyar area of Uri after five days of continuous searches, officials said. A resident of Bijnor district in Uttar Pradesh, Singh had reportedly slipped into river Jhelum five days ago. The deceased soldier had been serving army since 2016. According to officials, CCTV footage showed that the soldier had left his rifle and cellphone on the river bank. Meanwhile, police have registered a case under relevant sections and started further investigations

LADAKH FACE-OFF India Seeks Status Quo Restoration, Troop Pullout In Border Meet

Press Trust Of India

NEW DELHI: Indian and Chinese armies on Wednesday held Major General-level talks with an aim to end the military standoff in Pangong Tso and a number of other areas in eastern Ladakh, people familiar with the development said. In the over four-and-half-hour meeting, the Indian delegation pressed for restoration of status quo ante and immediate withdrawal of sizeable number of Chinese troops from all the standoff points, they said. The Major General-level dialogue took place in a "positive atmosphere" with an aim to further ease tension between the two sides, they said. The talks came a day after the two armies began a limited disengagement in a few areas in Galwan Valley and Hot Spring in a demonstration of their intent to end the row peacefully. However, both sides remained engaged in aggressive posturing in areas such as Pangong Tso, Daulat Beg Oldie and Demchok. Military sources on Tuesday said the two armies began "disengagement" ►PAGE 02

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Both Nations Taking Steps To Ease Situation: China

China said on Wednesday that Indian and Chinese troops have started implementing the "positive consensus" reached by the senior military officials of the two countries on June 6 aimed at "easing" the situation along the borders. The Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson's remarks came a day after officials in New Delhi suggested that ● P-02

Who's Responsible For Standoff? Cong Asks PM

The Congress asked Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Wednesday how much of India's land had been occupied by the Chinese army and what he was doing to remove them from the Indian territory. Congress spokesperson Manish Tewari said former Army generals and defence experts feared that around 40-60 square ● P-02

28 CRPF Personnel Among 161 Test Positive In J&K

Observer News Service

Srinagar: At least 28 Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel, two doctors and 17 paramedics were among 161 people who tested positive for coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir on Wednesday, taking the number of infected people across the Union Territory to 4507. "161 new COVID-19 cases were detected in J&K. While 115 of them are from Kashmir, 46 are from Jammu," the officials said. According to the reports, 28 CRPF personnel of 90 battalion tested Covid-19 positive at the

BMO Handwara Suspended For 'Misconduct'

Observer News Service

Srinagar: The health department on Wednesday suspended a senior medical officer in north Kashmir's Handwara for using 'un-parliamentary language' against public and healthcare staff. Block Medical Officer (BMO) Handwara, Abdul Majid Bhat was placed under suspension and attached with CMO office after a probe indicted him of using un-parliamentary language for public besides abusing the female staff, officials said Wednesday. His suspension ● P-02

After Poonch, Guns Roar Along LoC In Rajouri

Observer Monitoring Desk

JAMMU: After skirmishes in Poonch, India and Pakistan troops on Wednesday exchanged heavy gunfire along the Line of Control (LoC) in the neighbouring Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir. The Pakistani Army today opened fire and shelled mortars along the LoC in Rajouri district, officials said. The Indian Army effectively retaliated. "At about 0730 hours today, Pak initiated unprovoked ceasefire violation by firing of small arms & intense shelling with mortars along LoC in Nowshera Sector", a defence spokesman said. Exchanges were on when last re-

HC Reserves Verdict On Sagar's Plea Against PSA Detention

Srinagar: The Jammu and Kashmir High Court on Wednesday reserved orders on a plea challenging detention under Public Safety Act of Ali Muhammad Sagar, General Secretary of National Conference. A bench of Justice Sindhu Sharma passed the orders after counsel from both the parties completed arguments. Earlier senior Additional Advocate General B. A. Dar produced the Sagar's detention record. The Senior AAG had already submitted counter affidavit. Sagar was represented by Advocate Shuja-ul-Haq. ● P-02

Cong Cries Foul, Seeks Probe Into Sarpanch's Killing

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir unit of Congress on Wednesday staged a demonstration here against the recent killing of a party sarpanch by unknown gunmen in the valley and demanded a judicial probe into the incident. Led by Pradesh Congress Committee president Ghulam Ahmad Mir, a group of Congress leaders and activists came out of the party headquarters at Residency Road and held a peaceful demonstration to protest the killing of sarpanch Ajay Pandit. Pandit (40) was shot dead by unidentified gunmen in his native village of Larkipora in south Kashmir's Anantnag district on Monday. He was the sarpanch of the Lukbawan pan-

Two Boys Who Kept 'Spirit Of Kashmir' Alive During Pandemic

Arif Nazir

Srinagar: With their eyes glued to cellphone calendar and notebook, Yasir Mukhtar (25) and Musaib Ibrahim (26) are getting close to right count. It's after seven weeks that the childhood playmates and pals from Srinagar's Hyderpora locality got the time to tally the cash receipts and the kits worth lakhs distributed since COVID-19 lockdown began in the valley. "Remember, in this turn, we aren't excluding families we reached out before the holy month of Ramadan," says Musaib while drawing a line on the notebook he's holding. "This is the final draft and it seems we've passed Rs 2.5 lakh already," replies Yasir while continuing with his calculations. Almost two months back, as the virus disrupted the social order, the two friends realized that some needy families were being unnoticed by the community-based NGOs and welfare bodies in many Srinagar pockets amid the post Article-370 siege followed by COVID-19 lockdown. At about the same time, the duo had started a WhatsApp group to track the pulse of the society amid curbs. In the same group, a person would soon express his desire to help three needy families, if identified for him. "We identified the families, shared their details and bank account numbers with the person, but he never responded," says Yasir while adding that they had to make a choice to step up again. Knowing that most people in Kashmir have been under a complete lockdown for more than 9 months, they couldn't start a campaign for public donations.

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# Jailed J&K DySP Withdraws Bail Plea

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** Suspended Jammu and Kashmir DSP Davinder Singh, arrested in a case relating to a plan to execute militant attacks in national capital and other parts of the country, Wednesday withdrew his bail application from a Delhi Court.

He was arrested while ferrying two Hizb-ul-Mujahideen militants in a vehicle on the Srinagar-Jammu Highway earlier this year.

Additional Sessions Judge DharmenderRana allowed the withdrawal of bail application after Singh's advocate, M S Khan, said he has to make certain changes in the application and file some additional documents.

Singh and two other accused - Irfan Shafi Mir and SayedNaveedMushtaq - had moved their applications on Tuesday, claiming they were not required for further custodial interrogation.

All the three accused withdrew

their applications.

I will be filing fresh application on their behalf soon, Khan said.

The three accused -- Singh, Mir and Mushtaq were arrested on March 14, 19 and 27 respectively and are currently lodged in Tihar jail.

Singh was suspended from the Jammu and Kashmir Police in January this year. The Special Cell had brought him to Delhi from Hira Nagar Jail in Jammu and Kashmir.

He was arrested in a case related to planning to execute militant attacks in Delhi and other parts of the country.

According to Police, the accused used to chat with other co-accused and militants of Hizbul Mujahideen through various internet platforms.

Earlier, the police had told the court that Syed NaveedMushtaq and others were planning to execute attacks in Delhi and other parts of the country as well as tar-

geted killings of protected persons.

The police said Mushtaq, the commander of Shopian district of HizbulMujahiddeen, used to chat with the other co-accused and militants through various internet platforms, including dark net chat.

The Delhi Police has filed an FIR under Section 120B (criminal conspiracy) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). The FIR said the youths of Jammu and Kashmir and Punjab are being trained for carrying out militant activities.

## Above-Normal Temperatures In North, West India; Rain Brings Respite In Delhi-NCR

**NEW DELHI:** Parts of northern and western India recorded above-normal temperatures on Wednesday but rain and thunderstorm due to a cyclonic circulation over Rajasthan brought some respite from the heat in Delhi and NCR later in the day.

Meanwhile, the southwest monsoon further advanced area into west central and north Bay of Bengal. Light rains and thunderstorm were witnessed

in parts of Delhi with winds gusting up to 50 kilometres per hour, said KuldeepSrivastava, the head of the regional forecasting centre of the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

The mercury is expected to go down in the next few days as moisture-laden easterly winds due to the low-pressure area in the Bay of Bengal will bring showers in Delhi-NCR on June 12 and June 13, he said.

## 5 More Militants Killed...

associated with Hizb and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) were killed. Among the slain militants is a district commander of Hizb.

"Their bodies were retrieved from the site of encounter. The identification and affiliation of the killed militants is being ascertained," police spokesperson said.

The police spokesperson said that the operation was conducted 'professionally' and no collateral damage occurred.

"Incriminating material including arms and ammunition were recovered from the site of the encounter. All the recovered materials have been taken into case records for further investigation and to probe their complicity in other crimes," he added.

The police spokesperson said that a case under relevant sections of law stands registered in Police Station Zainapora and investigation has been initiated.

Meanwhile, villagers told Kashmir Observer that the state forces used drones during the operation to track down the militants. They said police also made loudspeaker announcements in the area asking people to stay indoors due to Covid-19 pandemic, after the area witnessed clashes between protesters and government forces in Sugoo and Hendhama villages.

The government forces, they said burst tear smoke shells and fired pellets to disperse the stone pelting youth. The clashes, according to the locals continued for several hours.

Pertinently, this is the third deadly encounter in Shopian district in the last four days.

On Sunday, five Hizbul Mujahideen militants, including a commander, were killed in a gun-battle in the district's Reban area. A day later, four more militants of the group were killed in similar encounter in Pinjora area.

## Abducted Man Found Dead..

in which four Hizbul Mujahideen militants were killed.

A police officer said that a case has been registered and further investigations started in this matter.

## Militancy Must End...

Armed Police Forces. "Militancy in Jammu and Kashmir must end at it has brought endless pain and suffering to the people of this beautiful place," Singh said.

He complimented various police districts and units who along with the Army and the CRPF carried out successful operations against militants.

"They (the militants) are working as per the agenda of their Pakistan handlers and agencies to keep this place in turmoil and people in agony. They are responsible for regular innocent killings of locals and attacks on security forces involved in maintaining and strengthening peaceful environment," he added.

The DGP expressed anguish over the killing of three civilians by militants and assured that the culprits would be brought to justice.

"In all these cases, the militants have been identified and they would be exposed to people for their inhuman acts of violence," he said.

Singh congratulated a boy who came back to reunite with his family after realising the futility of joining militant ranks.

The DGP expressed hope that an appeal made by the family of another youth from South Kashmir to their son, who went missing a few days back, would have desired impact on him.

The DGP assured that such youths, who have gone astray under various pressures in the recent past, would be assisted by police in case they choose to return.

## US Voices Concern Over ...

religious leaders belonging to various faith communities.

In their engagement with government officials, media, interfaith harmony organizations and NGOs, US officials emphasised the need to address the legitimate concerns of the country's religious minorities, condemn communal rhetoric, and ensure full protection of minorities as guaranteed under the Constitution, it said. In October, the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, in meetings with senior government officials, raised concerns over violence and discrimination against religious and ethnic minorities, including communal violence, the report said. The report refers to the revocation of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir last August and the parliament passage of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in December as major highlights for India last year.

India has categorically told the international community that the scrapping of Article 370 was its internal matter.

On the CAA, which accelerates citizenship for Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi, and Christian migrants from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Pakistan who entered the country on or before December 31, 2014, the Indian government has stressed that the goal is to protect the oppressed minorities of neighbouring countries. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that the CAA was an act to provide citizenship and not to take it away from legal Indian citizens, the report said, adding that in November he stated that the Constitution should be revered as a holy book and a guiding light. Some officials linked the CAA with the National Register of Citizens (NRC), a process used to identify illegal immigrants in the state of Assam.

On December 22, Modi disavowed any discussion of implementing the NRC nationwide, including earlier comments from Home Minister Amit Shah that a nationwide NRC should be in place so we will detect and deport every infiltrator from our motherland, the report said.

Some officials of the Hindu-majority parties, including from the ruling BJP, made inflammatory public remarks or social media posts against minority communities, the report alleged.

"Authorities often failed to prosecute perpetrators of such 'cow vigilantism,' which included killings, mob violence, and intimidation. According to some NGOs, authorities often protected perpetrators from prosecution and filed charges against victims, it said.

## India Seeks Status Quo ...

around patrolling points 14 and 15 in Galwan Valley and another in the Hot Spring area, adding the Chinese side has even moved back up to 1.5 km in the two areas.

Indian and Chinese troops have been engaged since May 5 following a violent clash in Pangong Tso. In their first serious efforts to end the row, Lt General Harinder Singh, the general officer commanding of Leh-based 14 Corps, and Commander of the Tibet Military District Maj Gen Liu Lin held an extensive meeting on June 6.

