



Maximum : 27°C  
Minimum : 17°C  
Humidity : 77%

SUNSET  
Today 07:11 PM  
SUNRISE  
Tomorrow 05:57 AM

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## News Digest

### Minor's Death Sparks Protest In Kangan

Srinagar: A minor girl's death in a road accident on Thursday set off protests in Kangan area of central Kashmir's Ganderbal district. Eight-year-old Adiya Bano was critically injured after a Srinagar bound truck (JK01A-2124) hit her near Ganiwan area of Kangan on Thursday afternoon, reports said. The injured girl was removed to the nearby hospital for treatment. However, the doctors there declared her brought dead on arrival. The girl's death, reports said set off protests in Ganiwan. The locals blocked Srinagar-Leh road demanding arrest and punishment of the accused driver. A local news agency KNT reported that the truck driver fled from the spot after mowing down the minor girl. ● P-02

### 10 Absent Employees Suspended In Anantnag

Srinagar: The district authorities in south Kashmir's Anantnag on Thursday placed ten employees under suspension for remaining unauthorized absent from duties. District Development Commissioner Anantnag Kuldeep Krishan Sidha Thursday visited Larkipora to take stock of the ongoing construction work of 4x33mtr span Bridge being constructed by R&B Division Qazung on Brengi nalla at Larkipora at an estimated cost of Rs. 1250 lac with an expenditure of Rs. 280 lac till date. During the surprise visit, the DDC suspended one doctor of PHC Larkipora and three officials of Agriculture extension office of Larkipora for remaining absent from duty unauthorizedly. Similarly on Wednesday, the DC visited ● P-02

### Grenade Found In Govt Office

Srinagar- A hand grenade was found lying in a tehsil office in Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir on Thursday, police said. Police detected the grenade in the afternoon, a police official said. A bomb disposal squad later defused the grenade. There was no loss of life or property in the incident, the official said

### Cop Dies Of Electric Shock In Pattan

Srinagar: A Policeman, who was on leave, died due to electrocution in north Kashmir's Pattan on Thursday. 29-year-old policeman, who was posted at IRP Battalion ParihasporaPattan was electrocuted to death while repairing an electric wire at his home at Wanigam Pattan. An official confirmed the incident to news agency KNO and identified the deceased as Hilal Ahmad Bhat, son of Wali Mohammad Bhat. The officer said the cop was on leave and died at his home. He said a case has been registered and further investigation has been initiated in this regard

### Eight Injured In Poonch Accident, 2 Critical

Poonch- At least eight persons were injured, two of them critically, when a sumo vehicle they were traveling in met with an accident in Poonch district on Thursday. Official sources said that a Sumo (JK02AB-5463) on way from Bhera to Mendhar met with an accident at MohallaBarwala in which eight persons were injured, reported news agency GNS. Seven of them have been identified as Muzamal Ahmed, RazaMahid, Mohammad Ayoub, Wazir Mohammad, Mazar Hayat, Mohammad Saeager and Majid Ali, all residents of Behra. Soon after the accident, SHO Mendhar ManzoorKohli along with a police team ● P-02

## Kashmir Fallout: Saudi's Snub Pak Efforts To Mend Relations

Agencies

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's effort to repair relations with Saudi Arabia has been snubbed by Crown Prince Mohamed bin Salman. The de facto ruler of the kingdom refused to meet with Islamabad's Army Chief, Qamar Javed Bajwa, who was in the Kingdom to mend ties between the two countries.

Bajwa, who started his visit to Saudi Arabia on Monday, returned home after being declined a meeting with bin Salman, known popularly as MBS. Instead, Bajwa had to settle for a meeting with the 34-year old's younger brother, Deputy Defence Minister Sheikh Khalid bin Salman, and Maj Gen Fayyad Al Ruwaili, the kingdom's chief of general staff, Middle East Monitor reported on Thursday.

It reported that Bajwa conveyed regret over comments made by Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi which angered the Saudis. Qureshi in an unusually sharp warning asked Saudi Arabia-led Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) early this month



PAK PREMIER Imran Khan with Saudi Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman. File photo

### Amid Tensions With Saudi, Pak Moves Closer To China

It was the statement of Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi against the Saudi-led Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), pertaining to the Kashmir dispute, which attracted irked response from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia ● P-02

to stop dilly-dallying on the convening of a meeting of its Council of Foreign Ministers on Kashmir.

