



Maximum : 32°C
Minimum : 18°C
Humidity : 53%

SUNSET
Today 07:29 PM
SUNRISE
Tomorrow 05:44 AM



News Digest

KU Postpones MBBS Exams

SRINAGAR: The Kashmir University on Monday announced that the MBBS examinations will be postponed till further notice. According to the varsity, the fresh dates for the deferred examinations will be notified separately, later. "It is hereby notified for the information of all concerned that the MBBS examinations (Regular/ Supplementary) for which dates have been already issued by the University of Kashmir have been postponed till further notice," the notification stated.

'Abducted' Soldier Remains Untraced

Srinagar: A search operation was launched on Monday to trace a Territorial Army (TA) jawan who is suspected to have been abducted by militants in Jammu and Kashmir's Kulgam district, an Army spokesperson said here. Rifleman ShakinManzoor of 162 Battalion (TA) went missing on Sunday and his vehicle was found abandoned and burnt in south Kashmir's Kulgam, he said. It is suspected that the soldier, a resident of neighbouring Shopian district, has been abducted by militants, the spokesperson said. The Army has launched an operation to trace him, he added.

Minor Dies After Car Falls Into Gorge

Banihal: A four-year-old boy was killed and four others, including his mother and minor brother, were injured as the vehicle they were travelling in skidded off the road and rolled down into a river in Jammu and Kashmir's Ramban district on Monday, officials said. The Bolero vehicle was going to Rajgarh in Ramban district from Dassa in Doda when it rolled down into the 150-feet-deep river resulting in boy's death and injuries to four other passengers, they said. Police officials identified the dead as Pritam Singh, son of Balwant Singh of Hiller, Rajgarh in • P-02

Boy Drowns In Poonch River

Srinagar: A minor boy died of drowning on Monday in Poonch district of Jammu and Kashmir. 12-year-old Murtaza Ahmed Malik was taking bath in a river in Sailan area of the district on Monday afternoon when he drowned, officials said. The locals swung into action and retrieved the boy in unconscious state before taking him to the sub-district hospital Surankote. However, the doctors there declared him brought dead on arrival. His body was handed over to his family after legal formalities, a police officer told GNS.

Bear Caught In Tangmarg

Srinagar: The officials of the wildlife department on Monday caught a bear in Tangmarg area of Baramulla district. According to reports, the locals spotted a bear in the village and instantly informed the wildlife department to prevent any incident of man-animal conflict. A team of wildlife officials reached the spot and caught the wild beast before whisking him away. The bear, reports said had attacked and injured at least nine persons in several villages of Tangmarg in recent days. (KNS)

Curfew In Srinagar Ahead Of August 5 Anniversary

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: Authorities in Srinagar on Monday clamped curfew in the city in view of what they called "specific inputs" about protests on August 5, the first anniversary of the revocation of J&K's special status and its division into two union territories.

Srinagar District Magistrate Shahid Iqbal Choudhary said in an order that the curfew will come into force with immediate effect and shall remain in effect on August 4 and August 5.

Earlier strict restrictions on public movement were imposed in the Kashmir valley on Monday, with officials saying that the curbs have been enforced as part of efforts to contain the spread of COVID-19.

Police and paramilitary forces sealed most of the roads and market places to enforce the lockdown.

Quoting Srinagar Senior Superintendent of Police District Magistrate said, "a series of inputs have been received suggesting that separatist and Pakistan-sponsored groups are planning to observe August 5 as Black Day and violent action or protests are not ruled out."

"There are specific inputs about violent protests endangering public life and property," the DM's order said.

Choudhary said any mass gathering would also be detrimental to efforts related to the containment of COVID-19.

The SSP report further suggests that in view of restrictions aimed at COVID-19 containment already in place, the movement and assembly of people have been prohibited, the DM said.

Thus, any such mass gathering would be detrimental • PAGE 02



CURFEW WAS CLAMPED on Srinagar city two days ahead of august 5 anniversary. KO photo Abid Bhat

Top Security Brass Discuss Measures

SRINAGAR: Top officers of army, police and civil administration on Monday held a meeting to discuss the security measures to be put in place on the first anniversary of the revocation of special status to Jammu and Kashmir.

The core group meeting was co-chaired by General Officer Commanding, Chinara Corps, Lt Gen BS Raju and Director General of Police Jammu & Kashmir, Dilbag Singh to review the security situation and ensure readiness to meet anticipated security challenges, an army spokesperson said in a handout



issued this evening. Officials of civil administration, intelligence agencies and besides Divisional Commissioner also attended the meeting.

"The Core Group reviewed the security situation in Kashmir and the progress on handling the COVID challenges facing the UT. Special emphasis was given to ensure extensive security for the upcoming one year anniversary of abrogation of Article 370 including discussions on administrative measures," the army spokesperson said.

He said the meeting also discussed recent increased infiltration attempts and CFVs along the LoC while the defence officials shared that the surveillance grid and counter infiltration grid in sensitive areas has been reinforced, which has led to early detection and foiling of infiltration attempts in last few weeks. • PAGE 02

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August 5 Move Won't Change Kashmir's Status: Hurriyat

The Hurriyat Conference led by Mirwaiz Umar Farooq on Monday said that the government of India's "muscular and brutal" August 5 move will not change the ground reality and that the Kashmir issues needs to be resolved in accordance to the wishes and aspirations of the people. • P-02

August 5 'Darkest Day' In History Of J&K, Indian Democracy: Cong

The Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee on Monday termed the August 5 move by Modi government as the "darkest day in the history of Jammu and Kashmir and Indian democracy" and said that one year down the line the region has been pushed into a quagmire by the BJP government • P-02

My House Locked From Inside Too: Soz

SRINAGAR: Senior Congress leader Saifuddin Soz on Monday claimed he continued to be under house detention, and that the main gate of his residence has now been locked from inside as well.

The former Union minister urged the country's judicial system to take notice of the situation.

I have already explained my position that I continue to be under house arrest. The Supreme Court was told by the Government on July 30 that I was a free man. I had categorically stated that the Government had made a false statement before the Supreme Court and outside too, he said in a statement here.

I had rebutted the false statement that very day and subsequently also, but the Government continued to spread the • PAGE 02

India Deploys More Troops, Tank Regiments Along LAC In Ladakh

Agencies

NEW DELHI: In response to China's deployment of more than 17,000 troops and armoured vehicles opposite Daulat Beg Oldi (DBO) and Depsang plains in Ladakh, India has made heavy deployment of troops and tank regiments in the area to counter any misadventure by the People's Liberation Army (PLA) there.



"We have done a very heavy deployment of troops and tanks in the DBO and Depsang plains area including the T-90 • PAGE 02

WE HAVE DONE A VERY HEAVY DEPLOYMENT OF TROOPS and tanks in the DBO and Depsang plains area including the T-90 regiments which are part of an armoured division,"

13 More Covid-19 Deaths In J&K, Toll Reaches 409

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: At least 13 more people, including six city residents died of coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir on Monday, taking the total number of fatalities due to virus in the Union Territory to 409.

While Jammu province reported two new deaths due to Covid-19, in Valley eleven people succumbed to the deadly disease, officials said. In Valley, six of the victims were Srinagar residents, while two from Anantnag and one each from Ganderbal, Baramulla and Pulwama districts.

SK institute of medical sciences reported three deaths, including that of a 85-year-old from Safakadal, 62-year-old from

Nawab Bazar here and a 75-year-old from Pulwama district.

At SMHS hospital, a 68-year-old from downtown Srinagar died this evening. "He was suffering from Pneumonia and was put on ventilator," a doctor at the hospital said.

Regarding two deaths at Jammu, officials said, one of them, a 60-year-old man from Simbal Morh in Miran Sahib area of Jammu tested positive last evening, nearly 24 hours after his death in the Government Medical College (GMC) Jammu. The other, they said, was 82-year-old woman from RS Pura who was admitted to the hospital on July 28.

Meanwhile, two persons from Anantnag died due to virus and included a 65-year-old from SK colony area of the • PAGE 02

60 Travellers Among 590 More Test Positive

Coronavirus on Monday crossed 22000 mark in Jammu and Kashmir as 590 more people, including sixty travellers tested Covid-19 positive raising the number of infected people across the Union Territory to 22006. While 433 new cases were reported from the Valley, remaining 157 were confirmed by the officials in the Jammu region. In Valley, Srinagar reported 180 fresh cases, Baramulla 23, • P-02

WHO Says No 'Silver Bullet' To Defeat Covid-19

Agencies

GENEVA: The World Health Organization warned Monday that there might never be a "silver bullet" for the new coronavirus, despite the rush to discover effective vaccines.

The WHO urged governments and citizens to focus on doing the known basics, such as testing, contact tracing, maintaining physical distance and wearing a mask in order to suppress the pandemic, which has upended normal life around the globe and triggered a devastating economic crisis.

"We all hope to have a number of effective vaccines that can help prevent people from infection," WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus told a virtual press



conference. "However, there's no silver bullet at the moment -- and there might never be."

"For now, stopping outbreaks comes down to the basics of public health and disease control.

"Do it all," he urged. The novel coronavirus has killed nearly 690,000 people and infected at least 18.1 million since the • PAGE 02

Pakistan Foreign, Defence Ministers Visit LoC

Press Trust Of India

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi and Defence Minister Perviz Khattak on Monday visited the Line of Control (LoC) where they were briefed by the Army about the latest situation, according to officials.

The two ministers, accompanied by the Prime Minister's Special Assistant on National Security Moeed Yusuf, visited the Chiri Kot Sector.

In a video message released before his LoC visit, Qureshi said he was visiting the LoC along with the Defence Minister to express solidarity with the Kashmiri people.

The two ministers visited the Chiri

Pak Names 'Kashmir Highway' After Srinagar

In a move that could upset India, Pakistan renamed 'Kashmir Highway' in its capital Islamabad as Srinagar Highway to pay 'tributes to the struggle' of the people of Jammu and Kashmir, Dawn Reported Monday. Pakistan's Minister for Communications and Postal Services Murad Saeed unveiled the • P-02

Kot Sector where they were briefed by the Army about the latest situation of the LoC, officials said. • PAGE 02

After Amit Shah, Karnataka CM Tests Covid-19 Positive

Press Trust Of India

BENGALURU: Karnataka Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa on Sunday said he has tested positive for COVID-19.

"I have tested positive for coronavirus. Whilst I am fine, I am being hospitalised as a precaution on the recommendation of doctors. I request those who have come in contact with me recently to be observant and exercise self quarantine," the veteran BJP leader wrote on Twitter.

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"I have tested positive for coronavirus. Whilst I am fine, I am being hospitalised as a precaution on the recommendation



of doctors. I request those who have come in contact with me recently to be observant and exercise self quarantine," the veteran BJP leader wrote on Twitter. Earlier in the day, Union Home Minister Amit Shah took to Twitter to announce that he has tested positive for COVID-19.

Article 370: A Year On, How Internet Restriction Affected Kashmiri Youth

Hameeda Syed

LAST Fall when Masrat Amin, 22, stepped outside of Indira Gandhi International Airport, she saw a few faces like her grimacing at the apathy that welcomed them. The tapping sounds of smartphones and caller tunes were the first thing that made her blink twice and register a thought that she hadn't registered for a while.

"Everything was normal here," Masrat recounts the day she landed in Delhi for studies after spending weeks under internet blockade back home in Kashmir.

"Life was going on," she continues, "New Delhi bustled with life and fervour, but Srinagar was silent. The feeling was so alien and overwhelming that I lapsed into

disassociating from my surroundings. I could hear my relatives exclaiming in my presence and wrapping their arms around me, but I couldn't feel myself being there."

She felt like she had left a part of herself somewhere hidden behind the snow-clad mountains, and its absence made her realise how hollow she was without it.

"Nothing was normal anymore," she recalls the distressed time in her flat in Delhi. "And nobody could see it."

In the morning of August 5, 2019, weeks after Kashmiris could feel an inevitable turning of events brewing close, Article 370 of the Constitution which granted special status to Jammu and Kashmir was abrogated by the NDA government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

During that time, Kashmiris witnessed the longest communication blackout in the region, with no access to cellular networks or the internet.



Five months later, the internet was restored with restrictions. Only a few sites could be accessed with 2G connectivity. The government is yet to provide the erst-

while 4G connection, the refusal of which has made life tough for people living in the valley.

Now, completing a year since the abrogation move and a few months since the pandemic has gripped the world awake, the restrictions to the internet in Kashmir has been un-

derlined more than ever before.

Social media site Twitter is one of the many platforms that Kashmiri youth use to propel and gesticulate their thoughts amid these restrictions. On observation, the site provides a means through which they can profess their opinions and discuss the ongoing situation in Kashmir, which has been turned into a union territory after its abrogation.

For instance, former Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah's latest interview drew raging flak from K-twitter.

The platform has given a space to vibrant, niche voices with an informed and progressive outlook towards the Kashmiri situation.

Speaking to a few of those voices coming from the younger generation, the connection between the internet and the • PAGE 02

From Front page...

Curfew In Srinagar Ahead...

to efforts related to COVID-19 containment as well, he said.

The order said the report has further made a case that to prevent such violence and loss of life/property, it's imminent to impose curfew in the district .

