



Maximum : 28°C SUNSET  
Today 07:12 PM  
Minimum : 18°C SUNRISE  
Humidity : 75% Tomorrow 05:56 AM

# OBSERVER

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## News Digest

### Guns Roar Along LoC In Rajouri

Jammu: The India and Pakistan troops on Wednesday traded heavy gunfire along the Line of Control (LoC) in Rajouri district of Jammu and Kashmir. Pakistan Army violated ceasefire by resorting to heavy firing and mortar shelling in forward areas along the LoC in Rajouri district, prompting a befitting retaliation from the forces, officials said. "At about 1630 hours today, Pak army initiated unprovoked ceasefire violation by firing with small arms and intense shelling with mortars along the LoC in Keri Battal area of Sunderbani sector," defence spokesperson said. The Indian Army retaliated befittingly, he said. On August 7, a 65-year old man was killed as Pakistan army resorted to mortar shelling in Poonch. **● P-02**

### Youth Found Dead In Handwara

Srinagar: A youth on Wednesday was found dead in Handwara town of the frontier Kupwara district. 24-year-old Aamir Suhail of Kargam village was found dead near the bus stand Handwara on Wednesday by the locals, a police officer said. He said a police team instantly reached the spot after receiving information from the locals. "A case under relevant sections of law has been registered and further investigation taken up," the officer told GNS.

### Labourer Drowns In Jhelum

Srinagar: A young labourer on Wednesday died of drowning while extracting sand in river Jhelum in Pulwama district of south Kashmir. 20-year-old Irshad Ahmad Sheikh was extracting sand from Jhelum near Sombura bridge in Kakpora, Pulwama when he slipped into the river, official sources said. Several youth jumped into the river to save the Sheikh from drowning. However, after hectic efforts, they retrieved the lifeless body of the labourer. Sheikh's body was handed over to his family for final rites after completion of legal-medico formalities.

### PDD Employee Dies Of Electric Shock

Srinagar: A Power Development Department (PDD) employee died of electrocution in this capital city on Wednesday. 40-year-old Ghulam Nabi Dar was repairing electricity line in Brane locality of Nishat here when he received an electric shock and collapsed on the ground, an official said. He said that electric shock was so strong that the PDD employee died on the spot. A police officer told news agency KINS that a case has been registered in this regard and further investigations set into motion.

### ACB Books Seven For Illegal Land Mutations

Jammu: The Anti Corruption Bureau on Wednesday booked seven people, including three former government officials, in a case related to illegal mutation of land title in Katra town, the base camp for pilgrims visiting Vaishno Devi shrine in Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir. After registration of the case, searches were carried out by seven teams in Reasi, Udhampur and Jammu districts, leading to the seizure of "incriminating material and documents" as evidence, a spokesman of the Anti Corruption Bureau (ACB) said. He said among the accused in the case include Naib Tehsildar Katra Nek Ram; then executive officer. **● P-02**

### PDP's Poser To Former Ally

## If Nagas Could Have A Special Status, Why Can't JK People?

SRINAGAR: Terming the Naga peace accord a way forward towards conflict resolution, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) on Wednesday lashed out at the government of India for committing a constitutional fraud by scrapping Article-370 in Jammu and Kashmir.

In a statement issued here, a PDP spokesman has said that while the out of box solution to a long-pending humanitarian and political problems facing the country is a welcome measure, it is ironic that the BJP led government at the centre is promising the Nagas same things that it snatched from the people of Jammu and Kashmir last year in August.

He said that the special position secured by Jammu and Kashmir at the time of accession in 1947 was not a 'charity' given to the state by the union of India but was an outcome of thorough deliberations and discussions between the two parties.

"Government of India, parliament and even the President cannot scrap 370 in a unilateral way. When it was agreed upon by the two parties, it was imperative that both the parties should have agreed to its dilution or scrapping. What GOI did to Jammu and Kashmir was a constitutional fraud," PDP spokesman said. "Idea of securing regional autonomy, internal **►►PAGE 02**

## 9-Day Old Militant Killed In Shopian Encounter

Handwara Gunfight Leaves Lashkar Commander, Aide Dead

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: Two Lashkar-e-Taiba militants and a nine-day-old Hizbul Mujahideen recruit were killed on Wednesday in two separate encounters with government forces in Shopian and Kupwara districts of the Valley.

A teenager, who joined militant ranks just nine days back, was killed in a brief encounter in Molu Chitragam area of Shopian this afternoon, a police official said.

The state forces, he said launched a cordon and search operation in Molu Chitragam area of Shopian after receiving specific information about the presence of militants in the area.

He said the search operation turned into an encounter after the militants opened fire at a search party of the forces, who retaliated.

In the ensuing exchange of fire, one militant was killed, the official said. However, two other militants reportedly managed to escape from the encounter spot, reported GNS quoting sources.

The report identified the militant as Talib Hussain Mir son of Nissar Ahmad Mir, a resident of



File Photo

### 4 Held With Grenades, Bullets In Shopian

State forces recovered four grenades and 100 rounds of AK-47 from 4 persons arrested in Shopian district of South Kashmir, officials said.

A police officer said that police and security forces arrested four persons including Imtiyaz Ahmad Dar of Ratnipora, Parvaiz Ahmad Kumar, Sajad Ahmad Dhobi, both residents of Pinjora and Shahid Manzoor of Hillow imamsahib, reported news agency GNS. Four grenades and 100 rounds of AK-47 were recovered. **● P-02**

Malikpora Shopian who according to sources had joined Hizb-ul-Mujahideen ranks on August 10. Meanwhile, two LeT militants,

including the outfit's commander Naseer-u-Din Lone were killed in a late night gunfight with government forces in Kralgund area of **►►PAGE 02**

**HANDWARA ENCOUNTER UPDATE: LET CMDR NASEER-u-din Lone, who was #involved in #killing of 3 CRPF jawans at #Sopore on 18/4/20 and 3 CRPF jawans at #Handwara on 4/5/20, got killed: IGP Kashmir Shri Vijay Kumar,**

## 1.89 Crore Indians Lost Jobs In Lockdown, 50 Lakh In July

Agencies

NEW DELHI: The lockdown India went through since March 25 in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic led to huge job losses across the country as almost all manufacturing and business activities came to a grinding halt.

According to the latest data issued by the Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy (CMIE), an independent think tank, over 18 million salaried employees lost their jobs during lockdown.

It said that the bloodbath in salaried employment began in April when 17.7 million jobs were lost,

followed by an additional 0.1 million jobs loss in May. Then, 3.9 million jobs were gained in June.

The CMIE report cast serious doubts over the prospect of healthy economic recovery as job losses in the formal sector kept ballooning. According to the report, 21 percent of all employment in India is in the form of salaried employment, far lower than the number of those engaged in the informal, or unorganised, sector.

It further stated that while the employment in informal sector and rural areas have seen an uptick since April, the lack of improvement in salaried jobs paints a **►►PAGE 02**

## Day 3: Protests Continue In Kashmir Against Blasphemy Video



Pic Abid Bhat

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: For the third consecutive day Wednesday, scores of people in Valley held strong demonstrations against the members of a Hindu extremist group, who made derogatory remarks against the Prophet of Islam (PBUH) in Jammu's Reasi triggering massive outrage across Jammu and Kashmir.

### Man Held Over Social Media Posts

A man was arrested on Wednesday for allegedly hurting religious sentiments of a community in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch district, officials said. Mohammad Zahid has been arrested for posting objectionable comments on Facebook and hurting religious sentiments of a particular community, SSP, Poonch, Ramesh Angral said. A case has been registered.

According to the reports, protests against the rightwing Sentinel Bharat Raksha Manch members continued for third straight day in parts of the Valley, including Srinagar.

Early morning, member of a lesser known outfit 'J&K Bachao Tehreek' appeared in Srinagar's Press Colony and staged a demonstration against the blasphemous remarks of the Hindu fanatics. Carrying

placards and banners denouncing the blasphemous remarks, the protesters demanded exemplary punishment for the accused for hurting sentiments of Muslims.

A peaceful protest was also held in Chanapora area of the city, where protesters demanded death penalty for the culprits.

On Sunday, police arrested Satpal Sharma, the main **►►PAGE 02**

### Govt Orders Pull Out Of 10,000 Troops From J&K

NEW DELHI: The Centre on Wednesday ordered "immediate" withdrawal of about 10,000 paramilitary personnel from the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, officials said.

This is the biggest de-induction of these forces after additional troops were rushed to the UT post the abrogation of the Article 370 of the Constitution that gave the erstwhile state a unique status.

They said the decision was taken after the Ministry of Home Affairs reviewed the deployment of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) in the union territory (UT). The Home Ministry had last withdrawn 10 CAPF companies from the UT in May, while 72 such units were taken out in December last year.

A senior official said that a total of 100 CAPF companies have been ordered to be withdrawn "immediately" on Wednesday and they have been asked to revert to their base locations in the country. **● P-02**

### Jammu Admin To Resolve Army's Land Acquisition Cases

JAMMU: The Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Sanjeev Verma on Wednesday directed the officials to resolve all the pending land acquisition and requisitions cases of the army.

In a meeting held here with the Defense Estate Officers to review the status of land acquisition, requisition cases of army pertaining to district Jammu, Samba and Udhampur, Verma sought case wise details and asked the concerned officers for resolving all the pending acquisition and requisitions, an **● P-02**

## Army Asks People To Join Shopian 'Fake Encounter' Probe

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The Army on Wednesday issued an advertisement in local newspapers asking people to share "credible" inputs for its probe into the killing of three alleged militants in an encounter last month, following allegations by families in the Rajouri area of Jammu region that as many of their kin were missing from the same place.

"Any person having credible inputs or information on the encounter by security forces at vil-

lage Amshipora, district Shopian, dated July 18, 2020 may please contact Deputy GOC (General Officer Command)...on telephone number 01933-247026 within the next 10 days. The identity and details of the person will be kept secret," the advertisement issued by Lt Col Sonal Jain read.

Srinagar-based defence spokesperson Colonel Rajesh Kalia had said on Tuesday that the Army was committed to ethical conduct of all counter-terrorist operations. "Cases where doubts **►►PAGE 02**

## 15 More Covid-19 Deaths In Kashmir, J&K Toll 581

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: At least fifteen people, seven of them Srinagar residents succumbed to coronavirus infection on Wednesday, taking the total number of Covid-19 fatalities across the Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory to 581.

Of the victims, seven were residents of Srinagar, three each from Budgam and Kupwara and one each from Baramulla and Shopian districts, officials said.

A 75-year-old woman from Chat-tabal Srinagar who was diagnosed with bilateral community acquired pneumonia died at SMHS hospital, a week after she was admitted there, they said. Officials said that a 55-year-old woman from Rainawari who was also

diagnosed with bilateral community acquired pneumonia died at wee hours today, a day after admitted to the hospital.

The third victim of the deadly disease, officials said was an elderly man from Shalatteng who also passed away at the hospital, two days after he was admitted there and subsequently diagnosed with bilateral community acquired pneumonia.

A 43-year-old man from Hawal Srinagar died at SKIMS Soura, a day after he was admitted to the tertiary care hospital and tested positive subsequently.

A 72-year-old man from Sebdan Budgam died at CD hospital Dalgate here, two days after he was referred from Chanapora to the exclusive facility for the management of the covid-19 patients. Diagnosed with **►►PAGE 02**

### 703 New Cases Include 20 Cops, 22 Security Men

Jammu and Kashmir reported 708 new cases of Covid-19, including 20 cops, 22 security personnel and 43 travellers, raising the number of people infected by the deadly disease across the Union territory to 30034. While Kashmir valley reported 606 new cases of coronavirus, remaining 102 were confirmed by the officials from the Jammu region. Among the new cases in valley include 20 from DPL Shopian, 17 CRPF and five from BB Cantt besides as many minors and three pregnant women, officials said. **● P-02**

### 7000 Bunkers Come-up Along LoC, IB In Jammu

JAMMU: The Jammu and Kashmir government has constructed 7433 bunkers for the villagers living near the Line of Control (LoC) and International Border in Jammu region, where border skirmishes between the armies of the two nuclear countries occur.

The details of the border constructions were shared in a meeting chaired by Divisional Commissioner Jammu, Sanjeev Verma with district administrations of border districts, an official spokesperson said Wednesday.

In the meeting, he said it was informed that a total of 7433 bunkers have been completed so far in the division including 6521 individual bunkers and 912 community bunkers. "In all 1522 community and individual **● P-02**

### ACB Power To Probe Not Affected By PC Act Repeal: HC

SRINAGAR: Jammu and Kashmir High Court on Wednesday said that Anti-Corruption Bureau's right to investigate has not been affected by the repeal of the Prevention of Corruption Act.

"The right which has accrued to the Anti-Corruption Bureau to investigate the crime which took place prior to coming into force of the Central Act and which was covered by the said Act remained unaffected by the reason of clause (c) of section 6 of the General Clauses Act, 1897, and the application of Clause 13 & 14 of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Removal of **● P-02**

## NC Calls Meet To Test Govt's Claim On 'Free' Party Leaders

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The National Conference has decided to convene a meeting of its senior leaders on Thursday after the local administration informed the Jammu and Kashmir High Court that none of the 16 leaders, that the party claimed were in illegal confinement, were detained and that they were free to move around.

In a statement issued Wednesday, the National Conference said it had taken note of the government's stand in the High Court on the petition filed by party president Faqrooq Abdullah and his son Omar to secure the liberty of its various leaders who have been under illegal house detention.



File Photo

"On a perusal of the reply the party has noticed that the government has unequivocally submitted before the High Court that no leader is under detention and that they are free to move subject to necessary security arrangements," the statement said.

"Now relying fully on the stand of the government before the HC that the members are free to move and expecting no hogwash **►►PAGE 02**

## How Omission Of Commission Left Kashmiri Women In Lurch

Sanika Athavale

ONCE done with festive feeling of band, baja and bharaat, Isha Mir, 35, realized that she had just landed in a bad marriage. Her husband turned out to be "apathetic and abusive" from the word go. Neither does he let her be in contact with her parents nor does he allow her to meet them. She's not even allowed a phone.

Her husband constantly tells her that this marriage was not fixed with his consent and on that pretext, talks to other women. After eight years of their marriage, she has two children with him and is not provided any kind of financial

support. She has had family counselling many times but that didn't improve her husband's behaviour. When she confronted him about the women he talks to, he slapped her. She has previously complained against him but now she wants to take it to the court. But to her chagrin, the courtrooms in Kashmir are already crammed with countless cases during Covid times.