China said on Wednesday that Indian and Chinese troops have started implementing the "positive consensus" reached by the senior military officials of the two countries on June 6 aimed at "easing" the situation along the borders. Asked about the reports of the troops on both sides disengaging and moving back to their previous positions, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying told a media briefing in Beijing that both sides are taking steps to ease the situation along the borders.

"Recently the diplomatic and military channels of China and India held effective communication on the situation along the border and reached positive consensus," she said. "The two sides are following this consensus to take actions to ease the situation along the borders," the spokesperson said.

Saturday's talks came a day after the two countries held diplomatic parleys during which both sides agreed to handle their "differences" through peaceful discussions while respecting each other's sensitivities and concerns. In a statement, India's external affairs ministry had on Sunday said that the the meeting took place in a "cordial and positive atmosphere" and that both sides agreed that an "early resolution" of the issue would contribute to the further development of the relationship between the two countries.

After the standoff began in early last month, Indian military leadership decided that Indian troops will adopt a firm approach in dealing with the aggressive posturing by the Chinese troops in all disputed areas of Pangong Tso, Galwan Valley, Demchok and Daulat Beg Oldie. The Chinese Army has been gradually ramping up its strategic reserves in its rear bases near the Line of Actual Control (LAC) by rushing in artillery guns, infantry combat vehicles and heavy military equipment, the sources said.

The trigger for the face-off was China's stiff opposition to India laying a key road in the Finger area around the Pangong Tso Lake besides construction of another road connecting the Darbuk-Shayok-Daulat Beg Oldie road in Galwan Valley. The road in the Finger area in Pangong Tso is considered crucial for India to carry out patrol. India has already decided not to stall any border infrastructure projects in eastern Ladakh in view of Chinese protests. The situation in the area deteriorated after around 250 Chinese and Indian soldiers were engaged in a violent face-off on May 5 and 6. The incident in Pangong Tso was followed by a similar incident in north Sikkim on May 9. 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.

Both sides have been asserting that pending the final resolution of the boundary issue, it is necessary to maintain peace and tranquillity in the border areas. In their historic informal summit in Chinese city of Wuhan in 2018, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping underscored the importance of maintaining peace and tranquillity in all areas of the India-China border region in the interest of the development of bilateral relations.

The summit had taken place months after a 73-day military face-off between the two armies in Doklam that raised fears of a war between the two Asian giants. In their talks on June 6, both sides agreed to follow the broad decisions taken by Modi and Xi in the Wuhan summit to ensure peace and tranquillity along the LAC.

## Both Nations Taking Steps...

armies of India and China have undertaken a "limited disengagement" in few areas in eastern Ladakh in a demonstration of their intent to end the border standoff peacefully ahead of another round of military talks on Wednesday.

Asked about the reports of the troops on both sides disengaging and moving back to their previous positions, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Hua Chunying told a media briefing here that both sides are taking steps to ease the situation along the borders. "Recently the diplomatic and military channels of China and India held effective communication on the situation along the border and reached positive consensus," she said.

"The two sides are following this consensus to take actions to ease the situation along the borders, the spokesperson said. Military sources in New Delhi said the two armies have begun "disengagement" around patrolling points 14 and 15 in Galwan Valley and another in the Hot Spring area, adding the Chinese side has even moved back up to 1.5 km in two areas.

Indian and Chinese troops have been engaged since May 5 following a violent clash in Pangong Tso.

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During their military-level talks on June 6, India and China agreed to follow the broad decisions taken by their leaders in the Wuhan summit in 2018 to ensure peace and tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control.

On June 6, Lt General Harinder Singh, the general officer commanding of Leh-based 14 Corps, and Commander of the Tibet Military District Maj Gen Liu Lin held an extensive meeting. 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.

## Who's Responsible For ...

kilometres of Indian territory had been "illegally occupied" by China.

Tewari asked Modi who was responsible for it and whether he would fix any responsibility.

"We also want to ask the prime minister about the Chinese intrusion. How did the Chinese soldiers enter India?" Tewari asked at an online press conference.

Indian and Chinese troops have been engaged since May 5 following a violent clash in Pangong Tso in eastern Ladakh.

The trigger for the face-off was China's stiff opposition to India laying a key road in the Finger area around the Pangong Tso Lake, besides construction of another road connecting the Darbuk-Shayok-Daulat Beg Oldie road in Galwan Valley.

"Who is responsible for this? Will the government decide its accountability? The country wants to know this," Tewari said. The Congress leader said Modi should tell the country that from May 5 till now, how much of India's land had been occupied by the Chinese army.

"Is it a fact that the Chinese have illegally occupied 40-60 sq km of Indian territory?" he asked.

"We want to ask the prime minister what the government is doing to remove the Chinese army from the Pangong Tso Lake in Galwan Valley, where China is sitting with its soldiers and tents," he asked.

He accused the Centre of trying to push the issue in cold storage

Hitting back at Ravi Shankar Prasad for his attack on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, Tewari said the Union law minister made a "very unfair and completely irresponsible" political attack. According to Tewari, it is unfortunate that rather than answering questions, the government was using "abrasive language" against the opposition party.

He said the government should direct India's national angst against those who have encroached upon Indian territory, rather than the Opposition.

"We want to tell them that patriotism and nationalism is not the exclusive monopoly of the NDA-BJP and much less the law minister," Tewari said. "Asking hard questions to the government is not unpatriotic, not replying to them is unpatriotic."

Tewari added that the Congress was posing questions as a responsible opposition party.

He underlined that when there were questions of security, unity, integrity, sovereignty, people hoped that the prime minister, defence minister, defence secretary or any other officer would come and tell the country about the situation, adding that there had been no such initiative.

The names of Pangong Tso Lake, Galwan Valley, Naku La were never heard of by Indians, he said, but today "even children know about it because these are all the places where Chinese soldiers have encroached" on Indian land.

The situation in the area deteriorated after around 250 Chinese and Indian soldiers were engaged in a violent face-off on May 5 and 6. The incident in Pangong Tso was followed by a similar incident in north Sikkim on May 9.

The India-China border dispute covers the 3,488-km-long Line of Actual Control (LAC)

## 28 CRPF Personnel Among...

12 from Poonch, 10 from Srinagar, eight from Baramulla, seven from Anantnag, six from Samba, four each from Bandipora & Jammu, two from Budgam, Ramban & Kathua and one each from Pulwama & Doda, they said.

About the Udhampur cases, the officials said include two doctors and 17 paramedics, who tested Covid-19 positive today.

The staff had come in contact with a pregnant woman who recently underwent a cesarean section at the hospital and were placed under quarantine after her report for COVID-19 came positive, they said. Udhampur District Development Commissioner Piyush Singh, in a tweet, said, "With more than 1000 negative reports in the last 4 days we wake up with a report of 19 positives today, mostly the staff of district hospital (sic)."

"These were high risk contacts who attended to the delivery of a pregnant positive lady and were already quarantined," he tweeted.

The officials said both the doctors and the paramedical staff were shifted to COVID wards after their reports came positive, while contact tracing was on to break the chain.

The officials also said that 165 patients recovered and were discharged from different hospitals.

The number of confirmed cases has now reached 4,507 out of which 3,522 are in Kashmir, while 985 are in Jammu, the officials said.

There are 2,785 active cases of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in J&K — 2,073 in Kashmir and 712 in Jammu — and 1,671 (1,403 from Kashmir and 268 from Jammu) patients have recovered, according to officials.

The J&K has witnessed 51 COVID-19 deaths so far (46 from Kashmir, 5 from Jammu), including the four deaths that took place on Tuesday.

## BMO Handwara Suspended.

order was issued by the Directorate Health Services Kashmir (DHSK) on the recommendation of the enquiry team that was constituted on the complaint of Panches and Sarpanch of Chowgal Handwara.

"Whereas, taking cognizance of the complaint and in order to ascertain the factual position, an inquiry team of officers/officials was constituted vide this office order No. DHSK/PS/201-07 dated 04/06/2020 to conduct the enquiry and submit the report within two days positively," reads the order.

It adds that the enquiry team furnished the report and stated that the doctor concerned has not been able to prove his ability as an administrator.

"Besides, he uses un-parliamentary language for public and abuses the female staff, thus recommended for immediate suspension of the doctor concerned," the order reads.

"Now, upholding the recommendations of enquiry committee, Dr Ab. Majid Bhat I/C BMO Handwara is hereby placed under suspension and is attached with CMO Office Bandipora till further orders," the order adds.

It further says that Dr Abdul Rouf, in-charge Medical Superintendent district hospital Handwara "is hereby directed to look-after the work of Block Medical Officer Handwara in addition to his own duties till further orders,"

## After Poonch, Guns Roar...

had traded fire along the LoC in Mankote and Khari Karmara sectors of Poonch district on Monday and Tuesday.

Meanwhile, the district administration in Rajouri today sanctioned Rs 20 lakh compensation to the victims of cross-LoC shelling.

According to an official spokesperson, Deputy Commissioner Rajouri, Mohammad Nazir Sheikh today cleared 4 compensation cases, including 3 deaths and 1 disability case related to militancy and cross-border shelling during the District Level Coordination Cum Screening committee meeting.

After thorough examination of all the cases, the committee sanctioned cash compensation of Rs 20 lacs in favour of the next of kin of deceased persons and injured by militancy violence or during cross border LoC firing. (with PTI inputs)

## Pak Summons Indian Diplomat

by India" in Jandrot sector on June 9.

The Indian forces along "the LoC and the Working Boundary (WB) have continuously been targeting civilian populated areas with artillery fire, heavy-caliber mortars and automatic weapons," it said.

The FO claimed that India has so far this year committed 1,296 ceasefire violations, resulting in seven deaths and serious injuries to 98 civilians.

It said that the violations are a threat to the regional peace and

security The FO said that India was also urged to allow the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) to play its mandated role as per the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolutions.

India maintains that the UNMOGIP has outlived its utility and is irrelevant after the Simla Agreement and the consequent establishment of the LoC.

## HC Reserves Verdict On...

Previously, the court had directed the Government to consider the bail plea of Sagar having regard to health grounds and submit the report. The court had made orders on an application filed by his son stating that Sagar is an old aged person and is suffering from hypertension and orthopaedic complications.

"The applicant (Sagar) has developed a severe cardio vascular ailment during his detention since August 6," reads the application. (GNS)

## Cong Cries Foul, Seeks Probe

The time demands that a fresh security assessment is made and those elected members be provided security who are living in vulnerable areas or facing threat to their lives, Mir further said.

## Two Boys Who Kept ‘Spirit

spirit, so does our Kashmiri identity."

After contributions came, the team started collecting, sorting, packing and distributing relief kits among needy families. The process continued for more than six weeks, without any break. Back in the room where the two friends have been calculating the relief amount, the consistent contradictions have been falling in. Musaib has set two different categories of distributions.

"Our regular kits lasting 15 days carried household essentials, from salt, sugar, soap, chilly to cooking oil, tea, wheat and pulses," explains Musaib.

"With our Eid kits, we tried to make the occasion special for those who were badly hit by the pandemic lockdown. Chicken, cheese, some vegetables, biscuit packets and little more bakeries are what our Eid kits carried," says Yasir with a sense of satisfaction nestling on his face.

Before Eid, the duo would also run what they call the Iftaar Desk and quietly help many unprivileged families and patients.

It was two years ago, in the holy month of Ramadan, when the duo first set up Iftaar Desk at Hyderpora square, with an aim to help passersby to break their fast on time.

"The idea came after we saw students from the educational hub, Parraypora, getting late for home and couldn't break their fast on time," Musaib, who's a civil engineer, says.

Starting with just two packets of dates and one box of mineral water bottle, the Iftaar Desk soon became a crowded spot, swarmed by students as well commoners heading home from work.

"The initiative was appreciated and financially boosted by many unassuming Samaritans," says Yasir, who's a graduate. "People contributed water cases and date packets for the cause."

Social media appreciation equally perked up the month-long initiative. "It was because of the community response and support that we were able to make a little difference," says Yasir. Once done with counting, Yasir and Musaib talks about the hundreds of regular and over sixty Eid special kits distributed among the needy.

"We started with Rs 3000, and ended up distributing relief worth Rs 3.4 lakh," Musaib points out.

After 'setting records straight', Musaib makes a concluding remark to which Yasir nods back with a smile. "To clear the illusion for those who're confused of our survival and red cheeks, they should know that our care for each other makes us survive the toughest times, and our love for each other keeps our cheeks red!"