Appearing in a talk show on ARY News, the foreign minister said: "I am once again respectfully telling OIC that a meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers is our expectation. 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 said that if OIC fails to summon the CFM ●PAGE 02

**I AM ONCE AGAIN RESPECTFULLY TELLING OIC THAT A meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers is our expectation. 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."**

### Indian Agencies Keep Vigil Over Seven Active Chinese Air Bases

NEW DELHI: Even as the tensions on China border continue over territorial issues, Indian agencies are keeping a close eye on the activities of the People's Liberation Army's Air Force (PLAAF) spread all along the Line of Actual Control with India opposite Ladakh in the north to Arunachal Pradesh in the Northeast.

"We are keeping a close watch on the Hotan, Gar Gunsa, Kashgar, Hopping, Dkonka Dzong, Linzhi and Pangat airbases of the PLAAF in the Xinjiang and Tibet region and all of them have been highly active in the recent times," government sources told ANI.

The Chinese PLAAF ● P-02

## 26 Militant Commanders Killed In Kashmir This Year: DGP

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The state forces have killed over two dozen militant commanders so far this year, which has broken the leadership structure of their outfits to a great extent, Director General of Jammu and Kashmir Police Dilbag Singh said on Thursday.

"A total of 26 militant commanders -- who were either number one or number two -- have been eliminated in the last seven-and-a-half months, after which their leadership structure has been broken to a great extent. This is a huge success for the security forces and has given

## We Have Not Given Up On Gupkar Declaration: Dr Farooq

NC Holds First Party Meet Post-Article 370 Abrogation

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: National Conference president Farooq Abdullah on Thursday said the party would discuss and review the political agenda with regard to Jammu and Kashmir only after all leaders including former chief minister Mehbooba Mufti have been set free.

"The aim of today's meeting was to ensure that the four leaders were free. We will discuss and review the political agenda once all political leaders are set free," Abdullah said. The Lok Sabha member was talking



Ko Photo Abid Bhat

to reporters at his residence here after meeting NC general secretary Ali Mohammad Sagar and former ministers

Mohammad Shafi Uri, Abdul Rahim Rather and Nasir Aslam Wani. Abdullah said he will also call

other party leaders for similar meetings in the coming days.

"I hope that those who came for the meeting today are free now, not just for today, after one year and 15 days of detention. I will be meeting other leaders as well," he said.

Abdullah said he wanted all the leaders of the union territory including PDP president Mehbooba Mufti to be set free. He said he was in constant touch with her and she was very much part of the Gupkar declaration of all political parties last year.

"We have not given up. The all-party meeting (convened ●PAGE 02

## HC Junks Plea By Teachers Against Continuation Of GB Hostel Wardens

Agencies

SRINAGAR: The J&K High Court on Thursday dismissed a petition by a group of teachers who had challenged process linked to their repatriation to parent department after completing tenure as Wardens or Assistant Wardens in the Hostels of Gujjars and Bakerwals and the Pahari Speaking People in the J&K.

The teachers had actually challenged Central Administrative Tribunal's order, dismissing their plea in this regard.

A bench of Justices Ali Mohammad Magrey and Sanjay Dhar also termed it as "enigmatic" the eagerness of these teachers to continue to the posts of Wardens or Assistant War-

dens in these hostels and asked Tribal Affairs Department to be watchful in ensuring funds allotted for the benefit of the poor students reach them as is provided on paper and due to them.

"It is enigmatic why should the petitioners (teachers) be so eagerly interested in sticking to the posts of Wardens / Assistant Wardens in these hostels when they belong to the School Education Department and hold substantive positions in their parent Department, moreso when they have completed the prescribed tenure of three years," the court said. "No such ground, muchless plausible, is coming forth from the pleadings."

However, the court said, inferably, it is likely that since there are huge funds allocated for ●PAGE 02

### 12 Charged For Duping Bizman Worth Rs 5.60 Cr

Jammu: An Udhampur court on Thursday framed charges of cheating and fraud against 12 persons for their alleged roles in duping an industrialist of Rs 5.60 crore on the pretext of selling him a precious metal on cheap rates.

The court of Udhampur chief judicial magistrate framed charges against the accused saying that material available on the file and submission made by the prosecution, all 12 accused are prima facie guilty of committing offences of cheating and fraud. The ASJ framed charges against the accused after they pleaded not guilty and claimed trial.

The formal trial of accused starts after framing of charges.

The case pertained to the alleged tricking of local industrialist Raj Kumar Gupta in ● P-02

### Board Exams To Be Held 'Offline'

SRINAGAR: The government on Thursday announced that this year's 10th, 11 and 12th class examinations shall be held "offline".