Her trouble equally comes from the order of October 23, 2019, that wound up the State Commission for Protection of Women and Child Rights (SCPWCR) from the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir. It has left many women like her hanging by a thread.

What's even worse is that with



the dissolution of the SCPWCR, the ongoing cases of 270 Kashmiri women, which had reached the turn towards the final judgment,

have been transferred to the National Commission for Women (NCW) headquartered in New Delhi.

Speaking about the role and authority of the NCW, Vasundhara Pathak Masoodi, the last chairperson of SCPWCR, recently said, "Just because we have a Supreme Court, it doesn't mean that all the state-level cases will directly come to it; for that, you have different high courts for different states and UTs. Similarly, we should have a body in every state and UTs."

Masoodi explained that if a woman from Delhi wished to register a case at the NCW, she would not be able to because there is a separate commission in place there. "NCW only takes up the cases of NRIs or people who are settled in different states of India. Besides, NCW **►►PAGE 02**



## 9-Day Old Militant Killed...

Handwara. The encounter, official sources said erupted when state forces came under fire by militants when they started a combing operation in an orchard in Ganipora village of Kralgund on Wednesday night. In the ensuing firefight, official sources said two militants were killed. Jammu and Kashmir police on its Twitter handle confirmed the killing of two LeT militants by quoting Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir, Vijay Kumar. "HandwaraEncounterUpdate: LeT Cmdr Naseer-u-din Lone, who was #involved in #killing of 3 CRPF jawans at #Sopore on 18/4/20 and 3 CRPF jawans at #Handwara on 4/5/20, got killed: IGP Kashmir Shri Vijay Ku-mar," tweeted J&K Police.

## 4 Held With Grenades,...

from their possession, they added. A case (FIR 191/20/20) under section 7/25, 18/39 ULA and 307 IPC has been registered in this regard, the officer added.

## Govt Orders Pull Out...

As per the directions, a total of 40 companies of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) and 20 each of the Central Industrial Security Force, the Border Security Force and the Sashastra Seema Bal, will be taken out from Jammu and Kashmir by this week. The CRPF has been asked to make arrangements for air lifting of these units to Delhi and other locations, they said. A CAPF company has an operational strength of about 100 personnel. "The units that are being withdrawn are deployed both in Jammu and Srinagar. It was felt that the counter-insurgency and counter-militancy grid is intact in the UT and these additional units that were sent in last year can be de-inducted giving them the much required rest, recuperation and training," a senior CAPF officer said. Also, he said, with the winters soon setting in, it would have been an onerous task to keep these units in make-shift and temporary dwelling units especially in the Kashmir valley region. With the latest de-induction, the lead counter-militancy force CRPF will have a strength of about 60 battalions (about 1,000 personnel in each battalion) in the Kashmir valley apart from very few units of the other CAPFs.

## Jammu Admin To Resolve...

official spokesperson said Wednesday. He said that threadbare discussion was held on various land cases of Army pertaining to these districts and the DEOs apprised the Div Com of present status of land requisition and acquisition cases in their respective districts. The meeting was attended by Assistant Commissioner Central, Additional District Development Commissioner, Jammu, Defense Estate Officers of Jammu, Samba, Udhampur and other concerned officers.

## 15 More Covid-19 Deaths...

pneumonia, diabetes and acute kidney injury, a doctor at the hospital told said that the septuagenarian's condition deteriorated and today he developed bradycardia followed by cardiac arrest. "He died at around 8 a.m.," the doctor added. A 60-year-old woman from Lal Chowk here who was suffering from hypertension, diabetes and Hypothyroid besides pneumonia died due to cardiac arrest at CD hospital at 4: 50 pm. today. Also a 65-year-old woman from Hawal died due to the virus, officials said. Two other Budgam residents— a nonagenarian woman from Budibagh Choon and a 65-year-old resident from Malpora Chadora—died last night, they added. Among three deaths reported from Kupwara includes an 80-year-old of Tanghar Dar Kupwara who was admitted to SMHS hospital on August 16 and diagnosed with bilateral CAP with "hypoxemia" died this afternoon. Regarding fatality from Shopian, they said, a 70-year-old woman from Wachí died at Government Medical College Anantnag few days ago and was included in the official list along with that of a resident from Baramulla and two other residents from Kupwara. With these deaths, officials said, 581 people have succumbed to the virus in Jammu and Kashmir so far—539 from the Valley and 41 from Jammu division. (GNS) Srinagar district with 187 deaths tops the list followed by Baramulla (89), Budgam (46), Anantnag (43), Kulgam (31), Pulwama (40), Kupwara (39), Shopian (26), Jammu (29), Bandipora (23), Ganderbal (14), Rajouri (3), two each in Doda, Poonch and Udhampur besides one each in Ramban, Samba, and Kathua. (With GNS inputs)

## 703 New Cases Include...

Giving district-wise breakup of the cases, official sources said that Srinagar reported 229 new cases, Baramulla 35, Pulwama 24, Budgam 88, Anantnag 48, Kulgam 19, Shopian 10, Kupwara 43, Bandipora 48, Ganderbal 62, Jammu 41, Rajouri 4, Kathua 4, Udhampur 2, Ramban 2, Samba 10, Doda 3, Poonch 1,Reasi 34 and Kishtwar 1. In Kashmir, Srinagar tops the list with 7253 cases followed by Baramulla with 2510, Pulwama 2146, Budgam 1922, Kulgam 1747, Shopian 1589, Anantnag 1905, Kupwara 1680, Bandipora 1583 and Ganderbal 1051. In Jammu division, Jammu district has 2074 cases, Rajouri 794, Ramban 631, Kathua 681, Udhampur 664, Samba 599, Doda 350, Poonch 333, Reasi 336 and Kishtwar 186. Moreover, sources said 611 more COVID-19 patients have recovered and were discharged from various hospitals, 175 from Jammu Division and 436 from Kashmir Valley.

## 1.89 Crore Indians Lost Jobs...

worrisome picture in terms of growth. Nearly 5 million jobs were lost in July. On a net basis, the plight of salaried employees worsened since the lockdown began. In April they lost 17.7 million jobs, but by July the job losses had swelled to 18.9 million, said the CMIE report. It concluded by saying "While salaried jobs are not lost easily, once lost they are also far more difficult to retrieve. Therefore, their ballooning numbers are a source of worry." Presently the country is passing through Unlock phase-3. Schools, colleges, universities and other educational institutions, besides swimming pools, continue to remain shut across the country. Restaurants have been allowed to serve take-away food only. Some states still observe strict restrictions on people's movement. Manufacturing and trading activities have begun and slowly inching towards normalisation.

## Army Asks People To Join ...

are raised are investigated under due process as per the law of the land. Since the case is under investigation, further details will be shared periodically, as appropriate without affecting due legal process," he had said. The encounter took place on July 18 when the Army claimed to have killed three militants at Amshipora in the higher reaches of Shopian in south Kashmir. However, little over two weeks thereafter, missing complaints were lodged in Rajouri area of Jammu region by the families of three youths, working as labourers in apple and walnut orchards, who had disappeared from the same region and they had last talked to them on July 17. The Army has already instituted a high-level Court of Inquiry to probe the incident and statements of Army personnel were recorded on Tuesday. DNA samples have been collected from Rajouri families by the Jammu and Kashmir Police and sent for matching with those of the alleged terrorists killed on July 18. The relatives of three youths, belonging to Dhar Sakri village in Kotranka of Rajouri area in Poonch, had lodged a written missing persons report at the local police station after they lost contact with them on July 17. In their complaint, they informed the police that they had last spoken to the three, who were mainly involved in apple and walnut trading, on July 17 when the youths had informed their families that they had got a room at Ashimpora in Shopian. The same place was the site of the encounter the next day and since then there has been no report about the three, the families said in their complaint. Three boys, Mohammad Imtiyaz and Ibrar Ahmed, both residents of Kathuni mohalla of Dharsakri village of Rajouri, and Mohammad Ibrar, a resident of Tarkassi village of Rajouri, left their homes to work as labourers in Kashmir's Shopian and went out of contact with their families after July 17 late evening. The father of Imtiyaz, one of the missing persons, was seen on social media pleading for a visit to Kashmir and exhuming the bodies of his son and others for a proper burial in Rajouri.

## CITU Moves NHRC, Raise...

families of the deceased. In a complaint to the NHRC, filed on Tuesday through Supreme Court advocate Subhash Chandran, CITU's J&K unit General Secretary Om Prakash expressed concern over the alleged questionable encounter last month. The encounter took place on July 18 when the Army claimed to have killed three alleged militants at Amshipora in the higher reaches of Shopian in south Kashmir. However, a little over two weeks thereafter, missing persons complaints were lodged in Rajouri area of Jammu region by the families of three youths, working as labourers in apple and walnut orchards, who had disappeared from the same region and could be last contacted by their families on July 17. Om Prakash demanded a thorough investigation to bring out the factual

aspects of the case. Mohammad Imtiyaz and Ibrar Ahmed, both residents of Kathuni mohalla of Dharsakri village of Rajouri, and Mohammad Ibrar, a resident of Tarkassi village of Rajouri, left their homes in Rajouri of Jammu region to work as labourers in Kashmir's Shopian and went out of contact from July 17 late evening, their families have said. After their families claimed that the three had no links with militancy, the army initiated a court of inquiry to ascertain the facts. Demanding the NHRC to direct authorities to produce the action taken report on the "human rights violation", the petitioner also sought initiation of appropriate criminal as well as departmental action against those involved in the alleged encounter. It also asked the NHRC to direct authorities to pay adequate compensation to the affected families. The army court of inquiry on Tuesday began recording statements of witnesses, while police collected the DNA samples from Rajouri and sent for matching with those of the alleged militants killed on July 18.

## Day 3: Protests Continue...

accused and his associate Deepak soon after the video containing derogatory remarks against Prophet of Islam (Pbuh) went viral. Rohit Sharma, a resident of Pacca Danga locality, was the third accused arrested in connection with the case related to the communally sensitive video. Police had also filed a case 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. Meanwhile, anger against the blasphemous video also triggered protests in border area of Uri and Karnah.

According to reports, scores of villagers from Dhani, Choolan, and Gingal in the border town Uri today hit the streets and staged a protest against the members of the extremist group. Chanting pro-Islam slogans, the protesters demanded exemplary punishment for those elements who hurt the sentiments of Muslims. Similar reports were also received from Karnah area of border district Kupwara, where scores of people, including traders took out a protest march against the blasphemous remarks. The protesters later dispersed peacefully.

## NC Calls Meet To Test Govt's ...

on part of the government, the party president Farooq Abdullah has invited senior party members including Ali Mohammad Sagar, Abdul Rahim Rather, Mohammad Shafi Uri and Nasir Aslam Wani for a meeting at his residence on 20.8.2020 at 5 pm," it said. The party also made it clear that it is mindful of the present pandemic and accordingly the meeting with various leaders that have been under detention will be done in batches of four members per meeting. "Needless to add that all standard operating procedures shall be strictly followed by all concerned," the party statement said. The party is hopeful that the liberty of the members under detention is now absolute and the meeting will be held successfully on the appointed day, it said. The Abdullah father-son duo had filed a bunch of habeas corpus petitions on July 13 seeking their release. A habeas corpus is a writ requiring a person under arrest to be brought before a judge or into court, especially to secure the person's release unless lawful grounds are shown for their detention. Filing the replies before the High Court earlier this month, senior additional advocate general Bashir Ahmad Dar said the contention of the pleas was "not only surprising but shocking as well" as there were neither any legal proceedings underway nor was it being contemplated. The similarly worded replies, vetted by Inspector General of Police (Kashmir range), however, said in the wake of Constitutional amendments carried out in the Article 370, "it was apprehended that inimical elements may disturb the peace" and the leaders "may provoke them to cause aggravation in the disturbance". However, no order of detention either under preventive detention law or substantive law was issued against the party leaders, it said, adding, the leaders were free to move with certain precautions "as deemed fit" for their security.

The reply said the petitioner being a categorised person has been advised not to visit any vulnerable areas without informing the concerned authorities" and reasoned that it was to ensure proper security. The Abdullahs had filed 16 petitions on July 13 for as many NC leaders contending that they were being held in "brazen violation" of Constitutional guarantees of the right to liberty.

The writ petitions filed under Article 226 of the Constitution lists NC general secretary Ali Mohammed Sagar, provincial president Nasir Aslam Wani, senior leader Aga Syed Mehmoood, party's chief spokesperson Aga Syed Ruhullah Mehdi, among the leaders being detained at their residences illegally and wrongfully without serving them grounds of detention. The leaders have been forcibly restricted by police personnel stationed outside their residences for the past 11 months, the pleas claim.

Other leaders for whose release the petitions have been filed were Abdul Rahim Rather, Mohammad Khalil Mehdi, Irfan Shah and Sahmeema Firdous, Mohammad Shafi Uri, Chaudhary Mohammad Ramzaan, Mubarak Gul, Dr Bashir Veeri, Abdul Majeed Larmi, Basharat Bukhari, Saifudin Bhat Shtrutu and Mohammad Shafiq.

The senior Abdullah has filed the habeas corpus petitions for seven leaders while Omar has filed for the remaining nine. Both Abdullahs, who were first taken into preventive custody and then detained under the stringent public safety act for several months since the intervening night of August 4 and 5, hours before Jammu and Kashmir's special status was revoked by the centre, have pleaded that the detainees be set at liberty. The reply of the home department said the petitioner being protected persons were well within the charter of duties of the administration to ensure their safety and security.

"...it is emphatically denied that currently or in the past any detention order is in the force against" the leaders and the administration was functioning "strictly within the parameters of law".

There is no infringement or brazen violation of the law as claimed in the petition. "The respondents have shown utmost respect for the law of the land," it said and pleaded for dismissal of the petition with costs. The party leadership moved the High Court after the petitions of these detained leaders to the Home Secretary of Union Territory on June 30 seeking removal of restriction on their movement and set them at "absolute liberty" remained unanswered.

The party, before moving the High Court, had expressed hope that the legal system will come to the rescue of their colleagues, who have been suffering for no fault ever since the abrogation of provisions of Art 370, Art 35A on August 5, 2019.