## SMC Mayor Likely To Face...

Commissioner against the Mayor, most likely in the coming days. The meeting was attended by coporators irrespective of their party affiliations. Interestingly the corporators of BJP and Congress are on same page to challenge the Mayor.

Sources also said that the disgruntled corporators have decided to support Imran for Mayor's post.

The Mayor had once faced no confidence motion but he managed to sail through with support of majority of the Corporators.

## Man Held Over Social Media

under sections 153A and 295A have been registered in Police Station Rajouri against the person who has been arrested," police said.

## Leopard Mauls Minor In Kulgam

Primary Health Centre Manzgam for treatment. However, the doctors there referred him to Sub-District Hospital Damhal Hanjipora.

The boy succumbed to his injuries in the hospital, reports said. The incident set off strong protests by the locals against the alleged negligence of the wildlife department.

"We had repeatedly informed the department about the movement of leopards in the area, but nobody took it seriously and today we saw the result," Jahangir Ahmed, a local said adding the incident has created panic in the area. (KNT)

## Girl Drowns In Kangan Canal

fished out from the canal.

A senior police officer also confirmed the death of the girl due to drowning and said the body was handed over to her family for last rites after legal formalities.

He said the police have registered a case under sections 174 CrPC has been registered in this regard while further investigations has been taken up.

As per the officials, the body was taken for postmortem to trauma hospital Kangan—(KNO)

## Dogs Bite 20 Bandipora ...

the district hospital Bandipora for treatment. However, the doctors there referred four of the seriously injured people to Srinagar hospital for treatment, reports said.

The canine attack triggered panic in the villages and prompted the locals to keep children and women indoors.



# CID report to CS over scam in “Housing for All” scheme prompts Govt to order inquiry

Will submit report soon: MD Housing Board

Agencies

**Srinagar: A report submitted by intelligence wing of Jammu and Kashmir Police to Chief Secretary about “scam” in the garb of “Housing for All” scheme has prompted the government to order an inquiry into the matter.**

The Housing and Urban Development department has ordered an inquiry into the matter on the

basis of a report submitted by the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) to J&K administration.

In an order, dated May 20, Dheeraj Gupta, Principal Secretary, H&UDD, has directed Arvind Kotwal, managing director, J&K H&UDD, to hold an in-depth enquiry regarding scam in the garb of Prime Minister’s Awas Yojana (Urban) on the basis of report submitted by Superintendent of Police (SP), CID to the Chief Secretary.

The government has directed the enquiry officer to submit the report along with the recommendations to the administrative department for further action.

When contacted, MD, Housing Board, Arvind Kotwal told the news agency, that he will soon submit a report to the government. “I will submit a report to the Principal Secretary when he will join the office,” he said.

Kotwal refused to disclose specific details about charges being probed by him. “I cannot share details because it is a confidential inquiry,” he said.

Jammu and Kashmir Housing

Board is nodal agency for PMAY (Urban) in the newly carved out Union Territory.

Launched in 2015 by the central government, the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) aims at affordable housing for those belonging to economically weaker sections of society and low-income groups.

The scheme has two major sections: Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Urban) (PMAY-U) and Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (Gramin) PMAY-G is applicable to the urban population while PMAY-U is applicable for the rural population –(KNO)

## Samoon discusses implementation of Edu Investment Policy-2020 with stakeholders

SRINAGAR, JUNE 10: Principal Secretary School Education, Dr Asgar Samoon today chaired a multi stakeholder meeting here regarding the implementation of Jammu and Kashmir Education Investment Policy-2020.

The meeting was attended by representatives from the universities, colleges, IIT’s, IIM’s education department, private stakeholders and other officers.

The meeting was held to provide inputs, feedback and suggestions for implementation of Education Investment Policy 2020 in Jammu and Kashmir.

During the meeting, the Principal Sec-

retary directed the concerned to mobilize financial assets for establishing private universities in Jammu and Kashmir and the government would be incentivizing those under certain guidelines.

Dr. Samoon said that there is a scope to establish foreign universities for which there is a need to attract the investors for establishment of these private universities in Jammu and Kashmir.

The Principal Secretary also directed the various stakeholders to come up with suggestions for ensuring the implementation of Jammu and Kashmir Education Investment Policy 2020.

### OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, TLMD II PAMPORE, KASHMIR, J&K Power Transmission Corporation Ltd. NOTICE INVITING e-Bids

NIT No. TLMD II/11 of 2020 dt:08.06.2020.

The Executive Engineer, TLMD II Pampore Kashmir, J&K Power Transmission Corporation Ltd, for and on behalf of the Lt. Governor of Jammu and Kashmir UT, invites online e-bids from registered self help groups fulfilling eligibility and qualification requirements specified hereunder for Erection of 04 no. 33 kV VCBs at 132/33 kV Grid Stations Awanipora and Lassipora including construction of 02 no. foundations for the VCBs under the jurisdiction of TLMD-II Pampore. Submission of e-Bid shall be deemed to have been done after careful study and examination of the procedures, terms & conditions with full understanding of its implications. The tender is available at website <http://jktenders.gov.in>. Interested bidders may view, download the e-Bid, submit their e-Bid online up to the date and time mentioned in the tablebelow:

a	Date & Time of downloading of NIT.	The NIT Documents can be downloaded over <a href="http://jktenders.gov.in">http://jktenders.gov.in</a> from 09.06.2020 (10.00 AM)
b	e-Bid submission (start) date & time (Submission of e-tender fee, EMD and other supporting documents in PDF/XLS format)	09.06.2020 (10.00 AM)
D	e-Bid submission (end) date & Time	19.06.2020 up to 4.00PM.
F	Date & time of online opening of bids	20.06.2020 at 4:00 Pm
G	Estimated cost	Rs.1.85 Lacs
H	Venue of opening of e-Bids	The Office of Executive Engineer TLMD II Pampore Kashmir J&K.
I	Cost of e-Bid document	Rs. 200.00 (Two hundreds only) in the shape of non-refundable Treasury receipt/challan against MH 0801.
J	Amount of Earnest Money Deposit	2% of estimated amount
K	Status of funds	Demanded

Sd/  
ExecutiveEngineer,  
TLMD II Pampore,

DIPK-NB-603/20

### GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU & KASHMIR OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER GANDEBAL (Mini Secretariat Complex, Duderhama)

Subject:- Tentative Seniority list of Patwaries (Revenue Department) of District Cadre Ganderal.

NOTIFICATION NO:- 320/DCG/Estt/2020  
DATED:- 09-06-2020

Whereas, the Final Seniority list of Patwaries of Revenue Department District Cadre Ganderal was notified vide this office Notification No.DCG/Estt/48-11/2017 Dated.28.12.2017;

Whereas, by virtue of promotions/placements, it has become imperative to update the seniority list of Patwaries in District Ganderal accordingly;

Whereas the Tentative Seniority list of Patwaries of Revenue Department District Cadre Ganderal as it stood on 01.05.2020 has been framed and issued by this office vide Notification No:-318/DCG/Estt/2020 Dated.03.06.2020 and is available on the official Website of District Administration Ganderal on [www.ganderal.nic.in](http://www.ganderal.nic.in).

By Order /

Additional Deputy Commissioner Ganderal

No:- DCG/Estt.48.II.2020  
Dated:- 09-06-2020

DIPK-1508/20

### Office Of The Assistant Director Food,Civil Supplies & Consumer Affairs Bandipora

Mini Secretarial Complex- Bandipora, Block-C, Ground Floor, Room No.: 301.

E-mail, [sdcapdbpr@gmail.com](mailto:sdcapdbpr@gmail.com) Fax/Phone No.: 01957- 225301

#### Notice of Public Auction sale

Under the authority of Order no. DCB/Shali/2020/802-06 Dated: 02-06-2020, confiscated / seized essential commodities (HSD- 03barrels containing 195 litres and Kerosene oil 06 barrels containing 612 litres )are hereby put under auction sale. The public auction will be held on 11-06-2020at 11:30am sharp at police station Bandipora in presence of below mentioned officers.

1. Assistant Director Food, Civil Supplies & CA Department Bandipora .
2. Tehsilidar Bandipora.
3. SHO Police Station Bandipora.

Details of terms and conditions of the auction can be had from office of the undersigned.

Assistant Director

Food, Civil Supplies & C A Department Bandipora.

NO. AD/FCS/CA/BPR/171-80  
Dated: 06-06-2020

DIPK-1563/20



### Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER (R&B) DIVISION GANDEBAL Address: Mini-Secretariat Ganderal



#### NOTICE INVITING TENDER

For and on behalf of the Lt. Governor, UT J&K, e-tenders (In single cover system) are invited on item rate basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with UT J&K., CPWD, Railways and other UT/Central Governments for the following works:-

S.No	Name of the Work	Adv. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rupees)	Earnest Money (In Rs.)	Time of completion	Class of Contractor	Major Head of Account
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Improvement /upgradation of road surface from Gangerhama to Wayil Bridge b.w.o P/L Nallah Muck and WBM G-II from RD 0 to RD 170 Mtr in Km 1 <sup>st</sup> (phase-1 <sup>st</sup> ) Under NABARD.	Rs. 03.97 Lacs	200/=	7940/=	10 Cal days	DEE	NABARD

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.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) as per schedule of dates given below:-

1	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	09-06-2020
2	Period of downloading of bidding documents	10-06-2020 from 11.00 AM.
3	Bid submission Start Date	10-06-2020 from 11.35 AM.
4	Bid Submission End Date	19-06-2020 upto 4.00 PM.
5	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	20-06-2020 at 10.00 A.M in the office of Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Ganderal.

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.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) as per schedule of dates given below:-

**Note :-The Bidders are advised to read all conditions laid down in the NIT carefully before uploading softcopy any short fall found in the soft copy the tender shall be rejected .**

**Note: As per Circular issued by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir Civil Secretariat Finance department vide No.OM No.A/24(2017)-651 dtd.07-06-2018 which reads as under :-**

**(a) Furnishing of Hard Copies of bids immediately after submission of E-tenders is dispensed with .The same should be obtained only from the Bidder who's declared itLowest (L-1) after opening of financial bids.**

**b). The Cost of tenders should be collected by introducing E-challan or simply uploading a copy of necessary TreasuryChallan/Receipt.**

**c). Similarly, Instead of insisting on actual Call Deposit Receipt , a copy of same duly pledged to the concerned department should be uploaded by the tenderers. However before allotting the work or issuing the supply order , the original CDR should be obtained and kept on record.**

**Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Challan in favour of Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Ganderal ( tender inviting authority ) and earnest money /Bid security in shape of CDR/PDR/- pledged to Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Ganderal ( tender receiving authority ) .** 1. The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) and conveyed

to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The **bids of Responsive bidders** shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of **Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Ganderal** (tender receiving authority).

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer,  
R&B Division Ganderal

No.1938-47  
DATED. 09-06-2020

DIPK-1540/20

### Jammu and Kashmir Government Office of the Executive Engineer Irrigation & FC Division Baramulla ABEYANCE NOTICE

Due to un-avoidable circumstances, the Bid Notice No. 01 of 2020-21 issued under endorsement No. I&FCDB/279-300 Dated: 03/06/2020, is hereby kept in \*ABEYANCE\* till further orders.

No: I&FCDB/397-418  
Dated:-09/06/2020.