Therefore, after having considered the material facts in the said report and examining the situation in backdrop of prevailing factors, I, District Magistrate, Srinagar, by virtue of powers vested in me u/s 144 CrPC hereby order complete restrictions on public movement / curfew in territorial jurisdiction of District Srinagar, the order read.

However, medical emergencies and movement of staff on COVID-19 duty with pass/valid cards shall be exempted from the restrictions, the order said.

These restrictions shall come into force with immediate effect and shall remain in force on August 4 and 5, the order said, adding, the restrictions previously ordered on account of COVID-19 shall continue thereafter till August 8, unless revised earlier.

PDP president Mehbooba Mufti's daughter Iltija Mufti said the heightened security arrangements in the valley were being undertaken to ensure that "anger and frustration felt by people" against the Centre's decision "remain hidden".

"Suddenly, there is heightened security & surveillance in the valley. Not like non discriminatory COVID virus will be more active in the days approaching 5th August so clearly this is being done to ensure that anger & frustration felt by people here remain hidden," Iltija posted on her mother's Twitter handle which she has been using since Mehbooba was taken into custody in August last year.

The Centre on August 5 last year revoked the special status of Jammu and Kashmir by abrogating Articles 370 and 35-A and bifurcated the erstwhile state into two union territories.

Top Security Brass Discuss...

The army spokesperson further said that the reports indicate that the launch pads in PkC were full and Pakistan establishment was keen to push in infiltrators in next few weeks.

"The forces are ready for any border misadventure in form of BAT actions or actions to support infiltration. The core group discussed the need for continued intelligence based anti-terror operations with a humane touch," he said.

He added that to address the complete eco-system of militant organisations, the efforts to identify and arrest over ground workers who sustain the militant organisations will continue with vigour.

"Review of security indicators show that violence level has dropped in last one year. Intelligence inputs indicate desperation in Pakistani establishment and separatists to generate violence and civil casualties in the valley," the army spokesperson said.

"The Security Forces have to be wary of attacks on political workers, attacks on soldiers on leave, IED attacks and attacks on isolated posts or patrols. Concurrently law and order including COVID restrictions need to be enforced for safety of the common man," he added.

The officials, he said also discussed local recruitment which though lower than last year had seen a spurt in last few weeks, it was decided to enhance steps to prevent local youth from joining militant outfits.

"Steps would include proactive steps in consultation with families of vulnerable youth, and identification and arrest of instigators," the army spokesperson said.

He said that the officials deliberated on the 'propaganda effort' by Pakistan and cautioned against the efforts to instigate violence in the UT.

"All efforts to instigate violence by the ANEs have to be pro-actively handled by good surveillance and policing action," he added.

The Divisional Commissioner, the army spokesperson said brought out the efforts of the administration to meet the COVID challenges.

"He also informed the gathering of the efforts to speed up developmental activities in last few months which has resulted in completion of 14000 projects which were languishing for 3 to 5 years," the army spokesperson said.

In the end, the army spokesperson said that the senior commanders expressed satisfaction at the successful handling of the security situation and asked for continued efforts to maintain peace in Jammu and Kashmir.

August 5 Move Won't Change

In a statement issued to media here on Monday, a Hurriyat Conference spokesperson said that it has been one year and lockdowns and imprisonments continue while one after another anti -people and anti-majority laws and ordinances were being thrust on the people as reminders of aggression. Even observance of religious occasions, the spokesperson said is barred.

"The muscular move of August 5 2019 regarding J&K by Government of India and its most brutal implementation is a most sordid chapter in the tragic saga of J&K," the spokesperson said."

The unilateral decision to change the demographic and physical character of J&K and undermine its disputed nature acknowledged by the world, will not change the reality of the Kashmir issue nor the need to resolve it peacefully," he added. The spokesperson said the August 5 decision has only increased the resentment in almost all regions of J&K manifold and people of Kashmir "have and will continue to protest it despite the severest crackdown" being foisted on them.

"We have always advocated for a peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue in accordance with the will and aspirations of all the people of J&K and stand firm and committed on that," the spokesperson said.

Terming the people of Kashmir as the main stakeholders, the Hurriyat spokesperson asked India and Pakistan to resume dialogue at the earliest to seek a permanent and peaceful resolution of the Kashmir issue as per the aspirations of the people, who have been "bearing the brunt of the conflict for the past 73 years and living in hellish conditions."

August 5 'Darkest Day' In...

In a statement issued here, JKPC Vice President and former MLC G N Monga said the unilateral, illegal and unconstitutional decision taken by the Central government last year has not been accepted by the people of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh, notwithstanding the claims of the BJP.

"The unilateral, brazen and totally undemocratic manner in which Article 370 of the Constitution was abrogated and Jammu and Kashmir was dismembered by misinterpreting the provisions of the Constitution is deplorable. Every principle of Constitutional law, states' rights, Parliamentary procedure and democratic governance was violated on August 5 last year," Monga said.

He said to hoodwink the public, the BJP leadership had claimed that revocation of special status of J&K under Article 370 will not only end violence in Kashmir, but bring development, investment and jobs to the region.

"One year has passed since then, neither the violence has ended nor development has come. In fact, if we see the figures, the violence, including ceasefire violations, killings of security forces personnel, militants and civilians continue unabated. There is a developmental freeze in Kashmir and all the political activities have come to a standstill. The restrictions in the form of clampdowns, and slow internet speed have only crippled the already fragile economy of Kashmir further," he said.

"In August last year, the government asked tourists and pilgrims to leave the region as soon as possible citing increased threat of terrorism. This was another lie and since then the tourism industry in Kashmir has been shattered. Thousands of people have lost their livelihood," he added.

In April this year, the Congress leader said, the Center passed new domicile rules pertaining to J&K which will shrink job opportunities for residents of J&K further.

"Unemployment in J&K has already touched the heights and whatever little avenues were available in the government sector has now been opened up for outsiders. Thousands of daily wagers and contractual employees in J&K are without wages for months together and the bills of contractors worth hundreds of crores are pending. Developmental activities have virtually come to a halt," Monga said.

He said not only people in Kashmir, but residents of Jammu and Ladakh too have been gravely affected by the blunders of the BJP government.

"There are serious concerns among the people of Jammu and Ladakh over the economic effects of new domicile rules. Voices have started emerging from Jammu and Ladakh against the BJP," Monga said.

The Congress leader said that restrictions have been placed on the movement of political leaders since last one year.

"After illegally detaining dozens of high profile political leaders, including three former chief ministers, last August, the government has now put restrictions on their movement despite releasing the majority of them. PDP president Mehbooba Mufti continues to remain in detention. The law is being abused and the citizens are being denied constitutional rights," he added.

13 More Covid-19 Deaths...

south Kashmir district.

Regarding the sexagenarian from SK Colony, officials said, she was diabetic, hypertensive and had bilateral pneumonia. She passed away at SMHS hospital here, they added.

Regarding the victim from Baramulla, they said a 65-year-old man was from New Colony Sopore who died at Sub District hospital Sopore in north Kashmir's Baramulla district.

The elderly had tested positive after his rapid antigen test was done at Bandipora on July 31, they said.

"Today morning the man was shifted to SDH Sopore with spO2 below 70. He was gasping and breathed his last," the officials said, adding, "The patient was having co-morbidities with hypertension and type 2 diabetes."

Also a patient from Rawalpora Srinagar died due to the virus in a hospital here, officials said.

So far 378 deaths have been reported in Kashmir and 30 in Jammu division. Srinagar district with 136 deaths has the highest fatalities followed by Baramulla (72), Kulgam (29), Budgam (28), Anantnag (26), Shopian (23), Pulwama (23), Kupwara (21), Jammu (21), Bandipora (14), Ganderbal (7), two each in Rajouri and Doda and one each in Ramban , Poonch, Udhampur, and Kathua. (With GNS inputs)

60 Travellers Among 590...

Pulwama 14, Kulgam 11, Shopian 6, Anantnag 35, Budgam 39, Kupwara 33, Bandipora 36 and Ganderbal 56.

Regarding Jammu division, they said, Jammu reported 72 cases, Rajouri 11, Ramban 24, Kathua 12, Udhampur 14, Samba 8, Doda 1, Reasi 7, and Kishtwar 8.

In Kashmir, Srinagar tops the list with 5333 cases followed by Baramulla with 1954 , Pulwama 1614, Kulgam 1523, Shopian 1474, Anantnag 1374, Kupwara 1141, Budgam 1336, Bandipora 815, and Ganderbal 490.

In Jammu division, Jammu district has 1259 cases, Rajouri 720, Ramban 574 , Kathua 547, Udhampur 555, Samba 446, Doda 292, Poonch 234, Reasi 170 and Kishtwar 155. With the new cases, the tally overall has risen to 22006—17054 in Kashmir and 4952 in Jammu.

Meanwhile, 905 more COVID-19 patients have recovered and were discharged from various hospitals—160 from Jammu Division and 558 745 from Kashmir Division.

WHO Says No 'Silver Bullet'...

outbreak emerged in Wuhan in China last December, according to a tally from official sources compiled by AFP.

- China mission -

The WHO began pressing China in early May to invite in its experts to help investigate the animal origins of COVID-19.

The UN health agency sent an epidemiologist and an animal health specialist to Beijing on July 10 to lay the groundwork for a probe aimed at identifying how the virus entered the human species.

Their scoping mission is now complete, said Tedros.

"The WHO advance team that travelled to China has now concluded their mission to lay the groundwork for further joint efforts to identify the virus origins," he said.

"WHO and Chinese experts have drafted the terms of reference for the studies and programme of work for an international team, led by WHO.

"The international team will include leading scientists and researchers from China and around the world.

"Epidemiological studies will begin in Wuhan to identify the potential source of infection of the early cases.

"Evidence and hypotheses generated through this work will lay the ground for further, longer-term studies."

The pair have not yet returned to the WHO's Geneva headquarters for a debriefing.

Scientists believe the killer virus jumped from animals to humans, possibly from a market in the city of Wuhan selling exotic animals for meat.

Chinese officials said early in the outbreak that the virus may have spread from a market in the city, which sold live and wild animals, but no further confirmation of that has been revealed.

My House Locked From...

falsehood, rather unnecessarily, he said.

Soz said the policemen posted at his house have now locked the main gate from inside as well.

I saw a change having taken place today in respect of myself being under house-arrest and it was that the main gate of my house has now been locked from inside, also, he said.

Certain observers from outside the state have been asking as to why the Supreme Court allowed narration of lies in its courtroom. To that question, I can only say that the country's judicial system can take notice of all such situations, the Congress leader said.

In an affidavit before the Supreme Court, the Jammu and Kashmir administration had said Soz was "never detained nor under house arrest" and there are "no restrictions on his movement subject to security clearance .

The government's affidavit came in response to a petition by Soz's wife asking for his release from "illegal detention" and for him to be brought to the court.

The senior Congress leader had said on July 31 he would sue the government for his "unlawful house arrest" since August 5 last year, when the Centre revoked the special status of Jammu and Kashmir, and termed the government's response in the Supreme Court that he was not under detention "falsehood .

India Deploys More Troops,...

regiments which are part of an armoured division," govern-

ment sources said.

The deployments have been made from the Patrolling Point 1 near the Karakoram Pass (PP-3) to the Depsang plains where the Chinese have amassed more than 17,000 troops since April-May time frame and have been blocking Indian patrols from PP-10 to PP-13, sources said.

The armoured deployment is such that the Chinese would find it difficult to operate there, in case, they try out any misadventure, they said.

Before the Chinese started build-up opposite the DBO and Depsang, the entire area was looked after by a mountain brigade and an armoured brigade but today more than 15,000 troops and several tank regiments have been moved there both by road and by air to tackle the threat from China, sources said.

One of the major intentions of the Chinese in this area has been to build a road from its TWD battalion headquarters opposite the DBO sector to the Karakoram pass area and connect the battalion there.

The connectivity plan, which has been foiled in the past, will allow the two Chinese units to reach other in a matter of a couple of hours against the 15-hour drive through the Highway G219 in their territory, sources said.

A small bridge was put up by the Chinese inside Indian territory on a nala (drain) near PP-7 and PP-8 but it was broken by Indian soldiers a few years ago, sources said.

At present, India and China are engaged in a dialogue focusing on disengagement in Finger area and other friction points but Chinese build up along the LAC in Depsang plains and DBO area has not yet been taken up in the military talks.

At present, we are in a position of strength in the Depsang Plains and DBO area now and we are not in a hurry to discuss that with the Chinese. Let the disengagement first take place and then we can talk about de-escalation there also, sources said.

On Sunday, India and China held Corps Commander-level talks at Moldo on the Chinese side of LAC to discuss disengagement.

The Chinese had earlier agreed for complete disengagement at Galwan valley, PP-15, Hot Springs and Gogra along with Finger area near Pangong Tso lake.

However, China stopped honouring their commitment after initial disengagement in Finger area and is now wanting to build an observation post at Finger 5. This has been rejected by India which has clearly stated that it will have to disengage completely and restore the status quoted existing in April/May 2020.

Pakistan Foreign, Defence...

India has firmly told Pakistan that the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir has been, is and shall continue to be an integral part of India. Issues related to Jammu and Kashmir are an internal matter of India, the Ministry of External Affairs has reiterated.

Pakistan has been unsuccessfully trying to drum up international support against India for withdrawing Jammu and Kashmir's special status on August 5 last year and bifurcating it into two union territories.