The decision was taken at a joint meeting of officers of JKBOSE and School Education Department chaired by Principal Secretary, School Education and Skill Development, Dr Asgar Hassan Samoon to review preparedness for the upcoming examinations in Kashmir Valley and winter zone of Jammu division.

Secretary, JK BOSE, Riyaz Ahmed, Director School Education, Kashmir, Mohammad Younis and other concerned officers were present in the ● P-02

Hirra Sultan

He was always faint-hearted when it came to personal illness. Always thinking of extremities. Despite being a medico and treating numerous patients and ailments, and tending to a lot of relatives with trivial as well as life-threatening illnesses, he always exaggerated personal ones. Even a slight fever would take him to a point where he would say he was dying. Always.

It is another thing that he rarely fell ill in the first place.

With the outbreak of Covid in Kashmir, all the family members urged him to not visit the mosque anymore. Even though he staunchly believed that whatever is supposed

## More Than Covid, I Lost My Father To Social Constructs

to happen will happen, and that God will protect him, he did listen to us and stopped visiting mosque for prayers, unlike many others. It was more out of fear for his grandkids rather than his own. Out of love.

Yet he maintained that since we people keep going out from time to time and two people are medicos and hence have a high likelihood to contact the virus, we will be the ones to bring the infection home. Probably we did. Who knows?

It was only after Ramzan that he resumed Friday prayers at the mosque again. Only Friday prayers. He often went for short walks and

to buy a few things here and there, while donning a mask. Even though it is alright to do away with one's face mask in non-crowded places where one is maintaining physical distance from everyone, I once found him walking without one and we had a lengthy discussion about it over dinner. Wearing one made him hot.

Things started turning ugly in July though. A relative passed away and my mother was adamant on paying them a visit. Even though we tried hard to convince her otherwise, she had made up her mind. Dad accompanied her. He always went for funerals, "If I do not pay the bereaved



family a visit and help them out the best I can, who would come help me in case of any eventuality?" So

he bathed the dead and prayed for them. Not in professional capacity, but to the best of his. It was 3rd of

July. Since it was a Friday, he returned home alone, in public transport, so as to attend the prayers in time.

Everything was routine.

Only a couple of days had passed when dad started having his first symptoms. Slight fever and fatigue. Like every other time, he told mum that this is the end of it. "Witch, mei tche khoran ungzie zeithemthchie" (See, my toes are elongated.) Mum rubbished these talks like every other time. It was like calling a fake wolf; mum didn't pay heed. Since the symptoms were nothing major, he continued his routine, tended to the kitchen garden, played around

with his grandkids, irrigated the garden, and all.

With each passing day, his fatigue got worse. So he asked the kids to walk on his legs, in hopes that this would relieve his cramps. He slowly started losing his appetite as well. Initially he ate less, then he started denying eating but would eat small portions on incessant insisting, and then he didn't agree to eat at all. His fever started to get high and wouldn't drop below 101. On a rare occasion when it did, it shot back in the afternoon.

Since he was at a high risk, he was already on medications prescribed to a Covid positive person. He was still at home because it is easier to take care, everyone was around him and his ●PAGE 02



# From Front page...

## Kashmir Fallout: Saudi's...

meeting, Pakistan would be ready to go for a session outside OIC. In response to another question, he said Pakistan could not wait any further. The comment was met with fury in Riyadh. Saudi Arabia terminated its loan and oil supply to Pakistan, prompting a diplomatic row between the two nations which traditionally have been allies. During the meeting in Riyadh, Bajwa is said to have floated a proposal for a meeting of the OIC contact group on Kashmir on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly meeting to be held under Turkey. It's not clear though if the Saudis will agree to such a meeting in light of their recent hostility towards Ankara.

The Saudis have been wary of any initiative that would allow for the creation of a block made up of Pakistan, Turkey, Malaysia and Iran. This sentiment is thought to have been conveyed to Bajwa who was told that cooperation between Pakistan and Turkey is unacceptable to Riyadh. Sources in India have reported that if Pakistan refuses to accept Saudi Arabia's demand the oil-rich Gulf nation may cancel its investment of \$20 million in Gwadar Port. Such a move though is only likely to move Pakistan further towards Turkey.

In a move that is likely to widen the rift between Pakistan and the block of Gulf countries led by the UAE, Imran Khan said his country will not recognise Israel until the Palestine issue is resolved. He suggested that accepting the state of Israel is equivalent to giving up Pakistan's stance on "illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir" which have been seized by India.