DIPK-1501/20

Sd/-  
(Er.M.D. Sultanpuri)  
Executive Engineer  
Irrigation & FC Division  
Baramulla

#### 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  
19 Shawwal  
1441**

#### PRAYERS

FAJR	3: 32
ZUHR	12: 30
ASR	5:31
Magrib	7:45
ISHA	9:26

## This Day In History

- 1774 - Jews of Algiers escape attacking Spanish Army
- 1837 - The Broad Street Riot occurs in Boston, fueled by ethnic tensions between English-Americans and Irish-Americans
- 1864 - The Battle of Trevilian Station, the bloodiest and largest all-cavalry battle of The American Civil War, begins in Louisa County, Virginia
- 1864 - Battle at Cynthiana Kentucky: General Hobscons unit caught
- 1864 - Battle of Laurel Hill, West Virginia
- 1898 - 1st US Marines (600) land at Guantanamo Cuba during Spanish-American War
- 1901 - Cook Islands annexed and proclaimed part of New Zealand
- 1913 - Grand Vizir Mahmud Shevket Pasha is assassinated, resulting in continuing Young Turk terrorism until WWI
- 1917 - King Alexander assumes the throne of Greece after his father Constantine I abdicates under pressure by allied armies occupying Athens
- 1920 - Republicans nominate Warren G. Harding for US president
- 1934 - Disarmament conference in Geneva fails
- 1935 - Inventor Edwin Armstrong gives the first public demonstration of FM broadcasting in the United States, at Alpine, New Jersey
- 1940 - World War II: British forces bomb Genoa and Turin in Italy
- 1940 - World War II: First attack of the Italian Air force on the island of Malta
- 1942 - German army defeated at El-Alamein, North Africa
- 1942 - US and USSR sign Lend-Lease agreement during WW II
- 1943 - Britain invades Pantelleria (a tiny island south of Sicily)
- 1944 - 15 US aircraft carriers attack Japanese bases on Marianas
- 1951 - Mozambique becomes an overseas province of Portugal
- 1958 - UN Security council sends observers to Lebanon
- 1971 - US & Japan sign accord to return Okinawa to Japan
- 1971 - US ends ban on China trade
- 1973 - Libya nationalizes Bunker Hunt concession; Nigeria
- 1975 - 1st oil pumped from North Sea oilfield
- 1975 - Greece adopts constitution
- 1975 - One-day international cricket debut of Javed Miandad aged 17 yrs 364 days
- 1981 - Richter Scale 6.9 magnitude Golbaf earthquake in Iran, kills at least 2,000
- 1982 - Israel and Syria stop fighting in Lebanon
- 1984 - US Supreme Court declares illegally obtained evidence may be admitted at trial if it could be proved that it would have been discovered legally.
- 1985 - Russian space probe Vega 1 lands on Venus
- 1996 - Exxon states that it will begin work on its \$15-billion Sakhalin I oil and natural gas development in Russia's Far East
- 1998 - Compaq Computer pays \$9 billion for Digital Equipment Corporation in the largest high-tech acquisition.
- 2009 - The World Health Organization declares H1N1 swine flu to be a global pandemic, the first such incident in over forty years
- 2012 - The Nobel Prize is reduced by 20% to prevent any future undermining of capital
- 2012 - Two earthquakes in Afghanistan trigger landslides that kill more than 80 people
- 2014 - Islamic State of Iraq forces seize control of government offices and other important buildings in the northern city of Mosul.
- 2017 - Japan passes law allowing Emperor Akihito to abdicate

## From KO Archives

## Hurriyat for erasing ‘artificial lines’

ISLAMABAD - After favouring fresh options other than the UN resolution for resolving the Kashmir issue, the moderate faction of the Hurriyat Conference has said efforts should be made to dismantle the “artificial lines” dividing Kashmir.

“When we talked about Kashmir it means the entire territory of Kashmir and the artificial lines drawn between Kashmir must be dismantled.” visiting Hurriyat chairman Mirwaiz Omar Farooq told reporters here. Farooq’s statement assumes significance as it comes on the heels of Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf’s assertion on similar lines that borders should be made “irrelevant”. He had mooted a concept of “soft borders” to resolve the issue.

The Hurriyat leader, who was in Karachi yesterday on a two-day visit, said they would work for removing the “artificial lines” separating the two sides of Kashmir.

About his comments earlier those UN resolutions have failed, he said they were not deviating from their long-held stand, but were in favour of finding other options as the world body has failed to find any solution. Farooq said new ideas and options should be explored and treated on merit for finding a solution to the Kashmir problem as the United Nations had miserably failed over the past 57 years.

“We don’t know what will be the final solution but relations with Pakistan would have a significant bearing on the out- come.” he said. Answering a question about headline leader Syed Ali Shah Geelani’s criticism of their visit, he said the All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) represented a joint struggle and one individual could not dictate terms: He said it was lime for reinforcing unity of the Kashmiri people.

Later visiting Mohammad Ali Jinnah’s mausoleum at Karachi along with eight other Kashmiri separatist leaders. Farooq hailed the father of Pakistan. “I on behalf of Kashmiri people salute Quad-e-Azam his leadership and dignity and freedom struggle initiated by him.” he wrote in the visitors book.

(Kashmir Observer, 11 June, 2005)



KASHMIR  
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## Testing Times

On Sunday, a senior journalist in Kashmir was tested positive for Coronavirus at Chest Diseases hospital laboratory. But a day after he was tested negative at the lab at Sher-i-Kashmir Institute of Medical Sciences. This has raised a question mark over the testing process followed to detect Covid-19 positive cases. Incidentally, On Sunday itself, the labs in J&K had detected 620 cases, the highest since the Covid-19 lockdown began in the union territory on March 25. It is not that the credibility of all these tests is under question but it is also true that a number of such tests could now be viewed with doubt. The government therefore needs to take note of it. Advisor to Governor Baseer Ahmad Khan has promised to look into it. And it is important that the administration gets to the bottom of it. It is not only about the negative cases being declared positive that should be of concern but also the positive cases being declared negative. In the former cases, the person and his family are subjected to unnecessary trauma but in the latter, the person himself, his family and all his contacts are put under grave risk. And imagine if there are many more such cases, it could wreak havoc on the ground.

There is more to it. Such faulty testing can artificially revise the number of Covid-19 cases upward and downward and thus project a wrong picture of the situation. And this, in turn, has far-reaching consequences for the society as a whole. As things stand, the government has declared eight out of the ten districts in Kashmir as Red Zones. This has meant continuation of the lockdown like restrictions in all these places. That too when the Valley has already been under the lockdown for the past ten months. This has wrought havoc with the businesses and in turn thrown thousands out of their jobs. The administration has gone ahead with extension of restrictions when other places in the country with far worse situation are opening up. And this too after just two months of lockdown.

The government thus needs to take a hard look at the situation. It is time therefore that the administration revisits the restrictions and eases them considerably to let the people return to businesses. What it can focus on instead is to strictly enforce the social distancing norms in public. And it can do so, considering the smaller population of Kashmir makes the infections more manageable than the densely populated states across India. At the same time, there's a need for random retesting of the people declared Covid-19 positive in recent past, so that the true extent of the faulty testing, if any, is known.

### OTHER OPINION

## Secure the future of migrants

In a significant, albeit delayed directive, the Supreme Court (SC) on Tuesday asked states and Union Territories to identify stranded migrants and arrange their transport back home within 15 days. It has also asked administrations to withdraw cases filed against migrants for violating the lockdown guidelines, and the Indian Railways to ensure the availability of trains within 24 hours if there is demand. Both the Centre and the states have been told to prepare a detailed list to identify migrants. The court has instructed that all schemes and employment opportunities available to migrant workers must be publicised; and there must be employment relief and skill mapping.

The SC's decision comes over 75 days after the national lockdown, imposed to curb the spread of the coronavirus disease (Covid-19), led to a humanitarian crisis. Migrant workers, suffering from an acute shortage of food and income and yearning to return home to their families and communities, began walking home, before the Centre, in early May, introduced special trains and buses for their transport. But this process has been riddled with complications. There was a controversy over train fares (before the court stepped in to say that migrants cannot be charged); there have been difficulties in Centre-state coordination over trains; social distancing norms have often not been observed; migrants have had to wait for days, if not weeks, to be able to get on to trains, prompting many to walk; many have died due to hunger and fatigue. All of it has led to a socio-economic tragedy which is almost unprecedented in independent India's history; this scale of people movement has not been seen since the Partition.

This newspaper has argued that the SC was remiss in not taking up the issue of migrant workers earlier. It only took up the issue on May 26, two months after the crisis began. To be sure, its intervention now is welcome. But it is not just the judiciary; the primary blame for failing to anticipate the needs of migrants and not providing an adequate safety net lies with the executive. It must now expedite the movement of migrants back, and both the Centre and the state governments need to plan ahead. While the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) has emerged as an indispensable policy tool to provide incomes to those who have returned, governments will have to do more in ensuring employment — even as they focus on tackling the spread of the disease. The plight of migrant workers has undermined the credibility of the State and caused enormous distress. It is time to correct the mistakes and find ways to give them a dignified future. The SC should continue to keep an eye on this.

Hindustan Times

PRAKHAR RAGHUVANSHI

**The state argues that the actions are necessary to curb militancy and cross-border infiltration. However, it is bald-assertion that medium of the internet facilitates it. The speed of the internet currently being provided is sufficient for these purposes and militancy has peaked in the valley without 4G.**

The internet services were suspended in the State of Jammu and Kashmir (Now, the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, hereinafter "the valley"), as a pre-emptive step in August 2019. Since then internet services are not restored to the full extent in the valley. Although on the direction of the Supreme Court of India (SC) 2G services were restored in January 2020, the valley still suffers from arbitrary orders of the valley administration amidst COVID-19 pandemic.

Following the national lockdown and other restrictive measures, a petition was moved to the SC to quash the order of the valley administration which suspended internet services. However, the SC on 11th May 2020, in FMP v UT of J&K, constituted a special committee to handle the issue at hand. The SC failed to appreciate human rights and allowed the government of India and the valley administration to cover the issue under the garb of national security.

The long-standing shutdown violated freedom of speech and expression as a constitutional right as well as a human right, enshrined under Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). However, the gravity of issue has increased exponentially following COVID-19. The restrictions are in violation of the right to life (Article 3 of UDHR), right to health (Article 25 of UDHR, WHO Constitution) and right to education (Article 26 of UDHR) inter alia rights. COVID-19 has led to a situation where 4G internet services in the valley are the essential infrastructure which must be provided by the state to ensure that these rights are effective. The decreased 2G speed of the internet acts as an obstruction in obtaining the latest information/update regarding COVID-19. It is almost impossible to consult a doctor over video-calls, order medicines and other essentials through e-commerce. Moreover, students in the valley cannot prepare for examina-

**Cross-border information warfare is yet another threat to national security which is argued by the state. However, in the 21st-century information warfare is used by nation-states across the globe, restriction flow of information in general through a gag order is not an effective solution for the state to adopt. Instead of curbing the spread of misinformation/fake news, such bans effectively close paths to cross-check information.**

tions at 2G speed.

The SC by actively ignoring the blatant human rights violations has flouted its own decision in Anuradha Bhasin v Union of India, which applied the three-pronged test for violation of the right to life and personal liberty. The test mandates legality; legitimate state aim; and proportionality. It is the third principle which needs a closer look here. Proportionality ensures a rational nexus between the objects and means adopted to achieve them. It also mandates the use of the least restrictive measure.

The state argues that the actions are necessary to curb militancy and cross-border infiltration. However, it is bald-assertion that medium of the internet facilitates it. The speed of the internet currently being provided is sufficient for these purposes and militancy has peaked in the valley without 4G. There is absolutely no rationale for providing 2G internet coupled with fixed-line internet connection in the valley.

Furthermore, even if the nexus is presumed to exist, the measures used by the state are not least-restrictive in nature. The restrictions can be lifted in areas which are comparatively less likely to plunge into chaos or speed can be restored for verified customers in the valley, there are numerous options available apart from a blanket ban. Appreciating these measures would comply with the basic

principles of proportionality, viz territorial and temporal degree of restriction. These orders are per se disproportionate and manifestly arbitrary are result in denial of basic public utility.

Cross-border information warfare is yet another threat to national security which is argued by the state. However, in the 21st-century information warfare is used by nation-states across the globe, restriction flow of information in general through a gag order is not an effective solution for the state to adopt. Instead of curbing the spread of misinformation/fake news, such bans effectively close paths to cross-check information.

The SC in FMP v UT of J&K (¶ 14) stated that – "it might be desirable and convenient to have better internet in the present circumstances..." (emphasis supplied). This is indicative of the utter disregard of human rights in India. Through such statements, the SC not only leaves the suppressed on their own but also tarnishes its long-standing jurisprudence of human rights. Better internet in the 21st century, especially in times of COVID-19, is not desirable and convenient rather necessary.

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## When Masked Are Respected and Unmasked Looked Down

We are now living in an era where the mask is part of our lifestyle. There have been various shifts in our ways of living from time to time such as from traditional to modern, from theoretical to practical, and from open face to a masked one and so on. There is one thing associated with all these concepts & shifts i.e advancement & Literally the mask has been a notion that is allied with the personality. The Greek actors used to wear it to conceal their identity.

The mask which we people wear nowadays is unlike the mask that the Greek actors used to wear. Today's mask as a concept is allied with the well being of the people i.e to ward off virus. This shift is unlike past. This

shift has added one more product to our basic needs i.e food, air, water, and now a mask. We have now set foot on in such an era where we can't perhaps live without a mask.

The document published by World Health Organisation on 06 April 2020 advises us on the use of masks in communities, during home care, and in health care settings and in areas that have reported cases of COVID -19. The document further suggests that the two main routes of the transmission of the Covid-19 virus are respiratory droplets & contact. The mask as per the WHO document thus plays a very important role in the prevention of viral diseases & points out the need for the use of masks.

Here it was first the district ad-

ministration Srinagar which made wearing face masks mandatory in all public places from May 1, 2020. Similarly, the same order was issued by the district administration Budgam on May 03, 2020. A moment of appreciation. Now I must also include that If we are going to travel anywhere in our country or elsewhere, wearing a mask is mandatory.

