



Maximum : 32°C
Minimum : 21°C
Humidity : 58%

SUNSET
Today 07:14 PM
SUNRISE
Tomorrow 05:55 AM



News Digest

IED Diffused In Pulwama

Srinagar- A major tragedy was averted after Police and security forces recovered an IED in South Kashmir's Pulwama district on Sunday late night. A senior police officer said that IED was planted by militants under a bridge near Tujan village in Pulwama district, reported news agency GNS. The officer said the bridge is between Tujan and Dalwan. By the timely recovery of the IED, a major tragedy was averted, the officer added.

5 More COVID-19 Deaths In Ladakh

Leh: Five more patients died of coronavirus in Ladakh, taking the death toll due to the disease in the union territory to 14, officials said on Monday. Kargil district recorded four new deaths, while one COVID-19 patient breathed his last in Leh, the officials said.

Man Found Dead Near GB Pant Hospital

Srinagar: A middle-aged man was found dead near the GB Pant hospital here in this capital city on Monday. The locals spotted the body of the middle-aged man near the hospital and accordingly contacted concerned police station, a police officer said. Later a police team reached the spot and retrieved the body. The deceased has been identified as a resident of Saraibal who is known by nickname 'Tita', the official said. He said that a case under the relevant section of law has been also registered and further investigation was taken up. (GNS)

Demolition Drive Turns Violent At NFR

Srinagar: The Enforcement Wing of Lakes and Waterways Development Authority (LAWDA) on Monday demolished illegal structures in green belt areas of the city. According to an official spokesperson, the LAWDA officials demolished two illegal constructions of single storey houses, concrete Block, shuttering for Plinth and roofing at Lashkari Mohalla north foreshore road (NFR) in green belt, Shalimar and Harwan areas. ● P-02

Teen Hangs Self To Death

Srinagar: A teenager on Monday allegedly committed suicide by hanging himself in Kawoosa area of central Kashmir's Budgam district. 17-year-old Zubair Ahmad Ganie was found hanging at his home in Kawoosa Khalisa area of the district on Monday evening, officials said. The teenager was rushed to the Sub District Hospital (SDH) Magam where the doctors declared him brought dead. ● P-02

Drug Peddler Held In Sopore: Police

Srinagar: Police in its recent action against drug dealings in Sopore have arrested a drug peddler and recovered contraband substance from his possession. Officers at a checkpoint established at Shripora Tuijar Crossing intercepted an individual identified as Waseem Akbar Dar @Gash Dar resident of Batlipora Tuijar. During checking officers were able to recover 630 grams of Charas from his ● P-02

4 Security Men, 3 Militants Killed In Twin Kreeri Encounters

Lashkar's Top Commander Among Slain Militants



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Two Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) personnel, an army soldier and a J&K police man were killed on Monday in two back to back encounters in north Kashmir's Baramulla district in which three Lashkar militants, including the outfit's commander Sajad alias Haider was also killed.

Around 9:15 am, a group of armed militants opened indis-

criminate fire upon joint team of CRPF and police when they were establishing a 'naka' in Kreeri area of the district, a police official said. In the initial exchange of fire, a special police official (SPO) identified as Muzzafar Ali Dar of Pattan was killed and two CRPF personnel of 119 battalion critically wounded.

The injured paramilitary men identified as constables Lokesh Sharma and Khurshid Khan were removed to the nearby hospital

Haider's Killing A Big Success: DGP

Director General of Police J&K Dilbagh Singh on Monday termed the killing of Sajad alias Haider as a 'big success' for the state forces saying that the most wanted Lashkar commander was luring youth to militancy by releasing video messages. "He was like Burhan Wani and had joined militancy in the winters of 2016. Like Burhan, Sajad too would lure ● P-02

CRPF ASI Hurt In Kulgam Attack

In a late evening attack militants made an attempt to attack a Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) camp in Kulgam in South Kashmir on Monday. A sub-inspector of CRPF was injured in the attack, initial reports said. Unidentified militants on Monday evening opened indiscriminate fire towards a CRPF camp in Nehama area of the district, officials said. ● P-02

THREE MILITANTS CAME THROUGH AN APPLE ORCHARD AND FIRED indiscriminately at CRPF and police when a naka was being laid. In the attack, two CRPF jawans and a policeman died," Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar told journalists at the encounter spot earlier in the day.

Another Accused Held In Blasphemy Video Case

Chenab Valley Shuts Down, Protesters Block Kashmir Highway

Press Trust Of India

JAMMU: Jammu and Kashmir police has arrested the third accused in connection with a communally sensitive video which had gone viral on social media, triggering protests and shutdown in Chenab valley region on Monday, officials said.

The overall law and order situation in the entire Jammu region is under control, they said.

Religious leaders and prominent citizens from all communities on Sunday took to social media to request people to maintain communal harmony.

Rohit Sharma, a resident of Pacca Danga locality, is the third accused arrested in connection with the case related to the communally sensitive video, a police official said.

Earlier, the main accused Satpal Sharma and his associate Deepak were arrested in the city soon after the video containing derogatory

remarks against Prophet of Islam (Pbuh) went viral on Sunday.

A case has been lodged under section 153A IPC (promoting enmity between different groups) and 295A IPC (deliberate and malicious acts, intended to outrage religious feelings of any class by insulting its religion or religious beliefs) at Pacca Danga police station.

Taking note of the incident, Inspector General of Police, Jammu, Mukesh Singh had on Sunday warned people against sharing the video and said strict action will be taken against the guilty.

"My appeal to the people is not to circulate such videos which cause harm to brotherhood and communal harmony in the society. It is not good for all of us," he had said.

"If we find anybody deliberately sharing the video, we will take strict action against him," he had said.

In view of the incident, ►PAGE 02

MY APPEAL TO THE PEOPLE IS NOT TO circulate such videos which cause harm to brotherhood and communal harmony in the society. It is not good for all of us,"

MMU Demands Exemplary Punishment For Culprits

Mutahida Majlis-e-Ulema (MMU), an amalgam of clerics led by Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, on Monday demanded strict action against the members of a extremist Hindu group in Jammu's Reasi, which has made blasphemous remarks against Prophet of Islam (Pbuh).

Taking strong note of the blasphemous remarks made by the members of Sentinel Bharat Raksha Manch, an MMU spokesperson said today that some zealots were making a deliberate attempt to hurt the sentiments of Muslims across the world. "It is extremely unfortunate that the anti-Islam forces are being time and again encouraged to indulge in such deliberate provocative acts ● P-02

LG Orders Hiring Of Docs, Paramedics To Strengthen Healthcare



Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha on Monday directed authorities to fill up vacancies of doctors and paramedics to strengthen patient care system in the Union Territory.

Chairing a meeting to review the functioning of Health & Medical

Education Department here at Raj Bhavan, Sinha also took a serious note of the rise in coronavirus cases in Kashmir division and directed for aggressive contact tracing of COVID positive patients to contain the deadly virus, particularly in Srinagar, an official spokesperson said. "As we are aiming to improve the health care system of J&K to make

it best in the country, the objective of providing best possible medical care to the patients visiting the Hospitals cannot be compromised at any cost", the LG, according to the official spokesperson said.

The spokesperson said that LG stressed on strengthening of human resources in the CHCs and PHCs and asked the concerned authorities to prepare a data base and rationalise the available staff, besides filling up the vacancies of doctors, nurses and other health workers immediately so as to strengthen the patient care system. "To ensure the retention ►PAGE 02

NCPCR Recommends Creation Of Separate Child Rights Body In J&K

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has recommended creation of a separate child rights body for Jammu & Kashmir Union Territory.

According to a report, Jammu & Kashmir government has been requested to constitute the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCR).

"Secretary, Social Welfare was requested to constitute the State Commission for Protection of Child

Rights (SCPCR) as per Section 17 of Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005," reads the report based on NCPCR's visit to J&K on March 11 and 12 this year.

A high-level team of NCPCR comprising its chairperson Priyanka Kanoongo, member secretary Rupali Banerjee Singh and experts visited J&K to review the status of child rights in the UT and to conduct inter-departmental review cum consultation meeting with the administration.

Ahead of its formal bifurcation into two Union Territories ►PAGE 02

Bajwa In Saudi To Fix Strained Ties

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa on Monday reached Saudi Arabia to discuss bilateral relations, amidst the recent strain in the ties over Riyadh's reluctance to toe Islamabad's line on the Kashmir issue.

Despite repeated requests from Pakistan to hold a foreign ministers' meeting on Kashmir, the Jeddah-based Organisation of Islamic Cooperation has shown reluctance to convene such a conference, prompting an upset Islamabad to threaten that it may call a separate gathering on the issue. Diplomatic sources here said that Gen Bajwa was accompanied ● P-02



DEVOTEES OFFER PRAYERS inside the shrine of Dastgeer Sahib (RA) shrine on Monday, nearly five months after the religious places were shut down due to Covid-19. Pic, Abid Bhat

Doctor, 9 More Die Of Covid-19 In Kashmir, J&K Toll 554

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: A prominent chest specialist was among ten people who died of coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir on Monday, raising the number of fatalities since the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic in the Union Territory to 554.

Among the victims, five were Srinagar residents,

two each from Budgam and Bandipora while another from Anantnag district, officials said Monday. With these fatalities, the death toll has risen to 554 in J&K—513 in the Valley and 41 in Jammu division.

They said that the 81-year-old chest specialist from Srinagar's Gilli Kadal locality was admitted to CD hospital, one of the exclusive facilities for the management, on ►PAGE 02

422 New Cases Include 35 Security Men, 55 Travelers

Coronavirus cases in Jammu and Kashmir on Monday inched closed to 29000 mark as the Union Territory reported 422 fresh Covid-19 cases including 55 travelers and 35 security forces personnel. ● P-02

Arshi Qureshi

ON the day when Prime Minister Narendra Modi was talking about the sweeping "development" in the valley from the ramparts of Red Fort, social media was abuzz with the viral image of Srinagar's Lal Chowk, whose iconic clock tower was seen hosting tricolor.

The image took the confined natives by surprise as the photo showed public movement apart from the unfurled flag on the day when the city centre had become a ghost town.

Apart from some top BJP leaders, including Kapil Mishra and Kiron Kher, the peddlers of this distorted image were some well-known Indian newsmen.

"On the occasion of India's 74th Independence Day," a Dainik Jagran report claimed, "the tricolour was reportedly hoisted at the historic Lal

'False Flag' At Lal Chowk: How Plague Of Fake News Is Distorting Kashmir

Chowk in Srinagar." Lal Chowk used to see bloodshed due to hoisting of the national flag, a report by News Nation said. "Now the country's flag rises there with pride."

But soon, the fake news peddlers faced some moment of truth when a freelance journalist—whose photo-shopped photo was used for peddling the fake news—countered the newsroom claims. "Have you no shame in sharing a doctored image? I clicked the original photo without the Indian flag on June 22, 2010. #LalChowk #FakeNews #FakeImage," tweeted photojournalist Mubasshir Mushtaq.

Just Another Distortion

Although the valley has been facing the fake news blitz for decades now, the intensity has clearly

increased since 2019. As soon as Jammu and Kashmir was stripped of its special status last summer, the internet and the electronic media were flooded with fake news. Some of the news anchors of the so-called 'Godi' media allegedly turned PR gurus and disinformation peddlers.

But 24 hours after the propaganda around Article 370, and 35A was spread, some prominent fact-checkers busted the fake news factory.

Speaking about the Indian media's fake portrayal of Kashmir, the Alt News (a leading fact-checking website) founding editor, Pratik Sinha, questioned the definition of 'newsroom normalcy' for Kashmir.

"What's normalcy? Children of Kashmir are growing up in a conflict area. Is this normal? As means



of communication is normal, then how do you define normalcy for a common man in Kashmir?"

It was, in fact, Sinha's Alt News, which debunked the misinformation

spread by PM Modi when he misquoted Omar Abdullah in the Parliament. The misinformation spread on February 6, 2020 was picked up by various TV news channels.

But soon, a fact-finding revealed that PM had quoted a parody website called 'Faking News'—which had attributed a spoof quote to Abdullah Jr: "The abrogation of Article 370 would bring a massive earthquake that will divide Kashmir from India."

But before the house would only fuel the fake news crisis in contemporary India, many New Delhi-based media houses had taken a contrasting line from international media on Kashmir last summer.

In fact, when facts countered fiction, the Ministry of Home Affairs had to issue a statement on twitter, claiming that international media's reportage—claiming that 10,000 people protested against the abrogation of Article 370 in downtown south—is 'fabricated' and 'incorrect'.

Exactly three days later on August 13, 2019, the Home Ministry again tweeted out a clarification calling the protests "miscreants mingled with people returning home after prayers at a local mosque. They resorted to unprovoked stone-pelting against law enforcement forces to cause widespread unrest".

Republic TV's Editor-in-Chief Arnab Goswami on his prime time debate dismissed the western media's Kashmir coverage as fake news. The aggressive anchor known for his tirade of abuse went on to accuse the BBC of spreading false propaganda. "Don't run away from me now, BBC! The figures you have peddled about, what was the proof gathered from?"

Channels like Times Now, India Today weren't far behind. Soon they started holding debates on 'normalcy in Kashmir' regularly. While the primetime news anchors were boasting how people in the valley were happy, ANI, ►PAGE 02

Quarrel Between 2 Groups Lead To Vandalisim, Firing In North Delhi; 3 Arrested

NEW DELHI: Tension gripped north Delhi's KuchaMohtar Khan area after around 12 men allegedly entered a locality, fired in the air and vandalised vehicles to exact revenge from another group with whom they had a quarrel, police said on Monday.