## 7000 Bunkers Come-up...

bunkers have been completed in district Samba, 1098 in district Jammu, 1427 in district Kathua, 2483 in district Rajouri and 911 in district Poonch", the meeting, according to the official spokesperson was told. "It was further informed that remaining bunkers are also at different stages of construction," he added.

The official spokesperson said that the ADC while giving district wise details regarding the progress on construction of bunkers, said that of the total 1320 bunkers (1200 individual, 120 community) in Jammu district 1098 bunkers (994 individual, 104 community) have been completed so far.

"In Samba, of the total 2130 bunkers (1982 individual, 148 community) 1522 bunkers (1512 individual, 10 community) have been completed by executing agencies PWD and RDD. Similarly, in Kathua, of the total 2126 bunkers (1956 individual, 170 community) 1427 bunkers (1343 individual, 84 community) have been completed," the official spokesperson said. In the meeting, he said it was further apprised that in Rajouri, of the total 3141 bunkers (2806 individual, 335 community) 2483 bunkers (2264 individual, 219 community) have been completed till date, while in Poonch of the total 1188 bunkers (500 individual, 688 community) 903 bunkers (408 individual, 495 community) have been completed so far. He said that the Div Com directed the concerned officers for close monitoring the construction of bunkers.

"He also directed the executing agencies to expedite the pace of work for timely completion of construction of individual and community bunkers," the official spokesperson said.

"The officers from the districts apprised the Div Com about the progress of works on the under construction individual and community bunkers in their respective districts," he added.

The meeting was attended by ADC Jammu Dr. Tahir Firdous, Executive Engineers of executing agencies, while the officers of Kathua, Samba, Rajouri and Poonch attended the meeting through video conferencing.

## ACB Power To Probe Not...

Difficulties) Order, 2019, the repealment shall not affect any investigation, legal proceeding or remedy in respect of any such right, privilege, obligation, liability, penalty, forfeiture or punishment," a bench of Justice

Ali Mohammad Magrey while disposing a plea for anticipatory bail.

"The power of the Special Judges in the Union Territory of J&K and Union Territory of Ladakh vested with the special powers in terms of the notifications published in the official gazette issued by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir from time to time under Repealed Act, is also saved in terms of application of Clause 14 of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Removal of Difficulties) Order, 2019," the court said, adding, "Therefore, all the Special Courts shall continue to exercise its powers as was being done prior to commencement of J&K Reorganisation Act, 2019."

The court passed the directions after hearing Advocate General D. C. Raina and senior advocate RA Jan.

The top law officer of the J&K while making reference to the provisions of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation Act and the Clause 13 and 14 of the Jammu and Kashmir Reorganisation (Removal of Difficulties) Order, 2019, besides Section 6 of the General Clauses Act submitted that the action taken qua application of repealed laws in the J&K and Ladakh is saved.

The Advocate General submitted that there is absolutely no ambiguity vis-à-vis the powers of the Anti-Corruption Bureau for registration of the case in question under Repealed Act.

The senior counsel had sought the bail inter alia on the grounds that the very premise on which the FIR has been registered (against his client Liaq Pervaz— FIR no. 03/2020 of Police Station Anti-Corruption Bureau Kashmir) is factually unfounded and legally misconceived as same has been done in "most mechanical and perfunctory manner under the repealed P.C. Act." However he later conceded the frankly legal position.

"The Court feels it necessary to place on record the appreciation for the approach adopted by R. A. Jan, Senior Counsel, by frankly admitting the legal position and facilitating a just decision in right earnest. The court also appreciates the endeavor made by the Advocate General and Mr B. A. Dar, learned Sr. AAG, in rendering the proper assistance in the matter," the court added. (GNS)

## If Nagas Could Have A...

sovereignty- own constitution- flag and protecting to indigenous people is a welcome move but same federal guarantees and rights were assured and guaranteed to JK people and unfortunately scraped by BJP regime that's promising Nagas everything we had at a time," said the party spokesman. He added that federalism is the only way ahead as centralization has "choked space to states and choked" ways and means for resolution of all conflicts.

"If Government is willing to innovative solutions, it definitely needs to be unconventional and see things in a larger humanitarian context. The Government should make Mr Vajpayee's way of functioning as its guiding principle as he sought resolution of the vexed issued in the ambit of Insaniyat. Jingoistic vocabulary and fake nationalism narrative has killed the soul of democracy," he added.

## How Omission Of Commission...

monitors the functioning of the commissions of other states and UTs as well." But 10 months after the NCW overtook the obliterated SCPWCR, the 'shifted' files seem to have been lost in transition.

"Ever since the SCPWCR, or the women's commission has been erased from Kashmir's administrative system, women in need have been using every option imaginable for writing towards ending their miseries," said Sabreena Bhat, a Kashmiri writer who writes on gender issues.

"There was a body, some support that Kashmiri women could fall back on in the event of a crisis. Many women were almost on the verge of getting justice, before the legal change spoiled their fruit of perseverance." Even former chairperson of the SPWCR, Nayeema Mehjoor admitted to having received several distress calls from the women she had interacted with during her tenure with the now-defunct body.

"After August 5, I received almost 15 distress calls every month and interestingly, most of the callers were women from North Kashmir," she said. In her years as the chairperson, Mehjoor had formed a network of 10,000 female volunteers – who continue to help her or the distress callers she refers to them.

"I had resigned from my post disgruntled by the invisible handcuffs. When the Kathua rape case happened, I was helpless. The same was my state when 'braid chopping' was rampant in Kashmir," the journalist and former People's Democratic Party (PDP) member told Kashmir Observer. Mehjoor stated that games of power kept her from freely expressing herself and speaking out on issues.

Arshie Qureshi, the co-founder of a new homegrown women's cell called Mehram, informed that since its inception in June 2020, the new cell has been receiving an average of 3 cases per day related to gender-based violence/issues.

"Once the state commission was dissolved, a lot of pressure was put on the other resources and avenues that were working for the same cause," Qureshi told Kashmir Observer.

However, this has happened in the case of women who were aware of the options other than the commission, constituting a tiny minority within a minority in Kashmir.

"The women's commission was known to women," she said. "It was an avenue that they could use. Not having one any more obviously points to the lack of a support system for them. Also, it is pertinent to mention that when the perpetrators know that the women do not have a support system, the abuse they inflict aggravates."

In the absence of a watchdog-like body for her issues, a woman named Sharifa who wants freedom and justice for her two kids from the clutches of her torturous in-laws has been running plaudit to post for some redressal. Recently, she reached out to a female lawyer with the hope to obtain some help.

Since her marriage in 2014, she said, her in-laws have been harassing her to the point that they even tried to strangle her to death. She survived but she has had to listen to abuses consistently.

Sharifa said her husband also subjected her to domestic violence which even caused her a miscarriage during her first pregnancy. "He was involved in an extramarital affair," she said, and in order to hide it, her in-laws have tried to defame her in society by calling her characterless.

She had lodged a police complaint against the accused but there was no action taken. She hopes for justice but due to the official apathy, her pain persists. Also, to add to her plight, her husband wants to end terms with her and her in-laws have also filed a case against her. She is in such deep distress that sometimes she wishes to commit suicide and have every-thing end in a single go.

Elaborating on such incapacitation of Kashmiri women, Sabreena Bhat, too, noted that, "Even if Kashmiri women (generally speaking) did not visit the commission enthusiastically for solving their problems, just knowing that they had an option was enough support."

Since women in Kashmir are bred in a highly patriarchal society, going out of the bounds of their homes to report instances of domestic abuse or violence was a very big thing for them, she said.

"But at least they had the option," she stressed. "Now, without the existence of such a body, we've nowhere to go. It goes without saying that this move has affected women and their safety a lot."

Notably, in the two-month period of the 'world's strictest' COVID-19 lockdown, announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on the eve of March 24, Jammu and Kashmir reported 16 cases of rape and 4 cases of molestation. Needless to say, since these victims do not have a statutory professional body to seek support from, they are 'left in a vacuum of sorts' as per Dr Touseef Rizvi, a psychology professor at Kashmir University.

"For the perpetrators, there's nothing to act as a deterrent," Dr Rizvi told Kashmir Observer. "Previously, they knew that their female housemates had the option of availing the services of the commission and that did serve as a deterrent." In absence of the commission, Arshie Qureshi's Mehram, the organisation working to provide legal aid to women suffering from gender-based violence, has stretched the duties of the employees beyond the stated purpose now.

"We also need to provide psychological support to the victims and brainstorm about different ways in which we can engage with society to start a dialogue about these issues," she said.

Last year, when all the communication lines were severed in the valley, social impact workers had trouble in helping and identifying victims of gender-based violence. In a few rare cases, the women would manage to come to them with their problems. If they knew the residential address of the worker, they would directly come to their homes. Some who managed to get their hands on a landline would try to reach out to their "Kashmiri sisters" placed outside of the Valley to narrate their ordeals. "It's important to know that women only use such 'third-party options', for redressal, when all the other options that are immediately accessible to them turn out to be useless," Qureshi further explained.

"Whenever there is an incident of violence, the family members try to resolve it at the familial level. If that does not work, then it is taken up at the community level. When they cross and exhaust all these avenues

they turn to bodies like ours."

The victims who come in are generally very confused and nervous about the consequences of their complaints with the third-party. Torn between giving their abusers a 'second chance' and their innate wish to 'move on', the victims reportedly have a hard time choosing from the variety of redressal options placed in front of them by professionals at these non-governmental organisations.

"This is where the 'counseling' part comes in," Qureshi continued. "Our legal professionals explain all the options to the complainant. She may file a court case, or an FIR with the police, or get us to intervene with the abusers or her own family which may be acting as a barrier. We negotiate and single out the best solution and help the victim's case."

Sometimes, these women are also presented with all the options and then given the time to think and choose the one they deem best. "Our job is to assure them that 'we are here for them' as long as they want help," Qureshi said. Backing Qureshi's views and women welfare work, Sabreena Bhat said that in spite of SCPWCR's presence in the past, women preferred to reach out to NGOs, like Mehram, for their issues. "Be that as it may, the final destination for the files that such NGOs would compile would be the SCPWCR's office until it was functional," the writer mentioned.

At the end of the day, the NCW would send all the troubles and complaints back to the apex office for its perusal. But now, with the body no more, all of the pending and existing cases that were stocked in the former state's folders are in the NCW office.

Calling the NCW a "disaster", Qureshi narrated her personal ordeal with the central body. "Somebody I knew had been incessantly harassed and there was a threat to her life. The police in Srinagar refused to file an FIR, so I had to contact the NCW for help. I kept calling on all numbers that were displayed on their website but no one picked up. I remember spending a good 2-3 hours on this. Finally, I took to Twitter and tagged the NCW and wrote my complaint online."

It was only then that the NCW responded to Qureshi assuring her a reply after a short while. "This happened in the last week of May. The point of reaching the NCW was to get my contact's case registered in absence of any local help," she said.

Ironically, the NCW redirected her complaint, via email, back to Kashmir, to the SP's (Superintendent of Police) office. Qureshi even went to check on the status of the case at the office but was told to go to another 'office' where the complaint was supposed to have been sent.

"Why do I have to go around from one office to another when the NCW had clearly said in their email that the complaint was sent to the SP? The SP's office had asked me to go to a few places with the printout of the original email. What I am trying to underline here is that the process with the NCW is not at all streamlined and I do not even have an update on my complaint till now," she sighed.

In the email, the NCW had stated that Qureshi's complaint was a time-bound issue and the police must respond within 30 days of its filing. But even after the passage of a lot of time, she does not have an inkling about its status. "I followed up too, but it was of no use."

Hameeda Nayeem, a prominent civil society member and retired English professor based in Srinagar, maintained that she had always dismissed the commission as "she never thought that it had ever resolved anything."

She said that the SCPWCR only had "nominal and cosmetic value" in the Valley. "Woh bas daastaan sunte the, mujhe nahi laga kaam kuch hota tha" (they would only listen to our stories, and I do not think that they ever did much).

"How will they?" she questioned, "It has all been a business appointed and conducted by New Delhi in Kashmir. Through these commissions they barely ever resolved the issues of women and only sought to achieve control over the population," the fiery professor said.

Discussing the next possible course of action in Kashmir, Nayeema Mehjoor believed that it was foolish to make another commission after wiping out the old one.

Interestingly, Rekha Sharma, the chairperson of the National Commission for Women, while speaking to the Indian media a while back had said, "Jammu and Kashmir will have its own Women's Commission once the elections will be held in J&K and an Assembly will be constituted."

"As an old officer in the administrative setup, I do not wish to see another commission but the reinstatement of Article 370," Mehjoor, the ex-commissioner, said. "The dialogue between women can only begin once the special status is back and not without it."

But until the political processes kickstart, the biggest issue remains the inability of victims to free themselves of the abuse, even when they wanted to, Sabreena Bhat said.

"Kashmiri women are unaware of their rights," she said. "The general response by a Kashmiri woman, bred in this society, to her husband shouting at her would be: 'if not at me, then at whom will he shout?' I know women who are highly qualified and very outspoken in their professional field but are married to physically abusive partners and keep their mouth shut about it."

In her view, young girls need to be educated and taught the basic difference between protecting the family's honour and protecting themselves. "In Kashmir people follow a lot of traditions and customs. These things are given more importance than religion at times. Outsiders paint the Kashmiri society as religiously extreme, but they do not know that when it comes to cultural traditions, Kashmiris overlook even religion," Bhat shared.

She also asserted that the common perception: 'mard toh mard hai, woh kuch bhi kar sakta hai' (a man is a man, and hence he can do anything) is "the real rot in the system that needs to be ripped off" before any more discussions on women's rights can be conducted.

## Guns Roar Along LoC In Rajouri

district while on August 1, an army jawan was killed in firing by Pakistan in Rajouri sector. On July 11, two women were killed as Pakistan shelled forward posts and villages along the LoC in different sectors in Poonch district and on July 10, an Army man was killed in a ceasefire violation by Pakistan in Rajouri district.

## ACB Books Seven For Illegal...

Municipal Committee (MC) Katra, Ravi Kumar; then Inspector MC Katra, presently posted as KhilafWarzi officer MC Samba, Ashwani Kumar; and then president MC KatraMulkh Raj Sharma. Jugal Kishore of Udhampur, and Sat Paul and KailashNathPangotra of Jammu were the other persons named in the FIR, the spokesman said.