Without a mask, we are not going to go anywhere. Without a mask, we are stuck in our home & without a mask, we can be fined also. Without a mask, we may infect others and pose a threat to the lives of others. The mask is now related to the healthy personality of an individual because without a mask we are now not a good human being. The phrase health is wealth

is now also corresponding with the mask. A masked person is now seen as safer than a un-masked one.

As a good human being and a responsible citizen it is now compulsory for us to wear a mask. Because mask fortifies us from the viral diseases. Mask now helps us to survive. Mask is now a basic need just like food, water, air, etc. We are now obliged to be habitual of wearing a mask. We should encourage people around us to wear a mask.

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# George Floyd Protests And The Dirty Secret Of Indian And Pakistani Communities

Rejecting oppressive treatment of minorities will be start in the fight against racism

“Since cultural icons won’t use their influence to tackle racist attitudes, it falls to us: the people. If Indians are truly outraged by the murder of George Floyd, they will take action and not just tweet hashtags. In India this means rejecting the destructive and oppressive treatment of its Muslim minority — particularly in the north.

ALI-ASGHAR ABEDI |  
GULF NEWS

In the week that has passed since he was brutally murdered by a police officer in Minneapolis, George Floyd has become an international symbol.

That so many around the world have been outraged by his killing at the hands of the merciless officer Derek Chauvin is a valuable step forward in the fight for racial equality.

Racial injustice is everyone’s problem, which means everyone has a role to play in solving this problem. For South Asians, this must start with confronting our sustained racism towards black people.

If Indians are truly outraged by the murder of George Floyd, they will take action and not just tweet hashtags. In India this means rejecting the destructive and oppressive treatment of its Muslim minority — particularly in the north

South Asians’ anti-black racism is now at the point where it is not even noticed any more; it’s so entrenched that it’s become part of the fabric of brown society.

#### As common as the head bobble

South Asia’s dirty secret is that sharing anti-black views carries no personal or professional penalties: it’s as commonly accepted as corruption and the famous head bobble.

Indeed, virtually all parents from the subcontinent view the notion of a black son-in-law or daughter-in-law as a source of shame. But the real shame is clinging to such an indefensible and clearly wrong attitude.

Despite many well documented cases of anti-black racism in India, South Asians appear to be making some progress on this front. For example, many South Asians who have expressed solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement on social media.

This includes public figures such as Nick Jonas’ babysitter (whom you may know as Priyanka Chopra). America’s favourite token brown person may have lent support to an oppressed minority in her adopted country via an Instagram post but she continues to ignore the systemic oppression of minorities — Muslims and Dalits — in her homeland.

To be fair to Priyanka, at least she spoke up on Black Lives Matter. Which is more than Bollywood icon Shah Rukh Khan ever did. But



“More troubling is the fact that Pakistani vigilantism has a disturbing cultlike following in the form of terrorist groups such as Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan, Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi.

we shouldn’t have any expectations from Shah Rukh Khan to see beyond himself.

After all, this is a man of incredible talent, wealth, influence and fame, who uses his platform to shamefully and reductively denigrate Muslims — an oppressed minority population in India — by producing Bard of Blood for Netflix.

I wonder how long it will be before an Apple engineer programs Siri to say Shah Rukh Khan when she is asked “what does sell out mean?”.

If this seems unfair, consider that America’s black celebrities — such as LeBron James and Jay-Z — routinely speak out when their community is targeted, but India’s Muslim celebrities — including Shah Rukh Khan — take selfies with Narendra Modi, a man who is Islamophobic in policies not just rhetoric.

#### Tackling racist attitudes

Since cultural icons won’t use

their influence to tackle racist attitudes, it falls to us: the people. If Indians are truly outraged by the murder of George Floyd, they will take action and not just tweet hashtags. In India this means rejecting the destructive and oppressive treatment of its Muslim minority — particularly in the north.

To truly honour the memory of George Floyd, Indians should demand justice for the Muslims killed by police officers during Delhi riots in January. To honour the memory of Ahmaud Arbery — the unarmed 25 year old who was killed by vigilantes while jogging — Indians should demand justice for the Muslims killed by cow vigilantes.

To honour the memory of Breonna Taylor — who was shot dead by Louisville police as she slept in her home three months ago, Indians should demand justice for Zaheer Ahmed who was similarly shot dead by police at his home this

past December.

Of course, oppression of a minority population is by no means limited to India. In neighbouring Pakistan, Shiites, Sufis and Ahmadis are sometimes labelled as non-Muslim and are violently targeted by Pakistan’s Wahabi vigilantes.

More troubling is the fact that Pakistani vigilantism has a disturbing cultlike following in the form of terrorist groups such as Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan, Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi.

Bigotry and violence isn’t a black problem, a Muslim problem or a Shiite, Sufi or Ahmadi problem. It’s everyone’s problem. This only gets solved when everyone contributes towards a solution. And there’s no better place to start than confronting the racism in our communities, before it becomes more deadly.

Ali-Asghar Abedi is a writer based in New York. Twitter: @AbediAA

## Thugs: The Indian History Of The Word That Trump Used To Describe George Floyd Protesters

The English colonisers crafted narratives of a demonic cult, ‘thuggee’, to justify their iron-fisted rule.

S SHANKAR

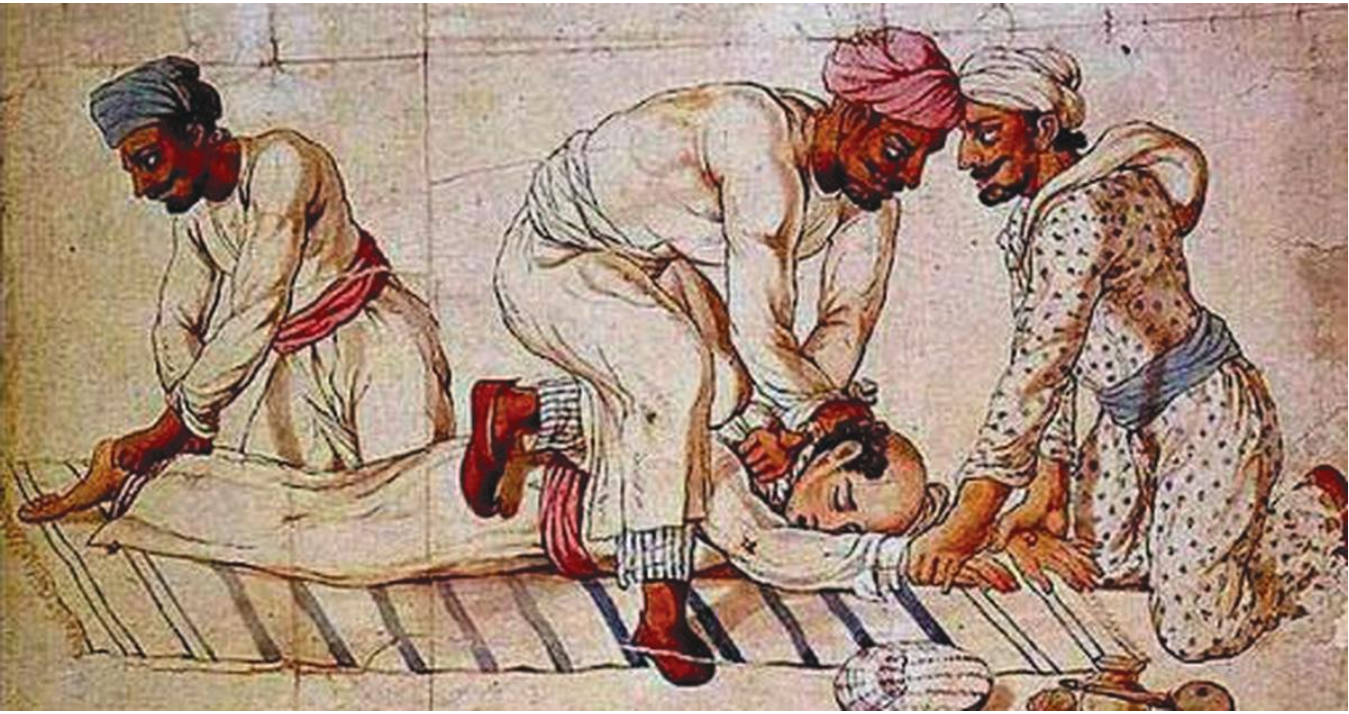
Nothing says law-and-order like thug. Once again, the word is being bandied about in all the media. The thugs are out looting and rioting in the inner cities of America, we are told. Every time protests against police brutality ignite across the United States, out comes the word from some all-too-convenient grab box of insults. Opinion pieces are full of it, and so are the mouths of politicians.

Certainly, there has been violence and destruction of businesses amidst the largely peaceful protests following the horrific murder of George Floyd. We can all agree the wanton destruction of shops owned by innocent community members, often black or brown themselves, is simply wrong. There can be no defense of such actions. But does it help to call the people involved thugs? Is the word at all illuminating in thinking about the events of the last few days? Or does it rather – by design – obscure more than it reveals?

Thug is by now a fully American word, but it wasn’t always. As the screenshot below suggests, thug, facilitated by British colonialism, entered the English language in early 19th century India, probably from Hindi or Hindustani.

Screenshot of an online dictionary no doubt – but the “historical” definition offered above is surely wrong. I have written before in this blog – and more fully in the critical essay Thugs and Bandits – about why. And others have too, in postcolonial scholarship that is by now at least 40 years old. Today, scholarly consensus holds that the word thug is profoundly shaped by – willful – British colonialist misconceptions of India.

A religious organisation? Devotees of Kali? Ritually-prescribed strangulation? All of this is likely pure fabrication. Were there robbers who waylaid and murdered



travellers in the midst of the social chaos of early 19th century India? Surely. But the British loudly and ceaselessly claimed more, much more – that thugs were nothing less than fiendish members of a vast and ancient demonic cult called thuggee. Why?

#### Ironing out complex histories

In the early 19th century, British colonialism was rapidly advancing across India. It needed a reason to extend its rule into new territories. Enter thuggee. The wild and diabolical stories of thuggee invented by the British provided justification for them to displace native Indian rulers, seen as either unable to

control thuggee or else going further to abet and give it protection. In place of native rulers, the British established their own rule.

The British discourse around thuggee in the 19th century aimed to convert a complex, social story of human beings struggling with social chaos and economic dislocation into a narrative justification for iron-fisted rule. It did so in two parts. First, it converted specific human beings, all robbers no doubt and many murderers, into demonic thugs, that is, targets for the most extreme disciplinary action. Then, it made thugs representative of Indians in general and thus, made India as such a target for disciplinary

action. It was a discourse masterfully designed to create a maximally repressive, law-and-order colonial state.

Fast forward to the US today. Does the word thug not do similar work now? Does it not parallel British colonial discourse in 19th century India in flattening out complex histories of racism, discrimination against black people and relentless police brutality against black men into a law-and-order problem? Does it not prevent us from engaging fully the real origins of the profound rage being expressed by black and other communities?

As an English word, thug originates in a law-and-order mentality and it continues to express such a mentality today.

Rather than fostering understanding and engagement, it propagates the iron fist of draconian rule. Like British discourse on thuggee in the 19th century, the use of the American incarnation of the word today justifies the reduction of a social crisis to a law-and-order problem – a problem to be met by the force of the carceral state about which, alas, black communities know only too much.

S Shankar is a novelist and critic. His most recent novel is Ghost in the Tamarrind. This article first appeared on his website.

Scroll.

“In the early 19th century, British colonialism was rapidly advancing across India. It needed a reason to extend its rule into new territories. Enter thuggee. The wild and diabolical stories of thuggee invented by the British provided justification for them to displace native Indian rulers, seen as either unable to control thuggee or else going further to abet and give it protection. In place of native rulers, the British established their own rule.



# PANDEMIC OFFERS SCIENTISTS A Chance To 'Hear' Oceans As They Once Were



**WE SPENT A LOT OF TIME PLANNING.**  
How would you try to set up this kind of study, even though we realized that it wasn't really practical?"

## Agencies

Eleven years ago, environmental scientist Jesse Ausubel dreamed aloud in a commencement speech: What if scientists could record the sounds of the ocean in the days before propeller-driven ships and boats spanned the globe?

They would listen to chit-chat between blue whales hundreds of miles apart. They would record the familiar chirps and clicks among a pod of dolphins. And they would do so without the cacophony of humankind – and develop a better understanding of how that undersea racket has affected sea life.

It was a flight of fancy, more aspirational and inspirational than a plan. At first, Ausubel says, he (very fancifully) suggested a year of a "quiet ocean," during which shipping would come to a halt, or at least slow down. Then a month. And finally, just a few hours.