The incident was reported late on Sunday night.

Three men have been arrested in connection with the incident so far, police said, adding that raids are being conducted to nab the remaining culprits.

At least three local residents received minor injuries in the incident, police said.

According to the police, a

group of locals had a quarrel with a man named LalitYadav and his brother-in-law.

Following the quarrel, Yadav called up his associates, who then reached the locality with arms to take revenge from the locals. They vandalised several vehicles and went into every lane of the locality in search of the group of men, with whom they had a fight.

However, the locals had allegedly fled the spot soon after the quarrel.

Yadav alias Pongi, declared a "Bad Character" by the Model Town police station, is wanted in connection with a case reg-

istered against him there under section 323 (punishment for voluntarily causing hurt) and 452 (house-tresspass after preparation for hurt, assault or wrongful restraint) of the Indian Penal Code, police said.

After the case was lodged, Lalit came and hid at in-law's house in the locality in KuchaMohtar Khan area. During his stay at the locality, he had a fight with the locals.

On Monday, when a team from Kashmiri Gate police station reached the locality, they found three to four cars damaged while several bikes had fallen on the ground.

While locals alleged that they heard multiple being rounds fired in the air, police claimed that they initially recovered three empty rounds from the spot while another empty round was recovered when their crime team conducted an inspection.

During enquiry, locals told police that a group of men had come to the locality and knocked on their houses. Some had even entered the house of one of the residents and were searching for someone specific but the residents could not name any of them, a senior police officer said.

Deputy Commissioner of Police (North) Monika Bhardwaj said on the complaint of a local resident, a case has been registered for rioting and under other relevant sections. A search is also on for the accused, she said.

"During investigation , it was found that there was a quarrel between a group of men from the locality and Yadav, who is a declared a 'Bad Character'. Yadav later called his associates to teach the men, who he had a quarrelwith, a lesson," she said.

According to locals, a group of men, who were involved in the quarrel with Yadav, were roaming in the locality when they spot-

ted him and his brother-in-law indulging in a fight with a family. When they intervened, a quarrel broke out between them, she said.

On searching the house of Lalit's in-laws, police found household items scattered and suspect that soon after the quarrel, they must have fled the spot with their essentials.

Since the incident, tension has gripped the area and residents are concerned about their safety, locals were seen saying in videos which have surfaced after the incident.

In the video, a family residing in the locality recalled, ""We fear for our lives. We

were sleeping when two men with their faces covered barged into our house with knives and sticks. They tried to break our television and furniture. They even tried to break our door. We do not know who they were. One of the kids in our family also sustained minor injuries."

Another resident alleged that men with their faces covered barged into their house and threatened one of the family member with a knife.

There are no CCTV cameras installed in the area and raids are being conducted to nab Lalit and his other associates, who are still absconding, police added.

Indian Navy Commanders To Hold 3-Day Conclave Beginning Wednesday

NEW DELHI: Top commanders of the Indian Navy will hold a three-day conclave beginning Wednesday to review the country's maritime security scenario including deployment of a significant number of naval assets in the Indian Ocean region in view of the border row with China in eastern Ladakh, official

sources said.

The Indian Navy has already deployed a range of its frontline warships and submarines in the Indian Ocean region to send a clear message to China, following escalation of the border dispute with the neighbouring country in the wake of the Galwan Valley clashes on June 15.

Defence Minister Rajnath

Singh and Chief of Defence Staff Gen BipinRawat are expected to address the inaugural day of the conclave, the sources said.

All possible security challenges that the country may face including from China and Pakistan in the Indian Ocean Region will be deliberated upon at length at the conclave, they added.

The Indian Ocean, considered

the backyard of the Indian Navy, is critical to India's strategic interests. Over the years, the region has witnessed increasing Chinese presence.

China increased its presence in the Indian Ocean Region by constructing the deep-sea Gwadar Port in southern Pakistan and a naval base in Djibouti in the Horn of Africa.

Covid-19 Vaccine: Govt Panel Meets Representatives Of Leading Domestic Manufacturers

NEW DELHI: The national expert group on vaccine administration for COVID-19 met representatives of leading domestic manufactures, including Serum Institute of India, Bharat Biotech and ZydusCadila, on Monday to take inputs about the present stage of various candidate vaccines as well as their expectations from the government, the Union Health Ministry said.

The meeting was mutually beneficial and productive, the ministry said.

"It provided the national expert group with inputs about the present stage of various candidate vaccines being developed by indigenous manufacturers as well as their expectations from the Union government," the statement said.

The meeting was chaired by NitiAayog member V K Paul and co-chaired by Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan. The panel met separately representatives of the five firms -- Serum Institute of India (Pune), Bharat Biotech (Hyderabad),

ZydusCadila (Ahmedabad), Gennova Biopharmaceuticals (Pune) and Biological E (Hyderabad).

According to sources, the panel comprising Department of Biotechnology Secretary RenuSwarup, ICMR Director General BalramBhargava and Department of Pharmaceuticals Secretary P D Vaghela met the representatives of the five pharma firms and asked them about their production capacity and whether they need any sort of assistance from the government.

4 Security Men, 3 Militants...

have suspended operation in the area due to darkness. The report quoting sources said that a top Lt commander is believed to be trapped.

"Three militants came through an apple orchard and fired indiscriminately at CRPF and police when a naka was being laid. In the attack, two CRPF jawans and a policeman died," Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar told journalists at the encounter spot earlier in the day. "We have laid a cordon. We will neutralize them soon," he added.

Replying to a question, IGP said that strategy adopted by militants of attacking 'nakas' were the number of security personnel is less, was a worrying sign. "In remote areas normally, the militants come in the garb of civilians, carry out attacks and flee. We are concerned about such attacks and we will solve this problem soon," he said.

Kumar also said that Kreeri attack was the second one in the last four days. "We will give a befitting response to such attacks," he added.

Haider's Killing A Big...

youth into militancy. We have arrested at least 20 youth who were recruited by Sajad besides many over ground workers (OGWs)," DGP said in a news conference at the Police Control Room here this afternoon.

Singh, who was flanked by IGP Kashmir Vijay Kumar, said that Haider was involved in a series of "crimes and militancy related incidents that include killing of fruit merchants, security forces personnel, non-local labourers etc."

"He was brain behind the killing of Waseem Bari (of BJP) and his family member in Bandipora. He was also involved in an attack on CRPF party at Sopore resulting in killing of one personnel and injuries to four others," he said.

DGP further said that Haider had started working on the lines of slain Hizb commander Reyaz Naikoo and would release video messages to lure youth and to issue threats to political workers and forces.

"His killing is a big success for security forces," Singh said.

He said Sajad had taken along one of his recruits Annayatullah Mir, who joined Lashkar in March this year, to carry out today's attack in Kreeri. "Mir was injured in the first retaliation by one of our Head Constable just a few meters away from the attack spot where three security forces personnel were killed," the DGP said.

He said the third militant Usman, a Pakistani, was also operating with Sajad in the northern belt of Kashmir.

When asked about the sequence of the attack and retaliatory action, DGP said that militants attacked a joint patrolling cum naka party of CRPF and police in which two CRPF men and an SPO were killed.

"Just minutes after the attack, special operations group (SOG) of police engaged the militants and one was hit just at the bund, a few meters away from the attack site," Singh said.

"He later managed to go inside the orchards. In the meantime, SOG men surrounded the orchards and after they were joined by the army and CRPF, one militant who was sitting on a tree, started firing. First he was killed by the security forces," he added.

The DGP further said that later another militant who was injured militant was also killed.

He said as forces kept searching the area, another militant fired and he too was engaged and later killed.

"In total three militants were killed in the operation that is going on still since morning," Singh, according to news agency KNO said.

CRPF ASI Hurt In Kulgam...

In the militants firing, a CRPF assistant sub-inspector identified as S. Kumar was injured. Kumar, who received a bullet in his foot was shifted to the hospital where his condition is stable.

Soon after the attack, government forces laid a siege around the area and started a search operation to track down the attackers.

Chenab Valley Shuts Down,...

police took preventive measures in all sensitive areas across Jammu region and strengthened deployment to maintain law and order, the officials said.

Prominent citizens and religious leaders of all faiths have appreciated the police for taking prompt action against the accused and asked people to cooperate with the law enforcing agencies.

People are requested not to fall prey to communal hatred and defeat them by maintaining peace and communal harmony, they said.

Different parts of Chenab valley comprising three districts of Ramban, Doda and Kishtwar observed a shutdown on Monday to press for strict action against the accused.

People in Banihal town along the Jammu-Srinagar national highway in Ramban district also staged a demonstration, forcing brief suspension of the traffic on the highway, the officials said.

Normal life was affected in Bhardarwah, Doda, Thathri, Bhallesa and Kishtwar areas due to a joint shutdown call given by various religious groups to register their protest.

Shops and other business establishments belonging a particular community in Chenab Valley remained closed, but government offices and banks functioned normally, reports reaching here said.

In the communally sensitive Kishtwar town, police and paramilitary personnel were deployed in strength and patrolling intensified as a precautionary measure.

Elaborate security arrangements were also made in all the major towns of Chenab valley including Doda, Bhardarwah, Thathri and Kishtwar, the officials said.

MMU Demands Exemplary...

to serve their petty interests by hurting the religious sentiments of Muslims," the MMU spokesperson said.

"Muslims can sacrifice their lives, and all but cannot bear an iota of disrespect to the honour and dignity of our beloved Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh); this is the belief of a Muslim," the spokesperson added.

The MMU said that the blasphemous remarks by zealots Satpal Sharma and Deepak, are meant to cause hurt and hatred and hence unendurable. The religious conglomerate demanded strict and exemplary punishment to those who committed this crime and have been arrested, so that no one swayed with "communal frenzy and deliberate provocation", musters courage to commit such shameful act again or harm the centuries-old communal harmony and mutual brotherhood in Jammu & Kashmir.

According to the spokesperson, all the religious, educational, social and welfare organisations associated with the MMU which comprise of Anjuman Auqaf Jamia Masjid, Dar-ul-Uloom Raheemiya, Muslim Personal Law Board, Jamiat Ahle Hadees, Jama'at-e-Islami, Anjuman-e- Sharie Shiayan, Ithihaad-ul-Muslimeen, Anjuman Himayat-ul-Islam, Jamiat Hamdania, Anjuman Ulema-e-Ahnaaf, Dar-ul-Uloom Qasmia, Dar-ul-Uloom Bilaliya, Anjuman Nusrat-ul-Islam, Anjuman Mazhar-ul-Haq, Jamiat-ul-Aima Wal Ulema, Anjuman Aima Wa Mashaa'ikh Kashmir, Dar-ul-Uloom Naqshbandiya, Dar-ul-Uloom Raashediya, Karwaan-e-Islami, Ahl-e-Bayt Foundation, Madrasa Kanz-ul-Uloom, Peruwani-e-Wilayat, Auqaf Islamiya Khirram Sarhama, Anjuman Tanzeem-ul-Makaatib, Muhammadiyah Trust, and others in a joint statement made it clear that Muslims can never tolerate disrespect or ill-remarks against their beloved Prophet Muhammad (Pbuh) the epitome of humanness and peace and is dear to each and every Muslim than their own selves.

LG Orders Hiring Of Docs,...

of the Doctors in rural areas, he directed for additional incentives to the Doctors serving in these areas. He directed that all District Hospitals should have Dialysis facilities and called for recruitment of specialists in District Hospitals, including Cardiologists, Radiologists etc," the official spokesperson said.

The LG, he said also laid emphasis on strengthening of healthcare infrastructure, especially in rural areas, which is one of the most crucial aspects of effective healthcare system.

"The Lt Governor directed the concerned officers to ensure that adequate medical facilities are made available at all the Health Centres with special focus on Primary and Community Health Centres across the UT. Proper inventories of medical equipments and medicines shall also be maintained at PHCs, CHCs, health and wellness centres," the official spokesperson said.

"He further directed for strengthening of monitoring system of Health department, besides updating all the available facilities and costs on the official website for information of the public," he added.

According to the official spokesperson, Sinha tool serious note of the rise in COVID cases in Kashmir division, and directed for aggressive contact tracing of COVID positive patients to contain the deadly virus, particularly in Srinagar.

The LG, he said also directed for achieving the targets under the various Health programmes envisaged by the Centre and the UT Government for the welfare and better health of the people.

The meeting was attended by Rajeev Rai Bhatnagar, Advisor to the Lt Governor; BVR Subrahmanyam, Chief Secretary; Atal Dulloo, Financial Commissioner; Health and Medical Education and other senior officers. Giving a detailed briefing on major achievements of the department, Dulloo, as per the official spokesperson informed about the status of Health Indicators, Health Infrastructure, Medical Education, Nursing / Paramedic Education, Legal & Policy Framework, Human Resources, Ayushman Bharat, National Health Mission: Operationalization of 102/108 Ambulance Service; Action Plan for reduction of Infant Mortality Rate (IMR); present status of important projects like Cancer Institute at GMC Jammu; establishment of 2 AIIMS; new Medical Colleges etc.