## Amid Tensions With Saudi,...

(KSA). And while Pakistan's military establishment is focused on mending the dented ties between the two Islamic nations, Prime Minister Imran Khan's recent statement, coupled with the visit of Qureshi to China, is signalling at Islamabad extending allegiance and inclination towards Beijing. Qureshi, accompanied by senior officials, will be in Hainan, China, from August 20-21 to take part in the second round of China-Pakistan Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue. As per the Pakistan Foreign Office, "The Chinese side will be led by State Councillor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi."

"During the dialogue, both sides will, inter alia, discuss cooperation on Covid-19, bilateral relations and regional and international issues of mutual interest. The visit will play an important role in further strengthening the Pakistan-China All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership and deepen strategic communication and coordination with China on a range of issues," said a Ministry of Foreign Affairs press release. Qureshi's visit comes a day after Prime Minister Imran Khan said that Pakistan's future is tied with China, indicating visible signs of Islamabad's intended inclination towards its trusted friend and partner China. "It should be made clear that our future is tied with China, which has stood by Pakistan through thick and thin. Both countries recognise each other's importance and are further strengthening mutual ties," Khan stated in a television interview.

"Unfortunately, western countries are using India against China," he added. Khan also rejected what he called rumours about "rifts" with Saudi Arabia, saying "they have their own foreign policy". It is pertinent to mention here that while Pakistan has not been happy with the performance of OIC, specifically on the Kashmir issue, Beijing has taken its side on raising the issue of Kashmir at global platforms like the United Nations. With Pakistan cozying up with China, experts believe that Islamabad may be sliding away from the financial dependency and alliance with Saudi Arabia.

## Hundreds Protest In Pattan ...

Satpal Sharma and even the cable channel that aired that derogatory video should be punished without delay. The culprits should be booked under Public Safety Act," said a protester Faheem Ahmed.

According to reports, a team led by SDM Pattan along with police stopped the protesters from entering Pattan market near Bilal Colony. He assured protesters that they will take up the matter with authorities and recommend stern punishment to those who hurt the sentiments of Muslim community.

Pertinently, on Sunday, police arrested Satpal Sharma, the main 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, reports of protest against the right-wing group were also received from Srinagar's Press Colony and Chanpora as well.

## CRPF Man Among 9 More Die...

hospital in wee hours today, they said. He was resident of Haryana, they added. An elderly woman from Yunsu Handwara in north Kashmir's Kupwara district having being diagnosed with bilateral community acquired pneumonia died two days after being admitted to the hospital, they said. A resident of Jawahar Nagar Srinagar, suffering from bilateral CAP, also died at SMHS hospital, the sources said. A 56-year-old woman from Lal Bazar Srinagar, died three days after she was admitted to CD hospital, one of the exclusive facilities for the management of the covid-19 in the Valley. "She was a case of severe Covid19 with HTN, T2DM and hypothyroid. She was not maintaining saturation and was shifted to ICU on August 18 and was on NIV since," a doctor at the hospital said. She suffered cardiac arrest and was declared dead at 2:45p.m, the doctor added. A 62-year-old man from Gantmulla Baramulla who was diagnosed with "T2DM HTN, CAD besides Pneumonia" died at 8p.m on Thursday evening at SMHS hospital, the sources added. A 70-year-old woman of Dialgam Anantnag died at SKIMS Soura, three days she was admitted to the tertiary care hospital, they added. With these deaths, officials said, 590 people have succumbed to the virus in Jammu and Kashmir so far—549 from the Valley and 41 from Jammu division. (With GNS inputs)

## Longest ICU Stayed Patient,...

respiratory distress, and were put on high low oxygen besides other COVID treatment including Inj. Remdesivir, an official spokesperson said Thursday. He said the patients with COVID pneumonia had associated co-morbidities like Hypertension, Hypothyroidism and Diabetes, which were also taken care of.

Regarding the other two patients, the official spokesperson said that one patient who was very sick and remained admitted for 47 days, was given Inj. Remdesivir and Convalescent Plasma Therapy (CPT).

"The patient failed to recover on maximum oxygen therapy and was put on Ventilator and stayed in ICU for 37 days," the official spokesperson said. He said another patient of Gynae and Obstetrics delivered normally and the patients were monitored on a day to day basis till their oxygen saturation remained 94 percent on room air and were discharged from HDU. "With this the number of COVID-19 recovered patients moved to 917, out of total COVID positive admitted patients numbering 1009 till date. The recovery rate at present is 90.88 percent and with 29 fatalities the mortality rate is 2.87 percent," the official spokesperson added.