As far-fetched as even that was, a small fraternity of about 100 similarly curious scientists picked up on his vision. In 2015,

they published a plan of how to conduct the International Quiet Ocean Experiment, should the opportunity ever present itself.

When the COVID-19 pandemic sparked an extreme economic slowdown in March, sending cruise ships to port and oil tankers to anchor, they mobilized. Last month, they finished cobbling together an array of 130 underwater hydrophone listening stations around the world – including six stations that had been set up to monitor underwater nuclear tests.

"Well, we're not excited that COVID happened, but we're happy to be able to take advantage of the scientific opportunity," says Peter Tyack, a professor of marine mammal biology at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland and one of the early instigators. "It would have just been impossible any other way."

Tyack says the recordings should give scientists a never-before glimpse of the ocean with little human interference. It's a bit like looking at the night sky if most of the world's lights were turned off.

He says some research suggests large whales have adapted to man-made noises by raising their voices and their pitch. He speculates that many species also have moved to quieter regions of the world so they can find food, and one another, more easily.

Generally, the group will be looking to see if the whales and other sea mammals adapt to the quieter oceans by lowering their volume, communicating more efficiently or shifting their habitat.

Some of the project's listening posts are connected to land via cables, but many of them are not and the recordings have to be retrieved by ships. Now that economies around the world are reopening, the quiet oceans group has started gathering the soundscape data.

It won't be until the end of the year, however, that the researchers will have cleaned up the recordings and can compare them to previous years for changes in human and animal noise alike.

The focus of the serendipi-

tous project is on the so-called SOFAR (Sound Fixing and Ranging) channel, a naturally occurring ocean stratum in which sound can travel long distances.

It's where large baleen and fin whales sing for a lover or join in a friendly chorus. But it's also where the human racket from fishing boats, tankers and motorboats, as well as oil rigs and wind turbines, gets trapped and then propagated around the world.

Sound waves travel farther and faster in water than in the air. That's especially true of the bass notes of a whale's song, the low grinding of a ship's shaft, even the rumble of a nuclear explosion. Those sounds can travel hundreds or even thousands of miles, bending around the planet by bouncing up and down in the SOFAR channel, a kilometer-deep band of water.

The 130 recording stations used by the researchers are a hodgepodge of locations and sensitivity in that channel. Part of the planning process includes identifying and recruiting partners who operate listening stations

run by governments, universities, environmental groups and other agencies.

The humblest station is four kilometers off the Spanish coast and operated by the Polytechnic University of Barcelona. It records sound up to 10 kilometers away. At the other extreme are six stations, each with multiple hydrophones, operated by the Vienna-based Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organization. Those stations can not only pinpoint underwater nuclear explosions anywhere on the planet, but also eavesdrop on whales an ocean away.

Ausubel, the director of the Program for the Human Environment at New York's Rockefeller University, says he and his fellow dreamers were ready, even if their plan seemed unrealistic.

"We spent a lot of time planning: How would you try to set up this kind of study, even though we realized that it wasn't really practical?"

But the plan, Ausubel says, anticipated moments of opportunity such as an extreme weather event, not a pandemic.

"Immediately after a hurricane or a typhoon, it's very quiet for a day or two because of the fear of large waves or storms," he says. "Fishermen don't go out to sea; shipping routes are changed; oil and gas platforms may be shut down."

Amid the pandemic and the lockdowns that ensued, major ports in the Northeast of the United States, such as Boston, Philadelphia, New York and Baltimore, saw a nearly 50% drop in ship and boating traffic in April compared to the same month in 2019, according to MarineTraffic, a ship-tracking firm.

Large European ports, such as Lisbon, Antwerp, Le Havre and Rotterdam, saw about a 25% drop in the same month, the firm said.

"I think there'll be some variability in different places, which is quite important to test this," Tyack says. "It isn't really a controlled experiment, so it's better to have 50 different sites, some of which noise is much lower and some of which it isn't, to be able to look at the impact of the reduction."

Still, Ausubel says he already sees anecdotal evidence that marine mammals are changing their behavior.

"There have been observations near Vancouver of orcas coming closer to the city than was customary, and off Scotland," he says.

Orcas, dolphins and humpback whales, which communicate using high-frequency sounds that don't travel particularly far, often congregate in shallower waters. They may have moved closer to once-busy ports and harbors, he speculated.

The group hopes to publish a paper this summer that gathers anecdotal reports of changes observed in recent months. At the end of the year, a group led by Tyack will report how much the volume went down. And finally, next year, the researchers aim to publish a full analysis of how the reduction in sound changed the behavior of marine mammals and other marine life.

"What did the pre-industrial ocean sound like," Tyack says, "and how are marine ecosystems going to respond to that?"

## Engaging In Family Meals Starts With Healthy Family Communication: Study

### Agencies

Engaging in family meals may be a matter of improving communication and support at home, suggests a new study. The study was published in the Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior.

The research connects less family discouragement and better family communication with a higher likelihood to eat evening family meals and family breakfasts together, and not in front of a television.

Researchers studied 259 parents who were also patients at either The Ohio State University or Wake Forest University accredited weight management and bariatric surgery facilities.

They found parents who had better family communication and lower discouragement about trying to improve their eating habits were more likely to participate in family meals.

"It's important to note all family members in the home have influence. Even if someone doesn't have the most power to influence the family (like children), they are all influencing each other," said the lead study author Keeley J. Pratt, PhD, The Ohio State University, Columbus, OH, USA.

Previous research has shown parental obesity is typically the strongest risk factor for children to have an obese weight status over time. The study's authors also found parents who



perceived their child to be overweight or obese were more than four times as likely to talk to them about the child's weight,

also called "weight talk."

While open communication with children about health is beneficial, "it's important to en-

sure communication directly about children's weight is not harmful in their development of a healthy body image and behaviors. That includes older children and adolescents who are at greater risk of developing eating disorders and disordered eating behaviors," Professor Pratt said.

There was no significant difference between male and female children in this study other than families with female children were more likely to eat dinner together without a television five to seven times a week.

Families with younger children, regardless of gender, were more likely to eat family dinners and breakfasts together, and parents of older children were more likely to talk about their own weight with the child.

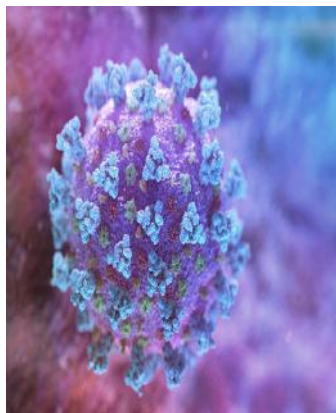
## What Is Herd Immunity And Could It Work With Covid-19?

### Agencies

**PARIS**-What is herd immunity and could it work with Covid-19? Herd immunity is when a virus can no longer spread easily because enough people are immune to it. That lowers the chances of the virus jumping from person to person and reaching those who haven't been infected yet.

People can become immune to certain viruses after surviving infection or being vaccinated. Typically, at least 70 per cent of a population must be immune to achieve herd immunity.

But how long immunity lasts varies depending on the virus, and it's not yet known how long



Covid-19 survivors might have that protection.

How easily the virus spreads

also plays a key role.

Say, for example, someone who's infected with a particular virus typically transmits it to two others.

The chances of that person passing it on to others would be lower if half the population is already immune, said Dr. Walter Orenstein, a vaccine expert at Emory University.

The odds of transmission fall further if even more of the population is immune. That could cause new infections to die out.

But if a virus is more infectious, a higher percentage of people would need to have immunity to stop the spread and achieve herd immunity, Orenstein said.

## Nicotine Aids Spread Of Lung Cancer To Brain

### Agencies

**NEW YORK**- Researchers have found that that nicotine, a non-carcinogenic chemical found in tobacco, actually promotes the spread of lung cancer cells into the brain where they can form deadly metastatic tumours.

Smokers are far more likely to develop lung cancer than non-smokers, the study said.

"Based on our findings, we don't think that nicotine replacement products are the safest way for people with

lung cancer to stop smoking," said study lead author Kou-nosuke Watabe from Wake Forest School of Medicine in the US. Around 40 per cent of lung cancer patients also develop brain metastasis, but new research has found this number is dramatically higher among smokers. In the study, published in the Journal of Experimental Medicine, the research team first examined 281 lung cancer patients and found that cigarette smokers exhibited a significantly higher incidence of brain cancer.

## COVID-19 In India May Have Originated From EU, Middle East: IISc study

### Press Trust Of India

The novel coronavirus in India may have originated from Europe, the Middle East, Oceania and South Asia regions, according to a study by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in Bengaluru.

The observation is a part of the findings of the IISc team comprising Kumar Somasundaram, Mainak Mondal and Ankita Lawarde after analysing 294 Indian viral genomes.

The objective of the study was to determine the genetic diversity among Indian SARS-CoV-2 viral isolates in comparison to the strains that are occurring worldwide.

"The potential origin appears to be countries mainly from Europe, the Middle East, Oceania and South Asia regions, which strongly implies the spread of virus through the most travelled countries," the team noted.

"Among different strains of the virus as identified by Global Initiative on Sharing All Influenza Data, Indian SARS-CoV-2 viruses are enriched with G (50 per cent) and I (6.7 per cent) clades in addition to 40 per cent samples with unknown genetic variants," it stated further.

The team is also finding the functional impact of high occurrence non-synonymous mutations on the viral protein functions and use this informa-

tion toward understanding immune escape mechanisms and also developing mutant specific therapies.

The team noted that while the novel coronavirus increased to more than five million worldwide, it has just crossed over one lakh in India.



The low infection rate in India, according to the team, could be due to long lockdown with effective social distancing, active identification of COVID-19 patients and quarantining them with proper treatment, presumed cross-immune protection and possibly variation in the viral strains that are introduced or prevalent in India.

"Comparison of viral genome sequences from different regions/countries allows us to identify the genetic diversity among viruses which would help in ascertaining virulence, disease pathogenicity, as well as origin and spread of SARS-CoV-2, between countries," the team added.



## Pakistan rules out adopting WHO recommendation

Press Trust Of India

Islamabad: Pakistan's top health official on Wednesday asserted that the government is following a "holistic" strategy to deal with the COVID-19 threat as he ruled out adopting the WHO's recommendation of implementing a two-week strict lockdown, intermittently, to stem the exponential spike in the coronavirus cases.

Pakistan on Tuesday registered its highest single-day spike of coronavirus cases with 5,387 new infections, taking the total tally to 113,702. The deadly virus has so far claimed 2,255 lives.

Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Health Dr Zafar Mirza said the government is pursuing a "holistic strategy to combat the coronavirus".

The government, he said, is "conscious" of the disease spread and mortality and has

make tough policy choices to strike a balance between lives and livelihoods," Mirza said.

He said Pakistan has consciously but gradually eased generalised lockdowns but at the same time has focused on enforcement of standard operating procedures (SOPs) in shops, industry, mosques and public transport.

In a letter to the Punjab health minister last week, the World Health Organisation said the virus has spread all over the country, and a large number of cases had been recorded in big cities. The cases had increased sharply after the easing of lockdown. It ranks Pakistan among the top-10 most affected countries.

The letter appreciated Pakistan's efforts in fighting COVID-19, but warned that recent statistics suggest its current strategy was not paying off.



## Two Weeks After His Death, Floyd's Life Celebrated At Houston Funeral

Agencies

Houston: George Floyd, the African American whose death in police custody roused worldwide protests against racism, was exalted at his funeral by religious and political leaders, family and friends on Tuesday in his hometown of Houston.

This is a home-going celebration," Reverend Mia Wright, co-pastor at the Fountain of Praise Church, told mourners.

Banners featured pop art illustrations of Floyd wearing a baseball cap with a halo above it.

American flags lined the streets outside the church. Flowers and bouquets were placed around a photograph of Floyd.

Former Vice President Joe Biden, the presumptive Democratic presidential candidate, spoke via a video recording.

"Why in this nation do too many black Americans wake up knowing that they could lose their life in the course of just living their life?" Biden said. "We must not turn away. We cannot leave this moment thinking we can once again turn away from racism."

After the service, a funeral

procession was due to travel about 15 miles (24 km) to Houston Memorial Gardens Cemetery in Pearland, Texas. His body was to travel in a horse-drawn carriage for burial alongside his mother.

Floyd, a 46-year-old African American who grew up in the Texas city, died on May 25 after a white police officer in Minneapolis pinned him with a knee to the neck for nearly nine minutes. A bystander's video captured the incident in excruciating detail, including his saying "I can't breathe" and crying out for his mother.