"On Universal Health Coverage, the LG was informed that Health & Medical Education Department has rolled out 'Jammu and Kashmir Health Scheme', which shall provide health coverage free of cost to all residents of Jammu and Kashmir who are not covered presently under Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY). The scheme will cover approximately 15 lakh families over and above those already covered under AB-PMJAY," the official spokesperson said.

On implementation of Pradhan Mantri National Dialysis Programme (PMNDP), he said, the chair was informed that about 70 dialysis machines provided by MoHFW have been installed at fifteen (15) District Hospitals including District Hospital, Leh & District Hospital, Kargil.

"To operationalize the dialysis units, existing manpower of health department have been trained at SKIMS, Srinagar and Super-Speciality Hospital, Jammu. In the current financial year 2020-21, five (5) more District Dialysis Centres are approved and shall be made functional at Samba, Reasi, Ramban, Shopian and Ganderbal," he added.

NCPCR Recommends Creation...

on October 31 last year, the Jammu and Kashmir government winded up the State Commission for Protection of Women and Child Rights.

"Consequent upon repeal of the Jammu and Kashmir State Commission for Protection of Women & Child Rights Act, 2018 by the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act, 2019, sanction is hereby accorded to the winding up of Jammu & Kashmir State Commission for Protection of Women & Child Rights with effect from 31-10-2019 i.e. the appointed date for the formation of the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir and Union Territory of Ladakh," reads the government order.

It also ordered that the chairperson of the women and child rights panel shall cease to hold office from October 31.

During Governor's rule in 2018, a law was enacted for establishing a body for protecting women and child rights panel. Noted Supreme Court lawyer, Vasundhra Masoodi Pathak was appointed as its first chairperson--(KNO)

Bajwa In Saudi To Fix Strained...

by the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) chief Lt Gen Faiz Hameed.

The details of their engagements in Saudi Arabia have not been released, but the two are expected to hold high-level meetings to iron out misgivings.

Pakistan has been pushing the 57-member organisation, which is the second largest intergovernmental body after the UN, for the foreign ministers' meeting since India revoked the special status of Jammu and Kashmir in August last year.

However, there has not been any positive response from the OIC, the biggest bloc of Islamic countries in the world, to Pakistan's request so far. A major reason behind the OIC's inaction has been Saudi Arabia's reluctance to accept Pakistan's request for holding a meeting specifically on Kashmir. Riyadh's support is crucial for any move at the OIC, which is dominated by Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries.

Pakistan has been trying to garner international support against India for withdrawing Jammu and Kashmir's special status.

Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi, for the first time, criticised the Saudi government in a recent TV interview and threatened to call an OIC meeting by sidestepping the Gulf council.

Saudis avoided directly responding to Qureshi's remarks, but reportedly stopped renewing a USD 3.2 billion oil credit facility to Pakistan despite requests from Islamabad. Pakistan has also paid back USD 1 billion loan to Riyadh which, according to some reports, the Saudis had demanded.

In 2018, Saudi Arabia granted Pakistan a USD 3 billion loan and USD 3.2 billion oil credit facility to help its balance of payments crisis after Prime Minister Khan visited the country to seek financial support.

Doctor, 9 More Die Of Covid-19...

August 13. Besides severe pneumonia, the doctor was diagnosed with hypertension, hypothyroidism, Bronchial asthma and osteoarthritis.

Also, a 75-year-old woman from Zakoora Srinagar who was admitted to the hospital on August 14 in view of severe pneumonia with underlying hypertension and hypothyroidism died at 9:20 a.m. today, a doctor at the hospital said.

A 53-year-old woman from Pantha Chowk Srinagar who was admitted to the hospital on August 6 and diagnosed with pneumonia with "hypertension, DM 2" also died at the hospital.

"She was admitted to ICU on August 10 and developed cardiac arrest twice today morning and was declared death at 10:40 am," officials said.

The two other residents from Srinagar who succumbed to the virus include resident of Natipora who was admitted on 11 August at SMHS and a 65-year-old man from Makhdoomsahib area who died at SKIMS Soura. The two victims from central Kashmir's Budgam district include a resident man, in early 30s from Lassipora who was admitted to SMHS hospital on August 16 and a 70-year-old from Chadoora who was admitted to the hospital nine days ago.

The fatality from Anantnag, officials said, include a 65-year-old man from Verinag area who was admitted to SKIMS Soura on August 4 and died at 7:40 a.m. today. "He was suffering from CKD, bilateral community acquired pneumonia with TIRE," a doctor at the tertiary care hospital said, adding, "he had cardiopulmonary arrest."

The virus also claimed two lives in Bandipora and one of them was a 70-year-old resident, the officials added.

With these deaths, officials said, 554 people have succumbed to the virus in Jammu and Kashmir so far--513 from the Valley and 41 from Jammu division.

Srinagar district with 178 deaths tops the list followed by Baramulla (88), Budgam (42), Anantnag (39), Kulgam (31), Pulwama (40), Kupwara (34), Shopian (25), Jammu (29), Bandipora (22), Ganderbal (14), Rajouri (3), two each in Doda, Poonch and Udhampur besides one each in Ramban, Samba, and Kathua. (With GNS inputs)

422 New Cases Include 35...

Of these cases which took the overall count to 28892, 81 are from Jammu division and 341 are from Kashmir Valley including 20 from army's BB Cantt, 14 CRPF and one police.

Giving district-wise breakup of the cases, official sources said that Srinagar reported 48, Baramulla 9, Pulwama 42, Budgam 40,Anantnag 43, Kulgam 15, Shopian 6, Kupwara 46, Bandipora 49, Ganderbal 43, Jammu 40, Rajouri 2, Kathua 11, Samba 10, Doda 6, Poonch 1, and Reasi 11.

In Kashmir, Srinagar tops the list with 6960 cases followed by Baramulla with 2438, Pulwama 2095, Budgam 1828, Kulgam 1712, Shopian 1576, Anantnag 1815, Kupwara 1571, Bandipora 1476 and Ganderbal 963.

In Jammu division, Jammu district has 2005 cases, Rajouri 788, Ramban 624, Kathua 674, Udhampur 649, Samba 577, Doda 343, Poonch 329, Reasi 288 and Kishtwar 181. Moreover 353 more COVID-19 patients have recovered and discharged from various hospitals, 89 from Jammu Division and 264 from Kashmir Valley.

'False Flag' At Lal Chowk:...

Asian News International, which is often regarded as the 'government's mouthpiece', went a step further and showed Eid prayers being offered

in a mosque in Srinagar, when the footage was originally from Jammu. Another interesting piece of fake news was when newsrooms showed Mohammed Ashraf Azad as a local Kashmiri supporting the government's abrogation move. What they didn't report was that this local Kashmiri is a BJP leader.

Why They Distort

"Well, because, most of these Indian journalists, who reported from the ground, are quite close to the government, and their work is to push government propaganda," Pratik Sinha told Kashmir Observer.

Many believe New Delhi pressed hard to emphasize normalcy in the valley and the media pushed it harder. With the result, majority of Indian sat in their living rooms, stared at their TV screens, rejoiced over 'Kashmir Integration' and at the same time remained oblivious of the ground reality.

"That way," a Srinagar-based scribe said, "the government media was successful in hiding the dark reality, in which Kashmir was passing through."

Even the print media followed suit.

Behind the big and bold headlines—"Mission Kashmir Victory" by Times of India, "Territory of the Union" by Hindustan Times and "History, In One Stroke" by Indian Express—the grouse on the ground remains, these traditionalists conveniently concealed the crisis in the valley.

"Even these major and popular English newspapers became the part of selective coverage by focussing on Eid prayers," the scribe continued.

Amid fake news bombardment, the plight of Kashmiris due to communication crisis was largely ignored.

"It's an injustice to the word 'media' and to the word 'journalism' to describe large sections of Indian television media, they're glorified stenographers who propagate the ideology of ruling dispensation," Gowhar Geelani, a Srinagar-based journalist, said.

"They're parachuted to portray Kashmir's pain, disposition as normalcy. This practice didn't start on August 5, this has been done over the last thirty years but it got only worse and intense. It's ugly face became more visible on August 5."

When questioned about the role of the International media, Geelani stated, the international media do not carry this baggage of ideology. "They present the ground reality and talk to locals," he said. "It is reflected in their reports. When local Kashmiri media reported the clashes, many Kashmiri editors were taken away by NIA for questioning in Delhi."

Many in mainland argue that the media distortion often happens in the name of "national interest and patriotism".

"Since many in India see Kashmir as a land of pride they possess, they refuse to acknowledge the miseries of Kashmiris," said Abhishek Sharma, a Delhi-based journalist. "Kashmir is considered to be the largest military zone in the world, but the Indian media refuses to show it and chides the International media for covering the truth."

Indian media basks in its own glory while reporting about Kashmir, Sharma said. "The misrepresentation of the valley is no less than disinformation."

And therefore, Gowher Geelani believed, Kashmiris have no faith in Indian media. "They behave like Joseph Gobbel's ministry of propaganda."

5 More COVID-19 Deaths...

infections were in Kargil and 943 in Leh, the officials said. They said 70 per cent of the total patients have been cured of the disease and subsequently discharged from hospitals.

The union territory now has 578 active COVID-19 cases -- 350 in Leh and 228 in Kargil district.

Demolition Drive Turns...

The illegal constructions were constructed taking undue advantage of the Covid-19 lockdown.

"During demolition operation there was great resistance at Lashkari Mohalla NFR from the public followed by manhandling of the members of demolition squad and police personnel," the official spokesperson said.

"The public also resorted to heavy stone pelting resulting in the minor injuries to some of the members of demolition squad besides some of the vehicles of the Enforcement Wing and Mechanical Division also got damaged," he added.

He said that the front and rare glasses of the two trippers which were running in nearby area on the main road NFR got completely damaged and the drivers, cleaners of these vehicles also received minor injuries.

Teen Hangs Self To Death...

An official told news agency KNO that the body was later handed over to the family members for last rites and investigation into the matter has been started--

Drug Peddler Held In...

possession. He has been arrested and shifted to Police Station Bomai where he remains in custody. Accordingly, case FIR No. 66/2020 under relevant sections of law has been registered in Police Station Bomai and investigation in the matter has been initiated.

Community members are requested to come forward with any information regarding drug peddlers in their neighbourhood. Persons found indulging in drug peddling will be dealt as per law.

Our consistent actions against drug peddlers should reassure the community members that we are making efforts to keep our society free from the scourge of drug menace as reiterated in our community meetings.(KNS)

LG Directs for Follow Up of B2V Programme

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER

PWD R&B DIVISION VAILLOO

INVITING TENDERS

of R&B/Vailloo /

tendering/ DATED 13.08.2020

For and on behalf of the **Lieutenant Governor of Union Territory J&K** Single cover system
item rate basis from approved and eligible Contractors registered with J&K State Govt., CPWD, Railways and other State/Central Governments for the following work

Name of Work								Major Head of
construction of 1x1.5 m								
supply and filling of GSB on Bontoor Interior roads								

The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of antities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website www.jktenders.gov.in as per schedule of dates given belo

Date of Issue of Tender Notice	
Period of downloading of bidding documents	up to 4.00 Pm
Bid submission	from 11.00 A.M
Bid Submission	
Date & time of opening of Bids	at 11.00 A.M in the Office of the Executive Engineer R&B Division vailloo

Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in shape of Treasury Receipt/
Executive Engineer R&B Division vailloo (tender inviting authority)
 Earnest money **Executive Engineer R&**
(tender receiving authority). bids are necessary to decide L

The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site www.jktenders.gov.in conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e mail message on their e mail address.
bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of
Engineer R&B Division vailloo (tender receiving authority).

The bids for the work shall remain **valid for a period of 120 days from the date of opening of Technical bids**

All other terms conditions are as per PWD Form 25 (Double agreement Form)

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER

2492429 Fax: 0194
tlcdistpdd@gmail.com

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Executive Engineer, TL Bemina Srinagar on behalf of the Governor of Jammu & Kashmir
(In Two Cover System) valid for 180 days from reputed, experienced and financially sound Electrical Contractors and Executors fulfilling the eligibility criteria specified in the standard bidding documents for the work detailed below. E Tenders need to be accompanied by earnest money deposit (EMD) in the shape of DD/CDR/BG from any Nationalized/ Scheduled Bank equivalent to of the advertised cost pledged to Executive Engineer, TL I Bemina Srinagar,

The complete bidding process is online. However, hardcopies consisting of Tender Fee & EMD (original instruments) in cover I and Techno Commercial bid (as per SBD) in cover II has to be submitted only by the Lowest Bidder in the office of Executive Engineer, TL a Srinagar, on the day which will be communicated to lowest bidder. Financial bids must be submitted online only as per prescribed format.

The Standard Bidding Document is available at website <http://jktenders.gov.in>

	Scope of work				
Supply, installation, testing and commissioning of following items at 220 / 132 / 33 kV, 160 MVA Grid					
	Cells of 2 Volt each)				
	AC Hot and Cold (2 Ton, minimum				
	LED lights (15 Watt)				
	LED fittings for High Mast (250				
	Multi meter / clamp meter				
	Locker Big Size				
	Grinder / Cutter				

he information regarding schedule of downloading of the tender document seeking of clarification and submission dates thereof is as per the table below:

CRITICAL DATES


Downloading of bidding documents	
Downloading of bidding documents	
Bid submission date& time(Submission of e tender fee, EMD and other supporting documents in PDF	
Bid submission date & time(Submission of e tender fee, EMD and other supporting documents in PDF	
Bid opening date and time.	
opening of Techno	Office of the Executive Engineer. I, Bemina, Srinagar
Bid document (to be submitted in the form of e challan or treasury challan / receipt)	
Amount of Earnest Money Deposit (2% of Advt	

- Only the bidders possessing the qualifying criteria as mentioned in the SBD should participate in the bidding process.
- Clarifications can also be sought from the office of the under signed on E
tlcdistpdd@gmail.com
- Before participating in the bids, the bidder shall acquaint himself with the site of work and local
- The department reserves the right to reject any or all the bids without assigning any reason thereof.