The case was registered following a preliminary inquiry by the ACB regarding the role of MC Katra officials and revenue department Katra after a commercial superstructure was erected on a state land measuring five Marlas in Katra town by Satpal in violation of the provisions of J&K Control of Building Operation Act (COBA), 1988.

"The inquiry revealed that the piece of land in question was allotted to one Fazlu in 1964 under a scheme to rehabilitate the landless downtrodden community of sweepers. But the ownership rights regarding the said land were never conferred upon him and therefore, the same could not be sold to any person," the spokesman said.

In 1999, he said, thenNaibTehsildar Nek Ram, without any legal justification, changed entries with respect to the land and entered the name of one Jugal Kishore, who subsequently raised the double storey super-structure over the said land without obtaining building permission from the MC Katra.

It has also been found that on March 22, 2006, Kishore sold the land along with the erected structure to Sat Paul and Pangotra for consideration of Rs 11 lakh through an agreement to sell, duly ratified, however no change was effected in the revenue records in favour of Sat Paul and KailashNath, the spokesman said.

He said notices under various sections of the J&K Control of Building Operation Act were issued by the Municipal Committee Katra clandestinely in the name of Ashok Kumar in connection with the construction.

Taking advantage of the "clandestine and superficial process" adopted by MC Katra, Kishore approached the MC for a proper building permission, whereby, his application for building permission with incomplete documents were also issued and shown dispatched.

"The inquiry also revealed that due to deliberate inaction on part of Municipal Authorities Katra, the construction work was allowed to continue under the garb of the pendency of application for permission," the ACB spokesman said.

However, a fresh report was submitted by KhilafWarzi Inspector where-in illegal construction of Guest House with changed nomenclature was reported, whereupon again a notice was issued to Sat Paul and Kailash-Nath to discontinue the construction and show cause as to why the illegal construction be not demolished.



# LG Tours Baramulla, Reviews Developmental Scenario

- Funding for Jetty Bridge awaiting completion for 22 Years
- Lays foundation stone of Govt. Degree College, Boniyar

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 19: Setting the tone and tenor of Government's relentless pursuit towards ensuring extensive development across J&K, the Lieutenant Governor, Manoj Sinha today while reviewing the developmental scenario in Baramulla District, approved 21 crore funding under JKIDFC for completing Jetty Bridge awaiting completion for 22 Years and directed for completion of the project within 2 years.

While interacting with scores of deputations at the District Headquarters, the Lt Governor took immediate cognizance of the demands related to various works of immediate public utility and announced Rs 50 lakhs as first installment of Untied Grant to all Deputy Commissioners across J&K for taking up the same on priority and to accentuate the overall developmental ecosystem in the UT.

The Lt Governor during the visit took a comprehensive assessment of the development scenario and other important local issues. At the outset, the Lt Governor inspected Government Medical College Baramulla and took the first hand appraisal of the pace of the construction work. He was informed that the College is being developed at an estimated cost of Rs 139 crore and shall be completed by July 2021. He directed the concerned agencies to expedite the pace of work so that it is completed within the stipulated

time frame.

The Lt Governor also visited Dak Bungalow where he distributed Special Aids and Appliances among 10 children with special needs under Samagra Shiksha. He evinced keen interest about the well-being of these children and directed the officers to provide the best possible facilities to them.

During the Development Review meeting, Deputy Commissioner, Baramulla, Dr. G.N. Itoo gave a detailed Power-Point presentation of the various ongoing developmental works being executed by different departments in the district. He also informed the Lt Governor about the achievements that have been recorded in different sectors.

On achievements made under PMGSY, he informed the chair that all the unconnected habitations in Baramulla will be covered under PMGSY by March, 2021.

During the review, the Lt Governor directed the officers to formulate District Capex Plans after a holistic assessment of the developmental needs of the District so that the allocation is utilized in the most efficient way thereby addressing the needs of the common people. He also called for utilizing the CSR allocation by NHPC in the most effective manner.

Taking serious note of the inadvertent delays in the issuance of Domicile Certificates, the Lt Governor directed

the officers to ensure seamless issuance of Domicile Certificates for PRC holders without requiring additional documents and simplifying the issuance process for people applying under other categories.

The Lt Governor directed the officers to lay special focus on improving the prompt service delivery mechanism for timely disposal of public grievances. Every possibility should be explored in meeting the developmental expectations of the people adding that a common man should not suffer for getting even simpler services and developmental needs, he remarked.

He further directed for 100% saturation and coverage of all Centrally Sponsored and Social Security Schemes so that the larger population can avail of the maximum benefits out of these schemes and programmes. He also directed to ensure that 100 % payment with Aadhaar linkage is done to benefit the beneficiaries under Social Security Schemes.

Specific directions were given by the Lt Governor to the concerned officers for tapping the full potential of all the Centrally Sponsored Schemes of Government of India in Agriculture, Horticulture, Animal & Sheep Husbandry and other allied sectors so that the benefits percolate to maximum population in the region.

He exhorted upon the officers to take all necessary measures to streamline the developmental process and remove

bottlenecks, if any, to ensure that the execution of any project does not remain delayed unnecessarily.

The Lieutenant Governor also e-inaugurated and laid e-foundation stones of several developmental projects which include- foundation of Academic Block at GDC Pattan, Commissioning of 1x6.3 MVA Receiving Station at Achabal Rafiabad, Inauguration of 1x20 M Span Steel Girder Bridge over Nallah Ningli at Bangdara, Inauguration of 1x20M span steel Grider bridge over Ningli Nallah at Chan Mohalla, Inauguration of road from Khaitangan to Takiya Wagoors, Inauguration of Hatchipora-Chatoosa Road, inclusion of 500 eligible families in AAY category and inclusion of 691 eligible persons in several pension schemes.

In continuation of his public outreach programme, the Lt Governor met 18 delegations at Baramulla and Chahal Boniyar, who appraised him about their issues and demands of vital public significance.

Later, the Lt Governor paid a visit to the frontier area of Boniyar, Baramulla where he laid the foundation stone for the establishment of Government Degree College, costing Rs 13.92 crore. The establishment of the college was the long pending demand of the people of the area and the College shall be completed within a period of 15 months.

## Labourer Drowns While Extracting Sand From Jhelum In Pulwama

SRINAGAR- A Labourer drowned in river Jhelum while he was extracting sand near Kernal Kakapora area of south Kashmir Pulwama on Wednesday.

Official sources said that the 20-year-old labourer identified as Irshad Ahmad Sheikh son of Bashir Ahmad Sheikh was extracting sand when he drowned near Sambora bridge.

A number of locals jumped into the river to save the youth. However, they could only retrieve his body after hectic searches, the sources added.

Meanwhile, the police took the body to the nearby facility for postmortem and it would be handed over to the family for last rites after formalities are completed, they added.

## Ankita Made MD Trade Promotion Organization

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 19: Jammu and Kashmir Government today posted Ankita Kar, IRAS, as Managing Director, J&K Trade Promotion Organization, relieving Manoj Kumar Dwivedi of the additional charge of the post.

As per a government order she shall also hold the charge of Managing Director, J&K IT Infrastructure Company and MD/CEO, Jammu/Srinagar Mass Rapid Transit Corporation, relieving Simrandeep Singh and Vikas Kundal respectively of the additional charge of the posts.

### HOUSE ON SALE

Three Story House on 15 Marlas land having four bathrooms, Hammam, Master Bedrom etc , on sale at Shah Vilayat Colony Seetar 8, Umarabad Near Noora Hospital Srinagar.

Contact : 9622604451  
7006568810  
Plz Call after 5 PM

Info

### Govt. of Jammu and Kashmir. Office of the Executive Engineer HNTDA

Subject: This office NIT No: 05/HNTDA of 2020-21- DATED 14-08-2020 ISSUED under endorsement No : HNTDA/Divn./81-85Dated 14-08-2020

#### Corrigendum

Kindly read the class of contractor as DEE/CEE/BEE

INSTEAD OF

Class of contractor CEE/BEE as advertised

All other terms and conditions will remain same as already advertised.

No: HNTDA/Divn/90-95  
Dated: 18-08-2020

DIPK-NB-1891/20

Sd/= Executive Engineer, HNTDA

### Government of Jammu & Kashmir OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER DEPARTMENT OF FLORICULTURE KASHMIR SRINAGAR

E-NIT No: 24 of 2020-21 Dated: 18.08.2020.

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

S. No	Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. In lacs)	Cost of T/Doc. (In Rs.)	Earnest Money (In Rs)	Time of completion	Class of Contractor	Account Head
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1.	Creation of 63 KVA Sub-Station along with HT/LT Line for providing power supply to the lighting system at Nishat ParkBandipora.	3.41	300/-	6820/-	45 days	Electrical Class "A"/ SSI Unit	CSR

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

1.	Period of downloading of bidding document	19/08/2020 from 01:00 Pm to 01/09/2020 up to 04:00 PM
2.	Bid submission Start Date	19/08/2020 from 01:30 Pm
3.	Bid submission End date	01/09/2020 up to 04:00 PM
4.	Date and time of Opening of Tenders (Online)	02/09/2020 at 02:00 Pm

- Bids must be accompanied with cost of Tender document in the shape of e-Challan/copy of receipt from Treasury favouring of **Executive Engineer, Floriculture Department Srinagar** (tender inviting authority) indicating name of work by crediting the requisite charges to the MH: 0406-02-112-Public Gardens (Floriculture Department Kashmir) in favour of **Executive Engineer** (tender inviting authority) and Earnest money/Bid security in the shape of fresh CDR/FDR pledged to **Executive Engineer Department of Floriculture Kashmir**.(Tender receiving authority).
- The date and time of opening of technical Bids shall be notified on Web Site [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The Financial bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer Department of Floriculture Kashmir Srinagar (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).**

No: EE/FDK/759-65  
Dated: 18/08/2020  
DIPK-4222/20

Sd/ Executive Engineer  
Deptt: of Floriculture, Kashmir.

#### DIAL-EMMA



- TRAFFIC POLICE : 9419993745, 01998-266686
- PCR: 0194-2452092,2455883
- PDD: 0194-2450213
- FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES : 2479488,2452222,2452155
- CAPD: 18001807011
- SMC HEALTH OFFICER: 9469409081

#### AIRPORTS

SHIEK UL ALAM AIRPORT: 01942303311



#### RAILWAYS

- SRINAGAR: 0194-2103259
- ANANTNAG: 01932-228243
- BARAMULLA: 0194-102029
- BIJHERA: 01932-228243
- PAMPORE: 01933-294132
- PATTAN: 01954-293507
- QAZIGUND: 01951-296153



#### HIGHWAY STATUS



- Sgr-Jammu highway - ( Open )
- Mughal Road - (Open)
- Srinagar- Leh- (Open)



HIJRI  
CALENDAR

29 Zil-Haj  
1441

#### PRAYERS

FAJR	4: 24
ZUHR	12: 35
ASR	5:20
Magrib	7:18
ISHA	8:44

## This Day In History

- 636 - Battle at Yarmuk: Muslims beat Byzantines
- 1641 - England & Scotland sign Treaty of Pacification
- 1828 - Hindi reform movement Brahma Samaj founded by Ram Mohan Roy and Dwarkanath Tagore in Calcutta
- 1864 - 8th/last day of battle at Deep Bottom Run Va (about 3,900 casualties)
- 1900 - Great Britain beats France by 158 runs in Paris; cricket's only appearance at an Olympic Games
- 1905- Sun Yat-sen, Chinese revolutionary, forms the first chapter of T'ung Meng Hui, a union of all secret societies determined to bringing down the Manchus
- 1914 - Battle at Gumbinnen, East-Prussia: Russians beat Germans
- 1914 - Battle at Morhange: German troops chase French, killing thousands
- 1914 - Bavarian troops kill 50 inhabitants of Nomeny, France
- 1914 - US & British forces destroy German 7th Army at Falaise-Argentan Gap
- 1919 - Ed Klepper & \$31,500; Jackson involved in 'Black Sox Scandal'
- 1919
- 1918 - WWI: Britain opens offensive on Western front
- invasion in Mongolia
- 1940 - 1st Polish squadrons fight along allies in the Battle of Britain
- 1944 - Soviet offensive at Jassy & Kisinev
- 1944 - US & British forces destroy German 7th Army at Falaise-Argentan Gap
- 1953 - General Fazlollah Zahedi arrests Iranian Prime Minister Mohammad Mosaddegh in a CIA supported coup d'état
- 1960 - USSR recovers 2 dogs, 1st living organisms to return from space
- 1961- East Germany begins erecting 5' high wall along the border with the west to replace the barbed wire put up Aug 13
- 1968 - During the night 250,000 Soviet and Warsaw Pact troops invade Czechoslovakia in response to the Prague Spring
- 1974 - Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed is elected fifth President of India
- 1975 - IL-62 crashes south of Damascus, Syria, killing 126
- 1975 - Viking 1 launched to orbit around Mars, soft landing
- USA
- 1977 - NASA launches Voyager 2 towards Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus & Neptune
- 1980 - UN Security Council condemns (14-0, US abstains) Israeli declaration that all of Jerusalem is its capital
- 1985 - Israel ships 96 TOWs to Iran on behalf of US
- 1985 - Libya throws out 1000s Tunisian/Egyptian gas workers
- 1986 Phils Don Carmen perfect game bid is broken in 9th
- 1988 - 6.5 earthquake strikes India/Nepal, 1,000s killed
- 1990 - Iraq moves Western hostages to military installations (human shields)
- 1991 - Estonia formally declares its independence from the USSR
- 1991 - The United Democratic Front, one of the most prominent anti-apartheid movements, comprising of over 400 workers', church, civic and student organisations, dissolves
- 1992 - England get 7-363 in 55 overs vs Pakistan, then world ODI record
- 1993 - Oslo Peace Accords signed, after secret negotiations in Norway, followed by a public ceremony in Washington, D.C. the following month
- 1996 - India defeat Pakistan in Under-15 World Challenge Final at Lord's
- 1998 - U.S. embassy bombings: US military launches cruise missile attacks against alleged al-Qaida camps in Afghanistan and a suspected chemical plant in Sudan in retaliation for August 7 bombings of American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania
- 2002 - A group of Iraqis opposed to the regime of Saddam Hussein take over the Iraqi Embassy in Berlin for five hours before releasing their hostages and surrendering.
- 2012 - South Africa become the top-ranked test cricket nation after defeating England

## From KO Archives

## Public to pay for Hizb decision: RR

SRINAGAR: Fear has gripped several Sopore localities after a Rashtriya Rifles (RR) officer warned locals that common people would have to pay dearly for the cease-fire withdrawal by the Hizb-ul-Mujahideen, news agency, KPS reported from Sopore today.