## Indian Agencies Keep Vigil...

has upgraded a number of these bases in recent times including the construction of hardened shelters, the extension of runway lengths and deployment of additional manpower to carry out more operations, they said. Sources said the Linzhi airbase opposite the Northeastern states is mainly a helicopter base and the Chinese have also built a network of helipads there to enhance their surveillance activities in those areas. The PLAAF has been deploying their fighter aircraft including their Chinese version of the Sukhoi-30 and indigenous J-series fighters opposite the Ladakh sector and other areas along with their strategic bombers which have been under constant monitoring of the Indian agencies through satellites and other means. The Indian side has also ramped up its preparedness in the view of the heightened activity by the Chinese forces on their side of the LAC and has deployed its fleet of Sukhoi-30MKIs, MiG-29s and Mirage-2000s at the forward air bases to tackle any misadventure.

In the initial phase of the tension with China in the April-May timeframe, the Indian forces had seen the deployment of Su-30s and MiG-29s in the forward air bases and they had played an important role in thwarting an airspace violation bid by the Chinese aircraft in the Eastern Ladakh sector. The Indian Air Force has an edge over the Chinese in the Ladakh region as their fighters have to fly and take off from very high altitude bases while the Indian fleet can take off from plains and reach the mountainous re-

gion in almost no time.

## We Have Not Given Up On...

by Abdullah on August 5 this year but disallowed by authorities) will take place when all leaders are set free," he said. Asked about some leaders like Shah Faesal, who were part of the Gupkar declaration on August 4 last year but have switched sides now, Abdullah said he was not answerable for the actions of others. "If his belief was weak, he is answerable for that. He is acceptable to his conscience and God. I had started alone on the journey towards my destination, people joined me and caravan was formed," Abdullah said reciting a famous Urdu couplet. Regional parties in Jammu and Kashmir had on August 4 last year unanimously resolved to fight any attempt to abrogate the constitutional provisions that guaranteed it special status or any move to trifurcate the state. The resolution was described as 'Gupkar Declaration' as the meeting was held at Abdullah's residence in the Gupkar area of Srinagar.

On August 5 this year, Abdullah had called a meeting of some political parties to discuss the situation arising out of the abrogation of Article 370 a year ago and to chalk out a joint political strategy for restoration of the special status through democratic means, but the meeting could not be held due to strict restrictions imposed by the authorities, his National Conference had said.

The NC had on Wednesday 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".

"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 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 Abdullah father-son duo had filed a bunch of habeas corpus petitions on July 13 seeking the release of the party leaders from home confinement.

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 the 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.

## 12 Charged For Duping Bizman

giving accused Mohammad Iqbal Mir and Pervez Ahmed Mir of Batote a sum of Rs 560 crore for purchasing some precious metal from some nomads of Patnitop. On Gupta's complaint, the case was initially registered by the district police but was later transferred to the Jammu and Kashmir Crime Branch, which filed the charge sheet in the case, indicting 12 persons.

The indicted accused are Irfan Hamid Zargar, Mohammad Iqbal, Mohammad Akhter Mir, Muddasir, Abdul Jaleel (all of J&K), Ventakata Krishana Madgula (tester of the precious metal), Parvej Ahmed Mir, Tahir Bakerwal, Imran Khan, Gundeep Singh, Angat Manhas, and Sandeep Singh Rana.

## Board Exams To Be Held...

meeting while Chairperson JKBOSE, Veena Pandita participated through video conferencing. Threadbare discussion was held on various issues regarding conduct of annual examination 2020 for 10th, 11th and 12th class and Bi-Annual private examination for 10th and 12th class in Kashmir Division and winter zone of Jammu Division. The meeting was informed that the proposal regarding these exams has been approved by the government and JK BOSE is all set to conduct the said examinations amid following of all necessary preventive protocols and guidelines regarding COVID-19. It was also decided in the meeting that the examination shall be conducted off line as per the prospectus. Chairperson JK-BOSE, Veena Pandita, also apprised the meeting of working of the Board during the pandemic like distribution of text books to all stakeholders, conduct of examination and declaration of results. Principal Secretary directed the concerned authorities to provide all logistic support for conduct of the said examinations. Earlier, Dr Samoon conducted a surprise visit to the office of JK Board of School Education, Bemina to take detailed report about the working there.

During the surprise visit, Principal Secretary visited various blocks and sections of the JKBOSE and interacted with the staffs in different sections. Among others, senior officers of School Education Department were also present during the visit.

## HC Junks Plea By Teachers...

the benefit of the students in these hostels, incurable on their day-to-day needs, "some advantage might be derived there from by these teachers in their capacities as Wardens /Assistant Wardens which has induced the greed in them to hold these posts."