Executive Engineer
I, BeminaSgr.

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM KASHMIR


NOTICE



Where a application for transfer of ownership has been recieved from one, Shri : Fayaz Ahmad Wani S/o: Lt. Ghulam Rasool Wani R/o: Nasrullaora Budgam (Transferor) of LMV Grand i 10. Vehicle bearing registration number JK04C - 5877. Chasis number 109203 Engine no. 281574 Model 2014, in favour of Shri. Dr. Mohammad Saleem S/o. Mohammad Yaqoob Dar R/o Kursoo Rajbagh Srinagar (Transferee) as well as HPA cancellation with M/S J & K Bank B/U Budgam is also required.

Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any to the proposed transfer of ownership shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport officer ARTO Budgam within a period of 12 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper .

No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.1266
Dated 17/08/2020.



Assistant Regional Transport officer
Budgam Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT REGIONAL TRANSPORT OFFICER BUDGAM KASHMIR

NOTICE



Whereas an application has been received from one, Shri : Mohammad Sultan S/o: Gulam Rasool Bhat R/o: Wadwan Jagir Budgam owner of vehicle bearing Registration No: JK04E-8188 for cancellation of hire purchase agreement with M/S J&K Bank B/U Narbal

Now therefore it is notified for the information of the general public that objections if any to the proposed cancellation of hire purchase Agreement shall be filed in writing in the office of the Assistant Regional Transport office ARTO Budgam within a period of 12 days from the date of publication of this notice in the daily newspaper .

No. ARTO/ BUDGAM.1265
Dated 17-08-2020


Assistant Regional Transport officer
Budgam Kashmir

 MCB

DIAL-EMMA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRAFFIC POLICE : 9149993745, 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	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259 • ANANTNAG: 01932-228243 • BARAMULLA: 0194-1020209 • BUBHERA: 01932-228243 • PAMPORE: 01933-294132 • PATTAN: 01954-293507 • QAZIGUND: 01951-296153
HIGHWAY STATUS	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sgr-Jammu highway - (Open) • Mughal Road - (Open) • Srinagar- Leh- (Open)

- 1769 - A lightning strike on the Bastion of San Nazaro in Brescia, Italy, ignites 90 tonnes of gunpowder, killing 3,000 people
- 1864 - Battle of Petersburg: Battle of Weldon Railroad day 1 of a 3 day battle
- 1868 - French Astronomer Pierre Janssen discovers helium in solar spectrum during eclipse
- 1914 - French troops under general Dubail occupy Sarrebourg
- 1924 - France begins withdrawing troops from the Ruhr
- 1925 - Belgium & US sign treaty about war debts
- 1940 - Battle of Britain: The air battle known as "The Hardest Day" occurs; Luftwaffe lose approximately 69 aircraft and the RAF lose 68 in one of the largest ever air battles
- 1945 - Sukarno elected 1st President of Indonesia by the Preparatory Committee for Indonesian Independence (PPKI)
- 1964 - Charles Helu elected president of Lebanon
- 1964 - South Africa banned from Olympic Games because of apartheid policies
- 1964 - USSR launch 3 Kosmos satellites
- 1971 - New Zealand Prime Minister Keith Holyoake announces in Parliament that New Zealand's combat force would be withdrawn from Vietnam before the end of the year, coinciding with a similar announcement by the Australian government
- 1976 - USSR's Luna 24 soft-lands on Moon
- 1979 - Iran's Ayatollah Khomeini demands Saint War against Kurds
- 1979 - USSR performs nuclear test at Eastern Kazakh/Semipalatinsk USSR
- 1985 - Suisse Launch (Halley's Comet Flyby)
- 2008 - President Of Pakistan Pervez Musharaf resigned due to pressure from opposition.
- 2013 - 6 people are killed by a bomb blast on a bus in West Bengal, India
- 2016 - Jamaica's Usain Bolt wins the gold medal in the men's 200m for the 3rd successive Summer Olympics, recording a time of 19.78 in Rio de Janeiro

KASHMIR OBSERVER

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4G Hope

After more than a year, high-speed mobile internet services were restored on a trial basis in Udhampur and Ganderbal districts of Jammu and Kashmir on Sunday night. The 4G internet, as it is called, will remain in force till September 8, unless modified earlier, in both the districts - one each in Jammu and Kashmir divisions.

The move has followed after the centre informed the Supreme Court that a special committee looking into the matter was considering permitting the facility in two of the 20 districts of the erstwhile state. This is a welcome decision and the people will hope that this trial run leads to restoration of the high speed mobile internet across the union territory.

A plea before the Supreme Court was filed by a not-for-profit organization Foundation for Media Professionals that argued the lack of 4G internet was causing difficulties for the general public during the Covid-19 outbreak. The government contended the plea was misconceived as all information related to Covid-19 could be accessed on fixed line internet not barred by speed restrictions. Importantly, the government said the decision as to whether a controlled access to internet is still warranted depends on the ground situation.

The government argument is fundamentally flawed, as the ground situation in the Valley has remained calm over the past year. So, no matter what the government says, its security argument to keep 4G internet suspended isn't convincing enough. Truth is the Valley has not witnessed a protest or a stone-throwing incident in a long time. So, to say that 4G will pose threat to security doesn't hold water. The government, therefore, needs to rethink the internet ban in its entirety. Six months ban on the service and ever since a severely curbed mobile internet is the longest denial of what the apex court has termed as a fundamental right.

Also, the government also needs to give people a free access to internet as part of the measures to fight ongoing health emergency. While on the one hand, the government has intermittently locked the region down so that Covid-19 doesn't spread, it is restricting what should have been its main tool to spread awareness. More than preventive measures, it is how much people are informed about the disease that will help the government to control the disease. One can also expect that from hereon the government finds no excuse to deny the high-speed internet just because a few people choose to 'misuse' the service. This would be tantamount to inflicting a collective punishment for the alleged sin of a few. More so, when the government has the means to identify these few.

OTHER OPINION

Guilty

The conviction of lawyer and activist Prashant Bhushan for criminal contempt for two tweets criticising the chief justice and the court is a sobering moment, a day before the country celebrates its freedom. For all the lengthy reasoning in Friday's 108-page order, for all its conclusion that in holding the tweets as "false, malicious and scandalous", it was acting "not to vindicate the dignity and honour of the individual judge" but to uphold the "majesty of the law and of the administration of justice", the order can, and will, be read as the Supreme Court showing a thin skin and wielding the offence of contempt to constrict the fundamental freedom of expression. The court also sends a chilling message that criticism could carry a high cost by leaving an impression of heavy-handed use of a blunt instrument against an individual citizen. A citizen who has a record of standing up and showing the mirror. Clearly, the SC has not heeded, as it has done earlier, its duty to be magnanimous, and to display the higher tradition of the higher courts — of "majestic liberalism".

The judiciary is the central pillar of the edifice of a constitutional democracy. It is the protector of the fundamental rights of the citizen and also the institution that keeps other institutions within constitutional bounds. Care must be taken, certainly, to ensure that public faith and trust in it is not weakened or eroded. But the safeguarding of that faith and trust cannot be done by coercion, or by falling back on an antiquated law that demands a kind of deference to a form of authority that is out of step with the temper of the times. A law, moreover, that is all too vulnerable to being seen as self-serving — enforced by judges, targeting offensive remarks about themselves. The Contempt of Courts Act, 1971, does not belong in a country celebrating its 74th Independence Day. Even as the court's power of contempt flows from Article 129 of the Constitution, it needs to be reconciled with the constitutional values of free and fair criticism. And that balancing, that harmonisation, has to be done by the court, keeping in mind the nature of the new public square where hyperbole, exaggeration, even the cheap shot, may need protection for the truth to emerge.

Whatever the sentence handed to Bhushan later this month, the court has done a real injury to its own standing as the balancing and harmonising institution. This self-goal is compounded by the fact that it has acted against Bhushan when it is seen to turn a deaf ear and an unhurried eye to several important cases — electoral bonds and the constitutionality of Article 370, to take just two — and when processes of justice, like all else, have been slowed down by COVID-19. It must be hoped that a court which has also shown a great capacity to self-correct will undo in the future the hurt it has caused to itself. Its shoulders have always been broad. They need to widen, not shrink, to carry the weight of a nation's expectations — especially when the critical voice becomes harder to hear.

Indian Express

Let the Women Inside Mohalla Mosques in Kashmir



Ahymon Ayoub

Humankind has always strived for ways to connect with the Sacred and attain spiritual fulfilment. However, in Islamic tradition, the collective aspect of such pursuit is particularly reiterated and hence the obligation of offering prayers in the mosques. Like other social institutions, the institution of mosque underwent various changes over the past centuries with the onslaught of modernity and other entailing processes that restructured our social systems and authentic ways of being.

The Arabic word for mosque is Jami, etymologically derived from Jam'a which means 'to bring together'. As such, mosques used to function as multidimensional institutions that would undertake educational, social and charitable work thus actualising Islamic values. Additionally, holding religious meetings and transmitting religious knowledge constituted some of the myriad functions of mosques.

Having equal access to the mosque, Muslim women were active and equal participants in carrying forth this social project of Islam centred around the mosque. Apart from participating immensely in the transmission of religious knowledge, such gatherings eventually entailed in the establishment of Waqf institutions that catered to the needs of economically challenged sections of the society. In fact, it was primarily due to the endeavours of these active Muslim women in the mosques that left behind the great legacy of Awqaf, a tradition which survives even today.

Traversing the current Muslim landscapes, women in most of the countries of Middle East have easy access to the mosque spaces. In fact one can find separate sections for women in the mosques not only around the city-centres but also in picnic spots, shopping malls, and the like. Turkey, which straddles both Asian and European cultures sets an example of inclusivity in this case. Mosques there are not only open to women but also house long robes, scarves, full-sleeved cardigans for the women whose dress-code doesn't comply with the religious regulations which they don before offering prayers. Masjid Al- Aqsa in Jerusalem, which is one of the most revered holy sites for Muslim world also has such arrangements in place.

Zooming in to South-East Asia and then to Kashmir, the picture is flipped altogether. Although spirituality and religious rigor have chiselled out the chequered history of the region with bearings of Central-Asian culture on socio-religious landscape; absence of women from mosques makes it a very intriguing case. Neither elder generations of women have met this reality any differently, nor does Shiite Islam offer any exception in this regard which, although largely tracing its roots to present-day Iran, doesn't seem to square on this front.

Recently, some religious movements in the sub-continent made significant developments in this regard with the consequences visible in the valley too. Yet, the project has fallen short of attaining a sustainable character and finding acceptance in the larger society. Some mosques like Jamia Masjid in Nowhatta, Aali (Ali) Masjid in Eid-gah and others in city-centres and towns do have well-maintained arrangements for women but they usually serve the purpose best on religious occasions like Eid, Jumma-tul-Vida, Meelad and the like. Unforeseen circumstances such as we are facing currently and harsh weather conditions, a typical characteristic of the valley often render grand mosques dysfunctional both for women and men. This makes the case even stronger for localised mosques which apart from overcoming such bottlenecks can adjust to local dynamics and needs.



Women pray at Khanqahi Maula on the Urs of Sufi saint Shah Hamadan

Apart from participating immensely in the transmission of religious knowledge, such gatherings eventually entailed the establishment of Waqf institutions that catered to the needs of economically challenged sections of the society. In fact, it was primarily due to the endeavours of these active Muslim women in the mosques that left behind the great legacy of Awqaf, a tradition which survives even today.

Centralised grand mosques as well as shrines are frequented by Muslim Women in large numbers but the effect doesn't seem to serve the foundational essence of localised mosques. In fact, shrines and mosques are often perceived interchangeably by women in Kashmir because the meaning of mosques does not extend beyond prayers for them. For men, on the other hand, mosques are more than just places to pray. Mosques determine the spirit of religious practice and guide the local temperament here. Absence of women from the ecosystem of local mosques is bound to alienate them. Women's absence from mosques also runs the risk of religion being fixated on men's issues as well as men's world view.

Educational institutions including countless other sectors seem to offer no alternate example let alone the commercial and business establishments. Oftentimes, the explanation offered in this connection is that women have the option of offering prayers at home. Even then, keeping them from the wholesome effervescent experience provided by congregational gatherings in a space severed from the mundane is questionable. Having penetrated the public sphere, women's absence from the prime centres of spiritual upliftment becomes appalling in present times. More so, because we are ensnared by the secular and individualistic frameworks which doubly necessitate the connection with Divine.

To compensate for the lack of such spaces, as reiterated before, some women often retire to local shrines for spiritual reprieve which have sections demarcated for women. Yet, the issue remains far from resolved. Since, in Islam, prayers are a daily obligation upon a believer and mosque as a physical space offers a scintillating retreat from dreary chores. This spiritual retreat must be accessible to

all and is an equal need for all genders.