India has categorically told the international community that the scrapping of Article 370 of the Constitution was its internal matter. It also advised Pakistan to accept the reality and stop all anti-India propaganda.

Pak Names 'Kashmir...

plaque to rename the Kashmir Highway as 'Srinagar Highway', the report said. The highway, Saeed said will also be known as the "Road to Srinagar".

"Saeed said the day is not far when the people of Islamabad and Muzaffarabad will collectively offer prayers at Jamia Mosque in Srinagar," the report added.

The Minister said that the decision taken by government of India on August 5 was illegal and unilateral.

He said Prime Minister Imran Khan, in his speech at the Parliament in August last year, had expressed serious concerns that India's August 5 action would not only affect the people of Kashmir but also minorities living in India, and that had proven correct in due course of time.

According to reports, direction boards on Faizabad, Golra Chowk, Dhokari Chowk, Islamabad Expressway have been changed with a new name 'Srinagar Highway'.

The Government of Pakistan will officially inaugurate Srinagar Highway on 5 August 2020, the report added.

Earlier, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi had announced to observe 'Youm-e-Istehsal-e-Kashmir' on August 5

Article 370: A Year On,...

year is clear.

"I'm a freelance columnist, who's also a social media buff," Jamsheed Ahmad, a Srinagarite, says. "The worst thing that I experienced last year was that I wanted to write but couldn't as I had no medium of communication."

Free access to the internet is a fundamental right, according to a study published in the Journal of Applied Philosophy by a lecturer from the University of Birmingham last year. Kerala agrees, with its high court having defended internet rights of a student in a case by quoting the Human Rights Council of the United Nations.

"As a student of law, I think the internet is not just a necessity but it is a way of life, and when someone disrupts your way of living freely, your human right or basic right of life is violated," Misba Mir, studying at Central University of Kashmir, says.

"Mentally it causes trauma, because that makes us realise that in the 21st century, when we talk about all kinds of rights and privileges that human beings enjoy, we are still caged and oppressed. We are still deprived of our basic rights. And that puts my mental state in a constant fear and trauma, which will ultimately result in chaos of any sort."

A policy brief on internet shutdowns by the Internet Society last year details the far-reaching impact of shutdowns on different folds of human society. An excerpt from the brief states: "People routinely depend on the Internet to stay in touch with family and friends, create local communities of interest, report public information, hold institutions accountable, and access and share knowledge. To that end, it can be argued that Internet access cannot be distinguished from the exercise of freedom of expression and opinion and the right to peaceful assembly."

Apart from that, the brief showcases how the technical impact of an internet shutdown includes affecting websites, global traffic and internet infrastructure. Economically, it lowers the GDP of a country.

"We are a generation heavily dependent on the internet for various purposes," Junaid Bhat, an active netizen from Srinagar, says. "We use it for educational, commercial as well as for entertainment purpose."

Post August 5, he says, the environment has been of fear and psychosis. "We were cut off from the rest of the world and not only the internet but even phone services were also snapped."

Amid internet blockade last year, Junaid and a lot of others, "felt like caged birds who weren't allowed out".

It affected the psyche in a negative manner, he says. "Our academics, business were suffering simultaneously with its suspension and it still continues to be this way."

Another active netizen Shayan Nabi compiled a thread of posts from Kashmiri entrepreneurs who relied on digital means to keep their business going. Post August 5, their business was heavily affected.

Meher, doing her second Masters in Journalism in Delhi, recalls her relationship with the internet before the August

shutdown.

"I use it for 18 hours a day," she says. "From August till November, I slowly forgot what to even do with it. I had stopped relying on it naturally. Then I went to Delhi and it took me awhile to get back as a normal user."

Amid normalcy in Delhi, Meher experienced panic attacks for the first time in January.

"I can't really tell how it started," she continues. "I think it was because of being under siege for so many months without any way to communicate. When I was among people in Delhi, I couldn't process it. The freedom, the life, it triggered the attacks."Meher has been diagnosed with clinical depression and manic depressive disorder. She undergoes therapy through online video calls, which is a task in and of itself due to the restricted connectivity.

"It [Internet] acts as a space of escape," she says. "Even though I am in therapy, it still acts as a space where I can disconnect from reality."

Misbah, another Kashmiri studying in Delhi, agrees when I ask her whether internet has given hope.

"Yes it has," she says. "I believe in times like these, where there is uncertainty over every single thing, the people you interact with, the friends you make on SM (social media), the things you learn on all SM platforms is worth cherishing. It gives a sense of hope and upliftment to see, that we are not alone in this. We are together, and supporting each other."

The younger generation has grown up with the internet and it has been a part of their life in much greater ways, says Ruchita Chandrashekar, a trauma therapist based in Mumbai.

"But when something like this is taken away from you, it's basically about what it represents. It's your rights being taken away from you," she says. "Somebody's telling you that we can silence you, we can assert power over you and you can do nothing about it."

Ruchita underlines how the internet has been a mode of expression for a younger generation.

"One day your WiFi doesn't work at home, and you're already irritable," she says. "But for a year, it's punishment. Kashmir faces a lot of violence from the Indian state just for being itself, and it can evoke a lot of trauma responses."

An accumulation of traumatic experiences can lead to complex trauma, which, Ruchita believes, is prevalent in Kashmir.

"From what you've witnessed, from what you've read in the news, what you have personally experienced- all of that can set in a degree of numbness and different trauma responses," she says.

"I think, one year in, what they've (the people of Kashmir) done is just tried to survive through every day."

But this survival comes with its own cost for people, says Ruqaya, an active netizen and teacher from Srinagar.

"The youths here are deranged and hopeless now, especially after the developments which took place after 5 August 2019," she says. "Those who had a trust element in 'mainstream politicians' have lost that after living a life full of uncertainties."

Now with the onset of this pandemic, Ruqaya says, "when-ever I talked with people they'd be like, 'What kind of life are we living anyways, even if Covid kills us, it won't matter'."

Kashmiri youths, she says, have developed major trust issues due to uncertainty in the future and their jobs.

"The bizarre throttled internet access on the other hand has its own effects on the people, those who want to attend online classes can't attend them. The futures are being jeopardised by such steps," she says.

And when the body has shifted to focusing on survival, Ruchita says, going to the source of pain can be extremely triggering and can disrupt it.

"I think a lot of trauma work in the beginning is creating a space for them [Kashmiris] to feel the way they feel," she says.

"Normalising anger is also a big step."

A lot of work, she says, goes into validating and normalizing, however, the people feel, whether its anger, numbness, disappointment, increased frustration, sadness, grief, or a disarming sense of anxiety.

"Whatever it may be," Ruchita continues, "I think it's important to meet them where they're at, and what they want to work on first. I can't sit as an expert in the room and be like 'I think this is what you should work with.'"

How does the internet play its role here?

"It's about finding solidarity together in hopelessness, finding a community that can serve as a catharsis. Why not socialise to recognise that the human experience is about all the emotions? I think the pain has to find space to exist, to just feel validated," Ruchita says.

Among Kashmiris in reality, and even more so in the virtual spectrum, one finds specks of the community spaces through discussions and childlike banters which provide a window into their resilience and apt use of the internet to keep going.

Detailing how the internet has helped her in times of the pandemic, Misbah says, "It keeps me updated on what is happening around me, it helps me in my education even when the universities are shut. The internet has made life easy in the sense that I can have things at my doorsteps through e-markets, without going out in crowded places.

"I think we would succumb to the change that our plagued political problem, and this pandemic has brought into the world. But the internet is somehow keeping us afloat."

Minor Dies After Car Falls...

Ramban district.

The boy's mother Nisha Devi, 22, and his elder brother Ansh, 6, too were injured in the accident.

Sources said the woman was returning to her in-laws' place in Rajgarh along with her two minor sons from her parental house in Dessa.

The two other injured persons were BihariLal, 66 and Deepak Singh, 32, both resident of Gai of Dessa area in Doda.

All four injured have been admitted in the Ramban district hospital.

Heavy rains to return to Mumbai as IMD issues red alert for extremely heavy showers

NEW DELHI: Rain lashed

Mumbai on Monday as the monsoon system active over the Arabian Sea strengthened and the weather department sounded a red alert that it will get intense in the metropolis and its suburbs during the next two days.

Though Mumbai had been receiving intermittent rainfall, forecasting agencies said this would be the second spell of heavy rainfall this monsoon after a gap of a fortnight.

Mumbaikars are advised to avoid going out on August 4 and 5, said private forecaster Skymet Weather, adding that the

intensity will start decreasing from August 6.

On the east coast, the India Meteorological Department's Odishacentre said a low-pressure area was developing over north Bay of Bengal under the influence of a cyclonic circulation over Gangetic West Bengal and another one over northeast Bay of Bengal. It will bring heavy rainfall to several parts of the state between Tuesday and Thursday.

The IMD advised fishermen to not venture deep into the Bay of Bengal till August 6 as surface winds with speeds up to 50 kmph will make the sea conditions very rough.



Two men sitting on the gates of a Sufi shrine in Srinagar pondering over the uncertain times lying ahead. KO photo Abid

BJP MLA gets legal notice from Kashmiri lawyer for his remarks on Eid-ul-Azha

Srinagar: A Kashmiri lawyer has sent a legal notice to a BJP MLA asking him to “apologise or face legal consequence” for purported comments that “Muslims should sacrifice their children on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha instead of animals”.

The legal notice issued by Amir Masoodi, a Srinagar based Lawyer to Nand Kishore Gurjar of Uttar Pradesh reads,

“I, being a Muslim and a lawyer by profession who believes in supreme constitution of India and

majesty of law stand authorised to proceed against you in the court of law. This notice is supposed to change your bent of mind by either apologising publicly or by facing the consequences as per law, so I confer you the notice.”

It added, “The preamble of the constitution of India declares India to be secular and Article 25 of the constitution confers right to profess or practice one’s own religion on every person in the country and Muslims are no exception to it.”



The notice issued by the Masoodi also reads that the practice of sacrificing animals on the occasion of Eid-ul-Azha is an essential part of Islam and thus protected by the su-

preme law of the land i.e., the constitution of India.

“The issuance of such unconstitutional statements stands you liable to face the prosecution under section 153A, 295A, 298, 504 AND 505 of Indian Penal Code,” reads the notice.

“I sincerely advise you to make unconditional apology for the statement publicly within the period of seven days from the receiving of this legal notice, failing which I am legally authorised to launch prosecution against you in the court of law.”

Police fines 17 violators; seizes 35 vehicles

Awantipora: Acting tough against the violators of Govt prohibitory orders, Police have seized 35 vehicles and fined 17 violators for defying govt orders in Awantipora.

17 violators were fined for not wearing masks in different areas of Awantipora and fine to the tune of ₹8,500 was collected from them. Police have also seized 35

vehicles across the Police District for violating prohibitory orders issued by the administration.

Police have once again requested the general public to follow the directions issued by Government in order to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Also, those who are found violating the restrictions will be dealt strictly.

All animal hides buried in Srinagar:SMC

Srinagar: Commissioner Srinagar Municipal Corporation Gaznafar on Monday said that all animal Hides are collected from road sides, drains and Dustbins have buried by SMC Srinagar.

In a tweet SMC Commissioner said all hides collected from roads , lanes, drains and

Dustbins have been buried by @SMC Srinagar frontline workers .I salute these unsung heroes who continue to work in all harsh conditions. I am proud of you all.

Meanwhile. Several animals hides were seen on the roadsides, lanes and Dustbins in the summer capacital Srinagar

11 Year Old boy Killed Over Water Dispute In Kupwara Village

Accused has been arrested in connection to the killing of boy: SSP Kupwara

Kupwara: An 11 year old boy was killed over a water dispute in Manznad Kachhama area of Kralpora in Kupwara district of Jammu and Kashmir on Friday, July 31, 2020.

The boy has been identified as Imtiyaz Ahmad Shah (11) son of Mohammad Syed Shah Residence of Manznad Kachhama of this frontier district Kupwara of Jammu and Kashmir was killed over a wa-

ter dispute between two families on Friday.

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kupwara, Shriram Ambarkar also confirmed the incident and said that it was an altercation between the two families. He said the accused has been arrested in connection to the killing of the boy, he added that an FIR was also registered in this connection and further investigation has been taken up.

Highway Robbery Gang Busted, 1 Held With Dummy Gun

Srinagar- Srinagar Police in a major breakthrough busted gang involved in highway robbery. One accused has been arrested and 02 Toy guns and Pouch have been recovered from him.

On 30th July, at about 0400hrs PS Batamalo received information that a highway robbers gang have intercepted a truck on NHW near Tengpora Bypass. They were impersonating as militants and trying to extort money from the truck driver. However, the truck driver kept the robbers engaged and succeeded in informing Police.

A Police party from PS Batmaloo which was detailed for night patrolling rushed to the spot and apprehended one of the robbers on spot with the assistance of truck driver. He has been identified as Imran Ahmad Shah resident of Meganwaji Nowgam at present living in Gangbugh Srinagar. A Santro car bearing registration number DL2CAD-3169 used in the commission of the crime has also been seized. During checking, officers were also able to recover two fake guns and one camouflage pouch from his possession.

Accordingly, a case FIR No.108/2020 under relevant sections of law has been registered in Police Station Batmaloo and investigation into the matter has been initiated.