"This needs to be carefully and strictly watched and checked by the Tribal Affairs Department, lest the students housed in these hostels belonging to downtrodden strata of the society should be deprived of what otherwise is provided for them on paper and is due to them."

The teachers had challenged July 27 order passed by the Central Administrative Tribunal, Jammu Bench, dismissing their plea for continuation as wardens and assistant wardens as being devoid of any merit.

On 13 March 2015 the Government had ordered a policy regarding posting of Wardens and Assistant Wardens in various Advisory Boards. Among others, the General Administration Department was to obtain a panel of eligible Lectures, Head Masters, Masters with outstanding service career from School Education Department for their posting as such Wardens or Assistant Wardens on deputation. The tenure of deputation has to be for two years and in no case, it shall be allowed beyond three years."

Pursuant to the Policy, the teachers were transferred and deputed to function as Wardens or Assistants Wardens in the Hostels of Gujjars & Bakerwals and the Pahari Speaking People in the J&K.

On 19-09-2019, advisor (F) to lieutenant governor directed that the Department shall issue notification regarding the engagement or employment of wardens on outsourcing basis. 27 May this year, the Additional Secretary to Government, School Education Department asked the Directors, School Education, Jammu and Kashmir, to furnish panel of suitable/eligible persons (2 names per post) for posting them as Wardens / Assistant Wardens in Gujjar and Bakerwal Hostels of the J&K to be appointed as per 2013 policy.

The petitioners had challenged the 27 May 2020 communication by the Additional Secretary to Government, contending among others that same was "illegal and arbitrary".

They had said that since there is no Chairman of the Board available, the GAD was rendered helpless in making deputations in terms of 2015 policy order and that the communication was contrary to the decision taken in the review meeting of the Tribal Affairs Department to fill up

the posts by outsourcing.

Also they had contended that due to Covid-19, while the Hostels had been converted into Quarantine Centres and the petitioners appointed as Nodal Officers for their respective Quarantine Centres or Hostels, "their displacement would expose them to grave threats and inconvenience."

## 26 Militant Commanders...

Union Territory congratulated the people of the valley as there was no casualty in the maintenance of law and order in 2019 and so far in 2020. He said the forces do not want any civilian casualties.

"Also, there was no casualty near the encounter sites in 2019 and 2020. For carrying out such clean operations, we have to work very hard. We had to face situations when militants escaped during operations. But the first endeavour is to avoid civilian casualties. If a militant escapes, let him. Dozens of our operations have failed this way and we accepted that thinking that we will see them the next time. But we want to avoid civilian casualties.

"Similarly, and this has happened in Srinagar as well, when we get to know that there is a local militant inside a cordon, we halt the operation, call his family and ask him to surrender -- not before us, but before his family. We assure him that he will face no consequences, just a little legal action and there will be no threat to him afterwards and I think, this endeavour of ours will succeed in the future," Singh said.

On a question about the Centre's claim that militancy would come to an end in the valley after the revocation of Article 370 of the Constitution, he said incidents of infiltration as well as recruitment of youngsters into militant ranks have come down.

"Infiltration has come down. Now it is not even 50 per cent of what it used to be. Border management is so good and the forces have not allowed them to cross over. Recruitment has also come down to such levels that were not witnessed before. I think people, including youngsters, are heeding to our appeal and I want them to listen to this again and give up this track," the DGP said.

However, he pointed out that the terrain of the border is such that "we cannot stop everything from crossing over".

"Had that been the case, there would have been no infiltration and no militancy," Singh said.

He said the security forces have succeeded in bringing 16 boys back from militant ranks so far this year.

"In 2020, 16 boys have been brought back and they have joined their families. Our attempt is to tell other boys also to shun this path and join their families. Pakistan is using social media and other agencies to create such an atmosphere and incite the youngsters," the DGP said.

At the press conference, Inspector General of Police, Kashmir, Vijay Kumar said there are 195 to 198 active militants in the valley.

"We cannot say if (militancy) has been wiped out as some new ones have joined," he said in response to a question on whether militancy has been wiped out in the valley.

Replying to another query on allegations of harassment of the families of militants, Kumar said the police do not harass the family of any militant.

"We respect them and do not harass them. However, we have arrested the sister of a militant and the mother of another (in south Kashmir). They have done something which is illegal and even the court has declined to grant them bail. This notion that the Jammu and Kashmir Police harasses militant families is totally wrong," he said.

Singh said it is the policy of the Jammu and Kashmir Police not to harass people.

"They are our people and their security and dignity are our responsibility. We take serious action on any report of harassment. The intention of all forces is not to harass anyone," he said.