"It was the worst thing I ever could have imagined, watching him going from speaking and breathing to turning blue," said Godfrey Johnson, 45, as he arrived at the church. Johnson, who wore an "I can't breathe" T-shirt, attended Floyd's high school and played football with him.

About 500 people were invited to the funeral, which followed memorial services last week in Minneapolis and Raeford, the North Carolina town where Floyd was born.

Advised to guard against the coronavirus pandemic by wearing masks over their mouths

and noses, some mourners and onlookers wore ones that said, "I can't breathe."

Mourning families

Family members of other black men killed in confrontations with white men attended.

The mother of Eric Garner, the New York man who died in a police chokehold, was at the church as was the family of Ahmaud Arbery, a 25-year-old Georgia man who was shot and killed in February while jogging. Three white men were charged.

Outside the church in hot, humid, 90 degrees Fahrenheit (32 degrees Celsius) temperature, two voter registration tables were set up.

Floyd's death ignited a wave of protests across the United States and cities in other countries against racism and the systematic mistreatment of black people, reinvigorating the Black Lives Matter movement.

The case also thrust the administration of President Donald Trump into a political crisis. Trump repeatedly threatened to order the military on to the streets to quell protests, which have mostly been peaceful.

## WHO Clarifies Remark That Infection From Asymptomatic People "Very Rare"

Agencies

Geneva, Switzerland: A top WHO official on Tuesday clarified her remarks that transmission of the new coronavirus from asymptomatic carriers was "very rare", citing a "misunderstanding".

Maria Van Kerkhove, the World Health Organization's COVID-19 technical lead, had said that on the basis of studies carried out in several countries, transmission of the virus by an asymptomatic person seemed "very rare".

"We have a number of reports from countries who are doing very detailed contact tracing. They're following asymptomatic cases, they're following contacts and they're not finding secondary transmission onward. It's very rare," she told a virtual press conference on Monday.

Her remarks, which were widely relayed on social media networks, sparked a reaction from part of the scientific community.

"Contrary to what the WHO announced, it is not scientifically possible to affirm that asymptomatic carriers of SARS-CoV-2 are not very infectious," professor Gilbert Deray of the Pitie-Salpetriere hospital in Paris said on Twitter.

Liam Smeeth, a clinical epidemiology professor at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, said he was "quite surprised".

"There remains scientific uncertainty, but asymptomatic infection could be around 30 percent to 50 percent of cases. The best scientific studies to date suggest that up to half of cases became infected from asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic people," he said. Van Kerkhove later posted on Twitter a WHO summary on transmission.

"Comprehensive studies on transmission from asymptomatic individuals are difficult to conduct, but the available evidence from contact tracing reported by member states suggests that asymptotically-infected individuals are much less likely to transmit the virus than those who develop symptoms," it said.

## Second Etihad plane from UAE lands in Israel

Agencies

Dubai: UAE carrier Etihad Airways sent its second flight to Israel in less than a month Tuesday, carrying medical aid to help the Palestinians tackle the coronavirus pandemic, witnesses and officials said.

Jordan and Egypt aside, Arab countries have no official diplomatic ties with Israel, but Gulf Arab nations have had ever more publicly warm ties with Israel of late, partly over shared rivalry with Iran.

In mid-May, the United Arab Emirates flew its first publicly announced flight to Israel, also an Etihad flight carrying coronavirus aid for the Palestinians. But Tuesday's aircraft bore for the first time the logo of the Arab carrier, a source with knowledge of the flight told AFP.

It is "the first time that a plane carrying Etihad's marking is landing in Israel", the source said.

Israel's foreign affairs ministry confirmed that Tuesday's flight was the second one to Israel from the UAE.

"It is the second direct flight from the UAE and it has medical aid for the Palestinians," the ministry said.

The aid "will be given to the UN to distribute," it said.

Palestinian premier Mohammed Shtayyeh said the Palestinians had not been in-

formed about the flight.

"The Emirati plane took us by surprise, we didn't know about it," he told foreign journalists at the Palestinian Authority headquarters in the occupied West Bank city of Ramallah.

He voiced appreciation for the aid, but said the delivery should have been coordinated.

"When China decides to help us, they coordinate with us, when any country in the world is extending its assistance, they tell us," he told foreign journalists in Ramallah.

In another sign of warming ties between Israel and Gulf Arab nations, the Jewish state Tuesday congratulated the UAE on its bid to launch the first Arab space probe.

That and the latest flight came as Israel prepares to potentially move forward in July with annexing its West Bank settlements and the Jordan Valley.

A peace plan announced by US President Donald Trump in January gave the green light for such annexations as well as creating a reduced Palestinian state, crucially lacking a capital in east Jerusalem.



## Books about racial discrimination become bestsellers

Agencies

Washington: FROM White Fragility to The New Jim Crow, literature about the history of racial discrimination in the United States is selling out as white Americans seek to educate themselves as nationwide protests grow over the killing of unarmed black people. As the death of George Floyd, who was pinned under the knee of a white police officer in Minneapolis, has prompted more than a week of street protests throughout the states, Americans at home are turning to books, movies and television shows that lay bare decades of discrimination.

Non-fiction books about the black experience head the Amazon.com bestseller list, including children's books, such as the We're Different, We're the Same from the Sesame Street stable. Many titles are sold out and used editions carry asking prices of up to \$50 each. On the Barnes and Noble website, eight

of the Top 10 bestsellers were previously published books, including Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates, and So You Want to Talk About Race, by Ijeoma Oluo. "This doesn't happen everyday ... The #1 and #2 overall bestsellers @amazon right now are two books challenging racism. This is you," Ibram X. Kendi, author of How To Be an Anti-Racist, tweeted this week.

Just as the street protests have transcended colour lines, Americans have been seeking and passing on recommended reading lists to friends and followers through Twitter and Instagram postings. Kendi, who compiled one such list for The New York Times at the weekend, wrote that the aim was to "confront our self-serving beliefs and make us aware that 'I'm not racist' is a slogan of denial." Supporters are also urged to make their purchases through black-owned or independent book stores in a concrete show of support.

## London may remove statues as Floyd's death sparks change

Agencies

LONDON: London's mayor announced on Tuesday that more statues of imperialist figures could be removed from Britain's streets after protesters knocked down the monument to a slave trader, as the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis continued to spark protests and drive change around the world.

On the day Floyd was being buried in his hometown of Houston, Texas, London Mayor Sadiq Khan said he was setting up a commission to ensure the British capital's monuments reflected its diversity.

The Commission for Diversity in the Public Realm will review statues, murals, street art, street names and other memorials and consider which legacies should be celebrated, the mayors office said.

It is an uncomfortable truth that our nation and city owes a large part of its wealth to its role in the slave trade and while this is reflected in our public realm, the contribution of many of our communities to life in our capital has been willfully ignored, Khan said.

International protests of racial injustice and police violence that Floyd's May 25 death spurred show no sign of abating. A white police officer who pressed a knee on Floyd's neck for more than eight minutes has been charged with murder.

Staff members and lawmakers in Britain's Parliament held a minute of silence in Floyd's memory on Tuesday. Demonstrators planned to gather in London's Parliament Square for a socially distanced vigil later.

France has seen nationwide protests calling for greater law enforcement accountability, and more demonstrations are planned for Tuesday evening.

Floyd's death has resonated especially strongly in Frances banlieues, or suburbs, where poverty and minority populations are concentrated. Protesters marching in solidarity with US demonstrations over Floyd's death have also called for justice for Adama Traore, a young man of Malian origin whose death in French police custody in 2016 is still under investigation.

French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe has met police and citizens' groups as part of efforts to calm tensions.

<b>GOVERNMENT OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR</b> <b>DIRECTORATE OF HORTICULTURE, RAJBAGH-SRINAGAR, KASHMIR</b> ( TELE-FAX: 0194-2311287/2311484 )	
Subject: - Cancellation of appointment as Gardner (Class IV) in District Anantnag.	
<b>ORDER NO:- _____/E Of 2020</b> <b>DATED: _____/06/2020</b>	
Whereas Shri Rahul Kumar S/O Bilo Ram R/O Jandrali A/P Sundhar Basohli Kuthua has been appointed in Horticulture Department District Anantnag against the post of Gardner vide Horticulture order No. 18/E of 2019 dated 11/07/2019 on the basis of recommendations of Chairman District Level Recruitment Committee Anantnag (Chief Horticulture officer Anantnag) from waiting list under SC category.	
Whereas Shri Rahul Kumar was required to join his duties within the stipulated period of 21 days from the date of issuance of the said order dated 11/07/2019.	
Whereas Shri Rahul Kumar failed to join the Department within the stipulated time period.	
Whereas Shri Rahul Kumar on 29/08/2019 i.e. after the lapse of more than 1 ½ months from the date of issuance of appointment order approached the Chief Horticulture officer Anantnag through an application for allowing him to join the office.	
Whereas the Chief Horticulture Officer Anantnag brought the instant issue into the notice of this Directorate vide his letter No. CHO/Ang/Estt/6082 dated 25/02/2020. In turn this office vide letter No. DHK/ Adm/ NG/ 198/ 16865 dated 28/02/2020 instructed Chief Horticulture officer, Anantnag to process the case of the incumbent for cancellation of his appointment after observing of all codal formalities as required under rules.	
Whereas a notice for cancellation of appointment of incumbent was published in daily Newspapers viz. Greater Kashmir and Kashmir Uzma on 09/02/2020 by Chief Horticulture Officer Anantnag, informing Shri Rahul Kumar that his appointment in the Department against the post of Gardner shall be cancelled.	
Therefore in view of the above facts and on the basis of recommendations of Chief Horticulture Officer Anantnag vide letter No. CHO/ ANT/ Est/ Rectt/ Class IV/7482 dated 07/03/2020, appointment order issued by this Directorate vide order No.18/E of 2019 dated 11/07/2019 in favour of Shri Rahul Kumar S/O Bilo Ram R/O Jandrali A/P Sundhar Basohli Kuthua, against the post of Gardner is hereby cancelled an-initio.	
No: DHK/Adm/NG/44/ Dt: -06-2020.	Ajaz Ahmad Bhat (KAS) DIRECTOR
DIPK-1513/20	

Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir <b>OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER R&amp;B SPECIAL SUB-DIVISION URI</b> <b>NOTICE INVITING TENDERS – FRESH TO NIT No. (10/ 03)</b> <b>NIT No. 15/ SSDU/ 508-27/ 2020-21/ R&amp;B/ Uri. DATED: 08/06/2020</b> <b>For and on behalf of “Lieutenant Governor, Union Territory of J&amp;K”, sealed tenders affixed with Six Rupee Revenue stamp are hereby invited from the Govt. approved contractors of the classes shown against each of the following works.</b>							
Sr. No.	Name of Work	Estimated Cost (Rs: In lacs)	Cost of Tender Document (In Rupees)	Earnest Money (In Rupees)	Time of Completion (In days)	Class of Contract	M.H: of Account
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Upgradation of Lagama Dabbar Road by way of Construction of R/ wall in Km 1st, RD 325 Mtrs.	0.80	200/=	8,00/=	07 days	“Self Help Group”	M.H: 3054-M&R
<b>Position of funds: Demanded. (One Work Only).</b>							
<b>All other terms &amp; conditions shall remain same as per this office detailed N.I.T No. (01) of 2020-21. No. SSDU/ 2020/ 508-27. Dated: 08-06-2020.</b>							
DIPK-1562/20				Sd/ Executive Engineer, R&B Special Sub-Division, Uri. /M. Yousuf/			

The Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir <b>Office of the Executive Engineer PHE Division Baramulla</b> Email: kmrphebla@gmail.com (FAX) 01952234575 (Tel) 01952234244 <b>CORRIGENDUM</b> Ref:- This office ENIT No. 07 of 05/2020 issued under No. 562-68 dated 23/05/2020. Please read “clear water chamber” instead of “clear water sump” in the nomenclature of the above referred work/ NIT figuring at S.No. 01 (a). All other terms & conditions shall remain same as laid down in the detailed NIT. No. 829-53 Dt. 08.06.2020		Sd/- Executive Engineer PHE Division Baramulla DIPK-1520/20
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## Cow Slaughter To Attract Rigorous Imprisonment, Fine Up To Rs 5 Lakh In Uttar Pradesh

To protect cows and prevent their slaughter, the Uttar Pradesh government on Tuesday approved a draft ordinance, providing a maximum rigorous imprisonment of 10 years and a fine up to Rs 5 lakh.

For the first offence, a person can be given a rigorous punishment of one to seven years with a fine ranging from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 3 lakh.

For the second offence, the person can be given a 10-year rigorous imprisonment with a fine up to Rs 5 lakh, a statement said.