During the course of investigation, the accused revealed that he was accompanied by two accomplices who happen to be his maternal uncles. They have been identified as Zamir Ahmad Shah @Zamir Pacha and Javid Ahmad Shah both residents of Nowgam. Both the accused are at large and efforts are on to effect their arrest.

Day 71: Srinagar Airport Receives 14 Flights

Jammu- On day 71 of resumption of routine domestic operations in Jammu and Kashmir, 24 domestic flights with 2,406 passengers on board today arrived at Jammu and Srinagar Airports.

A total of 728 passengers aboard 10 regular commercial flights arrived at the Jammu Airport while 14 domestic flights with about 1678 passengers on board landed at Srinagar Airport today.

Pertinently, Jammu Airport Authorities have received a total of 553 domestic flights with 41,892 passengers while Srinagar Airport Authorities have received 884 domestic flights with 1,11,979 passengers since 25th of May till date.

Also, the Jammu and Kashmir government has brought back about 3,676 passengers from various countries to the Union Territory through special



cial evacuation flights in the wake of global pandemic till date.

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

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

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 - (Open)
- Srinagar- Leh- (Open)



HIJRI
CALENDAR

13 Zil-Haj
1441

PRAYERS

FAJR	4: 04
ZUHR	12: 37
ASR	5:31
Magrib	7:33
ISHA	9:05

This Day In History

- 1791 - The Treaty of Sistova is signed, ending the Ottoman-Habsburg wars.
- 1821 - Fabian Gottlieb von Bellingshausen and Russian polar expedition returns to Kronshadt after becoming 1st to circumnavigate Antarctica
- 1824 - Battle of Kos is fought between Turks and Greeks.
- 1900 - An allied expeditionary force, made up of Japanese, Russian, British, French and American troops, sets off from Tientsin for Peking, China, to put down Boxer rebellion.
- 1914 - WWI: Germany declares war on Belgium; Britain declares war on Germany
- 1914 - WWI: King Albert I becomes Supreme Commander of Belgian army after German declaration of war
- 1914 - WWI: Field Marshal Lord Kitchener becomes British Minister of War after British declaration of war on Germany
- 1914 - US declares neutrality on the outbreak of WWI
- 1916 - Denmark cedes Danish West Indies, including the Virgin Islands, to the US for \$25 million
- 1918 - Adolf Hitler receives the Iron Cross first class for bravery on the recommendation of his Jewish superior, Lieutenant Hugo Gutmann
- 1919 - The Communist Bela Kun comes to power in Hungary
- 1943 - Soviet units reach suburbs of Orel
- 1943 - USAAF bombs Germans in Troina
- 1946 - An earthquake of magnitude 8.0 hits northern Dominican Republic. 100 are killed and 20,000 are left homeless.
- 1947 - The Supreme Court of Japan is established.
- 1956 - Indonesia says it will not pay debts to the Netherlands
- 1960 - Rocket propelled USAF research aircraft sets record at 2,150 MPH
- 1962 - Nelson Mandela captured by South African police
- 1964 - Civil rights workers Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman & James E Chaney, bodies discovered in an earthen Mississippi dam
- 1964 - North Vietnam torpedos US ships Gulf of Tonkin
- 1971 - US launches 1st satellite into lunar orbit from manned
- 1979 - USSR performs nuclear test at Eastern Kazakh/Semipalatinsk USSR
- 1983 - France performs nuclear test
- 1983 - Revolution in Burkina Faso
- 1990 - European community proposes a boycott of Iraq
- 1993 - Rwandan Hutus & Tutsis sign peace treaty in Arusha
- 2007 - NASA's Phoenix spaceship is launched.
- 2012 - 45 people are killed by a suicide bombing in Abyan, Yemen
- 2013 - Hassan Rouhani is inaugurated as the President of Iran
- 2014 - Hamas and Israel agree to another 72 hour ceasefire
- 2015 - Robert Downey Jr. named the world's highest paid actor by Forbes Magazine (earning \$80 mil).
- 4 non-Hollywood actors make the top 10.
- 2015 - 31 people are killed & 100 are injured after floods partially sweep two passenger trains off a bridge in Madhya Pradesh, India

From KO Archives

Vaishno Devi board snaps ties with J&K Bank

Observer News Service

JAMMU- The Shri Mata Vaishno Devi Shrine Board has snapped its 20-year-old ties with the Jammu and Kashmir Bank in what appears to be a fallout of the bickering between Governor S.K. Sinha and the state government.

The board - which controls the popular Hindu shrine of Vaishno Devi in Jammu and of which Sinha is the chairman -has withdrawn all its money from the bank and transferred it to the ICICI Bank, sources said.

Sinha, whose bickering with Chief Minister Mufti Mohammed Sayeed over a host of issues is only too well known, directed the board to withdraw all accounts from the Jammu and Kashmir Bank, the sources said.

The state government is a major shareholder in Jammu and Kashmir Bank Ltd.

The shrine board had a Rs.1 billion deposit with the bank, the source said. It had been rendering several services to the shrine board free of cost,

The shrine board had had its deposits with the bank since 1986, when the former was set up. The Vaishno Devi shrine attracts more than 5.5 million pilgrims.

The governor and chief minister have earlier sparred over the duration of the pilgrimage to the Hindu cave shrine of Amarnath in Kashmir. While the governor wanted it to last for two months, the chief minister insisted on one month.

Sinha, who also heads the Shri Amarnath Shrine Board, finally had his way.

The chief minister was worried over the impact of a longer pilgrimage on the security of the state, as a large number of troops and police forces are committed to guard the pilgrimage route.

He had also pleaded that the fragile ecology of the routes to the Himalayan shrine, located at a height of 13,500 feet, could not withstand the rush of pilgrims.

More than 200,000 pilgrims have visited the shrine so far this year, (IANS)

(Kashmir Observer, 04 August, 2005)

KASHMIR
OBSERVER

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Back To Politics?

As the anniversary of the withdrawal of Article 370 draws nearer, several mainstream politicians including Dr Farooq Abdullah and Omar Abdullah, two former J&K Chief Ministers have ended their prolonged silence and started speaking to media. Senior Abdullah has sought restoration of Article 370 that granted J&K its autonomous status within Indian Union. However his son Omar's interview ran into controversy after he was perceived to have stressed the restoration of the statehood for J&K to the neglect of the demand for reversal of the revocation of Article 370. Though Omar has since clarified that he didn't privilege restoration of statehood over that of the Article 370, there have been few takers for it. Similarly, there have been interviews by the veteran PDP leader Naeem Akhtar and Iltija Mufti, the former Chief Minister Mehbooba Mufti's daughter. The interviews of the later two have been more headline, mincing no words about their opposition to annulment of J&K's special status.

That said, these interviews still don't constitute the restoration of the political activity in the region. The government has yet to free the PDP president Mehbooba Mufti who is now under detention at her official residence. Similarly, leaders like Sajad Gani Lone, Shah Faesal are also detained at their respective residences and the former MLA Engineer Rashid has been shifted to Tihar jail.

This has brought the political activity in Kashmir to a halt. Except for their recent interviews, the leaders like Abdullah and Omar have largely been silent following their release. And the consequent political vacuum has to some extent filled up by the subdued activity of the newly established party like Apni Party, led by a businessman turned politician Altaf Bukhari. However, unlike the established parties, the NC and the PDP, Bukhari's party is largely in line with the centre's policy on the former state.

It remains to be seen how will the Valley based political parties react once all their leaders are released and allowed to hold political activity. The NC leader and the Member Parliament Hasnain Masoodi is already on record to have said that Gupkar declaration will be a basis for their future politics, so has now Omar Abdullah.

But as things stand, the J&K administration is unlikely to countenance any dissenting political views at this juncture. Hence the continued detention of the leaders like Mehbooba whose daughter Iltija Mufti has been fiercely vocal about the Article 370. Similarly, the senior PDP leader and Mehbooba's close confidante Naeem Akhtar who has begun to talk to press was recently evicted from his official residence.

This doesn't give hope that the political activity in Kashmir will restore to normal anytime soon. That is, unless the J&K administration is certain that it will not challenge its Kashmir narrative. It is also likely that the things will change for the better in the near future as it would become increasingly untenable for the government to further prolong the detention of the political and civil society leaders.

OTHER OPINION

Population growth

A few years after he wrote that essay, the global population hit 1 billion. Now, thanks to the exponential growth which he described, it is closing in on 8 billion. The scholar's direst warnings, echoed by others through the years, have not come to pass. But his concerns about the strain on resources have been multiplied by the climate crisis, with greenhouse gas emissions rising, and global heating in turn causing land loss and deterioration.

Now, a new report released this month suggests that the world's population could stand at 2 billion less than United Nations projections by the end of the century. The research, led by the University of Washington and published in the Lancet, suggests that the earth's population will peak at 9.6 billion in 2064 – rather than 11.2 billion in 2100, as the UN forecasts – thanks mostly to improved education for women and greater access to contraception. Though the UN has an impressive track record in its forecasts to date, others too have suggested that fertility will fall more sharply than it predicts.

This may look like good news. But even on the lower population estimates, the strain on resources would be immense. Nor would the reduction save us from climate catastrophe. Action must be taken now, not by future generations. And emissions are heavily dependent on economic circumstances, policy and personal choices: what matters most is not how many people there are in the world, nor even where they live, but what they do.

The projections in the study also suggest that some existing challenges will be sharpened, with immense cultural, social and political effects to match their material impact. The number of old people will overtake the young; by 2100, there could be 2.4 billion people over the age of 65, compared with 1.7 billion under the age of 20. Developed countries are facing the problems of ageing and declining populations first; the paper predicts that Japan's population will halve, while Nigeria's will almost quadruple. Many societies will face dying communities and younger workers may struggle to support large numbers of retirees.

The worst-case scenario, as the report's lead author notes, could see countries reducing access to birth control in a peculiar mirror image of the Malthus-inspired sterilisation campaigns and eugenics movements designed to head off growth. In contrast, planned and humane population movement – avoiding the creation of permanent underclasses – could benefit both growing and shrinking countries.

Yet migration policies alone will not be enough. At present, countries seem to be turning away from cooperation. But in a crowded world, where national populations are on vastly diverging trajectories, we will – more than ever – need international solutions.

Guardian

KUMAR KARTIKEYA

Constitutional courts are guardians of fundamental rights. Their role is to look out and act as a dyke to such unjust intrusion on the fundamental rights of the citizens of India. Suspension of 4G in J&K has made the life of the people there unnecessarily difficult.

Does Security Trump Citizens' Rights?

National security is and shall remain of paramount concern in any country but can rights of citizens be deferred or suspended for an extended period of time in the name of national security?

With around 687million internet users, India is ranked second largest sitting only one step behind China.

On August 5 last year, BJP led Central Govt successfully tabled the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganization Bill, 2019. The Act rendered the Article 370 and Article 35A of the Indian Constitution void. This annulled the Special Status granted to Jammu and Kashmir by the Union of India at the time of its accession. Further Jammu and Kashmir was divided into two union territories. A security clampdown was launched and civil liberties of citizenry suspended which were partly restored later. One year on the government is yet to restore internet services in the newly carved out Union territory fully leaving 13 million people virtually disconnected from the cyber world.

While the government stated security reasons for suspending the services, there has been no major escalation since August 5, 2019 and Kashmir has by and large remained peaceful. In January this year authorities restored 2G internet services in phases. With educational institutions and offices resuming work from November without any internet connectivity, step by step opening of internet services was thought to be the way forward by everyone. But this didn't happen.

After the outbreak of Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) in India, the nation went into a rigorous lockdown, which resulted in closing of all the educational institutions and businesses. Educational institutions took a decision in favour of starting online classes through webinars and group calls. Even prestigious institutions like University of Delhi and Indian Institute of Technology announced taking exams and classes via video conferencing. Webinars and other modes of online learning need fast, steady and working internet services, which are available almost throughout the country except for J&K, leaving millions of students in J&K without any way to access these methods of learning.

This stood as a big roadblock for the students who were not able to access the internet and attend their classes. Moved by this situation, many human rights activists and advocates of civil liberties applied pressure on the government to restore 4G network services. But the government has remained reluctant to do so. Officials contended that 2G is enough for the people to attend classes and continue their work, stating that some militant organisations use networks to plan attacks and mobilise people for protests.

What they fail to understand is that if websites and e-learning activities can be carried out on 2G networks, then the same are also equally sufficient for all militant and insurgency-related activities to be executed. But why would students, businessmen, doctors, lawyers and others suffer because of the failure of governments to restore law and order? With government refus-



ing to restore 4G in J&K, some people moved apex court for justice. After listening to both sides, the court gave an unlikely order of keeping the decision about 4G restoration in the hands of the Executive by forming an "Executive Review Committee" instead of a judicial review committee.

The way the judiciary gave the Executive the decision-taking authority. This shows how this matter was mishandled. The court's judgment also states that the executive committee should "advise" the government. However, the judgment sets no deadline for the executives to complete the executive review. While the whole union territory suffers from lack of Internet, the court ruling gives the Executive an indefinite time to deny high-speed internet connectivity to the entire population of J&K.