The task to reclaim mosque spaces for women may be arduous, yet there is no dearth of examples to take leads from. Noteworthy among these movements is Da'wa or "Piety Movement" started by Egyptian women in the 1970s to gain access to the mosques. Drawing their inspiration from Islamic sacred texts, they not only pitched for reclaiming the mosques, but also strove to make them the centres for transformation of the socio-cultural landscape of Egyptian society. Further, "Kadinlar Camillerde" i.e "Women in the Mosques", an initiative run by Turkish women in Fatih mosque of Istanbul to discuss mosque-related and other issues also explains the potential such projects carry.

Women's access to local mosques can also facilitate the formation of a parallel mosque committee aside the general one. Apart from fostering religious sisterhood and facilitating activism, such committees can encourage focused understanding of women's issues at a miniature level and pave way for their resolution. These indigenous methods of empowering women have the potential of becoming grounded resources for the future generations to build their imaginations upon. Therefore, to reclaim back the mosque spaces for women and reimagining it as an overarching socio-religious institution geared toward positive social transformation is therefore the call of our times.

Ahymon Ayoub has completed her Masters in Sociology from Kashmir University. She is also a freelance researcher interested in topics related to Islam and Women.



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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Covid-19 and the role of nurses

Covid -19 is an communicable infectious disease that arose in Wuhan china in late 2019 and a new virus termed novel coronavirus was found to be the responsible for this disease. Novel coronavirus belongs to a group of positive sense single stranded RNA, coronaviruses of Order Nidovirales. The common symptoms of this disease are fever, cough and shortness of breathe. Although in majority of cases it turns out to be mild but in some patients with medical histories, it may turn out to be lethal. The disease is said to spread via droplet mode of infection in which droplets of an infected patient containing virus, transmit the virus when contacted.

In the current outbreak of Covid -19 pandemic everyone's life is at stake with more than 3 million confirmed cases and about more than 0.2 million deaths. The profession that are more vulnerable to this disease are healthcare professionals because they have to treat these Covid -19 affected patients. As rightly said by Martin H. Fischer for healthcare workers "Our profession is the only one which works unceasingly to annihilate itself". Healthcare professionals need

to work tirelessly in this gruesome and melancholic situation. Everyone's hopes are bound to these workers and everyone looks up to them in case of any health problem. At present our healthcare workers are effortlessly working to defeat this pandemic without really caring for themselves. They are the only thing standing between us and Covid-19. They annihilate themselves just to protect us despite lacking PPEs and other protection kits. They are risking their lives to save common masses. This pandemic will be over soon but will leave a mark on the lives of these healthcare workers and even some might not live to see it vanishing. Until a vaccine is developed by scientists. These doctors and frontline health workers are the souls most at risk on the planet Earth. If a single healthcare worker is infected with Covid- 19, they will transmit it to a number of persons creating a terrible situation and will further add up the burden on other workers. So it is a must that these workers should be provided with every single thing they need to protect themselves.

Nursing profession is the noblest profession and most trusted profession in healthcare system and was lightened up by Florence Night-

ingale who died while serving the mankind. Nurses play an important role both locally and globally. They are on the front line fighting against this infection and caring for the patients. Since they spend more time with patients than doctors do, they are able to check and confirm whether a particular strategy against this infection is useful or should be discarded. The World Health Organisation (WHO) has named year 2020 as the year of nurses and midwives. The impact of the pandemic is that the nursing profession is gaining respect all over the world which were otherwise seen as downtrodden healthcare workers. This pandemic has changed the view of people about nursing and now the world has got to know that nursing is not only bedside caretaking or just assisting a doctor but it is an important part of the healthcare system with its own code of ethics, set of standards. As Dag Hammarsk told about nurses "Constant attention by a good nurse may be just as important as a major operation by a surgeon."

This pandemic will be over soon but we must learn some lessons from it, as to where we need to improve and how can we prefect our prepara-

tions to fight a pandemic. One of the important things is availability of Drugs and personal protection kits and secondly we need to educate our nurses properly during their training. We need to organise workshops for common masses in general and nurses in particular to educate them about the disease and how to prevent yourself from disease. We need to have hands on training programs for nurse to enhance their efficiency. We need to introduce emergency tactics subject in the curriculum of the courses like B.Sc nursing and M.Sc Nursing. We need to train our nurses to use emergency equipment's and have a background information about those equipments. Moreover the higher officials at administration level must be quick to respond to the alarms raised by nurses and act accordingly.

There are some other ways to enhance the efficiency and stability of our healthcare workers like by believing in the capabilities of nurses and trusting their instinct. All the achievements of a nurse need to be appreciated and awarded.

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Kamala Harris: What Do We know About Her Views on Kashmir?

Sanika Athavale

WHEN Democratic Party’s presidential nominee Joe Biden named California Senator Kamala Harris as his running mate this week a wave of excitement swept through India. Her heritage gave the Indian public cause to celebrate.

Harris, a child of immigrant parents from Jamaica and India, is the first Asian-American and Black woman to appear on a major party’s presidential ticket.

Kamala’s mother Shyamala Gopalan hailed from the Tamil Nadu state and her father is from Jamaica. Her nomination for the second most important position in the United States hierarchy stirred social media in India. From well-known business tycoons to celebrities congratulated and celebrated Harris on Twitter.

But for policymakers Kamala’s stand on Kashmir remains a cause of worry. Observers caution that despite her heritage, Harris has remained a tough critic of India’s domestic policies under Prime Minister Narendra Modi. She has been vocal on most contentious issue in India, Kashmir. But what exactly are her views on Kashmir. Let’s find out.

‘We’ve to remind the Kashmiris that they’re not alone in the world’

These resounding words of Kamala Harris, that have been widely quoted after she was chosen by Joe Biden to be the Democratic Party’s vice-presidential candidate, will be put through scrutiny as the election-action plays out in the United States of America later this year.

Her statement was quick to become popular, when she spoke at an event in Texas during October 2019 – two months after the abrogation of Article 370.

At that time, Harris was aspiring to be a participant in the US presidential race when she had flagged her concern for the human rights abuses in the restive region.

“We’ve to remind the Kashmiris that they are not alone in the world. We are keeping a track on the situation. There is a need to intervene if the situation demands,” said the woman who acknowledges the role of her Indian heritage in her African-American upbringing.

She had spoken while responding to a question about the human rights abuses in Kashmir, including curfews and communication blackouts following the revocation of Article 370.

At the same event, Harris had also verbally poked Donald Trump for failing to have a full-time US ambassador in Pakistan during the inceptive period of Narendra Modi’s ‘Naya Kashmir’.

“If the US wants to take any effective step on the Kashmir issue,” she had reportedly said, “then there is a need for deployment of an American ambassador in the region (Pakistan).”

Mid-2019, when she was a presidential hopeful, Harris had uncovered the skeletons in the closet of former vice-president, Joe Biden, during her par-



ticipation in the Democratic Party presidential debate. These debates take place among candidates in the campaign for the Democratic Party’s nomination for the President of the United States.

In the course of the event, she had torn into the remarks Biden had made as a Senator representing Delaware in the 70s, on issues like school desegregation and busing.

By doing so, she gained a reputation for shooting grilling arguments during political debates and it helped her jump ahead of other Democratic candidates. Her campaign then enjoyed a powered climb in fundraising but shortly after the high, she had to suspend it in December 2019 owing to a crunch in finances.

Interestingly, this March, she endorsed Biden as the Democratic Party’s candidate to take on President Donald Trump – who has been on the receiving end of her sharp criticism for his anti-immigrant laws.

As a policy-maker and public representative, Harris has always pushed for stronger ties between India and the US.

In 2017, she tweeted a ‘welcome message’ for Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi when he visited the US. “I welcome Indian PM @NarendraModi to the United States and reaffirm the unbreakable bonds between our two nations.”

But she has been critical of the situation that manifested in Kashmir after the abrogation of Article 370 in 2019. In an effort to practice what she was preaching, Harris had boycotted the glamorous ‘Howdy Modi’ event in Texas.

She had also stood by the Indian-American Congresswoman, Pramila Jayapal, who had introduced a bill in the first week of December 2019, in the US House of Representatives (akin to the

Lok Sabha), urging India to lift the communication clampdown, release political detainees, and “preserve religious freedom for all residents” in Jammu and Kashmir.

Her support for Jayapal, who happens to be the first US Congresswoman of Indian origin, was especially highlighted when Indian External Affairs Minister Jaishankar had refused to attend a diplomatic meeting in the US over her participation.

“It’s wrong for any foreign government to tell the Congress what members are allowed in meetings on Capitol Hill,” Harris had said.

Even Senator Elizabeth Warren had come out in support of Jayapal at that time. “The US and India have an important partnership – but our partnership can only succeed if it is rooted in honest dialogue and shared respect for religious pluralism, democracy, and human rights,” she had tweeted.

Although many Congress and Senate members have cried foul over New Delhi’s actions in Kashmir since the clampdown last year, Harris’s comments were placed in the spotlight because of her Indian roots.

Harris and her back story

In her 2019 memoir, The Truths We Hold, Kamala Harris has briefed her readers about her origin story and her degree of attachment to it. After Biden’s announcement on August 12, Harris’s sister, Maya tweeted: “You can’t know who @KamalaHarris is without knowing who our mother was”.

Shyamala Harris, the woman who brought up the first person of Indian descent to be nominated by a major political party for a national office in the United States of America, was a graduate from Delhi University. Referring to her as a ‘proud, brown woman with a heavy accent’, Kamala Harris

credits her Tamilian mother, who raised her single-handedly since she was seven years old, for deeply influencing her life, especially her political career.

Born in 1938, in the Madras Province of British India, Harris’s mother was expected to return to get married after she left for the US to pursue a career in cancer research – nutrition and endocrinology to be precise. But, she met and married Donald Harris – an economics professor from Stanford University of Jamaican origin.

Theirs was a partnership of seven years that blossomed in the University of California, Berkeley, during the civil rights movement of the 1960s. As an infant and the firstborn daughter of immigrant academics, Kamala Harris was pushed in her stroller with the protesting crowd as her parents hosted weekly study groups. This was a phase in her mother’s life that contributed much to her own political ideology.

Shyamala Harris has been termed, in the words of her daughter, a woman “born with a sense of justice imprinted on her soul.” Interestingly, the concepts of human rights and activism seem to be genetically passed on in the household as Harris’s maternal grandparents were freedom fighters who resisted British colonists in India and educated rural women about the much-ta-boomed topic of contraception.

Prosecutor to Appeaser?

However, like any other politician in business, Kamala Harris also comes with a record of contradictions. Her tenure in California as a prosecutor, district attorney, and state attorney general before representing the state as a Senator in 2017, has led her critics to dub her not as a progressive reformer but as a living memory of the ‘tough on crime’ era of the 1990s and 2000s.

As per the New York Times, soon after her selection as Joe Biden’s running mate was announced, Trump and his top campaigners tried to box her as a politician who will “try to bury her record as a prosecutor” and someone who will appease “anti-police extremists.”

There are fears that her previous position as a prosecutor for the state will come to haunt her because she was a defender of the policies that swelled prison populations. But as progressive activists are calling to make the criminal justice system less punitive and racist, Harris has argued that her views match those of the new movement.

Speculations back home swing between regarding Kamala Harris as an important ally to Kashmir given her own statements and actions since the historic abrogation, or looking at her as a metaphorical Judas, who might, owing to her own professional background, find merit in the government of India’s arguments of ‘justice and peace’ for defending its military actions on the ground.

Thus, whether Kamala Harris’s assertions on Kashmir will materialise into substantial foreign policies will depend on the success of Joe Biden’s presidential campaign and the issues his office aligns itself with later.

It Is Time To Check Your Child’s Mental Health

Syed Tajamul Hussain

Child is one of the most vulnerable member of society and is often seen with a behaviour that looks odd and mysterious. Everyone, especially parents, find it hard to explain the behaviours of children which are characterised by mood swings, emotional breakdowns, tantrums, hyper activity or solitary behaviour. All these behavioural setups are categorised under the rubric of the mental health of children which a layman might overlook.

For child psychology experts, the capacity to achieve and maintain optimal psychological functioning and wellbeing is referred to as a healthy state of child’s mental health. “How can such health be maintained?” and “What determines mental or behavioural disorders in the blooming buds?” are some of the crucial and curious questions often asked by parents.

Like physical health, a child also needs a sound mental atmosphere to stay fit and energetic in life. Children who are mentally healthy, live a good quality of life and can function well at home, in school and in their communities. It is only by virtue of good mental health that children can develop the resilience to cope with whatever life throws at them and can grow into well-rounded healthy adults.

On the other hand, within a disturbing and unhealthy home atmosphere, the script of the story is altogether different and detrimental. A child is prone to develop mental disorders in an uncondusive, disturbed and violent environment at home, school or in the society in general. Mental health problems affect 1 in 10 children and young people.

These mental health issues cause serious changes in the way children typically learn, behave or handle their emotions. Many children have fears and worries and may feel hopeless and dejected from time to time. Having been mentally disturbed, children become susceptible to disruptive behaviours and might often sink in thoughts. They may develop extreme forms of fear and sadness which may culminate into anxiety issues or even depression. These issues, if unaddressed, have the potential to cause personality disorders in children as well.