The threat came this morning when residents of Seelu found themselves under a security forces cordon following a night during which they kept up a fearful barrage of gunfire, reports from Sopore said.

Inhabitants were ordered to assemble in the open and village elders told to use the public address systems in mosques to announce that people would now be penalised for the Hizb decision to revoke the cease-fire, the report said. An officer of the 22nd Rashtriya Rifles told the assembled villagers to co-operate with the security forces and keep them informed about militants' movements, threatening that the entire locality would be razed to the ground if the security forces came under a militant attack.

Kashmir Observer, August 20, 2000

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## Congress needs a new leader

Former Congress president Rahul Gandhi has once again made it clear that he won't be taking over as the party's new president and would want a non-Gandhi chief as new Congress leader. His stand has been endorsed by his sister, AICC general secretary Priyanka Gandhi. According to Priyanka if the new Congress chief shifts her from Uttar Pradesh where she has currently been posted by her party to Andaman Nicobar, she will happily go. It has been a year since Gandhi resigned as the Congress president after his party suffered a humiliating loss to the BJP in last year's national election. Congress could just muster 54 seats against the BJP's landslide victory of over 300 seats.

Ever since Congress fortunes have only further plummeted. The BJP continues to reign supreme. A recent India Today survey found out that Narendra Modi is India's best Prime Minister and Yogi Adityanath was the best Chief Minister. In fact, 66 percent of those polled said that Modi will be a good Prime Minister for the next term as well while Rahul Gandhi got just 8 percent votes.

The BJP has received a tremendous popular boost after it accomplished a series of once unthinkable ideological projects like revocation of Article 370 in Kashmir and the inauguration of Ram Mandir at Ayodhya. And by the time the next election draws around, the BJP is further expected to further consolidate its hold on the electorate. That is, if Congress remains as rudderless and adrift as it does now.

For the past year, Congress has Sonia Gandhi as an interim president. The prospect of a non-Gandhi president taking over has turned out to be elusive. For all the talk of Rahul Gandhi and his sister, there has been no visible effort for the election of a new Congress president. This, despite the fact that several senior Congress leaders have displayed serious concern about the state of the party, among them veterans like Kapil Sibal.

Going forward, the election of a full-fledged leader is the most urgent need of the hour for the Congress party. A new leader would need time to settle down and formulate a comprehensive strategy to take on the BJP. There are still four years to go before another general election and the party would need to prepare for it in right earnest. There is also the election in West Bengal. If the party is serious about getting back in electoral reckoning anytime soon, it will have to start early. And the first thing to do for this is to elect a new leader.

### OTHER OPINION

## Facebook faces heat

Facebook has had its fair share of critics who have repeatedly called out the social network for failing to adequately police hateful and misleading content. The global giant has come under intense scrutiny in India after a Wall Street Journal report indicated that it had gone easy on hate speech by a BJP lawmaker to protect the company's business prospects in its biggest market. Facebook has over 340 million users and its WhatsApp chat service has 400 million users in India. If that is not foothold enough, in April, Facebook announced it was investing \$5.7 billion in Reliance Jio. The insinuation of a 'broader pattern of favouritism' towards the BJP has been denied by Facebook, but it has plenty to explain than a casual acknowledgment that 'while we know there is more to do, we're making progress on enforcement'.

The Opposition's demand for an investigation into Facebook's conduct in India is only going to get shriller, notwithstanding the BJP vociferously taking on the Congress over charges of spreading fake news and influencing the electorate. The Parliamentary Committee on Information Technology may be split over summoning Facebook executives to explain the alleged bias towards the ruling party, but the issue does require fact-checking and transparency. A free run is against national interest and democratic values.

The issue of biased content moderation applies to all social media platforms, not just Facebook. The impact of hateful, inciteful, inaccurate content flowing without check has been devastating in India. As Facebook finds itself embroiled in the political discourse, be it in India or the US where the upcoming presidential election is set to test the efficacy of its self-regulation, the message for amending processes cannot be clearer. For a hugely successful company, profit cannot be the sole driving force. Striving towards being more responsible is a mark of character. That, in the long run, is priceless.

Tribuneindia

# Ataturk was Islamophobic Statesman

He turned Turkey into an isolated nation-state bereft of its deep Islamic roots and rich Ottoman culture

Sheikh Shahid

The Hat law was introduced in 1925. Mustafa Kemal was of the mind that European civilization would not accept the Turkish people in a fez, which he said, "sat on our heads as a sign of ignorance, fanaticism, of hatred to progress and civilization."

The August 8 issue of Kashmir Observer carried an opinion piece called "Ataturk and the Question of Hagia Sofia" written by Faheem Jeelani Gundroo.

Before examining the reason behind Ataturk's conversion of Hagia Sofia into a museum, the author sets out to clear the "crusty old bird mis-construction" that Mustafa Kemal was westernised. To foreground his military acumen and leadership, he is compared to the great 12th century Muslim military leader Saladin.

Further, as in awe of Ataturk, my friend dives ahead to draw another comparison. This time, in my opinion, an overblown one. He considers him to be the modern interpretation of Khalid Bin Waleed (Peace be upon him), one of the greatest military generals in history, who the Prophet called Saifullah or the Sword of Allah after the battle of Muthah.

These comparisons conjure up Jonathan Phillips's biography of Saladin, in which he quotes I. Gershoni and J.P. Jankowski's "Egypt, Islam and the Arabs",

"In September 1922, rumors began to circulate in Egypt that Kemal might start a jihad to liberate Egypt from the British. "Poets and illustrators compared him to the Prophet's companion and great general, Khalid bin al-Waleed, and to Saladin".

One wonders what those poets and illustrators would have had to say after Ataturk's modernisation of Turkey!

In 1902, when the results were out at the Royal Military Academy, Mustafa Kemal was number eight among Four hundred and fifty nine cadets. He had graduated with proverbial flying colors. By that time, the curriculum at the academy had come quite close to that of European institutions; majorly at the expense of religious subjects like Persian and Arabic. The academy had been molded by the military and bureaucratic reforms of the early nineteenth century with the goal to churn out educated men with professional militarism instead of ordinary educated citizens.

The spheres of study were heavily influenced by French and later German disciplines as well. Around 1883-1884, the famous German theorist Colmar Von der Goltz visited the academy at the sultan's invitation and helped transform the academy on the lines of the German institution, Kriegsakademie of Berlin. Along with the introduction of algebra and other technical disciplines, Goltz laid special emphasis on the role of military in the society. In his book, "Das Volk in Waffen" or The Nation in Arms, he had argued that war was inevitable between nations and it was an indispensable duty of the military to encompass all the spheres of the society in their role to defend and drive the nation. In other words, the military was to be the elite class of the society.

Glottz's ideas of a distinguished military class were not fulfilled until the Young Turk Revolution of 1908. "It was therefore ironic", writes Klaus Kreiser in his biography of Ataturk that, "Goltz's ideas gained more currency in the Ottoman Empire than they did in his native Germany".

By 1908, the idea touted by Goltz was embedded in almost every Ottoman officer's mind. The idea that they had the duty of transforming the nation and that they were, in fact, the elite among the commoners.

After graduating from the academy, Mustafa Kemal had earned good respect in this "privileged class".

By 1907, this class was quite sympathetic to Goltz's ideas but was also aware that the Ottoman state was a polyethnic empire with a diverse set of social mores and traditions. In 1907, Ataturk proposed that Ottoman Empire should dissolve itself in order to make way for population exchanges which would in turn give way to the Turkish state. From then on, the prime priority was to vouch for Turkish nationalism.

The victory of Japan over Russia cemented Kemal's view of a national consciousness. The Balkan wars of 1912-13 had exposed the loopholes in the Ottoman military, following which the government invited Lieutenant General Otto Liman von Sanders for a thorough restructuring of the army across the ranks. World War I was verging on and the Ottoman army proved their mettle with a valorous determination. After the war, the old school officers who were sympathizers of the sultan got sidelined and young officers of Kemal Ataturk's generation got promoted to important positions. In 1915, Lieutenant Colonel Mustafa Kemal took charge of a division.

However, these military men considered themselves to be a class apart from the masses. Many historians have stated that these young men were attracted to Gustave Le Bon's idea of crowd psychology in which military is the crown of the ruling elite.

Mustafa Kemal was no different. He had also found Le Bon's notions very enticing. Recep Cengiz states that he had read Le Bon's magnum opus, "Lois Psychologiques de L'Evolution Des Peuples" and later Turkish renditions of Le Bon's "Enseignements Psychologiques de la Guerre Europeenne", "Le Desequilibre du Monde", and "Hier et Demain" with unflagging interest.

Another doctrine which was very close to the hearts of the educated class of Turks to which Ataturk belonged was the German philosophy of vulgar materialism; a potpourri of materialism, rationalism and Darwinism. Later, the ottoman version of this materialism centered upon the downplaying of religion. Their idol was the German physiologist Ludwig Buchner, the author of "Kraft und Stoff" or Force and Matter.

Ataturk was no intellectual but he certainly was a good reader. He had read Leone Caetani's "Annali dell'Islam" in Turkish translation. Infact, Quoting Recep Cengiz, Sukru Hanioğlu writes, "He seems to have fully agreed with the Italian Orientalist that revelation was a myth fabricated by Muslim tradition; that the Quran represented Muhammad's own composition; that the prophet adopted many practices from Judaism; and that the driving force behind Islamic expansion was not religious zeal but the rapacity of the Arab tribesmen" He further comments that, "As president of the Republic, he went so far as to make cautious use of Caetani's words when drafting a chapter on the origins of Islam for the official high school history textbook."

In November 1922, the Sultanate had been abolished but the Caliphate was still there. There were emotions of Muslims attached with the institution. Mustafa Kemal himself praised the Caliphate as an emirate tying together Muslims, which would prove very prosperous to the Turkish state and the entire Muslim world.

However, he was also aware that the Caliphate was that one institution which could prove to be an obstacle on his way to be the nationalist autocratic ruler of Turkey. As Sir Mohammad Iqbal had said:

"main khatakt houn dil-e-yaz-

dan main kantay ki tarah"

Like a thorn, I rankle God's heart  
On March 1, 1924, the National Assembly opened for a session and in the opening speech, Mustafa Kemal made three main points: safeguarding of the Republic, the creation of a national education system, and the need to cleanse and elevate the Islamic faith by rescuing it from being used as a political instrument. He emphasized that politics was harmful to religion when he stated, "it has now become a plainly evident truth that it is necessary to liberate and to elevate the Islamic religion from its position of being a tool of politics, in the way that has been traditional for centuries". He then prepared a draft bill to abolish the Caliphate.

On March 2, 1924, the proposals of Mustafa Kemal were discussed and accepted in a meeting. After 623 years of being founded by Osman along the borders of Byzantine Empire, the Ottoman sultanate was abolished.

Alama's lamentation immediately rings the mind;

Chaaq kar di turk-e-nadaan ne khilafat ki Qaba

Saadgi muslim ki dekh, auroun ki ayaari bhi dekh

The Imprudent Turk has torn the cloak of the Caliphate

Just look at the unfamiliarity of the Muslim and also look at the cunningness of others - (The Eid Crescent- Sir Mohammad Iqbal)

Gazi Dogan, a PhD student in the department of History at Kansas State University writes that after the establishment of the Kemalist single-party regime, social and legal reforms were launched and implemented by the Kemalist Government in a Jacobin way.

In 1925, the Hat Law was introduced. Mustafa Kemal was of the mind that European civilization would not accept the Turkish people in a fez, which he said, "sat on our heads as a sign of ignorance, fanaticism, of hatred to progress and civilization". The New York Times stated that "Mustapha Kemal and his associates evidently want the Turks to cease being a peculiar people, in either garments or habits."

Another "reform" was closing down of the Dervish lodges. In 1925, the Tarikats, religious orders and dervish lodges were banned by the Government. "This was one of the significant Jacobin-style interventions in the people's religious life during the Kemalist modernization. As a modernist, Mustafa Kemal showed zero tolerance to the religious social institutions which were seen as responsible for the backwardness of the Turkish society", writes Gazi Dogan.

The new turkey was to be rid of its Islamic past. Consequently, hijab was banned, shariah was outlawed and even Azaan didn't sound the same.

The language reforms were another sad legacy of the Kemalist regime. The Arabic alphabet was replaced by Latin alphabet of Europe. This cut off Turks from their Islamic history. They could no longer read the calligraphic inscriptions in old imperial mosques and neither could they read the vast Islamic literature. In a way, Turkey was forced into an isolated nation-state bereft of its deep Islamic roots and rich Ottoman culture.

To conclude, it won't be inapposite to say that Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, being the first president, was also Turkey's first Islamophobic statesman and military general.

(Sheikh Shahid from Thamuna, Pulwama is a Science graduate with a passion for literature and history)



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## Let businesses reopen

The catch-22 lockdown situation has weighed heavy on businesses in Kashmir. Even as the spectre of Covid-19 has materialised into a grave danger in Kashmir, it is still the colossal loss of wealth and hunger that is most horrifying. The current lockdown in place in Kashmir is a puzzling paradox. Globally, countries are opening up their economies. Even in India, states with higher number of Covid-19 cases are opening up businesses. Why hasn't this been the case in Kashmir?

Here, shops in mohalla markets are given a leeway while big markets

such as Lalchowk and Nawhatta in Srinagar are facing the heat of a stricter lockdown.

Lockdowns were imposed with the idea of buying time and improving the health infrastructure that had risen due to the pandemic. We're six months into the Covid-19 lockdown in Kashmir and it is still unknown as to why we're still so underprepared.

The disruption of the economic system in Kashmir has not been addressed adequately. The government hasn't given any substantial relief packages to people in Kashmir. It is shifting the responsibility of preven-

tion on people as it has failed to equip our healthcare system. Why must a poor shopkeeper take the brunt of the lapses that our administration has made?

Shops with their shutters down and men in khaki thronging the streets is a sight that brings back memories of hartals and curfews. Why is a curfew and a Covid-19 lockdown being implemented interchangeably in Kashmir? The long lockdown last year that followed the abrogation of Article 370 had also crippled our economy. Coupled with the Covid-19 lockdown, it has totally shattered it.