The question that needs answer is whether the citizens should be denied personal liberties on grounds of national security? While national security has always been an important aspect of the Indian Union, there has been a divide between national security and individual liberty for a long time now. No one can deny the fact that national security is important for the people, but can someone's right be deferred and taken away for a long period in the name of national security? Giving cardinal importance to national security, the constitutional courts must figure out whether the restrictions on fundamental rights are minimal, essential, and proportionate.

Obstructing individual freedoms in times of war has led to some great, yet temporary victories. For example, in dissent of the legislation, the House of Lords in England believed that national security is an issue of political administration and executive, as reflected in their decision in the landmark case of A vs The Secretary of State for the Home Department. They stated that it was the duty of the constitutional courts to have a thorough review, if in case the rights of an individual are being infringed. It would be an impossible task for the House of Lords to handover the strings of justice to the executive as done in India.

The fact remains, our constitutional court did not even do a prefatory investigation on the proportionality of the issue. Certain questions were left unanswered to the civilian residents of the union territory, like whether

the existing militancy and involvement of many militant organizations is substantial enough for an indefinite and complete suspension of 4G internet access to the entire J&K?

The prima facie pieces of evidence don't show that the denial of 4G services has kept the acts of militancy on a tight leash. On the other hand, the government has told the hon'ble court that there has been an increase in a number of terrorist activities since the Article 370 was revoked.

Constitutional courts are guardians of fundamental rights. Their role is to look out and act as a dyke to such unjust intrusion on the fundamental rights of the citizens of India. Suspension of 4G in J&K has made the life of the people there unnecessarily difficult. When the whole nation is working from home using 4G mobile services, 13 million people of J&K have to struggle to remain hooked to internet via 2G networks. From a constitutional point of view, the Supreme Court has not done enough justice to the people of the union territory, but we live on in the hope they do so in the coming times. The review committee formed by the Supreme Court has not met even once and even if they do, it's highly unlikely to reach a decision in favour of lifting the suspension of networks, as the suspension was put in effect by the Executive in the first place.

When the Solicitor General, on behalf of the government ardently stood in favour of 2G services, it is surprising that the constitutional court is expecting any form of relief for the people of J&K from the special review committee. Turning a blind eye to the fundamental rights in the name of national security is a point of serious concern, and a breach of the rights of the citizens of the nation. If the judges of the apex court start keeping the writ petitions aside, it will be just a matter of time before the citizens will start losing faith in the judicial institutions. If people lose faith in such institutions it won't be wrong to quote Nathaniel Hawthorne: "...Such loss of faith is ever one of the saddest results of sin". This is the time for constitutional courts to redeem themselves and act to uphold the fundamental rights of people.

(Kumar Kartikeya is an aspiring lawyer with a keen interest in study of Constitution, Law and Public Policy)



OBSERVER
MAIL

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

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Real Eid is in helping poor

On Eid al Azha, Muslims do the qurbani (sacrificing of a cow, goat, camel or sheep) for the sake of Allah's pleasure.

But alas, we do not perform qurbani in its real essence. The meat of the sacrificial animal is asked to be distributed among relatives, neighbours and especially among needy, destitute and poor people. But what most of us do is really opposite. We displease Allah (SWT) instead of pleasing him. We distribute a good quantity of meat among our rich relatives, neighbours and in laws. We distribute only small amount of meat among poor and needy people; who actually deserve it. They need it to feed their families; because they can't af-

ford delicious recipes on Eid. But we distribute maximum portion of meat among those who eat mutton daily or prepare delicious recipes on Eid.

We buy mutton, bakery, chicken worth thousands but donating aRs 100 note seems a burden to us. We buy many varieties of pastries, biscuits and cakes but we don't bother whether needy people in our neighbourhood have brought anything. We don't bother if aroma of delicious dishes wafting from our homes reach a poor fellow, what pain will he feel. We buy our kids new dresses, shoes and toys on Eid but we do not pay heed to those kids who don't have any new dress to wear on Eid. We are inconsiderate to the needy

families. They also want to feed their families a delicious dish, they also want to buy new dresses for their kids but unfortunately they don't have money to do so. The children of poor watch rich kids enjoying Eid with great pomp and show.

It is thus important for us to remember our needy brethren on every Eid. Let us pay heed to their need. A little contribution by each one of us will make a big change in someone's life. Let us be a cause behind someone's smile. Let us make someone happy. The pandemic has affected everyone of us but it has affected those people a lot who earn from hand to mouth; pandemic has made lives of

many families miserable. Vendors, labourers, bus drivers, auto drivers and those who used to earn livelihood by working as domestic workers are worst-hit. Let us help them. There are many people in our society who draw 5-digit monthly salaries. Such people especially should come to forefront to help in the betterment of society; to help improve lives of people in this worst time. There are various NGOs, charity trusts and social activists who are helping people but to help them cater to needs of maximum people let us contribute to the noble cause.

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‘Kashmir’s Educational Scenario Is Really Endangered’

AASHIQ HUSSAIN ANDRABI

No big losses globally. The world has shifted to personalized and individualistic instructional strategies much earlier than the present outbreak.

AS Kashmiri students remain out of their schools for a year now, many suggestions and takes of how to revamp the lockdown-hit education sector of the valley are being discussed and debated right now.

Joining the debate, on the first anniversary of the abrogation of Article 370 and its ramifications in Kashmir, prominent educationist, *Prof. AG Madhosh*, shares his precise expert take with Kashmir Observer in an exclusive chat.

Kashmir Observer: In a devastating double blow, first the clampdown and then the lockdown, education has been the worst hit. Schools and colleges functioned for barely 100 days between 2019 and 2020. What does this mean for the future of education in Kashmir?

Prof. Madhosh: I don’t want to give you future shocks, but, yes, our educational scenario is really endangered.

KO: Given your background and contribution to the education system of Jammu & Kashmir, you have seen different crisis in education here. How would you characterize this period in J&K’s education system?

PM: This period is overwhelming, and has rendered us target-less, with no conceivable directions.

KO: How has global education been impacted by the Covid-19 Pandemic?

PM: No big losses globally. The world has shifted to personalized and individualistic instructional strategies much earlier than the present outbreak.

KO: What are the residual impacts that can come for a community when you have schools closed so long?

PM: A dreadful question. The commodities may deal themselves from all cultural goods including education. With a strong material substance, education may find its strategic ways of survival.

KO: With children losing out on education, how do you think frequent and long school closures could impact future workforce for generations?

PM: Future workforce may need only a strong skill-based training, distant from formal schooling.

KO: How long do you think it will take for the education to recover after the pandemic passes and schools open?

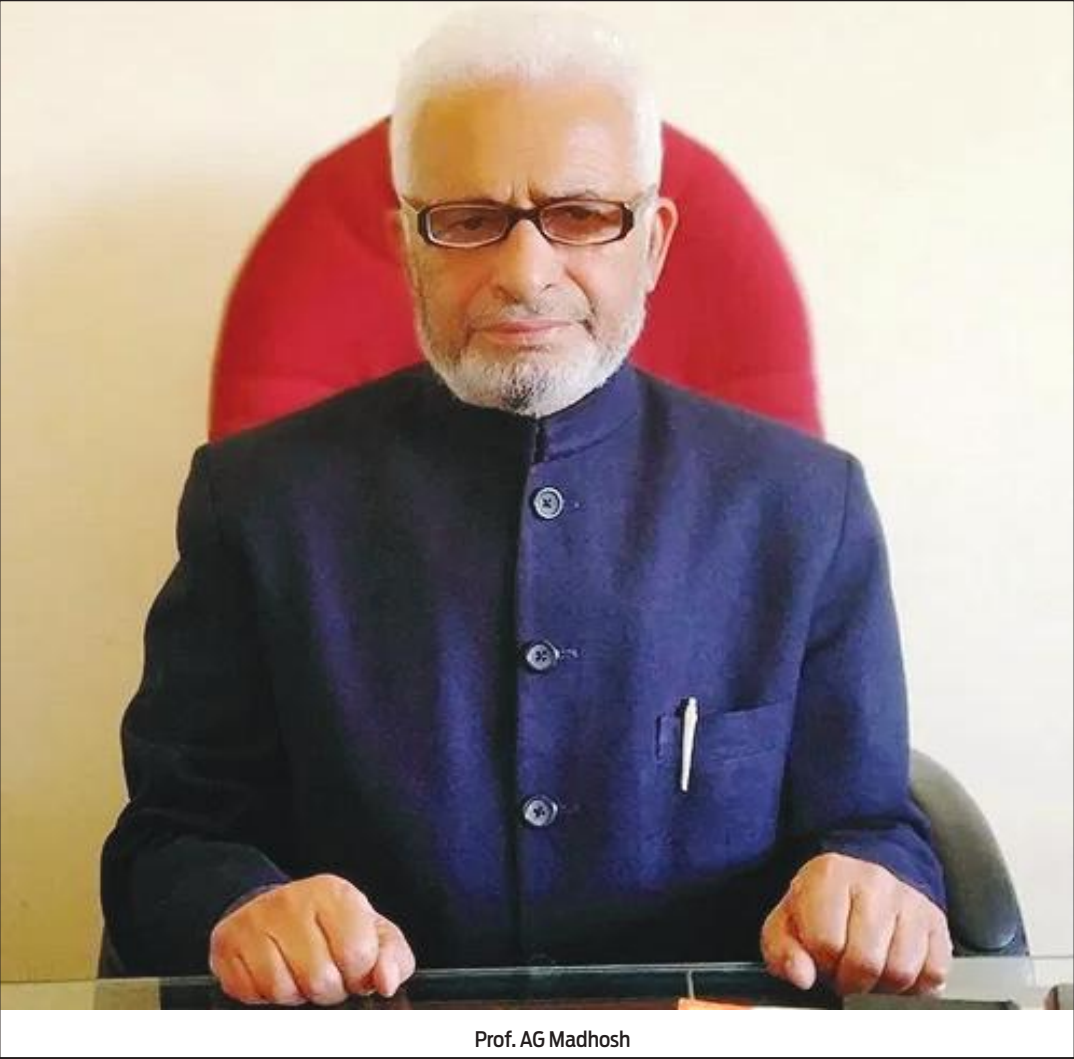
PM: Non creative, traditionally established educational systems take much less time to come back on tracks.

KO: What should the government do in the face of this education paralysis to support the education system in J&K?

PM: Government must play its role as seems to be well defined.

KO: How do you think we as a lockdown-battered community can cultivate the right education ecosystem post Covid-19 to mitigate the impact of lost time and prevent an education crisis?

PM: Please don’t panic and stress your children now for an unseen future.



Prof. AG Madhosh

KO: Covid has changed education forever. Students have entered a new world of education, by learning remotely through online classes. How do you see this transition to online learning? Do you think it will widen educational inequalities?

PM: Unless we have most required infrastructure available, the online learning shall increase domestic violence, child abuse creating a stressful learning environment.

KO: Lots of parents, teachers, as well as students, worry that online lessons are poor substitute for classroom teaching. What is the likely impact of remote learning on educational outcomes and how is the current reality of education compromising the effects of personal, one-on-one instruction, especially for learners who are struggling?

PM: Vulnerability and adversity is apparently community based, therefore only a community-oriented and well-planned methodology, with a legal and execution support may help.

KO: You know there is a digital divide which is creating a potentially extreme impact on the inequality of opportunities? What should be the approach of the schools and education department towards the remote learning to bridge that digital divide?

PM: I feel the New Education Policy 2020, has some substantial suggestions concerning these issues.

KO: How can we prepare for any such closures in future?

PM: Simple, closures be taken as integral components of the school curricular practices, and demand-based operational strategies be worked out.

KO: Amid this prolonged pandemic lockdown many educationists have expressed a drop out concern, what is your take on this?

PM: Yes and no: yes, because immediacy treatments cannot be meted out. No, because like all other institutional fallouts, complete devastation is not a time-tested experience.

COVID-19: The Clarity That Comes With Hard Times

My worries over small things recede in a crisis like the coronavirus pandemic

MARGARET RENKL
New York Times

SOME time recently I stopped finding pandemic jokes funny. All I can think about anymore are the thousands of people who have already died, or the millions who have lost their jobs, or the many others who go to work terrified of getting sick. Domestic violence is skyrocketing. The social safety net is in tatters. No matter how funny the joke, it’s hard to laugh at a time of suffering so widespread, of mortality so close at hand.

I fear for my 60-year-old husband, who doesn’t easily shake a cold, and for my 91-year-old father-in-law, our only surviving parent. I fear for my future daughter-in-law, a hospital nurse, and for my three grown sons. The “children” are all young and strong and fit, but there are no guarantees with this virus, so I worry anyway.

My siblings and my oldest friends call more often now, and I know it’s because they’re worried, too. Every online gathering, every phone call, every just-saying-hey email carries an undercurrent of mortality. Even if we don’t say it out loud, we recognise that our time for checking in may run out. This is not breaking news, of course. We have always been mortal beings, but until life serves up a memento mori like the new coronavirus, people tend to spend each day as though they had an endless supply of days. As though they had all the time in the world to say, “I love you.” Nobody I know has died of COVID-19,



but the death of the legendary singer-songwriter John Prine hit me like a death in the extended family. MrPrine was the moral centre of Nashville’s songwriting community, the generous heart and mischievous Puck of the music world. I’m not a musician myself, and aside from concerts and the occasional sighting in the grocery store, he was a stranger to me. But his music has been the soundtrack of my entire adult life, and I cannot imagine what the world will feel like without him in it. As he put it himself, “To believe in this living is just a hard way to go.”