Being occasionally sad is a part of every child’s life but what should bell an alarm is if such moods are frequent. To identify whether a child has a sound or disturbed mental system is not easy. One needs to read the behaviour of children very closely, in order



“A child who grows in a society that is marred by political violence or inequalities can develop serious mental health issues especially if they’re at the receiving end of it. PTSD is an unfortunate condition that a child develops under these circumstances.”

to deduce the situation and rush to seek mental health assistance, if need be.

Some common traits shown by a child who may be struggling mentally are, being unusually unhappy and irritable. If they’re saying negative things about themselves, it can also indicate some issues. Even excessive daydreaming should be monitored carefully to make the right call about one’s child’s mental health.

In addition to this, parents have to ensure that children are not exposed to factors that affect their mental health. Domestic Violence has been seen as the greatest cause that can impede normal life of children thereby making them prone to mental health issues. Children

who witness domestic violence or are victims of abuse themselves are more vulnerable. They are also at a greater risk of being violent in their future relationship themselves; thereby continuing the cycle of trauma.

Another factor that affects a child’s mental health is negligence. Neglecting a child may have negative effects on a child. Children who are neglected can struggle with issues of low self-esteem which could later lead to high risk behaviours. When a child is not getting love and attention, the pessimistic world surrounds the victim like a barbed wires.

Additionally, a child is very tempted to be a part of social life and learns many virtues and loopholes from

it. So, the nature of society in which a child breathes is also a factor that leaves a mark on their mental hygiene. A child who grows in a society that is marred by political violence or inequalities can develop serious mental health issues especially if they’re at the receiving end of it. PTSD is an unfortunate condition that a child develops under these circumstances.

Yet another factor that has affected everyone especially children is over reliance on technology. Although technology has added spices of comfort and innovation in our lives but mishandling it will bring somewhat undesirable results which might be hard to control. Violent online games like PUBG have had a catastrophic impact on children’s mental health. Unhealthy use of social media and pornographic content will also seriously tamper with their social skills and their ideas of healthy relationships.

Many of our children might already have shown many of these behavioural patterns. However, the good news is that mental disorders of children are treatable. Some promising ways include a healthy parenting process. Parenting is the process that prepares a child for independence. For very young children, involving parents in treatment is the key. According to the “Journal of Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology”, the medicine to treat disruptive behavioural problems in children is the parent behaviour therapy.

Additionally, children need care and appreciation. This will make them feel loved, trusted, understood, valued and safe.

Yet another factor to control is the content that kids consume. Give them access to safe content only. Be aware about your child’s media use. This must include monitoring content as well as the screen time. One must also keep a keen watch on who they might be interacting with on social media and online games.

Now, more than ever, because of prolonged lockdowns and conflict, children need our time and attention. Our main focus during the pandemic must also be mental health. Children by virtue of being inexperienced, need to be constantly guided towards a healthy outlook. This makes it extremely important to have an “all hands on deck” approach as far as their mental health is concerned.

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Young children would rather choose to explore choices than opt for rewards: Study

Agencies

In comparison to elderly people, young children who are around the age of 4-5 are inclined in exploring more choices than keep an eye for an immediate reward, according to a new study.

"Exploration seems to be a major driving force during early childhood - even outweighing the importance of immediate rewards. We believe it is because young children need to explore to help them understand how the world works," said Vladimir Sloutsky, co-author of the study and professor of psychology at Ohio State University.

Researchers found that when adults and 4 to 5-year-old children played a game where certain choices earned them rewards, both adults and children quickly learned what choices would give them the biggest returns. But while adults then used that knowledge to maximize their prizes, children continued exploring the other options, just to see if their value may have changed.

And despite what adults may think, kids' search for new discoveries is anything but random. Results showed children approached exploration systematically, to make sure they didn't miss anything.

Sloutsky conducted the study with Nathaniel Blanco, a postdoctoral researcher in psychology at Ohio State. Their results were published online recently in the journal *Developmental Science*. The researchers conducted two studies. One study involved 32 4-year-olds and 34 adults.

On a computer screen, participants were shown four alien creatures. When participants clicked on each creature, they were given a set number of virtual candies. One creature was clearly the best, giving 10 candies, while the others gave 1, 2, and 3 candies, respectively. Those amounts never



changed for each creature over the course of the experiment.

The goal was to earn as much candy as possible over 100 trials. (The children could turn their virtual candies into real stickers at the end of the experiment.) As expected, the adults learned quickly which creature gave the most candies and selected that creature 86 percent of the time. But children selected the highest-

reward creature only 43 percent of the time.

And it wasn't because the children didn't realize which choice would reap them the largest reward. In a memory test after the study, 20 of 22 children correctly identified which creature delivered the most candy.

"The children were not motivated by achieving the maximum reward to the extent that adults were. Instead, children

seemed primarily motivated by the information gained through exploring," Blanco said.

But what was interesting was that the children didn't just click randomly on the creatures, Sloutsky said. When they didn't click on the option with the highest reward, they were most likely to go through the other choices systematically, to ensure they never went too long without testing each individ-

ual choice.

In a second study, the game was similar but the value of three of the four choices was visible - only one was hidden. The option that was hidden was randomly determined in each trial, so it changed nearly every time. But the values of all four choices never changed, even when it was the hidden one.

Like in the first experiment, the 37 adults chose the best option on almost every trial, 94 percent of the time. That was much more than the 36 4- and 5-year-old children, who selected the highest-value option only 40 percent of the time. When the hidden option was the highest-value option, adults chose it 84 percent of the time, but otherwise, they almost never selected it (2 percent of the time). Children chose the hidden option about 40 percent of the time - and it didn't matter if it was the highest value one or not.

"The majority of the children were attracted to the uncertainty of the hidden option. They wanted to explore that choice," Sloutsky said.

However, there were some individual differences in children, he noted. A few children, for example, acted much like adults and nearly always chose the highest-value option. In the second experiment, a few children almost always avoided the hidden option.

These variations may have to do with different levels of cognitive maturation in children, he said. But it appears that all children go through a phase where systematic exploration is one of their main goals.

"Even though we knew that children like to run around and investigate things, we're now learning that there is a lot of regularity to their behavior," Sloutsky said.

While Blanco added: "Children's seemingly erratic behavior at this age appears to be largely molded by a drive to stockpile information."

Study Says Feelings Of Jealousy Can Be Tool To Strengthen Friendships

Agencies

Feelings of jealousy can be a useful tool in maintaining friendships, according to a new study from Arizona State University, Oklahoma State University.

The jealous feelings were related to the value of the friendship and also motivated behaviours that maintain friendships. The work was published online in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* on August 11.

"Friends aren't just fun. They are an important resource, especially in our current situation with ongoing COVID-19 outbreaks. Friends give support during the conflict, buffer against loneliness, and can even provide life-sustaining resources when we need them,"



said Jaimie Arona Krems, who earned her doctorate at Arizona State University and is now an assistant professor of psychology at Oklahoma State University.

"We wanted to understand how we keep friendships, and we found feelings of jealousy can act as a tool for maintaining friendships," said Krems.

Not all threats to friendships evoked jealousy. If a best friend moved away, people felt sadness and anger more than jealousy. But when friendships were threatened by another person - such as a new romantic partner or new friend at work - jealousy was the dominant feeling.

The intensity of jealous feelings varied by how likely the third-party threat was to replace someone in the friendship. A best friend gaining a romantic partner elicited less jealous feelings than them gaining a potential new friend.

"The third-party threats to friendship were not just related to a best friend spending time away from us: It mattered whether the person they were spending time with could replace us as a friend. We found people felt less jealous about their best friend spending the same amount of time with a new romantic partner than a new acquaintance, which means what makes us most jealous of is the possibility that we might be replaced," said Douglas Kenrick, who is a President's Professor of psychology at ASU and author on the paper.

Feelings of jealousy over being replaced were associated with behaviours that could overcome the third-party threats, like trying to monopolize a best friend's time and manipulate their emotions.

"Together, these behaviours are called 'friend guarding', and they occur across cultures and also in non-human animals. Female wild horses are known to bite and kick other female horses," said Keelah Williams, assistant professor of psychology at Hamilton College who earned her doctorate and law degree at ASU.

Not all friend guarding behaviours focus on trying to control a best friend; jealousy also led people to commit to being a better friend.

"Getting jealous can sometimes be a signal that friendship is threatened, and this signal can help us jump into action to invest in a friendship that we might have been neglecting," said Athena Aktipis, assistant professor of psychology at ASU and author on the paper.

Gargling With Mouthwashes Might Lower Spread Of COVID-19, Scientists Say

Press Trust of India

The novel coronavirus can be inactivated using commercially available mouthwashes, according to a study which says gargling with these products may reduce the quantities of viral particles in the mouth and throat, and possibly reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission over the short term.

However, the study published in the *Journal of Infectious Diseases*, cautions that mouthwashes are not suitable for treating COVID-19 infections or protecting oneself against catching the novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2.

According to the researchers, including those from Ruhr University Bochum in Germany, high quantities of the virus particles, or viral load, can be detected in the oral cavity and throat of some COVID-19 patients.

They added that the main route of transmission of the virus likely involves direct contact with respiratory droplets of infected individuals, produced during sneezing, coughing, or talking, and the subsequent contact to nasal, oral or ocular mucosal membranes of healthy individuals.

The researchers believe the study's findings might help reduce the risk of this form of transmission



and potentially help develop protocols for dental treatments.

They said the findings "support the idea that oral rinsing might reduce the viral load of saliva and could thus lower the transmission of SARS-CoV-2." "Our findings clearly advocate the evaluation of selected formulations in a clinical context to systematically evaluate the decontamination and tissue health of the oral cavity in patients and healthcare workers to potentially prevent virus transmission," the scientists wrote in the study.

In the research, they tested eight

types of mouthwash with different ingredients that are available in pharmacies in Germany.

The scientists mixed each mouthwash with virus particles and a substance which was intended to recreate the effect of saliva in the mouth.

They then shook the mixture for 30 seconds to simulate the effect of gargling and tested it in Vero E6 cells, which, according to the researchers, are "particularly receptive" to SARS-CoV-2, to determine the quantities of the virus particles.

In order to assess the efficacy of the mouthwashes, the scientists also

treated the virus suspensions with cell culture medium instead of the mouthwash before adding them to the lab-grown cells. While all of the tested preparations reduced the initial virus count, the study noted that three types of mouthwash reduced it to such an extent that no virus could be detected after an exposure time of 30 seconds.

However, the scientists cautioned that the effect and its duration remain to be confirmed in clinical practice.

According to the researchers, mouthwashes are not suitable for treating COVID-19.

"Gargling with mouthwash cannot inhibit the production of viruses in the cells, but could reduce the viral load in the short term where the greatest potential for infection comes from, namely in the oral cavity and throat. and this could be useful in certain situations, such as at the dentist or during the medical care of Covid-19 patients," explained study co-author Toni Meister from Ruhr University Bochum.

The scientists are examining the possibilities of a clinical study on the efficacy of mouthwashes on SARS-CoV-2 during which the scientists want to test whether the effect can also be detected in patients and how long it lasts.

آہ! سید شاہ صاحب اندرانی میر پورہ شہر گامہ تہا بنی گنڈا انتقال کر گئے

انا لله وانا اليه راجعون

موت ایک اہل حقیقت ہے، اس سے کسی کو انکار نہیں، یہ تکمیل حیات کا دوسرا نام ہے۔ اسی فیصلہ الہی کے تحت مورخہ 16 اگست 2020 بروز اتوار محترم القام سید شاہ صاحب اندرانی داعی اہل کو لبیک کہہ گئے۔ آسمان تیری لہر پر شہنشاہی کرے سبز و نورت اس گھر کی گنہگاری کرے

مرحوم انتہائی طبعی، مفسر ہونے کے ساتھ ساتھ دیندار اور ایماندار بھی تھے۔ قرآن و سنت کے پابند اس پابند شریعت شخصیت کے انداز گفتگو میں متانت اور نرمی کی وجہ سے بھلائے۔ حد متاثر ہوتا تھا۔ مرحوم کی فاتحہ خوانی 19 اگست 2020 بروز بدھواران کے آبائی مقبرہ واقع در سید پورہ، شہر گامہ تہا بنی گنڈا میں منعقد ہوگی اور مرحوم کو خراج عقیدت پیش کیا جائے گا۔

سوگواران:- سید محمد سعید اندرانی، سید فاروق احمد اندرانی، سید عبدالرشید اندرانی، سید شمس الدین اندرانی، سید جواد حسین اندرانی (من جملہ سوگواران کتبہ)

آہ! سید محمد سعید قادری، شالیما رانتقال کر گئے

انا لله وانا اليه راجعون

موت ایک اہل حقیقت ہے، اس سے کسی کو انکار نہیں، یہ تکمیل حیات کا دوسرا نام ہے۔ اسی فیصلہ الہی کے تحت مورخہ 16 اگست 2020 بروز اتوار 9 بجے رات محترم القام سید محمد سعید قادری داعی اہل کو لبیک کہہ گئے۔ مرحوم کو رات کے ذریعہ پہنچے ہوئے دعا کی گئی۔ آسمان تیری لہر پر شہنشاہی کرے سبز و نورت اس گھر کی گنہگاری کرے

مرحوم انتہائی طبعی، مفسر ہونے کے ساتھ ساتھ دیندار اور ایماندار بھی تھے۔ قرآن و سنت کے پابند تھے۔ انداز گفتگو میں متانت اور نرمی کی وجہ سے بھلائے۔ حد متاثر ہوتا تھا۔ مرحوم کی فاتحہ خوانی 20 اگست 2020 بروز بدھواران کے آبائی مقبرہ واقع در شالیما رانتقال کر گئے اور مرحوم کو خراج عقیدت پیش کیا جائے گا۔

سوگواران:- سید غلام چشتی قادری، سید اقبال احمد قادری، سید طارق احمد قادری، سید امتیاز احمد قادری، سید ارشد احمد قادری (من جملہ سوگواران کتبہ)



OFFICE OF THE
EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
JSD (PHE) DIVISION PULWAMA
email : xenhophulwama@gmail.com



از دفتر ایگزیکٹو انجینئر جی شکتی ڈیپارٹمنٹ (پی۔ ایچ۔ ای) ڈویژن پلوامہ

CORRIGENDUM NO. 2

Subject:- ENIT S. No. 20/PHEP of 2020-21

Reference:- This office No. PHEP/1733-44 Dated. 04-08-2020

In light of Government Order No. 752JK(GAD) of 2020 Dated: 10.08.2020, both the works figuring at S. No. 5, 6 & 7 of the above-mentioned E-NIT reserved for Self Help Groups are hereby cancelled.