Therefore, it is absolutely important for businesses to open up in Kashmir now. The adverse effects of a yearlong lockdown in Kashmir might outlast generations. Such a realisation only goes on to foreground the urgency with which our economy needs to be revived.

Therefore, the government needs to lift the lockdown and find other ways to ensure SOPs are followed. Not opening up the economy as promptly as possible or reimposing more lockdowns is tantamount to deliberately pushing people to hunger and deprivation.

Tania Shafi  
Downtown, Srinagar



# Don't try to change things you can't control

To nurture the acceptance mindset, build a regular well-being practice which includes self-compassion mantras, meditation and expressions of gratitude

Jen Kim

Despite what each person may think, their preferences are their preferences, and do not automatically equate with 'right.' People will argue and argue about their different preferences, but both are typically within the realm of normal. Relationships work best when we compromise and take one another's

In so many situations, especially those beyond my control, I've always found it difficult to accept things as they are. The last several months stuck indoors has tested my patience and sanity to the extreme. With a new baby in tow as well as an inescapable terror about the future, my inability to accept this new reality has resulted in nothing but perpetual anguish and rage. This is not healthy. I am not healthy.

I imagine there are many of us who feel this way, constantly vacillating between fear and fury - which is why, for all of our sakes, I turned to the professionals to show us how to better accept the things we simply can't (or don't want to) accept.

#### Free your mind(fulness)

From the numerous psychologists and mental health experts who responded to my call for help, one common theme emerged: Mindfulness.

Paul Harrison, a mindfulness expert and founder of TheDailyMediation.com, describes mindfulness as "the practice of being aware of the present moment and without judgement" and essentially the key to mastering acceptance or the ability "to be non-reactive to people, events and our own thoughts and feelings."

Mindfulness sounds like a simple concept in theory but practising it successfully is far from simple. When's the last time I didn't judge, criticise or critique a situation that wasn't to my liking? I can't even remember.

So where do we start?

#### Right vs. wrong is wrong

A powerful step in our path towards mindful living, says Harrison, is to stop thinking in terms of "right" and "wrong." This is challenging, especially if you've already set your mind on things happening or being a certain way.

So Harrison's advice is to practice "calm observation", which is to try to perceive things without reacting to them. Doing so "trains the mind to experience negative thoughts and feelings in a non-reactive way."

That said, you shouldn't hide or stifle your emotions. You can and should feel however you feel, but the key is to take a step back and observe "what is happening in the present moment, and not getting lost in thoughts or feelings," he says.

After all, being judgmental is a natural human behaviour, according to Terry B. McDougall, an author and career coach. It is when we feel threatened or unsafe that we feel most judgmental - it's our "fight or flight" instincts kicking in. That's why it's important to "stop and ask



yourself what belief is at the heart of your judgement," she says. Look for valid evidence "to either confirm or invalidate your judgement" to prevent basing your feelings on unfounded assumptions.

Embracing an objective mindset can be transformative in all areas of your life, including relationships. In his therapy practice, Ned Presnall helps couples reframe right and wrong and see them instead as "competing preferences," helping both partners recognise that their behaviours and feelings are equally valid.

"Despite what each person may think, their preferences are their preferences, and do not automatically equate with 'right.' People will argue and argue about their different preferences, but both are typically within the realm of normal. Relationships work best when we compromise and take one another's perspective."

And, it's worth emphasising that "acceptance is not resignation," says psychotherapist Michael Ceely, so you don't have to like this reality - you only have to acknowledge that it is the current reality.

#### Work in progress

As with most skills, mastering acceptance is not a one-time event nor should it be rushed. "Acceptance often requires ongoing work and conscious effort," says Nicole Arzt, a marriage and family therapist. "We need to remind ourselves that it's okay not to accept something right away - sometimes we just need to feel our anger or sadness or fear." In fact, putting too much pressure on ourselves to come to terms with something immediately can backfire, since it may "intellectualise and invalidate our feelings, which in turn, makes it harder to accept the situation."

To nurture the acceptance mindset, Alan Chu, an assistant psychology professor at University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, recommends building a regular well-being practice which includes self-compassion mantras (focused on mindfulness, common humanity and self-kindness), meditation and expressions of gratitude.

And the reward for being more accepting? A happier life. Now isn't this a challenge worth accepting?

-Psychology Today

## Is Gaming The Future Of The Virtual World?

During the pandemic, digital 3-D environments are where much of life is taking place

Ruchir Sharma | New York Times

Even before the pandemic and the lockdowns, digital games were fast emerging as one of the world's favourite pastimes. But when live entertainment came to a halt, the virtual kind just took off.

Since April, every week has ended with US box office receipts down at least 97 per cent and gaming revenue up by more than 50 per cent, compared with the same week the year before. Driven by widening bandwidths that make digital games fun to play on mobile phones, global gaming revenues have risen steeply from under \$20 billion in 2010 and are on track to hit \$160 billion this year — more than books, music or movies.

But gaming is doing more than displacing other forms of entertainment. It is also providing digital three-dimensional environments in which people can interact freely, develop content and pass on knowledge in new ways. Though built by a creative class of coders for the purpose of play, these rapidly growing platforms are shaping the future of the virtual economy — indeed, the future of the virtual world.

During the lockdowns, gaming platforms have been thriving as venues for all manner of events. Savvy teachers are holding online classes where their students are already spending their time: on game-focused sites like Twitch and Discord. People have held beach weddings inside Animal Crossing and concerts inside Fortnite. Students at the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Chicago and other universities built 3-D replicas of their school settings inside Minecraft and some held graduation celebrations there.

There is even evidence to suggest that playing these games can have beneficial effects, including improvement in spatial skills, motivation and learning concepts.

These 3-D worlds are good business. Consider Fortnite. Made by Epic Games, it uses the "freemium" model: Players



During the lockdowns, gaming platforms have been thriving as venues for all manner of events. Savvy teachers are holding online classes where their students are already spending their time: on game-focused sites like Twitch and Discord. People have held beach weddings inside Animal Crossing and concerts inside Fortnite. Students at the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Chicago and other universities built 3-D replicas of their school settings inside Minecraft and some held graduation celebrations there.

are allowed into the game's 3-D world free of charge, but once there, they can buy virtual accessories — equipment, outfits ("skins"), dance moves, even branded merchandise from outside vendors like the National Football League. Fortnite made an estimated \$1.8 billion last year, most of it from sales of virtual goods to its more than 350 million registered players. The game is seen as the harbinger of a day when consumers move seamlessly

between physical and virtual commercial spaces.

Aware of the threat posed by gaming companies, internet giants like Apple, Amazon and Google are racing for controlling stakes in what is sometimes called the "metaverse" — a term borrowed from Neal Stephenson's 1992 sci-fi novel "Snow Crash," which anticipated the arrival of a parallel online world. Companies like Microsoft have

already bought out online gaming pioneers like Mojang Studios, the creator of Minecraft, and have the resources to swallow many more.

#### Virtual world is young and rapidly evolving

Critics accuse the internet giants of taking an unfair cut of the nearly \$120 billion global market for mobile apps, three-quarters of which is spent on gaming apps. It is a sign of the times

that one company bold enough to take on the tech giants is a gaming company: Epic. On Thursday, after Apple and Google banished Fortnite from their app stores for dodging the 30 per cent cut that they take from app purchases, Epic shot back with lawsuits, calling the cut an "oppressive" tax.

The tech giants are not as invincible as they may appear. Remember that IBM, Intel and Microsoft were once seen as too big to challenge for supremacy in the digital age — but they weren't. The virtual world is young and rapidly evolving, and no company can claim a permanent place in it.

Many gaming companies have reached the stage where Google and Facebook were a decade ago — attracting millions of users but not yet making as much money on each user as they might. In other words, they have room to grow. These companies also have powerful backers: The Chinese tech giant Tencent, for instance, holds a stake in the companies behind seven of the 10 top-grossing games since 2008, including Epic.

The prospect of a virtual world built on gaming platforms may unsettle those who see digital games as a mind-deadening waste of time at best and full-immersion training in antisocial behaviour at worst. But this is an outdated view. There is even evidence to suggest that playing these games can have beneficial effects, including improvement in spatial skills, motivation and learning concepts.

What gaming is likely to do is take the common 2-D online experience and add a richer third dimension. The result would be fully realised "worlds" where people can work, play, study and shop in a more immersive way, fostering greater social interaction, creativity and innovation.

— Ruchir Sharma is the chief global strategist at Morgan Stanley Investment Management, the author, most recently, of "The Ten Rules of Successful Nations" and a contributing Opinion writer.





HERE’S WHY SOCIAL  
CONNECTION  
IS STRONGEST  
PROTECTIVE FACTOR  
FOR DEPRESSION

Agencies

A team of researchers named social connection as the strongest protective factor for depression and suggested that reducing sedentary activities such as TV watching and daytime napping could also help lower the risk of depression. Researchers have identified a set of modifiable factors from a field of over 100 that could represent valuable targets for preventing depression in adults. The study was published in The American Journal of Psychiatry. "Depression is the leading cause

of disability worldwide, but until now researchers have focused on only a handful of risk and protective factors, often in just one or two domains," says Karmel Choi, PhD, an investigator in the Department of Psychiatry and the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, and lead author of the paper. "Our study provides the most comprehensive picture to date of modifiable factors that could impact depression risk." To that end, researchers took a two-stage approach. The first stage drew on a database of over 100,000 participants in the UK Biobank -- a world-renowned cohort study of adults -- to systematically scan a wide range of modifiable factors that might be associated with the risk of developing depression, including social interaction, media use, sleep patterns, diet, physical activity, and environmental exposures. This method, known as an exposure-wide association scan (Ex-WAS), is analogous to genome-wide association studies (GWAS) that have been widely used to identify genetic risk factors for disease. The second stage took the strongest modifiable candidates from Ex-WAS and applied a technique called Mendelian randomization (MR) to investigate which factors may have

a causal relationship to depression risk. MR is a statistical method that treats genetic variation between people as a kind of natural experiment to determine whether an association is likely to reflect causation rather than just correlation. This two-stage approach allowed the MGH researchers to narrow the field to a smaller set of promising and potentially causal targets for depression. "Far and away the most prominent of these factors was the frequency of confiding in others, but also visits with family and friends, all of which highlighted the important protective effect of social connection and social cohesion," points out Jordan Smoller, MD, ScD associate chief for research in the MGH Department of Psychiatry, and senior author of the study. "These factors are more relevant now than ever at a time of social distancing and separation from friends and family." The protective effects of social connection were present even for individuals who were at higher risk for depression as a result of genetic vulnerability or early life trauma. On the other hand, factors associated with depression risk included time spent watching TV, though the authors note that

additional research is needed to determine if that risk was due to media exposure per se or whether time in front of the TV was a proxy for being sedentary. Perhaps more surprising, the tendency for daytime napping and regular use of multivitamins appeared to be associated with depression risk, though more research is needed to determine how these might contribute. The MGH study demonstrates an important new approach for evaluating a wide range of modifiable factors and using this evidence to prioritize targets for preventive interventions for depression.

"Depression takes an enormous toll on individuals, families, and society, yet we still know very little about how to prevent it," says Smoller. "We've shown that it's now possible to address these questions of broad public health significance through a large-scale, data-based approach that wasn't available even a few years ago. We hope this work will motivate further efforts to develop actionable strategies for preventing depression." The study's two-stage approach could also be used to inform the prevention of other health conditions.

Heavier Smoking May Increase  
Disease Risk By 30 Per Cent: Study

Press Trust Of India

Each cigarette smoked a day by heavier smokers may increase the risk of contracting diseases such as respiratory disorders, cancers and cardiovascular ailments by more than 30 per cent, according to a study. The study by researchers at the University of South Australia links heavier smoking with 28 separate health conditions, revealing a 17-fold increase in emphysema, eight-fold increase in atherosclerosis or clogged arteries and a 6.5-fold higher incidence of lung cancer. Light smokers on average smoke less than 10 cigarettes a day, moderate smokers 10 to 19 cigarettes a day, and 20 or more cigarettes a day is classified as heavy smoking, they said. The findings, published in the journal EClinicalMedicine, analysed hospital data and mortality statistics from more than 152,483 smokers in the UK Biobank to look how heavier smoking affects disease risks.



The risk of suffering respiratory diseases, cancers and cardiovascular diseases increased with each cigarette smoked per day, said the researchers. The links between heavier smoking and emphysema, heart disease, pneumonia and respiratory cancers

were particularly high. However, the researchers also found associations with many other respiratory diseases, renal failure, septicaemia, eye disorders, and complications of surgery or medical procedures. "Tobacco smoking is the leading

preventable cause of death worldwide and smokers typically die 10 years earlier than non-smokers," said University of South Australia professor Elina Hypponen. "Despite a global decline in smoking over the last 20 years, an estimated 20 per cent of the world's population aged over 15 years are still smoking tobacco," said Professor Hypponen. Several known smoking outcomes, including stroke, were not identified in the study, which only counted cases above 200 for each health condition, said the researchers. "We only looked at how heavier smoking further affects disease risks in a group of people who are all at least past smokers, so compared to never smokers, the health effects are going to be even more notable," said Professor Hypponen. "Other factors, including when people start smoking or how long they have smoked, may also affect the health consequences arising from smoking."

Smartwatch Can Track Drug Levels Inside Body In Real-Time

Agencies

Researchers have demonstrated that drug levels inside the body can be tracked in real-time using a custom smartwatch that analyses the chemicals found in sweat. This wearable technology could be incorporated into a more personalised approach to medicine where an ideal drug and dosages can be tailored to an individual, according to the study published in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. "We wanted to create a wearable technology that can track the profile of medication inside the body continuously and non-invasively," said study leader Sam Emaminejad from the University of California-Los Angeles. Because of their small molecular sizes, many different kinds of drugs end up in a sweat, where their concentrations closely reflect the drugs' circulating levels. That's why the researchers created a smartwatch, equipped with a sensor that analyses the sampled tiny droplets of sweat. The team's experiment tracked the effect of acetaminophen, a common over-



the-counter pain medication, on individuals over the period of a few hours. First, the researchers stimulated sweat glands on the wrist by applying a small electric current, the same technique that Emaminejad's research group demonstrated in previous wear-

able technologies. This allowed the researchers to detect changes in body chemistry, without needing subjects to work up a sweat by exercising. As different drugs each have their own unique electrochemical signature, the sensor can be designed to look for the level of a particular medication at any given time. "This technology is a game-changer and a significant step forward for realising personalised medicine," said study co-author Ronald W Davis from Stanford University. "Emerging pharmacogenomic solutions, which allow us to select drugs based on the genetic makeup of individuals, have already shown to be useful in improving the efficacy of treatments," Davis added. "So, in combination with the wearable solution, which helps us to optimize the drug dosages for each individual, we can now truly personalize our approaches to pharmacotherapy," the authors wrote.