Long-term effects of collective trauma
We don’t know yet how this living

will be changed when the pandemic finally passes. All those jokes about how we’ll be hoarding toilet paper and wiping down cans long after our grandchildren are old enough to roll their eyes — maybe they’ll be prescient in the end. Those of us raised by parents who came of age during the Great Depression will have no trouble imagining the long-term effects of collective trauma and collective deprivation. But will we remember the gifts of this time as well as its terrors? Will we remember this clear understanding of our own precarious lives, the desperate need to make the time we have really matter?

I have loved being in closer touch with my friends. I’ve loved the virtual

cocktail hours and critique-group meetings. I’ve loved hearing my husband teaching online — making his students laugh and tricking them into caring about stories that were written in a time so long past it’s unimaginable to them. This is the way my husband spends his days, but in almost 32 years of marriage I’ve never seen it up close before.

Owing to a catastrophic misunderstanding of Apple’s photo taxonomy, I recently managed to delete all 15,000 photos in my iCloud account, including pictures of every family gathering of the past 10 years. I’ve recovered them since, but while I was still on hold with Apple’s helpline, I felt something in me shift. “I guess I can stop fretting about when I’ll have ever have time to sort through all those pictures,” I thought. As long as my people are safe, I could let the photos go.

I first experienced that feeling of release 17 years ago, in the months after my father died. In regular life, as Prine once put it, “It’s a half an inch of water and you think you’re gonna drown,” but fear and grief can change that equation. I remember asking a friend who had lost a child how long that sense of perspective lasts after a tragedy. How soon before I would go back to being irritated by small matters, back to forgetting that every single day is a life-or-death proposition?

“Too soon,” he said.

Maybe it will be different this time. Suffering has been unevenly distributed during this crisis, but the collective nature of this terror might mean that we will remember together what we move on from too quickly alone. Perhaps we’ll fi-

nally take in what we know but nevertheless manage to put out of our minds: that life is precious and finite, that we cannot know when the end is coming, that what is beautiful and just and true deserves our focus far more than what’s annoying or inconvenient.

Death on the night of a supermoon

John Prine died on the night of a supermoon. As soon as I heard the news of his death, I went outside to look. I don’t know why I thought I might find comfort in a cold rock hanging in a dark sky. Something about its immutability despite the semblance of constant change? Or the way it lights our way though it has no light of its own to give? I couldn’t say.

The moon was shrouded by clouds, but the wind was blowing, and the clouds were scudding across the sky at a good clip, so I stood still and waited. After 25 years in this house, I know where to look for the moon, even on a moonless night, and I didn’t have to wait long before a break in the clouds offered a fleeting glimpse. It was exactly where it has always been and where it will always be.

I hope that bright, bright moon is what I remember of this hard time. Not the jokes and surely not the fear. Just that bright moon, and John Prine, and gratitude for the chance to love everyone I love again tomorrow.

— Margaret Renkl is a contributing opinion writer who covers flora, fauna, politics and culture in the American South.

Not Everyone In Coronavirus-Hit Family Prone To Disease



THE ASSUMPTION THAT EVERYBODY IS susceptible to coronavirus may not be true. It is said that a few minutes of exposure to the coronavirus outside will get us infected.

Press Trust Of India

The assumption that everybody is susceptible to coronavirus may not be true as 80 to 90 per cent people living in the same household where a member is diagnosed with COVID-19 do not get the disease, as per a study by the Indian Institute of Public Health Gandhinagar.

This indicates the other family members may have developed some form of resistance or immunity to the disease, the institute's director Dileep Mavalankar told PTI on Sunday.

"The assumption that everybody is susceptible to coronavirus may not be true. It is said that a few minutes of exposure to the coronavirus outside will get us infected. If that is the case, then why not everybody in the same household is getting COVID-19 (after one member gets infected)?" Mavalankar asked.

"There are some families where all the members are infected, but they are not in majority. There are even homes where one person has died of COVID-19, but no other member is infected," he pointed out.

He said the study is based on a review of 13 papers published globally on the topic of household family transmission of COVID-19, "which shows nearly 80 to 90 per cent members of a family do not get infected even when one member is infected, indicating they may have developed some form of resistance or immunity and are not susceptible to the disease".

Out of the 13 papers reviewed in the study, titled 'Secondary Attack Rate of COVID-19 in Household Contacts: Systematic Review', most show the household Secondary Attack Rate (SAR), or the rate of transmission of the virus from one member of the family to the other, is 10 to 15 per cent.

Only three papers showed SAR of 30 per cent or more (30, 35 and 50 per cent), said Mavalankar, who has co-authored the study along with faculty members Komal Shah and Deepak Saxena.

The study was recently published in the Quarterly Journal of Medicine, Oxford, UK.

Mavalankar said studies of the 13 papers show the transmission to be generally between 10 to 15 per cent, with some showing it to be in the range of five to 10 per cent as well, he said.

One of these papers by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) shows about eight per cent of family members of a COVID-19 infected person contract the virus, he said.

"Some studies have gone into the details of transmission between husband and wife or vice versa, which is shown in the range of 45 to 65 per cent. Even in cases where people share beds, transmission is

not 100 per cent," he said.

Transmission from an adult member of the family to the child is lower, but from the adult to an elderly person in the family is higher. But even this is between 15 and 20 per cent, Mavalankar said, sharing the findings of his report.

"Different people have different immunity to the virus. Within a household, we do not follow social distancing rules or use masks. Between the appearance of the symptom and diagnosis, there is a gap of three to five days, which means all the family members are exposed to the virus. But still, not all get it," he said.

Mavalankar suggested that a "large percentage of population may not be susceptible to the virus," and said the sero-surveillance study to measure antibodies against COVID-19 in the population would be helpful to find out exactly how many persons have already been infected.

In central Ahmedabad, for example, the number of COVID-19 cases has seen a decline after a surge, with the most likely reason being that herd immunity is building up among the population, he claimed.

He said half of the population is not susceptible to the virus, as per a theory of "immunological black hole" propounded by Karl Friston, a neuro-scientist at the University College of London.

Based on European data, Friston has modelled his theory which shows 50 per cent of the people in Europe do not seem to be susceptible to the virus, he said.

"One of the first reasons for this is many people are limited to their homes and are not going out much, while some people already have some immunity due to some other infection or cross immunity or innate immunity, and some are susceptible but develop mild infection that cannot

be transmitted to others," Mavalankar said.

In central parts of Ahmedabad, which were worst affected by COVID-19, where sero-prevalence or the infection rate reached 28 per cent, only 12 to 15 per cent people are susceptible, as according to Friston's theory half of the population is not being susceptible, Mavalankar said.

"We can say this as cases are not emerging in large numbers from that area, we can say herd immunity might have developed," he said.

The same thing has been witnessed in Delhi where sero prevalence reached 23 per cent in July. In (Mumbai's slum area) Dharavi also, with 50 per cent sero-prevalence, not all its residents are infected, he noted.

"So, the infection must be so mild that they could not pass it to others despite being infected. Then there is a small percentage which can get infected and can

also develop immunity," he said.

Mavalankar further said the study is based on secondary published literature, and the team at the Indian Institute of Public Health Gandhinagar (IIPHG) is also trying to get primary data for a study to validate if the same is being seen in Gujarat.

"We need more research on why people are not getting infected. In April, they were testing all household contacts of a positive case, which was (later) stopped. We would have known exactly who all are infected," he said.

"Now, only family members who have developed symptoms for COVID-19 are getting tested. Asymptomatic persons are not getting tested because the ICMR has changed the policy," he added.

IIPHG was established after the Gujarat government and the Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI) entered into an MoU in 2007 for setting up the institute.

Researchers Trace Enzyme Behind Body Odour

Agencies

A team of researchers has now found a unique enzyme responsible for the pungent characteristic smell we call body odour or BO.

Researchers from the University of York have previously shown that only a few bacteria in your armpit are the real culprits behind BO. Now the same team, in collaboration with Unilever scientists, has gone a step further to discover a unique "BO enzyme" found only within these bacteria and responsible for the characteristic armpit odour. The study was published in the journal Scientific Reports.

This new research highlights how particular bacteria have evolved a specialised enzyme to produce some of the key molecules we recognise as BO.

Co-first author Dr Michelle Rudden from the group of Prof Gavin Thomas in the University of York's Department of Biology said: "Solving the structure of this 'BO enzyme' has allowed us to pinpoint the molecular step inside cer-



tain bacteria that makes the odour molecules. This is a key advancement in understanding how body odour works and will enable the development of targeted inhibitors that stop BO production at the source without disrupting the armpit microbiome."

Your armpit hosts a diverse community of bacteria that is part of your natural skin microbiome. This research highlights Staphylococcus hominis as one of the main microbes behind body odour.

Furthermore, the researchers say that this "BO enzyme" was present in S. hominis long before the emergence of Homo sapi-

ens as a species, suggesting that body odour existed prior to the evolution of modern humans and may have had an important role in societal communication among ancestral primates.

This research represents an important discovery for Unilever R&D, made possible by its long-standing academic-industry collaboration with the University of York. Unilever co-author Dr Gordon James said: "This research was a real eye-opener. It was fascinating to discover that a key odour-forming enzyme exists in only a select few armpit bacteria - and evolved there tens of millions of years ago."

Women With Little Or No Social Ties Could Be Most Prone To Obesity

Agencies

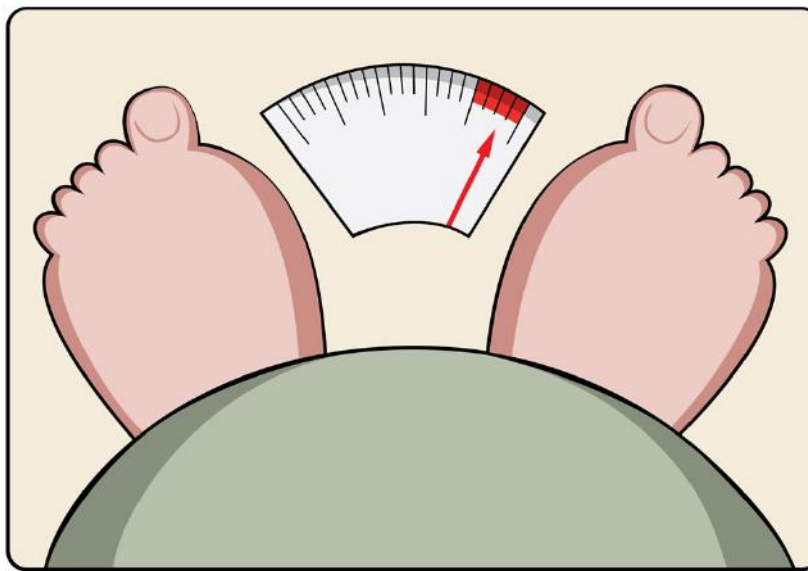
Older women who lack social ties, or are single, widowed, divorced or separated have a greater likelihood of being obese, according to new UBC research.

However, men, on the other hand, were less likely to be obese if they lived alone and had a smaller social network, according to the research published in PLOS One.

Using data from the Canadian Longitudinal Study on Aging, researchers analysed the social ties of 28,238 adults aged 45 to 85 and how these link to waist circumference, body mass index, and general obesity.

They found that women with less social ties had higher odds of abdominal and general obesity. There were higher odds if they had limited social participation—women who were not married lived alone and had no monthly social activities had the highest average waist size.

In comparison, among men, the average waist size was greatest among those who were widowed, co-living, and had a large social network. For example, men whose social network had more than 219 contacts were more likely to be obese than those with smaller networks.



"There is a lot of literature suggesting that marriage is health-promoting for men and potentially less so for women, so our results about marital status were kind of surprising," said principal investigator Annalijn Conklin, assistant professor in the faculty of pharmaceutical sciences at UBC and researcher with the Centre for Health Evaluation and Outcome Sciences.

"The different types of social ties that we looked at had a more consistent relationship with obesity for

women. Those patterns in men were less obvious and seemed to sometimes even be reversed to what we saw in women," Conklin added.

The study did not investigate why these gender differences exist. However, Conklin suggested the findings may be partly due to different gender roles and different social expectations around those roles.

"You would think that having small social networks would be a kind of social stress and that would have consequences for obe-

sity, but we found that it was potentially protective for men," Conklin said.

"It could be that managing very large networks becomes a source of stress for men, as research has shown that men often assign to their wives the emotional labour of keeping track of birthdays, special events and organizing family or social gatherings," researcher added.

An earlier study of the Korean population by other researchers obtained similar results.

More research is needed

to understand the factors at work, says lead author Zehab Hosseini, who did the work as a former postdoctoral research fellow at UBC's Collaboration for Outcomes Research and Evaluation.

"Not only did we find that minimal social participation was associated with obesity in older women, but also that social participation altered the levels of obesity in widowed women. These findings call for studies that will follow the participants over time to understand the possible causal links between different social connections and the health of older women and men," said Hosseini.

The study results do suggest that health care providers may want to begin including social activities alongside healthy diet and exercise when treating non-partnered older women, added the researchers.

"Clinicians could be encouraging older women patients who are non-partnered, especially widowed women, to participate in social community interventions as a way to address obesity. This would require clear implementation strategies and a focus on social connection interventions by health care researchers and decision-makers," said Hosseini.