The state cabinet cleared the draft of the Uttar Pradesh Cow Slaughter Prevention (Amendment) Ordinance, 2020 at a meeting chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath in Lucknow.

The ordinance aims at making the existing law (Uttar Pradesh Prevention of Cow Slaughter Act, 1955) more robust and effective and to completely stop the incidents pertaining to cow slaughter, the statement said.

In case of the illegal transportation of cows and other bovines, the driver, operator and the owner of the vehicle

shall be charged under the new Act, unless proven that the transportation was done without the owner's knowledge by someone else for committing the crime.

The expenditure incurred on the maintenance of the captured cows will be recovered from the owner of the vehicle for a period of one year or until the cow or bovine is released, whichever is earlier.

The provisions also attract punishment if there is a danger to their lives through physical damage or mutilation.

## Delhi's Jama Masjid May Close Again Due To Covid-19 Situation, Says Shahi Imam



**NEW DELHI:** Delhi's Jama Masjid may have to be closed again in view of the "deteriorating" situation in the city due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the mosque's Shahi Imam Syed Ahmed Bukhari said today.

The development comes after the Shahi Imam's secretary Amanullah died due to coronavirus at the Safdarjung Hospital on Tuesday night.

Delhi recorded 1,366 fresh cases of COVID-19 on Tuesday, taking the tally to 31,309, while the number of deaths went up to 905, authorities said today.

"He (Amanullah) had tested positive and was admitted to the Safdarjung Hospital on June 3, where he breathed his last yesterday," Mr Bukhari said.

The Shahi Imam said the opinion of the people has been sought on closing the mosque again in view of the surge in the number of novel coronavirus cases in the na-

tional capital.

"People are giving their views through social media and other channels on closing the Jama Masjid. We may again shut it down for people and limit 'namaz' for a few people, in a day or two," he said.

The mosque had opened on June 8 after a gap of over two months with the government allowing further relaxations as part of "Unlock-1", the first phase of a calibrated exit from the novel coronavirus-induced nationwide lockdown.

"I have also asked other smaller mosques to appeal to people to stay at home and offer 'namaz' instead of going to mosques for it. What is the point of visiting mosques at such a time when the spread of the coronavirus is peaking in Delhi, when we did not do so even during Ramzan and Eid due to the lockdown," Mr Bukhari said.



## Most Covid-19 Smartphone Apps Don't Promise Privacy Protection: Study

Most mobile applications that track the spread of COVID-19 require access to users' personal data, but only a handful indicate the data would be anonymous, encrypted and secured, according to a study by Indian-origin researchers in the US.

Professor Masooda Bashir and doctoral student Tanusree Sharma from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign analysed 50 COVID-19-related apps available in the Google Play store for their access to users' personal data and their privacy protections. The researchers noted that it is disconcerting that these apps are continuously collecting and processing highly sensitive and personally identifiable information, about health, location and direct identifiers like name, age, email address and voter or national identification of a user.

"Governments' use of such tracking technology -- and the possibilities for how they might use it after the pandemic -- is chilling to many," the researchers wrote in the study published in the journal Nature

Medicine.

"Notably, surveillance mapping through apps will allow governments to identify people's travel paths and their entire social networks," they noted.

The researchers explained that functionalities of the COVID-related apps developed around the world include live maps and updates of confirmed cases, real-time location-based alerts, systems for monitoring home isolation and quarantine, direct reporting to the government of symptoms, and education about COVID-19.

Some also offer monitoring of vital signs, virtual medical consultations and community-driven contact tracing, the said.

Of the 50 apps the researchers evaluated, 30 require users' permission to access data from their mobile devices such as contacts, photos, media, files, location data, the camera.

These 30 apps also require the device's ID, call information, Wi-Fi connection, microphone, network access, the Google service configuration, and the ability to change network connectivity and audio set-

tings, according to the study.

Some of the apps, the researchers said, state they will collect users' age, email address, phone number and postal code; the device's location, unique identifiers, mobile IP address and operating system; and the types of browsers used on the device.

Only 16 of the apps indicated such data will be anonymous, encrypted, secured and reported only in aggregate form, they said.

Of the apps sampled in the study, 20 were issued by governments, health ministries and other such official sources.

The researchers acknowledged that mass surveillance measures may be necessary to contain the spread of the virus.

"Health care providers must absolutely use whatever means are available to save lives and confine the spread of the virus," they wrote in the journal.

However, the researchers added that it is up to the rest, especially those in the field of information privacy, and security, to ask the questions needed to protect the right to privacy.

## Airlines To Lose \$84 Billion This Year Due To Pandemic: Aviation Body

Airlines are set to lose \$84 billion as the coronavirus pandemic reduces revenue by half to mark the worst year in the sector's history, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) forecast on Tuesday.

With most of the world's airlines currently parked, IATA said revenue would likely fall to \$419 billion from \$838 billion last year.

"Every day of this year will add \$230 million to industry losses," IATA Director General Alexandre de Juniac said.

The average loss amounts to almost \$38 per passenger flown.

In 2021, IATA warned losses could hit \$100 billion as traffic struggles to recover and airlines slash fares to win business.

"Airlines will still be financially fragile in 2021," De Juniac said, predicting "even more intense" competition.

"That will translate into strong incentives for travellers to take to the skies again," he added.

IATA forecast a rise in 2021 revenue to \$598 billion.

Airlines are counting the cost of weeks of lost business, a debt pile swollen by bailouts and a diminished demand outlook.

Passenger numbers are seen fall-



ing to 2.25 billion this year before rising to 3.38 billion in 2021, still more than 25% below 2019 levels.

Yields, a proxy for fares, are seen falling 18% this year, contributing to a \$241 billion decline in passenger revenue.

Cargo, a relatively small share of the overall business, brought some relief as mass plane groundings drove price increases expected to top 30%, IATA said, helping revenue

to a near-record \$111 billion.

Even in markets where COVID-19 infection rates have fallen sharply, airlines still face a patchwork of travel restrictions and wary consumers.

A 14-day quarantine for arriving passengers introduced by Britain this week has prompted an angry response and legal threats from the travel industry amid reports that it may be loosened in favour of "air corridors" to some destinations.

## Goa Government Allows People To Skip COVID-19 Test On Arrival

From Thursday, those entering Goa will have the option of skipping the COVID-19 test, provided no symptoms were found in them during the screening at the entry points, Chief Minister Pramod Sawant said on Wednesday.

However, those who choose not to undergo the test will have to remain home-quarantined for 14 days, he said.

Sawant said the government has brought a change in the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to execute this new plan considering the strain on the testing facilities in Goa in view of the

COVID-19 negative from any ICMR-affiliated laboratory, which should be issued less than 48 hours before their arrival, Sawant said.

"Everyone entering the state will have to go through thermal scanner check, and if found symptomatic, that person will be taken to a quarantine facility, where test would be conducted," he said.

"The change in SOP has been brought as the testing facilities are getting stressed due to increasing number of people arriving in the state," he said.

On the status of the COVID-19 patients in Goa, the chief minister said so far,



rising number of people arriving in the state.

"As per the change in the SOP, people will be allowed to enter the state without having to undergo the COVID-19 test. Those not found carrying any COVID-19 symptoms will have this option. It will come into effect from June 11. However, it is mandatory for those who choose to skip this test to observe 14-day home quarantine along with the family members," he said.

"Those who decide to undergo COVID-19 test on their arrival in Goa will have to remain under institutional quarantine till their test results are declared," the CM said.

People can carry the medical certificate of being

359 positive cases were found in the state, of which 67 have recovered.

"We have 292 cases, which are active, of which only 21 are symptomatic. None of the patients had to be put on ventilator," he added.

Sawant said except for three patients, all others are natives of Goa. "Of the total cases, 194 were from Vasco's Mangor Hill area, which has been declared as a containment zone," he added.

The chief minister said that eleven health workers who were working to curb the spread of COVID-19 have tested positive, while four drivers of the state-run Kadamba Transport Corporation Ltd who were on duty, were also found infected.

## Over 1,000 Doves Starve To Death At Afghan Mosque Shut Due To Lockdown

**MAZAR-I-SHARIF:** More than 1,000 doves have died of starvation at Afghanistan's famed blue-tiled mosque in Mazar-i-Sharif after it closed to curb the spread of the coronavirus, caretakers said Tuesday.

Before the mosque complex shut amid a nationwide lockdown, flocks of the snow-white birds would gather at the popular tourist attraction, where visitors would feed them.

But without any visitors to the 12th century wonder in Balkh province in northern Afghanistan, the doves have had little to eat, caretakers said.

"Every day, about 30 doves die. We bury them outside the shrine," said Qayum Ansari, head of cultural affairs at the mosque, adding that more than 1,000 birds have starved to death in recent weeks.

The doves have been a fixture for decades, with some visitors even considering them sacred.

"The birds were fed by visitors but since the lockdown, nobody has come," said Ahmed Naeveed, a caretaker at the mosque.

Local officials said authorities were ready to feed the birds if mosque managers allow it.



"We will buy them bird food," said Munir Farhad, spokesman to the governor of Balkh province.

The mosque, which is adorned with intricate hand-painted tiles, was destroyed by Genghis Khan and his army in the 13th century, but was rebuilt and has emerged as a major pilgrimage centre for Muslims.

Afghanistan's coronavirus crisis is worsening by the day, with authorities reporting 21,459 confirmed cases so far, though the real number is thought to be much higher.

Experts say the country has one of the highest rates of tests coming back positive -- about 40 percent, indicating high levels of undetected infections.

Officials have warned the country faces a "disaster," with hospitals running short of beds as suspected cases surge.

### NEWS MAKER

#### This Town Brings France, Italy, Japan To Its People As Virus Stops Travel

**VILNIUS, LITHUANIA:** With virus travel restrictions preventing summer holidays abroad, Lithuania's capital is offering a low-cost alternative by mimicking the look and feel of different countries at weekends.

France, Japan and the US are among the more than half-a-dozen nations that Vilnius residents can get a taste of without leaving the Baltic city.

Last weekend Italian music filled the Old Town, while local restaurants offered Mediterranean dishes as green, white and red flags fluttered nearby.

Aurelija Baniulaitiene, a Lithuanian civil servant who came with a friend to an open-air restaurant, said the southern European atmosphere helped her "leave the lock-



down cocoon".

In the weeks to come, the theme will change to India, the United States, France, Spain, Germany and Japan.

Rasa Kliostoraityte, a translator who presented three books by contemporary Italian writers as part of the initiative, hoped it would allow "people to enjoy the Italian spirit without leaving the city".

Her husband, Italian-born singer Mario Di Pasquale, had mixed feelings before taking his guitar to the stage near the 17th century St John's Church bell tower that dominates the city's skyline.

"I had to think if it is fine to celebrate Italy now, when it is suffering so much pain," the 44-year-old told AFP.

"I have not forgotten the victims for a moment and I

pay my respect with my songs. Italians themselves started singing folk songs from balconies when the outbreak started," he added.

A short walk away, in a former Jewish neighbourhood, jeans designer Milda Paukste used pieces of denim to stitch an outline of the Italian peninsula on a sheet laid out in the street.

"On top of it, I put everything Italian that I found at home, from spaghetti to a Versace perfume and a cup of espresso. I see it as a creative way to educate people," said Paukste, 35.

In the nearby Town Hall Square, hundreds of Lithuanians admired a collection of iconic Vespa scooters and Alfa Romeo cars.

#### India's Favourite Biscuit Parle-G Records Highest Sales During Lockdown

**NEW DELHI:** Leading food company Parle Products logged record sales of its Parle-G biscuits, preferred for mass consumption, in April and May during the lockdown, said a senior company official.

The company has gained a market share of around 5 per cent in the highly competitive biscuit segment, helped by Parle-G biscuits, which was proffered by the people while stocking pantry during the pandemic.

Parle-G biscuits also gained traction as it was preferred by government agencies and NGOs working to distribute food relief packages to the people during the pandemic due to its economic proposition with value package of Rs



2 besides being considered as a good source of glucose, Parle Products Senior Category Head Mayank Shah told PTI.

"The growth was phenomenal and as a result Parle was able to increase its market share by 4.5 to 5 per cent during the lockdown," he added.

"This is one of the highest

of uncertainty, it has been consumed a lot." Even during the earlier crisis like tsunami and earth quakes, sales of Parle-G biscuits had gone up, he added.

"That is the kind of trust, which the people have in the brand," he said adding the Parle-G is good for storing also as it has a longer shelf life.

The company had also announced to donate three crore packs of Parle-G biscuits when the coronavirus pandemic intensified in India. "We also saw many other people doing that. There were many other organisations, which were also helping the people by distributing Parle-G biscuits," he said adding that it was being donated by multiple people and organisation as it is a good product for that.