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER  
PWD(R&B) DIVISION VALLOO  
NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

NIT No. 46 / 2087-97 of R&B/Vailloo /2020-2021/e-tendering/ DATED:- 13.08.2020

For and on behalf of the Lieutenant Governor of Union Territory J&K e-tenders (In Single cover system) are invited on 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:-

S.No	Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/Doc.in form of Treasury challen / Receipt (In Rs )	E/M (in Rs )	Time	T&D of Opening of Bid	Class	MH of account
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Construction of Medical Officers Quarter at PHC Chittergul	37.50	1100	75000	25 days	29.08.2020 11.00 am	AAV/BEE class	4210 Medical

- The Bidding documents Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Drawings, bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website [www.iktenders.gov.in](http://www.iktenders.gov.in) as per schedule of dates given below:

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	13.08.2020
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From: 19.08.2020 from 11.00A.M To:- 28.08. 2020 up to 4.00 Pm
3.	Bid submission Start Date	19.08.2020 from 11.00 A.M
4.	Bid Submission End Date	28.08. 2020 upto 4.00 P.M
5.	Date & time of opening of Bids (Online)	29.08. 2020 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/ challan in favour of Executive Engineer R&B Division vailloo (tender inviting authority) and Earnest money in shape of CDR / FDR pledged to the Executive Engineer R&B Division vailloo. (tender receiving authority). Minimum of Two bids are necessary to decide L-1 bidder in case of Self Help Groups/ Contractors
- The date and time of opening of Bids shall be notified on Web Site [www.iktenders.gov.in](http://www.iktenders.gov.in) and conveyed to the bidders automatically through an e-mail message on their e-mail address. The bids of Responsive bidders shall be opened online on same Web Site in the Office of Executive Engineer R&B Division 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
- The earnest money shall be forfeited, if:-
  - Any bidder/ tenderer withdraws his bid/ tender during the period of bid validity or makes any modifications in the terms and conditions of the bid.
  - Failure of Successful bidder to furnish the required performance security within the specified time limit.
  - Failure of Successful bidder to execute the agreement within 28 days after fixation of contract.
- Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.
- Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website [www.iktenders.gov.in](http://www.iktenders.gov.in) acquaint bid submission process.
- To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get 'Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)' as per Information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved Vendor.
- The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No bid will be accepted in physical form.
- Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-1.
- Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents with the bid. Besides, original / photocopies of documents related to the bid be submitted physically / by registered post / through courier before the date specified in Para-1.
- Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copies of all necessary documents including Earnest Money and tender document fee in terms of soft copies with technical bid
- All other terms conditions are as per PWD Form 25 (Double agreement Form)

DIPK-4260/20

No:- 46 / 2087-97

Dated:-

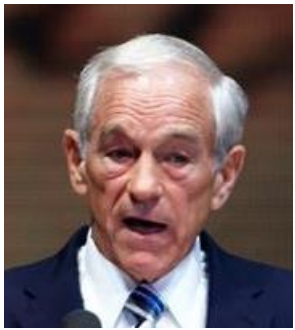
Sd/-  
Executive Engineer  
PWD(R&B) Division  
Vailloo/zulfkar



## Ron Paul warns Trump's failed Iran policy may lead to war

Agencies

Washington: The former Republican congressman and presidential candidate referred to the Trump administration's Iran policy as an example of "arrogance at it greatest", insisting that the use of force, and bullying a country to submit to US de-



mands, was not the right direction for the Iran policy.

"If people really, really cared about it they would be going in a different direction," he said, pointing out that diplomatic relations and trade deals were the right path to peace.

"We should be able to talk to people. We should be able to trade with people," he said.

He noted that America's

defeat at the United Nation Security Council (UNSC) was another indicator that the Trump administration was on the wrong path and other members of the UNSC had understood this.

Paul said US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and Special Representative for Iran Elliot Abrams, who were currently running US foreign affairs, were hawkish neocons (neoconservatives), pursuing the objectives set by the deep state, which were devised to benefit the owners of the military-industrial complex.

"Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has been foaming at the mouth for war with Iran for years, along with the various neocons like Eliot Abrams who serve as cogs in the war machine," the article reads.

According to Paul, Trump's Middle East policies had resulted in an escalation of tensions, driving the region towards war.

"The friction is growing. It is growing very much," he said.

Paul noted that, "It has been aggravated with the recently signed treaty between the UAE and Israel," he said.

Paul noted that the US arms sales to the UAE was being publicized as a positive development

## Trump wrong Prez for our country, says Michelle Obama



Agencies

WASHINGTON: Former first lady Michelle Obama launched a blistering attack on President Donald Trump on Monday and urged Americans to elect Democrat Joe Biden in November to end the chaos created during the four years of Trump's presidency.

In an impassioned speech capping the first night of the Democratic National Convention, Obama said the Republican Trump "has had enough time to prove that he can do the job" but had failed to meet the moment in a country reeling from the pandemic, economic turmoil and racial injustice.

"Whenever we look to this White House for some leadership or consolation or any semblance of steadiness, what we get instead is chaos, division, and a total and utter lack of empathy," she said, calling him "the wrong president" for the US.

"He simply cannot be who we need him to be for us. It is what it is," Obama said. "If you think things cannot possibly get worse, trust me, they can; and they will if we don't make a change in this election. If we have any hope of ending this chaos, we have got to vote for Joe Biden like our lives

depend on it." Obama, whose husband, Barack Obama, was in the White House when Biden was vice-president from 2009-2017, capped a long parade of speakers, including some of Trump's fellow Republicans, who gathered online to make the case for Biden at the start of his four-day nominating convention. The convention opened amid widespread worries about the safety of voting. — Reuters

**Now, Pence to woo Indian-American voters**

New Delhi: After the Democrats made the pitch for Indian-American votes on Independence Day through an hour-long discussion that featured Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, US Vice-President Mike Pence will address the US-India Strategic Partnership Forum later this month along with Indian Cabinet ministers S Jaishankar and Piyush Goel. TNS

**Change of guard can end chaos**

If you think things cannot possibly get worse, trust me, they can; and they will if we don't make a change in this election. If we have any hope of ending this chaos, we have got to vote for Joe Biden like our lives depend on it. — Michelle Obama



## Imran Khan Plays Down Differences With Ally Saudi

Agencies

**Islamabad: Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan has played down differences with longtime ally Saudi Arabia after his army chief visited Riyadh in a bid to ease a dispute over policy towards the disputed Himalayan region of Kashmir.**

The dispute, brought on by Pakistani demands for Saudi Arabia to take a firmer line against India for what Pakistan says is its human rights violations in Indian-administered Kashmir, has threatened Riyadh's financial support for Islamabad.

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia had no differences, Khan said in a late Tuesday interview, backing away from criticism by his foreign minister this month who suggested Saudi Arabia was indifferent on Kashmir.

"The rumours that our relations with Saudi Arabia have soured are totally false," Khan said in the interview with the Dunya News television channel.

"Our relations are very good. We are constantly in touch."

**Army chief visits Riyadh**

Pakistan's army chief travelled to Saudi Arabia on Monday for a one-day visit that was "primarily military-affairs oriented", the army said.

But top military and government officials said the visit was aimed at calming the simmering standoff that could badly hurt cash-strapped Pakistan's foreign reserves.

Saudi Arabia gave Pakistan a \$3bn loan and \$3.2bn oil credit facility to help its balance of payments crisis in late 2018.

Pakistan's demands for Saudi Arabia to support it against India over Kashmir led to Saudi Arabia forcing Pakistan to pay back \$1bn early, military and finance ministry officials have told the Reuters news agency.

Saudi Arabia is also demanding repayment of another \$1bn of the loan and has not responded to Pakistani requests to extend the oil facility, they said.

**Saudi anger**

The Saudi government has not commented on the matter.

The Saudi-led Organization

of Islamic Co-operation (OIC) has only held low-level meetings on Kashmir, to the frustration of some who want to see a more robust position.

"On the Kashmir issue, there is a view that OIC should have stepped forward," Khan said.

"Saudi has its own foreign policy. We shouldn't think that because we want something Saudi will do just that," he added.

Earlier, Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi sought a meeting of the OIC.

"If you cannot convene it, then I'll be compelled to ask Prime Minister Imran Khan to call a meeting of the Islamic countries that are ready to stand with us on the issue of Kashmir and support the oppressed Kashmiris."

Qureshi's remarks revived Riyadh's anger, one of the Pakistani military officials and a government adviser earlier told Reuters.

Analysts say Saudi Arabia does not want to risk its business interests in India by supporting Pakistan over Kashmir.

Pakistan and India both claim the Muslim-majority region of Kashmir in full but rule it in part.

## COVID-19 Misinformation On Facebook Draws Billions Of Views: Report

Misleading health content has racked up an estimated 3.8 billion views on Facebook Inc over the past year, peaking during the COVID-19 pandemic, advocacy group Avaaz said in a new report on Wednesday.

The report found that content from 10 "superspreader" sites sharing health misinformation had almost four times as many Facebook views in April 2020 as equivalent content from the sites of 10 leading health institutions, such as the World Health Organization and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The social media giant, which has been under pressure to curb misinformation on its platform, has made amplifying credible health information a key element of its response. It also started removing misinformation about the novel coronavirus outbreak that it said could cause

imminent harm.

"Facebook's algorithm is a major threat to public health. Mark Zuckerberg promised



to provide reliable information during the pandemic, but his algorithm is sabotaging those efforts by driving many of Facebook's 2.7 billion users to health misinformation-spreading networks," said Fadi Quran, campaign director at Avaaz.

"We share Avaaz's goal of limiting misinformation, but their findings don't reflect the steps we've taken to keep it from spreading on our service," said a Facebook company spokeswoman.

"Thanks to our global network of fact-checkers, from April to June, we applied warning labels to 98 million pieces of COVID-19 misinformation and removed 7 million pieces of content that could lead to imminent harm. We've directed over 2 billion people to resources from health authorities and when someone tries to share a link about COVID-19, we show them a pop-up to connect them with credible health information," she said.

Avaaz's report also said that warning labels from fact-checkers were applied inconsistently even when misinformation had been found to be false.

The report tracked how content from a sample of misinformation-sharing websites was shared on Facebook by interpreting available Facebook data between May 2019 and May 2020.

## UK Data Shows Most COVID-19 Transmissions Happen In Homes, Minister Says

Agencies

London: Britain is unlikely to follow France in ordering people to wear face coverings at work because its test and trace scheme shows most people catch COVID-19 in household transmission, health secretary Matt Hancock said on Wednesday.

"We are not currently considering doing that," he told BBC TV, when asked if Britain would impose masks at work places as in France.

"The reason is that the evidence from NHS Test and Trace for where people catch the disease is that, very largely, they catch it from one



household meeting another household, usually in one of their homes," he said.

"The amount of people who have caught it in work places is relatively low we think from the evidence that we have got."

## Mali president Ibrahim Boubacar Keita quits after armed mutiny

Agencies

Bamako: Mali's president announced his resignation late Tuesday, just hours after armed soldiers seized him from his home in a dramatic power grab following months of protests demanding his ouster.

The news of President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita's departure was met with jubilation by anti-government demonstrators and alarm by former colonial ruler France, and other allies and foreign nations.

The U.N. Security Council scheduled a closed meeting Wednesday afternoon to discuss the unfolding situation in Mali, where the U.N. has a 15,600-strong peacekeeping mission.

Speaking on national broadcaster ORTM just before midnight, a distressed Keita, wear-

the president.

There was no immediate comment Wednesday from the troops, who hailed from the same military barracks where a coup was launched more than eight years ago, allowing the Islamic insurgency to take hold amid a power vacuum.

The political upheaval unfolded months after disputed legislative elections. And it also came as support for Keita tumbled amid criticism of his government's handling of the insurgency, which has engulfed a country once praised as a model of democracy in the region.

The military has taken a beating over the past year from Islamic State and al-Qaida-linked groups. A wave of particularly deadly attacks in the north in 2019 prompted the



ing a mask amid the COVID-19 pandemic, said his resignation — three years before his final term was due to end — was effective immediately. A banner across the bottom of the television screen referred to him as the "outgoing president."

"I wish no blood to be shed to keep me in power," Keita said. "I have decided to step down from office."

He also announced that his government and the National Assembly would be dissolved, certain to further the country's turmoil amid an eight-year Islamic insurgency and the growing coronavirus pandemic.

Keita, who was democratically elected in 2013 and reelected five years later, was left with few choices after the mutinous soldiers seized weapons from the armory in the garrison town of Kati and then advanced on the capital of Bamako. They took Prime Minister Boubou Cisse into custody along with

government to close its most vulnerable outposts as part of a reorganization aimed at stemming the losses.

Tuesday's developments were condemned by the African Union, the United States, and the regional bloc known as ECOWAS, which had been trying to mediate Mali's political crisis. Former colonizer France and the United Nations, which has maintained a peacekeeping mission in Mali since 2013, also expressed alarm ahead of Keita's speech.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres sought "the immediate restoration of constitutional order and rule of law," U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

But news of Keita's detention was met with celebration throughout the capital by anti-government protesters who first took to the streets back in June to demand that the president step down.

### NEWS MAKERS

## Snowing cocoa? Chocolate factory glitch dusts Swiss town

Berlin: Residents of a Swiss town got a bit of a shock when it started snowing particles of a fine cocoa powder after the ventilation system at a chocolate factory malfunctioned.

The Lindt & Spruengli company confirmed local reports Tuesday that there was a minor defect in the cooling ventilation for a line for roasted "cocoa nibs" in its factory in Olten, between Zurich and Basel.

The nibs, fragments of crushed cocoa beans, are the basis of chocolate.

Combined with strong winds on Friday morning, the powder spread around the immediate vicinity of the



factory, leaving a fine cocoa dusting.

The company says one car was lightly coated, and that it has offered to pay for any cleaning needed — but hasn't yet been taken up on

the offer.

Factory production was able to continue as normal and the company says the particles were completely harmless to people or the environment.