Thousands march in Berlin against coronavirus curbs

Agencies

Berlin: Thousands marched in Berlin on Saturday to protest against measures imposed in Germany to stem the coronavirus pandemic, saying they violated people's rights and freedoms.

The gathering, estimated by police at 17,000, included libertarians, constitutional loyalists and anti-vaccination activists. There was also a small far-right presence with some marchers carrying Germany's black, white and red imperial flag.

Protesters danced and sang

Police filed a complaint against the organiser for failing to ensure marchers wore masks and kept their distance. Mainstream politicians criticised the protesters, with Social Democrat co-leader Saskia Esken calling them "covidiot".

"They not only endanger our health, they endanger our successes against the pandemic," tweeted Esken, whose party is Chancellor Angela Merkel's coalition partner.

After Germany's initial success in curbing the pandemic, infections are rising again. More than 200,000 peo-



"We are free people!" to the tune of rock band Queen's 'We Will Rock You'. Others marched with placards saying 'We are making a noise because you are stealing our freedom!' and 'Do think! Don't wear a mask!'.

"Our demand is to return to democracy," said one protester who declined to give his name. "The mask that enslaves us must go."

The protests followed a rallying call from Michael Ballweg, an entrepreneur and political outsider who has organised similar rallies in Stuttgart and is running to become mayor of the southwestern city.

ple have caught Covid-19 and nearly 1,000 have died from it.

Most people in Germany have respected measures that include wearing face masks in shops, while the government has just imposed mandatory tests for holidaymakers returning from high-risk areas. But a vocal minority is chafing against the restrictions.

"Only a few scientists around the world who follow the government's lead are heard," said protester Peter Konz. Those who hold different views "are silenced, censored or discredited as defenders of conspiracy theories".

UK Rolls Out 2 New Rapid COVID-19 Tests, Can Detect Virus In 90 Minutes: Report

Agencies

London: Two new tests, both able to detect the novel coronavirus in just 90 minutes, will be rolled out to hospitals, care homes and laboratories across the UK to increase testing capacity and distinguish between COVID-19 and winter flu in the coming months, the British government said today.

One of the tests, the 90-minute LamPORE swab tests, will be supplied by Oxford Nanopore, an Oxford University spin-off co-founded by Indian-origin CEO Gordon Sanghera, who believes it also offers an "accessible global testing solution".

"We are honoured to be playing a part in fighting COVID-19 in the UK, and preparing the country for the winter virus season. Ever since we founded Oxford Nanopore, our mission has been to create disruptive, high performance technology that has a profound, positive impact on society," Mr Sanghera said.

Oxford Nanopore will be making 450,000 90-minute

LamPORE swab tests available across adult care settings and labs in Britain from next week. These tests will be able to process swab and saliva samples to detect the presence of COVID-19 in 60 to 90 minutes.

"LamPORE has the potential to deliver a highly effective and, crucially, accessible global testing solution, not only for COVID-19 but for a range of other pathogens. We are delighted to be working with the UK government to support and empower our communities to effectively manage testing at a national and localised level," added Mr Sanghera.

The UK's Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) said the new test has the same sensitivity as the widely used PCR swab test, but can be used to process swabs in labs, as well as on-location through "pop up" labs.

The desktop GridION machine can process up to 15,000 tests a day, or the palm-sized MinION can process up to 2,000 tests a day for deployment in a near-community "pop-up" lab.



A wounded man receives treatment at a hospital after a suicide car bomb and multiple gunmen attack in the city of Jalalabad, east of Kabul, Afghanistan

Mass jailbreak in Afghanistan as IS militants attack Afghan forces

Agencies

Jalalabad: Islamic State militants were battling Afghan security forces in the eastern city of Jalalabad on Monday morning, after an overnight assault on a prison that led to a mass jailbreak, officials said.

The assault began on Sunday evening with car bomb detonated at the entrance to the prison, and there were numerous other blasts heard as the IS gunmen opened fire on security guards.

Two Nangarhar province

officials said at least five civilians were killed, and around 40 wounded during the initial attack and the gunbattle through the night, as Afghan special forces arrived to support police.

During the ensuing chaos more than 75 prisoners escaped, forcing police to divert manpower to try to recapture them, according to the officials.

IS claimed responsibility for the attack, which came a day after the Afghan intelligence agency said special

forces had killed a senior commander of the group near Jalalabad, the provincial capital of Nangarhar.

Some 130 kilometres (80 miles) east of Kabul, Jalalabad lies on the highway leading to the Khyber Pass and the Pakistani city of Peshawar.

A United Nations report last month estimated there are around 2,200 IS members in Afghanistan, and that while the group is in territorial retreat and its leadership has been depleted, it remains capable of carrying out high-profile attacks.

US-based 'terrorist' leader Jamshid Sharmahd arrested by Iran

Agencies

Tehran: Iranian security forces have detained the man suspected of masterminding the 2008 Shiraz mosque bombing which killed 14 people and wounded 215, officials said on Saturday.

They claim Jamshid Sharmahd, the head of pro-monarchy militant group Tondar, "directed armed and terrorist acts in Iran from America." Iranian television showed a video of a man identifying himself as Sharmahd and later the same man wearing a blindfold, saying "They needed explosives and we provided it."

The officials say Tondar had planned several "big operations" which have failed or have been foiled by Iranian officials, including plots to blow up a dam in Shiraz, use "cyanide bombs" at a Tehran book fair, and plant a bomb at the memorial of the late Ayatollah Khomeini.

The US-based Sharmahd is "now in the powerful hands" of Iran law enforcement, the authorities said.

However, they provided no details on how Sharmahd, who was operating out of the US state of California, ended up in Iranian custody. Tondar's website identifies Sharmahd as Iranian-German, but the German foreign ministry did not immediately comment.

Investigators point to a 'CIA agent'



Tondar had planned several "big operations" which have failed or have been foiled by Iranian officials, including plots to blow up a dam in Shiraz, use "cyanide bombs" at a Tehran book fair, and plant a bomb at the memorial of the late Ayatollah Khomeini

Iran views Tondar (Farsi for thunder) also known as the Kingdom Assembly of Iran, as a terrorist organization. The authorities have asserted links between the group and several people who have already been executed over the 2008 bombing. Iran said some were taking orders from an Iranian US-backed "CIA agent" who was preparing an assassination of a high-ranking official.

In 2010, a suspected Iranian operative vanished before facing trial in California for allegedly trying to hire a hitman to assassinate Sharmahd. Observers believe the suspect most likely managed to flee back to Iran.

While it was not clear how

Iran captured Sharmahd, its operatives are known for using family members and tricks to lure exiles back to Iran or to Tehran-friendly countries.

The country's opposition made a similarly cagey announcement regarding the arrest of former opposition leader Ruhollah Zam in October last year.

On Saturday, Iran's foreign ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi slammed the US for hosting Sharmahd.

Washington "must be responsible for supporting terrorist groups which are inside of this country and carry out and lead terrorist acts against the Iranian people," the spokesman was quoted as saying by the Iranian state broadcaster.

Parents struggle as schools reopen amid coronavirus surge

Shannon Dunn has to report to her job this week as a cafeteria manager at an elementary school in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, but she has no idea what she will do when her daughter starts kindergarten with online-only instruction.

With a new school year beginning this week in some states, Dunn, like many other working parents, is struggling to balance her job with her child's schoolwork as the coronavirus pandemic continues to cause upheaval around the country. The death toll in the U.S. has reached about 155,000, and cases are rising in numerous states.

Dunn's East Baton Rouge district has asked employees to begin work this week, while students are set to begin virtual classes next week. School officials have said they hope to begin in-person classes after Labor Day.

"My family works. I have no one I can take her to and say, 'OK, at 12 o'clock you are going to have to start working online with her for school,'" Dunn said.

Parents in Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee are among those who will be the first to navigate the new academic year as schools open up in parts of those states this week.

In Indiana, where schools reopened last week for the first time since a pandemic-driven nationwide shutdown in March, a student at Greenfield-Central Junior High School tested positive for the coronavirus on the first day back to class.

School Superintendent Harold Olin said the student was tested days earlier and attended class before receiving

the results. The student was isolated in the school clinic, while school nurses worked to identify other youngsters or staff who may have had close contact with the student.

"This really does not change our plans," Olin said. "We knew that we would have a positive case at some point in the fall. We simply did not think it would happen on Day One."

Schools in Hawaii were supposed to reopen Tuesday, but the teachers union led a move to delay that until Aug 17.

Most schools in the state are planning a hybrid approach, with students alternating between in-person classes and online instruction. Some schools will have full in-person instruction



tion for lower grade levels, but only a few schools will offer a full-time, in-person return.

Many school districts around the country had offered parents a choice of at least some in-person classes or remote instruction. But an uptick in Covid-19 cases in many states has prompted districts to scrap in-person classes at least for the start of the school year, including Los Angeles, Philadelphia and Washington.

Dunn said she hopes her daughter will be able to attend in-person classes at her school after Labor Day. But even if she does, that will not ease Dunn's mind completely.

Chinese Artificial Intelligence Company Files \$1.4 Billion Lawsuit Against Apple



Agencies

Shanghai: Chinese artificial intelligence company Shanghai Zhizhen Intelligent Network Technology Co. Ltd, also known as Xiao-i, has filed a lawsuit against Apple Inc, alleging it has infringed on its patents.

The company is calling for 10 billion yuan (\$1.43 billion) in damages and demands that Apple cease "manufacturing, using, promising to sell, selling, and importing" products that infringe on the patent, it said in a social media post.

Xiao-i argued that Apple's

voice-recognition technology Siri infringes on a patent that it applied for in 2004 and was granted in 2009.

Apple did not respond to a request for comment. Reuters was not immediately available to find a copy of the court filing.

The lawsuit marks the continuation of a row that has been ongoing for nearly a decade.

Shanghai Zhizhen first sued Apple for patent infringement in 2012 regarding its voice recognition technology. In July, China's Supreme People's court ruled that the patent was valid.

NEWS MAKERS

SpaceX capsule and Nasa crew make 1st splashdown in 45 years

Two Nasa astronauts returned to Earth on Sunday in a dramatic, retro-style splashdown, their capsule parachuting into the Gulf of Mexico to close out an unprecedented test flight by Elon Musk's SpaceX company.

It was the first splashdown by US astronauts in 45 years, with the first commercially built and operated spacecraft to carry people to and from orbit. The return clears the way for another SpaceX crew launch as early as next month and possible tourist flights next year.

Test pilots Doug Hurley and Bob Behnken arrived back on Earth in their SpaceX Dragon capsule named Endeavour, less than a day after departing the International Space Station and two months after blasting off from Florida. The capsule para-



chuted into the calm gulf waters about 40 miles off the coast of Pensacola, hundreds of miles from Tropical Storm Isaias pounding Florida's Atlantic coast.

"Welcome back to planet Earth and thanks for flying SpaceX," said Mission Control from SpaceX headquarters.

"It's a little bit overwhelm-

ing to see everybody here considering the things that have gone on the last few months since we've been off planet," Hurley said after arriving back home in Houston on Sunday evening where they were greeted by a small masked-gathering of family and officials, including Musk.

9-year-old Pakistani girl beats Indian professor, sets world record in chemistry

A nine-year-old Pakistani girl breaking the record of Indian professor became the fastest and youngest in the world to arrange the chemical elements of the periodic table in the shortest possible time.

Natalia Najam, the Lahore-based science enthusiast, achieved the Guinness World Records title after arranging all elements of the periodic chart in just 2 minutes and 42 seconds on July 18, 2020, according to Gulf News.

She broke the previous record by 7 seconds.

After setting the record, the young girl screamed with joy as the judges gave her a resounding thumbs up. Pakistani kid Natalia Najam, a Science enthusiast broke Guinness World Record in #Chemistry. She is now the



youngest & fastest person to arrange all elements of the periodic table in record time Najam accomplished the feat by breaking the record previously held by Indian economics professor Meenakshi Agarwal who completed the same task in 2 minutes and 49 seconds.

The young Pakistani girl hopes that her achievement will inspire children around the world to continue taking strides in science and pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

Nobel Laurette John Hume Dies

London: John Hume, the Northern Irish politician who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1998 for his role in the British province's peace process, has died aged 83, his family announced Monday.

Hume, the former leader of the mainly Catholic Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP), shared the Nobel with David Trimble of the pro-British Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) after the pair helped forge the 1998 Good Friday peace agreement.

"We are deeply saddened to announce that John passed away peacefully in the early hours of the morning after a short illness," his family said in a statement. "John was a husband, a father, a grandfather, a great-grandfather and a brother. He was very much loved, and his loss will be deeply felt by all his extended family."

The statement noted that Hume had been suffering from dementia and in the care of a nursing home in Londonderry. The ex-SDLP leader helped to end three decades of bloody strife in Northern Ireland between the largely Catholic nationalist community who want to unify with Ireland and Protestant unionists who want to remain part of Britain.