NO: PHEP/2023-37
Dated:- 17-08-2020

Sd/-
Executive Engineer,
JSD (PHE) Div., Pulwama.

DIPK-4153/20

China grants country's first COVID-19 vaccine patent to CanSino

Agencies

Beijing: China's vaccine specialist CanSino Biologics Inc

published by China's National Intellectual Property Administration saying that the patent was issued on August 11.



has won a patent approval from Beijing for its COVID-19 vaccine candidate Ad5-nCoV, state media reported, citing documents from the country's intellectual property regulator.

It is the first COVID-19 vaccine patent granted by China, state-owned newspaper People's Daily reported on Sunday.

The paper cited documents

Saudi Arabia said this month it plans to begin Phase III clinical trials for the CanSino vaccine. CanSino has said it is also in talks with Russia, Brazil and Chile to launch Phase III trials in those countries.

CanSino's Hong Kong shares rose around 14 per cent in Monday's morning session. Its Shanghai shares rose by 6.6 per cent as of midday.

Coronavirus Deaths In US Cross 1,70,000: Report



Agencies

Washington: he United States surpassed 170,000 coronavirus deaths on Sunday, according to a Reuters tally, as health officials express concerns over COVID-19 complicating the fall flu season.

Deaths rose by 483 on Sunday, with Florida, Texas and Louisiana, leading the rise in fatalities.

The United States has at least 5.4 million confirmed cases in total of the novel coronavirus, the highest in the world and likely an undercount as the country still has not ramped up testing to the recommended levels. Cases are falling in most states except for Hawaii, South Dakota and Illinois.

Public health officials and authorities are concerned about a possible fall resurgence in cases amid the start of the flu season, which will likely exacerbate efforts to treat the coronavirus.

Centers for Disease Control Director Robert Redfield warned the United States may be in for its "worst fall" if the public does not follow health

Public health officials and authorities are concerned about a possible fall resurgence in cases amid the start of the flu season, which will likely exacerbate efforts to treat the coronavirus.

guidelines in an interview with Web MD.

Months into the pandemic, the U.S. economic recovery from the recession triggered by the outbreak is still staggered, with some hot spots slowing their reopenings and others shutting down businesses.

The Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation is anticipating an uptick in COVID-19 cases in the coming months, resulting in around 300,000 total deaths by December, and a nearly 75% increase in hospitalizations.

Worldwide there are at least 21.5 million coronavirus cases and over 765,000 confirmed deaths. The United States remains the global epicenter of the virus, with around a quarter of the cases and deaths.



GCC: Iran's strong reaction to UAE-Israel normalization 'a threat'

Agencies

Abu Dhabi: In a statement on Sunday, the regional grouping's Secretary-General Nayef Falah Mubarak al-Hajraf alleged that the position adopted by various Iranian officials, including President Hassan Rouhani, amounted to a "threat," Sky News Arabia reported.

Such remarks, Hajraf claimed, served to foment instability and insecurity in the Persian Gulf region and ran counter to the standing diplomatic customs.

The United Arab Emirates and Israel announced the deal that laid the groundwork for full normalization of their relations on Thursday.

The agreement was met with uniform condemnation of all Palestinian factions, who called it a stab in the back of the Palestinians and sheer betrayal of their cause.

The Emirati Foreign Ministry, meanwhile, summoned Iran's charge d'affaires in Abu Dhabi in reaction to the Iranian president's

remarks, which it alleged amounted to "interference" in the UAE's internal affairs and an "assault" on its sovereignty, the Emirates' official WAM news agency reported..

The Iranian envoy was served with a "strongly-worded memo" over the "unacceptable" and "inflammatory" remarks, echoing the GCC's allegations that Rouhani's words carried "serious repercussions" for the security and stability of the Persian Gulf region, the agency added, citing the ministry.

Lambasting the move, President Rouhani warned Abu Dhabi about the consequences of allowing the Tel Aviv regime to secure a foothold in the region and wield influence.

He said Emirati rulers had taken a wrong path to think that their security and economic growth would be ensured if they sided with the United States and the Israeli regime, similarly denouncing the deal as a betrayal of the Palestinian cause.

Ali Akbar Velayati, a senior

advisor to Leader of the Islamic Revolution Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei, said normalization between Abu Dhabi and Tel Aviv served to further galvanize regional people against the occupying regime, thus bringing its ultimate disintegration closer.

The GCC official suggested though that by assuming such stances, the Islamic Republic was avoiding a "peaceful" resolution of the existing differences with its fellow Persian Gulf littoral states, and neglecting the principles of good-neighborliness.

Tehran has repeatedly expressed readiness for participation in a dialog aimed at ironing out the differences.

It, however, has cautioned against foreign meddling, including by the US and its allies, asserting that the region's problems have to be sorted out by its own members. Tehran has invited the regional states to join their efforts to ensure security without any foreign interference.

Israel shells besieged Gaza, troops shoot hearing impaired man

Agencies

Jerusalem: The Israeli military has intensified its attacks on the Gaza Strip, with its tanks pounding several positions in the besieged enclave.

"Tanks targeted a number of military observation posts" belonging to the Hamas resistance movement in Gaza early on Monday, the Israeli army claimed in a statement.

The attacks, it said, came in response to incendiary balloons sent from Gaza to the occupied territories on Sunday evening as well as protests along the fence separating the enclave from the occupied territories.

The aggression is the latest in a string of aerial and artillery attacks that hit Gaza in recent days.

The Israeli regime every so often launches strikes against positions in the blockaded enclave, accusing resistance groups there of launching attacks.

Flying fiery kites and balloons has become a new mode of protest by Gazans since March 2018, when the Tel Aviv



regime began a crackdown against anti-occupation demonstrations near the fence separating Gaza from the Israeli-occupied land, killing and injuring many people.

The Palestinian movement Hamas vowed to step up its resistance against the Israeli military after two children were injured during nighttime Israeli strikes on Gaza on Friday.

Israel on Sunday tightened its naval blockade of the Gaza Strip. It also banned fuel from entering the Kerem Shalom

crossing between the southern Gaza Strip and the occupied territories until further notice.

The Gaza Strip has been under an Israeli land, air and sea blockade since June 2007, which has caused a decline in the standard of living as well as unprecedented levels of unemployment and unrelenting poverty.

Israel has launched three major wars against the enclave, killing several thousand Gazans and shattering the impoverished territory's already poor infrastructure.

China welcomes Putin's proposed summit on Iran

Agencies

Beijing: China welcomed Russian President Vladimir Putin's proposed summit of world leaders to avoid "confrontation" over a US attempt to trigger a return of all UN sanctions on Iran.

The US lost a bid on Friday to extend a UN arms embargo on Iran.

Russia and China opposed extending the weapons ban, which is due to expire in October under a 2015 nuclear deal between Iran and world powers. Eleven members abstained, including France, Germany and Britain, while the US and the Dominican Republic were the only two votes in favour.

Speaking in Beijing, Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Zhao Lijian said the failure of the US

US bid to extend Iran arms embargo (2:00)

Zhao added that the US needs to end its unilateral sanctions and adopt a rational attitude, returning to the "correct path" of respecting the Iran nuclear agreement and Security Council decisions.

"As for the Russian proposal for a teleconference summit on the Iran nuclear issue, China expresses its welcome and appreciation," he said. "We are willing to continue to maintain close communication and coordination with all parties concerned to jointly promote a political settlement of the Iranian nuclear issue."

US President Donald Trump said he probably would not participate in any such summit.

China, which has close economic and diplomatic ties with



resolution "again showed that unilateralism has no popular support and hegemonistic behaviour will not succeed".

UN Security Council rejects

Iran, has frequently clashed with the Trump administration over its tough stance against Tehran, becoming another irritant in Sino-US relations.

Google warns Australians could lose free search services

Agencies

Canberra: Google on Monday warned that the Australian government's plans to make digital giants pay for news content threatens users' free services in Australia and could hand users' data to media organisations.

The US-based company's warning, contained in what it called an "Open letter to Australians", comes a week before public consultations close on Australian draft laws that would make both Google and Facebook pay for news siphoned from commercial media companies.

"A proposed law...would force us to provide you with a dramatically worse Google Search and YouTube, could lead to your data being handed over to big news businesses, and would put the free services you use at risk in Australia," Google Australia and New Zealand managing director Mel Silva wrote.

Google owns YouTube, a video-sharing platform.

Both Google and Facebook have condemned the proposed legislation, which was released last month and aims to succeed where other countries have failed in making them compensate media businesses for news content.

Australian competition watchdog Rod Sims, chair of the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission, which drafted the laws, said Google's letter "contains misinformation".

"Google will not be required to charge Australians for the use of its free services such as Google Search and YouTube, unless it chooses to do so. Google will not be required to share any addition-

al user data with Australian news businesses unless it chooses to do so," Sims said in a statement.

Australian Treasurer Josh Frydenberg, the minister responsible for the consumer watchdog, said in a statement that the draft law "remains open for consultation, providing an opportunity for media companies and digital platforms to provide feedback" until August 28.

Swinburne University senior lecturer on media Belinda Barnet described the Google letter as a "cynical exercise" designed to "scare Google users". "I see no merit in any of the arguments,"



she said.

"One of the most ironic arguments is that they're going to have to hand over some data to news organisations — for example which article people have read and how long they may have read it for — and this coming from the world's major privacy violator and certainly the world's largest data aggregator is a bit rich," Barnet added.

Google has been battling the Australian consumer watchdog on two fronts.

Last month, the watchdog launched court action against Google for allegedly misleading account holders about its use of their personal data.

UAE, Israel establish phone service



DUBAI: The UAE and Israeli foreign ministers held their first publicly-acknowledged call on Sunday after the Gulf state opened telephone lines to Israel as part of a normalisation of ties. Israel and the United Arab Emirates on Thursday announced their US-sponsored rapprochement, which promised a boom in bilateral trade but angered Palestinians and anti-

Israel countries such as Turkey and Iran.

The two foreign ministers spoke by phone to inaugurate the newly-opened lines. Israel's Gabi Ashkenazi said he and his UAE counterpart Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed agreed during the call "to meet soon".

Israel's Communications Ministry said the UAE telecoms providers on Saturday unblocked calls to numbers with

Israel's +972 country code.

Reuters made several calls from the UAE to Israel on Sunday and Israeli news websites that previously were blocked in the UAE could also be seen using UAE internet connections.

First business deal signed since the understanding; foreign ministers of the two countries 'agree to meet soon'

"I congratulate the United Arab Emirates on the unblocking," Israeli Communications Minister Yoaz Hendel said on Twitter.

"Many economic opportunities will now open up, and these trust-building steps are important for advancing the countries' interests."

The UAE's Telecoms Regulatory Authority did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Neither did the UAE's two main telecoms operators Du and Etisalat.

Bahrain prosecutes woman for destroying Hindu statues

Cairo: Bahraini police said Sunday they had taken legal steps against a woman who destroyed Hindu religious statues inside a shop. The woman appeared in a viral video destroying Ganesha idols inside a souvenir store in Manama's area of Juffair, saying Bahrain is a Muslim country.

"The Capital Police took legal steps against a woman, 54, for damaging a shop in Juffair and defaming a sect and its rituals, in order to refer her to the Public Prosecution," the police said on its Twitter account.

A senior Bahraini official condemned the act, calling it a "hate crime".

"Destroying religious symbols is not part of nature of the Bahraini people," royal adviser Khaled bin Ahmed Al Khalifa said. "It's a crime that exposes alien and rejected hate," he added in a tweet.



Foreigners account for over half of Bahrain's total population of 1.7 million.

"Lucky" Chinese Phone Number Sold For \$300,000 At Online Auction

Beijing, China: A "lucky" mobile phone number has sold for a whopping 2.25 million yuan (\$300,000) after hundreds of people vied online for the right to use the apparently auspicious string of digits.

The number ends in five eights, a sought-after combination in China as the word "eight" in Mandarin sounds similar to the word for "prosperity".

The number was among assets seized and ordered auctioned by a court in Beijing, and an online sale attracted more than five thousand bids between Saturday and Sunday.

Phone users in China -- especially companies seeking to impress clients and business partners -- often pay a premium for combinations of digits considered lucky.