Asked whether there was any chance of restoration of high-speed (4G) internet services in other districts of the Union Territory after it was restored in Ganderbal and Udhampur districts, the DGP said the issue is under active consideration of the government.

Asked about the Centre's decision to withdraw 100 companies of paramilitary forces from the valley, he said the calibration of the forces' levels happens from time to time.

"We had done a huge deployment here on the basis of requirements... I am thankful to the MHA for supporting us always and I thank those troops as well. Now they are needed at some other place or at their original areas," the DGP said.

On the investigation into an alleged fake encounter in south Kashmir's Shopian district, in which the Army had claimed that three militants were killed, Singh said the probe will be fair.

"Our parallel inquiry is on and I can assure you that the investigations will be fair," he said.

## Militant Slain In Handwara...

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Kashmir Vijay Kumar said the killing of the two militants was a big achievement for the security forces. Kumar on Wednesday had said that one of the slain militants was Lt commander Naseer-u-din Lone, who was involved in killing of three CRPF jawans at Sopore on April 18 and another three CRPF jawans at Handwara on May 4 this year.

He said an AK-47 rifle, which was snatched from a CRPF jawan after the attack at Vangam Handwara on May 4, was recovered from Lone. This proved his involvement in the killing of the three CRPF jawans, he said on Thursday.

Killing of Lone and Danish is a big achievement for the forces, the IGP Kashmir said.

The Kashmir Zone Police on its official Twitter page uploaded a CCTV grab purportedly showing Lone firing on CRPF jawans at Aahad Baba Chowk in Sopore on April 18. The police wrote "justice done" on August 19 in the tweet.

The encounter at Ganipora Kralgund area of Handwara in north Kashmir's Kupwara district started after security forces cordoned off the area and launched a search operation. The encounter was the second such operation on Wednesday. Earlier in the day, security forces killed two militants in Shopian district in south Kashmir.

## More Than Covid, I Lost My...

symptoms were manageable. Hospitals are contaminated and could have proved counter-productive. Better to be safe than sorry.

Five days in, he started fainting. He had no energy to move out of bed anymore and didn't do anything apart from sleeping. On the rare occasions that he did, he complained of chills and cold. Once he looked at the kitchen garden from his window and lamented, "Yemi phiri tichum ni basaan bi bachi" (I don't think I will survive this time).

Just to be on the safer side, we got a pulse oxy-meter to check his SpO2. Initially it was 91-92. Safe. Might as well have been happy hypoxia, but still, safe. The trauma started the next day when we checked again and it had dropped to 85. Everyone was suddenly on their toes. He was rushed to get a CT scan. Since the reports are instant, they help in understanding whether the patient might have Covid.

Dad's bedding was put into Sun, for gaining viralisidal effects. Everyone thought they will be gone a while and till they would come back, everything would be back in its place. Somehow they came back soon enough for dad to see his bed gone and it broke him in the sense that his family had already thought he wouldn't come back. This regret still haunts my mother.

By this time he was getting breathless and lied down for a while till things were discussed with a doctor on call. His CT showed bilateral pulmonary effusion. Keeping an oxygen cylinder at home was considered but was unfeasible as a single cylinder would last mere three hours, forgetting about the cost altogether. Owing to his drop in SpO2, hospital was the best option available.

When brother told him that they would be going to hospital, dad asked him to wait a while. Till he caught his breath. He asked for his waistcoat and combed his beard. Instead of water, we sent him with a bottle of Zam Zam. The last of what he had bought with him earlier this year. While walking towards the door he reminded us, "Bury me at the graveyard nearby; the kafan will be arranged by the committee along with everything else; take care of everything." That was the last we saw of him. He was admitted to SMHS. His oxygen saturation was stable as soon as he was connected to an oxygen point. His Covid report was positive, as suspected. Yet, he was talking to us on phone, audio as well as video, and brother was staying there with him. They had a private room to eliminate exposure to the virus further.

First two days went well. Only his sugar level was high owing to the medication and was put on Insulin. The third morning he had a drug reaction and was unconscious and unresponsive for hours on end. This became a recurrent event for next couple of days. Then the doctors' strike along with no signs of improvement forced

brother to shift him to CD hospital.

Even though dad was stable with a high flow mask, he couldn't maintain oxygen saturation without it. On admission to CD hospital, even brother was Covid positive. The relocation from SMHS to CD hospital exhausted and dehydrated dad, to the extent that he slept whole of that day. He refused having anything at all.

The next day he had some juice and soup for dinner. And the next, he asked for coke. We were expecting recovery, for if not solid food, he was ready to have something and had a good humour. Probably that was the last anyone laughed. With hopes of his recovery and for his love of cold drinks.