With Loan Money Gone, Restaurants Are At Mercy Of Coronavirus



The check has arrived and beleaguered restaurant owners across America are looking down on their empty wallets. Government coronavirus loans in the spring helped eating establishments rehire laid-off employees and ride out the pandemic's initial surge and wave of shutdown orders. But that Paycheck Protection Program money has now been spent at many restaurants, leaving them in the same precarious position they were in during outbreak's early days: Thousands of restaurants are being forced to close down again on mandates from state and local officials combating the virus's resurgence, particularly in the South and West. And even in parts of the country where the outbreak appears contained, restaurants' revenue is far below normal because social distancing requirements – and wary diners – mean fewer tables, fewer customers and limited hours. John Pepper used a PPP loan to pay employees and reopen four of his eight Bo-loco restaurants when Massachusetts lifted its shutdown order in early May. But with the money spent and business at the restaurants down as much as 70%, Pepper had to again close two locations. The staff of

125 he had before the virus outbreak is down to 50. "A lot of this is out of our hands at this point," Pepper says. "At this moment, I don't see getting my full payroll back." Congress is debating another relief bill that potentially will have more help for small businesses, but even with more loan or grant money, restaurants will remain at the mercy of the virus that has decimated their business. The virus's resurgence has prompted officials in California, Texas, Florida and other states to order restaurants shut again. In the Northeast and other parts of the country where infection rates appear more stable, no one expects limits on inside dining to be lifted anytime soon. Restaurants generally have a low profit margin, between 5% and 6%, and they achieve that only if they have a full house virtually every day, says Sean Kennedy, executive vice president for the trade group National Restaurant Association. They also tend to have only about two weeks of cash on hand, making them highly vulnerable when their sales are down. "They aren't designed to have an on-off switch. They're designed to be used seven days a week, 14 to 15 hours a day at 100% of capacity," Kennedy says. Gerry Cea was forced to shut his Miami restaurant, Cafe Prima Pasta, from March into May when the outbreak first began. Now, he has again closed the dining room as local officials try to contain the virus; the Miami/Dade area is one of Florida's hit hardest by the virus.

Sushant Case: CM Nitish Terms IPS Officer's Forcible Quarantine Inappropriate

PATNA: Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar on Monday voiced strong disapproval of the "forcible" quarantine of an IPS officer from Patna, hours after he landed in Mumbai to lead a Special Investigation Team probing the death of Bollywood actor Sushant Singh Rajput.



"Whatever has been done to him is inappropriate," Kumar said when asked about Vinay Tiwari, SP City (East), who is in Mumbai to investigate an "abetment to suicide" case. He also said the matter has been taken up with the authorities in Maharashtra by DGP Gupteshwar Pandey. "He (Pandey) will himself speak to the authorities concerned," Kumar said. When asked about whether he would himself have a word with his Maharashtra counterpart Uddhav Thackeray, the Bihar chief minister said, "It is not a political matter. The issue at hand is a legal obligation of the Bihar police. We will make all possible efforts to fulfil the same." He, however, ducked queries about recommending a CBI inquiry into the matter, the demand for which has been raised by at least two of the deceased actor's sisters. The chief minister was approached by journalists at a

park where he tied a 'rakhi' around a tree on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan. He was flanked by key aides including his deputy Sushil Kumar Modi, a senior BJP leader, who has been vociferous in charging the Maharashtra government with non-cooperation with the Bihar police team. Rajput, 34, was found hanging from the ceiling of his Bandra residence in Mumbai on June 24. The Bihar police got involved in the matter after Rajput's father lodged an FIR, more than a month after his son's death, accusing actress Rhea Chakraborty and her family members of abetting the suicide. Bihar DGP Gupteshwar Pandey on Sunday charged that Vinay Tiwari has been "forcibly quarantined" by the civic authorities in Mumbai. The DGP, who broke the news himself on his twitter handle past midnight, also shared a video footage of Tiwari, lodged in a Maharashtra police establishment with the quarantine stamp on his hand.



SECURITY was tight on Monday and policemen were seen stopping motorists on the streets. KO Photo Abid Bhat

"Foundation Of New India": Yogi Adityanath Reviews Ayodhya Event Preparations

AYODHYA: Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath has said that the COVID-19 protocol will be strictly followed during the "bhoomi puja" ceremony for Ram temple in Ayodhya and only those invited should come. The chief minister, who was in the city to oversee preparations for the August 5 event, said it was a "historic and emotional" moment which will lay the "foundation of a new India." He also hit out at the Congress, saying those who are making negative comments on the event had tried to create obstacles in the construction of the Ram temple and the people of the country know about them. "It is not only a historic but also an emotional moment as after 500 years the Ram temple work will start. It will be the foundation of a new India. COVID-19 protocol will be strictly followed at the event. As the prime minister will be here representing 135 crore people, I appeal that only those who have been invited should visit Ayodhya. The rest should remain at their respective places," Mr Adityanath said, adding no laxity will be allowed. Nearly 200 people have been invited for the ceremony, according to the temple trust. The chief minister urged the people to light earthen lamps, decorate temples and recite Ramayana in memory of those who died "in the temple struggle." For those who are keen to visit



Ayodhya, arrangements will be made to bring people from every district once the coronavirus pandemic is over, he said. The chief minister reached Ayodhya in the afternoon and visited the Ram Janmabhoomi site where the bhoomi puja is to be held. He also paid obeisance to Ramlalla (the idol of Lord Ram as an infant), visited Hanuman Garhi temple and gave directions to senior officers from the dais, where the main event is scheduled to be held. Additional Chief Secretary (Home) Awanish Kumar Awasthi, Ayodhya District Magistrate Anuj Kumar Jha and DIG Deepak Kumar also accompanied the chief minister, a senior official said. The chief minister was scheduled to visit Ayodhya on Sunday but it was cancelled due to the death of state minister Kamla Rani Varun, who had contracted COVID-19.

Tamil Nadu's Ruling Party, Opposition Unite Against Three-Language Formula In New NEP

CHENNAI: Strongly backing Tamil Nadu's decades old two-language policy, the ruling AIADMK in the state on Monday rejected the Centre's three-language formula proposed in the new National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and said there will be no deviation from the existing system. "The three-language formula in the NEP is painful and saddening. The Prime Minister (Narendra Modi) should reconsider the three-language policy," Palaniswami said. Taking strong exception to the proposal, he said in a statement the state has been following the two-language policy for several decades and that there will be no change in it. His assertion came amidst opposition demand, including from DMK, that the government should reject the three-language formula proposed in NEP and stick to its two-language policy. Incidentally, ahead of today's meeting he convened to discuss the matter with his senior cabinet colleagues, the Opposition bloc led by DMK wrote to the chief minister, asking him to adopt a Cabinet resolution against the new NEP. "Tamil Nadu will never allow the



Leader of Opposition in the Assembly, MK Stalin, dubbing it as an attempt to "impose" Hindi and Sankrit. The anti-Hindi movement of the 1960s taken forward by the DMK had struck an instant chord among the Tamil masses then and is believed to be one of the key reasons for the Dravidian party storming to power in the 1967 elections under the late CN Annadurai, unseating a Congress government in the state for the first time in post-independent India. Palaniswami further said the state has been maintaining a consistent stand and that for about 80 years, the people of Tamil Nadu had been firm on two language policy. Late chief ministers Annadurai, MG Ramachandran and J Jayalithaa were firmly against 'imposition' of Hindi. He also recalled the historic resolution brought in the Tamil Nadu Assembly by late Annadurai on January 23, 1968, which proposed to abolish the three language policy in all schools in the state, removing Hindi from the State syllabus but allowing only Tamil and English. Later, the AIADMK government led M G Ramachandran had in 1986 adopted an Assembly resolution asserting the two language policy.

Serum-Oxford COVID-19 Vaccine Gets DCGI Grant For Human Trials In India

NEW DELHI: The Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI) has given nod to the Serum Institute of India (SII) for conducting phase 2 and 3 human clinical trials of the Oxford University developed COVID-19 vaccine candidate in the country.



Government officials told PTI that the approval for conducting phase 2 and 3 clinical trials by the SII was granted by DCGI Dr V G Somani late Sunday night after a thorough evaluation based on the recommendations of the Subject Expert Committee (SEC) on COVID-19. "The firm has to submit safety data, evaluated by the Data Safety Monitoring Board (DSMB), to the CDSCO before proceeding to phase 3 clinical trials," a senior official said. "As per the study design, each subject will be administered two doses four weeks apart (first dose on day one and second dose on day 29) following which the safety and immunogenicity will be assessed at predefined intervals," the official said. As a rapid regulatory response, the expert panel at the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) on Friday, after a detailed deliberation and considering the data generated on the vaccine candidate in phase 1 and 2 of the Oxford University trial, had recommended granting permission for phase 2 and 3 clinical trials of the potential vaccine. 'Covishield', on healthy adults in India, the officials said. Currently, phase 2 and 3 clinical trials of the Oxford vaccine candidate is going on in the United Kingdom, phase 3 clinical trial in Brazil and phase 1 and 2 clinical trials in South Africa. The officials said that the SII had submitted a revised proposal on Wednesday after the SEC on July 28, following deliberation over its application, had asked it to revise its protocol for the phase 2 and 3 clinical trials besides seeking some additional information. The panel had also recommended that the clinical trial sites which have been proposed for the study be distributed across India. According to the revised proposal by the SII, 1,600 people aged above 18 years will participate in the trials across 17 selected sites, including AIIMS-Delhi, B J Medical College in Pune, Rajendra Memorial Research Institute of Medical Sciences (RMRIMS) in Patna, Post Graduate Institute of Medical Education and Research in Chandigarh, AIIMS-Jodhpur, Nehru Hospital in Gorakhpur, Andhra Medical College in Visakhapatnam and JSS Academy of Higher Education and Research in Mysore. "According to the application, it would conduct an observer-blind, randomised controlled study to determine the safety and immunogenicity of 'Covishield' on healthy Indian adults," the official said. The SII, which has partnered with AstraZeneca, for manufacturing the Oxford vaccine candidate for COVID-19 had submitted its first application to the DCGI on July 25 seeking permission for conducting the phase 2 and 3 trials of the potential vaccine. Initial results of the first two-phases of trials of the vaccine conducted in five trial sites in the UK showed that it has an acceptable safety profile and homologous boosting increased antibody response, sources had said.

Pak Court Asks India To Appoint Lawyer For Jadhav

Islamabad: The Islamabad High Court on Monday ordered the Pakistan government to give "another chance" to India to appoint a lawyer for death-row prisoner Kulbhushan Jadhav, Pakistani media reports said. Jadhav, the 50-year-old retired Indian Navy officer, was sentenced to death by a Pakistani military court on charges of espionage and terrorism in April 2017. India approached the International Court of Justice against Pakistan for denial of consular access to Jadhav and challenging the death sentence. The Hague-based ICJ ruled in July 2019 that Pakistan must undertake an "effective review and reconsideration" of the conviction and sentence of Jadhav and also to grant consular access to India without further delay. On Monday, a two-member bench comprising IHC Chief Justice Athar Minallah and Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb heard a petition filed by the Pakistan government to appoint a lawyer for Jadhav. The Pakistan government, in the petition, asked the

IHC to appoint a legal representative for Jadhav so that it can fulfil its responsibility to see to the implementation of the ICJ's decision. It also claimed that Jadhav refused to file a review petition or an application to reconsider the verdict against him by the military court. "Now that the matter is in the high court, why not give India another chance," Justice Minallah was quoted as saying by Geo News. The judge said that the Indian government or Jadhav may reconsider their decision pertaining to the review petition. "India and Kulbhushan Jadhav should once again be extended an offer to appoint a legal representative" for the death row prisoner, he added. Responding to the judge's remarks, Pakistan's Attorney General Khalid Javed Khan said an ordinance was issued to give an opportunity to India and Jadhav to file a review petition against the sentence. "We will contact India again through the Foreign Office," he said. The hearing was subsequently adjourned till September 3.

NEWS MAKERS

India Couple Beat Covid-19 But Commit Suicide Due To Stress

HYDERABAD: A middle-aged couple who had recovered from COVID-19 only two days ago, committed suicide while in quarantine at home. The incident occurred on Sunday in Dharmavaram town of Anantapur district in Andhra Pradesh. According to the police, 42-year-old Phani Raj and 40-year-old Sreesha jumped from a three-storied building and died on the way to hospital. Deputy Superintendent of police Ramakant said that the couple had tested positive for COVID-19 and were admitted to a local hospital. After recovering



and leaving the hospital on July 30, they were in self-isolation at their home. On Sunday morning they jumped to their death. "Our preliminary investigation showed that the couple was suffering from mental stress and financial difficulties and decided to end their lives," Ramakant said.

Rajasthan Restaurant Offers "COVID Curry", "Mask Naans" To Win Back Customers

JODHPUR: A restaurant in Rajasthan is hoping to win back customers who are afraid of eating out during the pandemic with a special "COVID Curry" and "Mask Naans". "This has been a really tough time for us and for our entire sector," Yash Solanki, owner of the vegetarian Vedic eatery in Jodhpur, told AFP. The fried vegetable balls have been shaped to look like the "crowned" coronavirus, while the breads look like surgical masks. Mr Solanki said that they had also added, and advertised, that their COVID curry had extra herbs and spices that are good



for people's health. "Even with recently relaxed curbs, the fear still dominates. People are still very reluctant to eat out," Mr Solanki said. Almost 800 people are dying daily from coronavirus in India, with around 50,000 new infections reported every 24 hours. India has had 1.8 million cases, the third-highest in the world behind the United States and Brazil, and more than 38,000 deaths.

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