SC Rejects Plea Seeking Postponement Of JEE (Main), NEET-UG Exams Over COVID Fear



NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Monday dismissed a plea seeking postponement of JEE (Main) April 2020 and NEET-Undergraduate examinations, which are scheduled to be conducted in September, amid spurt in number of COVID-19 cases, saying precious year of students "cannot be wasted" and life has to go on.

A three-judge bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra said career of students "cannot be put under jeopardy for long".

"Life has to go on. Life has to move ahead. Precious year of students cannot be wasted," the bench, also comprising Justices B R Gavai and Krishna Murari, said during the hearing conducted through video conferencing while paving the way for commencement of the exams as scheduled.

Solicitor General Tushar Mehta told the apex court that due precautions and all safeguards would be taken while conducting these examinations.

The counsel appearing for the petitioners told the bench that lakhs of students are looking towards the top court for relief and they

were only seeking postponement of these exams.

The plea, filed by 11 students belonging to 11 states, had sought quashing of the July 3 notices issued by the National Testing Agency (NTA), by which it was decided to conduct the Joint Entrance Examination (Main) April 2020 and National Eligibility-cum-Entrance Test (NEET)-Undergraduate exams in September.

As per the public notices issued by NTA, JEE (Main) April 2020 is scheduled from September 1-6, while NEET UG 2020 exam is scheduled for September 13.

The plea, filed through advocate Alakh Alok Srivastava, had referred to COVID-19 pandemic and said authorities be directed to conduct these exams only after normalcy is restored.

The plea had also sought direction to the authorities to increase the number of examination centres.

"Conducting the aforesaid examination across India at such perilous time, is nothing else but putting lives of lakhs of young students (including petitioners herein) at utmost risk and danger of disease and death. The best recourse at this stage can be to wait for some more time, let COVID-19 crisis subside and then only conduct these exams, in order to save lives of the students and their parents," the plea had said.

Shaheen Bagh Protest Was 'Scripted' By BJP To Win Delhi Polls: AAP

The AAP, on Monday, claimed that the entire Shaheen Bagh protest was "scripted by the BJP" and that its leadership dictated each and every move of the agitators for electoral benefits in Delhi polls, drawing a rebuttal from the saffron party.

AAP spokesperson Saurobh Bhardwaj made the claim a day after several members of the minority Muslim community from Shaheen Bagh area, which was the centre of the anti-Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) protests in the national capital, joined the BJP.

Bhardwaj alleged the BJP's campaign for the Delhi election centred around the Shaheen Bagh protests and it was the only party that benefited from the controversy surrounding the agitation.

"Delhi assembly election could have been fought on the issue of education, health, environment or other developmental narratives. But the Delhi BJP chose to fight the election on the issue of Shaheen Bagh," he told a press conference.

"The whole Shaheen Bagh protest was scripted by the BJP. The topmost leadership of the BJP scripted each and every step of these protests," he alleged.

They decided who will speak what, who will attack whom and then who will be doing the counterattack. All these things were pre-planned and well-scripted,



Bharadwaj claimed.

He said the key people behind the Shaheen Bagh protest joined the BJP on Sunday in the presence of the senior leadership of the party.

"Today the question is: does the BJP want to give a message that the people who used to raise anti-national slogans will now be part of the BJP?" he said.

Bhardwaj claimed that in Delhi, the BJP's vote percentage rose from 18 to 38 due to the Shaheen Bagh protests and the controversy surrounding it.

"Due to this protest, BJP polarised north-east Delhi, won some seats and then engineered a riot," Bhardwaj charged.

His allegations drew a rebuttal from Manoj Tiwari, the chief of Delhi BJP when these protests happened, who said his party does not discriminate on the basis of religion, caste, creed or lineage.

"Now the confusion is getting cleared and Muslim brothers and sisters want to walk with the BJP...Stop dividing Arvind Kejriwal ji. The world's largest party BJP represents all religions and does not discriminate on the basis of religion, caste, creed or lineage," Tiwari said in a tweet in Hindi.



SCENE OF A PROTEST IN SRINAGAR. Members of Kashmir Small Scale Industrial Association held a protest at Bagh-e-Ali Mardan Khan demanding exemplary punishment for the culprits who hurt Muslim sentiments.

Is Facebook In India Controlled By BJP? Report Sparks Calls For Probe

SRINAGAR: A major controversy has erupted over a report in the Wall Street Journal that social media giant Facebook ignores cases of hate speech and objectionable content from leaders and workers of the ruling BJP for fear of antagonising the Modi Government in India.

India's main opposition Congress party has now called for a parliamentary panel to investigate what it has described as favourable treatment by Facebook's India team towards the governing right-wing party.

On Friday, The Wall Street Journal reported that a senior Facebook executive, who oversaw operations in India, had blocked action against leaders associated with the BJP and other Hindutva groups.

Facebook's top public policy executive in India "opposed applying hate-speech rules" to at least four individuals and groups linked with the BJP despite the fact that they were "flagged internally for promoting or participating in violence."

Facebook India's Public Policy Director Ankit Das told staff members that "punishing violations" by BJP politicians "would damage the company's business prospects in the country, Facebook's biggest global market by number of users," WSJ reported.

Many have accused Das of being a member the Narendra Modi fan club.

Referring to hate-speech — calling



for violence against minorities — allegedly by Telangana BJP MLA T Raja Singh, the report cited "current and former" Facebook employees as saying that Das's intervention is part of a "broader pattern of favouritism" by the company towards the ruling party.

The WSJ report said that internal Facebook staff concluded that the MLA should be banned from the platform under a policy called "Dangerous Individuals and Organizations".

Reacting to the WSJ report Rahul Gandhi Sunday alleged that the saffron party controls the social networking site, along with WhatsApp, and uses it to spread fake news in order to influence the electorate.

"BJP and RSS control Facebook and WhatsApp in India. They spread fake news and hatred through it and use it to influence the electorate. Finally, the American media has come out with the truth about Facebook," Gandhi tweeted.

In response Union Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad tagged Congress leader as "losers who cannot influence people even in their own party."

"Losers who cannot influence people even in their own party keep cribbing that the entire world is controlled by BJP & RSS. You were caught red-handed in alliance with Cambridge Analytica & Facebook to weaponise data before the elections & now have the gall to question us?" the minister said.

Facebook spokesman Andy Stone said Das had "raised concerns about the political fallout" but said her opposition "wasn't the sole factor in the company's decision to let Singh remain the platform." According to the report, Facebook deleted some of Singh's posts after a query from WSJ, and said that he was no longer allowed to have an official account.

Facebook was also accused to have favored the BJP during the 2019 elections.

Congress MP Shashi Tharoor tweeted, "The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Information Technology would certainly wish to hear from @Facebook about these reports & what they propose to do about hate-speech in India."

Our Policies Without Regard To Party Affiliation: Facebook

NEW DELHI: Facebook, that is at the centre of a political slugefest over allegations of supporting the ruling dispensation, on Monday said its social media platform prohibits hate speech and content that incites violence and these policies are enforced globally without regard to political affiliation.

However, the social media giant—which counts India among its largest markets globally—also acknowledged that "there is more to do".

"We prohibit hate speech and content that incites violence and we en-



force these policies globally without regard to anyone's political position

Taxpayers Need Not Reveal High-Value Transactions In ITR

NEW DELHI: Taxpayers will not be required to mention their high-value transactions in their income tax returns, officials in the know of the development said.

"There is no such proposal to modify income tax return forms," an official said, responding to reports of the proposed expansion of reportable financial transactions to include hotel payments over Rs 20,000, life insurance premium payment over Rs 50,000 and health insurance premium payment over Rs 20,000, donations and payment of school/college fees over Rs 1 lakh a year.

Any expansion in reporting under the statement of financial transactions (SFT) will mean that such reporting of high-value transactions to the I-T department will be done by financial institutions, they said.

Only third parties would report high-value transactions to the I-T department as per the Income Tax Act. Such information would be used to identify people who are not paying due taxes, and not for examining affairs of honest taxpayers, they said.

"There is no such proposal to modify income tax return forms," an official said. "The taxpayer would not need to mention his/her high-value transactions in his/her return."

They said collecting reports of high-value transactions was the most non-intrusive way to identify those who spend big money on



various items and yet they do not file income tax returns by claiming that their income was less than Rs 2.5 lakh per annum.

These items include business class air travel, foreign travel, spending big money in expensive hotels, or sending children to expensive schools.

Finance Ministry sources said the Income-tax Act already provided for quoting of PAN/Aadhaar for certain high-value transactions and their reporting by the third parties mainly for the purpose of widening the tax base.

"It's an open fact that in India, only a tiny segment of people pay taxes and all those who should be paying their taxes are actually not paying their taxes," a source said.

The I-T Department is relying more and more on voluntary compliance and, hence, expenditure data collected from third parties through SFT is the best and the most effective non-intrusive method to catch evaders, sources said.

The Income Tax Department currently receives information like cash deposit/withdrawal from saving bank accounts, sale/purchase of immovable property, credit card payments, purchase of shares, debentures, foreign currency, mutual funds, among others.

'Trump Never Interfered In J&K Issue, Stood Up To China': Campaign Team



WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump has hit the right chord with India by standing up to China and never intervening in the Kashmir issue, officials of his presidential campaign have asserted.

Seeking re-election for a second consecutive term, Trump, 74, is pitted against Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden, 77, in the November 3 presidential elections.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic hit the US, there was a record drop in unemployment rate of Indian-Americans under the Trump administration, his Indian-American supporters said.

US President Trump elevated India's stature on the world stage, stood up to China in support of India and has never intervened in the Kashmir issue, they claimed.

"In a nutshell, Trump has hit the right chord with India and Indian-Americans," said Al Mason, the co-chair for the Trump Victory Indian-American Finance Committee and for the recently created "Indian Voices for Trump".

The Trump campaign's strong pitch that he is the

best bet for the community and India-US relationship for the next four years comes on the eve of the Democratic National Convention that would for the first time nominate an Indian-American and an African-American, Senator Kamala Harris, as the party's vice-presidential candidate.

Born to a Jamaican father and an Indian mother, California senator Harris, 55, if elected, would be second in line of succession after Biden.

"The choice for Indian-Americans is clear this fall, four more years for Trump/Pence (Vice President Mike Pence)," said Harmeet Kaur Dhillon, an eminent Indian-American lawyer and a senior Republican Party leader from California.

Ms Dhillon is also the co-chair for Indian Voices for Trump by the Trump Campaign.

"President Trump has been a great friend to India, with historic warmth and feeling between the two allies, and that will only continue in the next four years. President Trump is also a friend of religious liberty, very important to the diaspora Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims who came here from India," Ms Dhillon said.

Prior to the novel coronavirus pandemic, the unemployment rate among Indian-Americans dropped by nearly 33.33 per cent, a senior official of the Trump administration told PTI.

NEWS MAKERS

Everybody Knows The Pain Sachin Pilot Has Gone Through: Scindia

Former Union minister and BJP Rajya Sabha MP Jyotiraditya Scindia on Monday attacked the Congress, saying question marks are raised on capable leaders in the party and cited the example of Sachin Pilot, who had briefly rebelled against the leadership in Rajasthan.

Scindia, who quit the Congress and joined the BJP in March, said curbs should be imposed to check objectionable posts on social media.

Pilot is my friend. Everybody is aware of the pain that he has gone through. How after so much delay the Congress is trying to set its house in order is



also known to everyone, he told reporters here.

Scindia arrived here and later left for Ujjain.

It is a matter of pain that in the Congress questions are raised on capable leaders. My ex-colleague also faced a similar situation recently," he said, referring to Pilot, who had rebelled against Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, but later reached a truce with the Congress leadership.

Praising Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership,

he said under his stewardship, the NDA government scrapped Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir and gave a befitting reply to China over the border stand-off. Scindia also referred to Modi performing the 'bhoomi puja' for a grand Ram temple at Ayodhya on August 5.

Asked to comment on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's allegation, in the backdrop of a report in a US daily, that Facebook ignored applying its hate speech rules to BJP politicians, he said The Internet is an independent medium.

"When people who have nothing to say after losing faith of citizens, then catch hold of such issues.

First Look: Mahindra SUV Thar In New Avatar

NEW DELHI: Home-grown auto major Mahindra & Mahindra (M&M) on Saturday unveiled the all new version of its iconic SUV Thar, which it plans to launch later this year.

The model, which comes with all new exteriors and interiors, will debut in the country on October 2.

The SUV would feature BSVI compliant petrol and diesel powertrains mated to six speed manual and automatic transmissions.

The diesel variants would be powered by 2.2 litre engine while the petrol trims would come with all new 2 litre powertrain.

While the diesel motor will generate 120 HP of power, the petrol Thar will see an output of 150 HP of

hauling strength.

"Today, with the unveiling of the all-new Thar, we rewrite history once again. The model is firmly rooted in our rich automotive heritage and upholds the Mahindra DNA in its purest form," M&M Managing Director Pawan Goenka said.

The model has been designed and engineered in India and even most of the components used in the vehicle have been sourced locally, he noted.

The model, which will be rolled out from the company's Nashik plant, will not

only attract die-hard Thar enthusiasts, but will also appeal to all those people who have always dreamt of owning an iconic vehicle, with all the

bells and whistles of a contemporary SUV, M&M said.

The new Thar comes with a hard top, a first-in-class convertible top and an optional soft top. It also features new seating options — 4 front-facing seats and 2 plus 4 side-facing seats.



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