## Travellers Miss Flying So Much They're Taking Mock Flights To Nowhere

When an in-flight virtual reality experience called First Airlines started offering faux flights in the Ikebukuro neighborhood of Tokyo in 2017, you could say it was ahead of its time. Three years later, in the grips of a global pandemic that has grounded the vast majority of flights, Tokyo's business travelers are leaning on the VR experience for a taste of international travel without leaving their city.

"I often go overseas on business, but I haven't been to Italy," one local businessman, who tried the experience recently, told Reuters. "My impression was rather good because I got a sense of actually



seeing things there."

The appeal of an "in-flight" meal, a first-class "lounge" and a first-class seat plucked off an Airbus aircraft is that most frequent travelers are unlikely to see the real

thing any time soon. The First Airlines experience channels all the minute details of flying, from departures screens in the lounge to flight attendants carrying out safety protocols. And the two-hour

virtual reality experience, complete with a four-course meal and window TV screens replicating exterior views, is cheaper than an actual first-class plane ticket at about \$62, or 6,580 yen.

First Airlines calls itself the world's "first virtual aviation facility," with equipment and small touches that make its indoor spaces feel like an actual airport and airplane, even when your supplied VR headset isn't on.

Customers in flight seats use virtual reality devices at First Airlines, that provides VR flight experiences, including 360-degree tours of cities and meals, amid the COVID-19 pandemic in Tokyo.



## People's Bank Of China Invests Rs 15 Crore In ICICI Bank Amid India-China Tension



**MUMBAI:** The People's Bank of China has picked up 0.006 per cent stake in ICICI Bank by investing Rs 15 crore in the private sector lender's Rs 15,000 crore qualified institutional placement (QIP) exercise which concluded last week.

Investment banking sources said the Chinese bank was among 357 institutional investors including domestic mutual funds, insurance companies and global institutions that subscribed to the issue.

The prominent investors were Government of Singa-

pore, Morgan Investment and Societe Generale, according to regulatory filings.

In March, the Chinese bank increased its stake in home loan lender HDFC Ltd to over 1 per cent, creating a flutter in the Indian market.

The move prompted the government to tightened foreign portfolio investment rules, especially on investments coming from neighbouring countries with a Chinese connection, citing 'opportunistic takeovers'.

Relations between India and China have worsened since the Galwan valley border clash. India has already banned 59 Chinese apps including TikTok and WeChat. Besides, the government is monitoring Chinese investment inflow closely.

## Centre To Review Guidelines For On-Demand Coronavirus Tests: NITI Aayog



**NEW DELHI:** With nearly nine lakh COVID-19 tests being held per day, the government has said it would review the guidelines for testing to see if it can be made available on an on-demand basis for the people.

Responding to a question on why on-demand testing is not being implemented for those who are willing to pay for it even as the testing capacity has been significantly ramped up, NITI Aayog member Dr VK Paul, at a press briefing on Tuesday, said the government would review the guidelines for testing.

in mathematical models that predict peaks as in several instances in the past projections were made which turned out to be "far from reality".

He stressed that the states and UTs should focus on effective implementation of containment measures, surveillance, contact tracing, aggressive testing, timely treatment in hospitals and better quality care to increase the recovery rate and reduce the fatality rate.

Mr Bhushan said the price rate has decreased from the start of testing in January. The diagnostic kits were mostly imported and hence prices were high till March, he said.

"Now, most of these testing kits are available on government e-marketplace and also the prices are in public domain. So, now the state governments have become empowered to negotiate and procure better test-kits at a reasonable rate," he said.

Mr Bhushan said though "we are getting satisfactory results of all the measures taken, there is no reason to slacken our guard". He said the services of those who have recovered from COVID-19 are being taken as volunteers in many states.

They work for raising awareness about COVID-19 and urging people in urban as well as rural areas to go for testing on having symptoms. They are also encouraging people to seek treatment in COVID Care Centres or Hospitals on being tested positive, he said.



**AGHA SYED ARSHAD RIZVI** leading a protest at Press Enclave against the recent blasphemy by some right wing activists in Jammu. KO Photo Abid Bhat

## Asteroid Flies By Earth Closer Than Any Seen Before, NASA Says

**WASHINGTON-** An asteroid has flown past Earth closer than any seen before.

The tiny object, known as asteroid 2020 QG, came just 1,830 miles over the southern Indian Ocean on Sunday, the space agency said.

According to Independent, as it did so, it was spotted by the Zwicky Transient Facility, a robotic camera that scans the sky in search of a variety of objects, from the smallest asteroids to the largest supernova.

The asteroid 2020 QG is particularly small. It is about three to six meters across, scientists said, roughly the size of a large car.

Its small size meant that it never posed much of a threat to Earth. If it had flown towards us rather than just past, it would have turned into a fireball and broken up in Earth's atmosphere, as numerous small asteroids do each year.

By flying by so closely, however, it has entered the record books as the closest asteroid known to have flown past Earth.

"It's really cool to see a small asteroid come by this close, because we can see the Earth's gravity dramatically bend its trajectory," said Paul Chodas, director of the Center for



Near-Earth Object Studies (CNEOS) at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory.

"Our calculations show that this asteroid got turned by 45 degrees or so as it swung by our planet."

Such asteroids are not thought to be rare – an object of this size passes by this close to Earth once a year or so. But it is spotting it as it does that is difficult, with new technology allowing such small objects to be spotted more easily.

Nasa needs to be able to track these near-Earth asteroids in case any of them are large and close enough to put Earth in danger. The space agency has been tasked with finding 90 per cent of near-Earth asteroids that are 140 meters or bigger, since those objects could pose a significant threat and are easier to spot

from a distance.

"It's quite an accomplishment to find these tiny close-in asteroids in the first place, because they pass by so fast," Chodas said. "There's typically only a short window of a couple of days before or after close approach when this small of an asteroid is close enough to Earth to be bright enough but not so close that it moves too fast in the sky to be detected by a telescope."

The object was discovered by looking through the images from the ZTF, as part of a Nasa-funded programme to track and study such asteroids. As they fly across the sky, they leave streaks across the ZTF images, and every night an algorithm looks through about 100,000 pictures in search of those streaks, forwarding any promising ones onto staff for further investigation.

"A lot of the streaks are satellites, but we can quickly go through the best images by eye to find the actual asteroids," said Bryce Bolin, a postdoctoral scholar in astronomy at Caltech and a member of the ZTF team. "This latest find really demonstrates that ZTF can be used to locate objects very close to Earth that are on potentially impacting trajectories."

## India Building New Road To Ladakh To Move Troops Without Detection: Report

**NEW DELHI:** In an effort to rush troops and tanks to the Pakistan and China front in Ladakh without being observed by the enemy, India is working on making a new road from Manali to Leh, which will provide the third link between the high altitude mountainous Union Territory (UT) and the rest of the country.

India is also working on providing alternative connectivity to the strategically important Sub-Sector North including the Daulat Beg Oldi and other areas there for the last three years and work has already started from the world's highest motorable road Khardung La pass.

"Agencies are working to provide alternative connectivity from Manali to Leh through Nimu-Padam-Darcha axis which will help in saving a lot of time in comparison with the existing routes passing through Zojila pass from Srinagar and the other route from Manali to Leh through Sarchu," government sources told ANI.



troops from positions in high altitude mountains alongside the road.

Sources said the work has already started on this project and the new road will connect Manali with Leh near Nimu where Prime Minister Narendra Modi had recently visited during the ongoing conflict with China.

Likewise, to provide alternatives to the strategic Durbuk-Shyok-Daulat Beg Oldi road, India is working on further developing the old summer route on which caravans used to reach eastern Ladakh areas from the western side.

The new road will travel from Leh towards Khardungla and then move through glaciers including the Sasoma-Saser La-Shyok and Daulat Beg Oldi axis.

Senior sources said that the 14 Corps was given the responsibility of finding an alternative to the DSD-BO road and check the road coming from near the Siachen camp towards the DBO area, and one unit was sent through there on a trial basis.

## Tablighi Jamaat: ED Raids Multiple Locations In Connection With Money Laundering Case

**NEW DELHI:** The Enforcement Directorate (ED) on Wednesday conducted multi-city searches in connection with a money laundering case filed against Tablighi Jamaat leader Maulana Saad Kandhalvi, trusts linked to the Jamaat and others, officials said.

They said various premises in Mumbai, Delhi, Hyderabad and a few other locations are being raided to collect evidence.

The action is being carried out under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA), the ED said.

The central probe agency had filed a money laundering case in April against Maulana Saad and others after it took cognisance of a Delhi Police complaint against these entities.



The Delhi Police crime branch had on March 31 lodged an FIR against seven people, including the cleric, on a complaint by the station house officer (SHO) of Nizamuddin police station for holding a congregation of Tablighi Jamaat followers in alleged violation of the orders against large gatherings to contain the spread of coronavirus.

Maulana Saad was alleged to have organised the religious gathering in March at Nizamuddin Markaz in violation of social distancing protocol imposed by the Centre to curb the spread of coronavirus.

The ED later took over the case and is looking at the personal finances and charges of alleged money laundering against Maulana Saad and some other office bearers and associates of the Tablighi Jamaat.

Certain donations received by the Islamic organisation from foreign and domestic sources are also under the scanner of the agency.

In an audio message released after the Delhi Po-

lice case, Maulana Saad had said he was exercising self-quarantine after several hundreds who visited the congregation at Nizamuddin Markaz tested positive for COVID-19.

The police FIR registered against the Tablighi Jamaat event said Delhi Police contacted authorities of Nizamuddin Markaz on March 21 and reminded them of the government order, which prohibited any political or religious gathering of more than 50 people.

It says that despite repeated efforts, the event organisers failed to inform the health department or any other government agency about the huge gathering inside the Markaz and deliberately disobeyed government orders.

More than 25,500 Tablighi members and their contacts have been quarantined in the country after the Centre and the state governments conducted a "mega operation" to identify them, the government had said.

At least 9,000 people participated in the religious congregation in Nizamuddin. Later, many of these travelled to various parts of the country.

Some of the foreign nationals who participated in the congregation have been recently allowed to walk free and return to their countries by local courts on payment of varying fines, after they accepted mild charges under the plea bargain process.

However, a number of them could not fly back to their countries due to the pendency of some other police FIRs lodged against them for the same offence.

## After Supreme Court Verdict, CBI To Probe Sushant Singh Rajput Death Case



**NEW DELHI:** The Supreme Court on Wednesday upheld the transfer of an FIR, lodged at Patna against actress Rhea Chakraborty and others for allegedly abetting the suicide of actor Sushant Singh Rajput, to the CBI.

The apex court said that Bihar government is competent to transfer the case to the CBI for investigation.

A bench of Justice Hrishikesh Roy said that FIR registered by the Bihar Police on the complaint of Rajput's father Krishna Kishore Singh is correct and the reference to the CBI is lawful.

The top court delivered its verdict on a plea by Chakraborty who had sought transfer of the FIR lodged against her at Patna to Mumbai.

Rajput, 34, was found hanging from the ceiling of his apartment in suburban Bandra in Mumbai on June 14 and

since then Mumbai Police has been probing the case keeping in mind various angles.

The Centre had earlier informed the top court that it has accepted the recommendation of the Bihar government for a CBI probe into the FIR lodged at Patna by Rajput's father, who has accused Chakraborty and six others of various offences including abetment of suicide.

While pronouncing the verdict, the bench said that if any other case is registered regarding Rajput's death, the same shall be probed by the CBI only.

It said that jurisdiction of Mumbai Police, which is conducting probe under section 174 of the CrPC which deals with procedure to be followed in cases of unnatural death and suicide, is limited.

The apex court held that the ongoing investigation done by the CBI is lawful.

The top court, which had reserved its judgement on the plea on August 11, was told by the Bihar government that political clout has not allowed Mumbai Police to even register an FIR in Rajput's case.

### NEWS MAKERS

#### Madhya Pradesh Man, 38, Cycles 105 Km For Son's Exam

**DHAR:** In the absence of public transport, a 38-year-old man travelled on a bicycle for 105 kilometers, carrying his son, to ensure he does not miss his Class 10 boards supplementary exam in Madhya Pradesh.

Though Shobhram, who peddled the cycle, is himself illiterate, he says he understands the importance of education and did not want his son to waste one year by missing the supplementary paper.

With no public transport available due to the COVID-19 lockdown and hardly any money, Shobhram decided to take his son on a bicycle to Dhar town, some 105 km away, so that he can appear in Class 10th boards supplementary exam conducted under the Madhya Pradesh government's "Ruk Jana Nahin" scheme.

The scheme gives an oppor-



tunity to students to clear those subjects which they were unable to pass in the first attempt.

"No means of transport, including bus, were available due to the prevailing coronavirus situation. But if I had missed

this opportunity, then my son's one year would have gone waste. Therefore, I decided to take him for the examination on a bicycle," Shobhram told PTI on Wednesday.

"Besides, we don't have money or even a motorcycle. Nobody helps. But for improving my son's life, I brought him to Dhar for appearing in the examination on bicycle," he said.

"We carried food and other eatables with us for sustaining ourselves in Dhar for two-three days. We started on Monday and after spending a few hours of night at Manawar town, we reached Dhar on Tuesday morning just before start of the exam," he said.

The boy, Ashish, aged around 15, said: "I am studying in Class 10 and I came here on cycle with my father for appearing in the examination."

#### Pranab Mukherjee's Health Declines Due To Lung Infection

The Army Research and Referral Hospital in Delhi announced on Wednesday that there had been a decline in the health of former president Pranab Mukherjee.

Pranab Mukherjee had been admitted to the Research and Referral Hospital on August 10 to undergo a procedure to remove a blood clot in the brain. He tested positive for COVID-19 that day.

Pranab Mukherjee was placed on ventilator support that same day after he underwent the surgical procedure.

"There has been a decline in the medical condition of Former President Pranab Mukherjee as he has developed features of lung infection. He continues to be on ventilatory support and is currently being managed by a team of specialists," ANI quoted the



Army Research and Referral Hospital as saying.

Earlier on Wednesday, Pranab's son, Abhijit Mukherjee, tweeted his father was stable. "With All Your good wishes & sincere efforts of the Doctors, my father is stable now! His vital parameters continue to remain under control & manageable! Positive signs of his improvement is noticed!..." Abhijit Mukherjee tweeted.

Pranab Mukherjee had been president from 2012 to 2017. A veteran Congressman, Pranab has held important portfolios such as finance, defence and external affairs.

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