A couple of days were spent like that, juice, soft drink and soup. Then he started denying food. Any and all food. He started getting restless and wouldn't listen to anyone. Brother started making calls to everyone. After talking to one of us, he would agree to eat. Sometimes brother would scold him; sometimes blackmail him in the name of his grandkids. It worked for a couple of days. Only.

Then we got a panic ridden call, saying dad is really really critical. Once he got stable, we got to know that he was still falling unconscious for hours on end, even though the initial 14 day period was over and so was the danger. Or so we thought. That day onwards he grew highly uncooperative. No number of video calls or appeals would yield any result. He wouldn't maintain his oxygen mask. Brother was at the end of his wits. Nothing was working.

All of us were of the opinion that if he ate well and remained strong-willed he would recover. For the days he had something to eat, he used to be better.

But things were supposed to go downhill. A repeat test after 10 days was still positive. He had been pacing the ward all night, without his mask. He urged brother continuously to take him home. He even threatened him that in case of non-compliance, he would run away. He would ask for his nephew, in hopes that he would listen to him and take him home. He would ask for his elder daughter, for she might agree to take him home. Since he was old, we thought he was not able to relax in a strange setting and hence yearned home. When he said the same to mum over a call, she asked him to eat and get better so he shall be home soon. That soon never came.

On July 26, because of not maintaining his mask, his SpO2 dropped to 46. Due to his non-cooperation, he had to be put on a ventilator. It was a difficult decision for brother as recovery of a Covid patient from ventilator is highly unlikely. Brother called his elder daughter, "Last time shaql dekh lo". She went in in a proper PPE. After calling him multiple times with no response, she had started to break down when he opened his eyes and tried hard to recognize the face behind the mask. He asked her for water, had a few sips, said Alhamdullillah and closed his eyes. Those were the last words he uttered. After discussing with doctors for hours on end and denying consent, he ultimately gave in at 11 in the night.

A repeat test next day and dad was negative. Probably because of plasma treatment. His vitals were also stable and things looked good. In a single night, from 100% on ventilator, he had resumed 20% of his lung function. Things looked promising. He was being fed liquids through tubes. We were hopeful that with some food, proper oxygen and some rest, he would be back on his feet within no time.

The next day wasn't as good though. His potassium levels were high. July 29 and his KFT reports were haywire. Keratin levels were too high. By this time his lungs had patches due to Covid pneumonia. At 8 in the evening he had a cardiac arrest which he didn't survive.

His death wasn't termed a Covid death because of the negative report and hence everything came easy. Brother's test report was negative too so he could leave the hospital for the last rites. The grave was dug at the designated graveyard without any issues and even with the lockdown and everything, his funeral was attended by his close relations. In times when 6 people attend a funeral at maximum, he had at least 30 people there with him.

He could have been moving towards multi-organ failure as well, as is the trend these days. So is a cardiac arrest after testing negative. It might as well have been his lack of will to live too.

But still, a lot of people these days, when alerted about the extreme consequences of Covid, call the people alarmist. Yet, we are pretty much in the same situation as Italy was a few months back. There are no proper goodbyes, and some hospitals are not allowing any attendants inside the premises. As such people are dying without meeting their loved ones for the last time. Even without the last bath, without letting the family get a last glimpse of their dead. Even if people do not acknowledge, we are in grave situation. An extremely grave situation.

But more than Covid, diabetes, or the ensued cardiac arrest, it was society and its norms that killed my dad.

Since the pandemic hit Kashmir, we had been taking all recommended precautions. Yet, the reason for the entry of virus into our household was because mum felt the need to visit a relative for condolence. "Teman gas-eim malaal agar ni bi gayeis. Yi gasie galat" (They would be upset with me if I won't visit them).

Even after a lot of requests, and telling her how dangerous the times are, she still went ahead.

We ended losing dad.

Not one of these people she had so cared about even came to visit once. Even when brother explicitly mentioned that he needed someone to stay with him in the hospital, no one did. So what for listening and caring about what the society thinks or how it would behave?

Even in the time of condolences, when brother and I proposed not letting anyone come home, mum was thinking something else. "Timan agar wanav ma yiev, timan phuttie dil. Yein" (They would feel bad if stopped from visiting us. Let them come). Even after losing her husband, she is more concerned of what the society will say and how they will react.

Even my sister-in-law, who is a medico and often used to criticize people for their foolishness and the way they were behaving in the face of pandemic, is losing her mind. "Agar kahn aav, aeis ma karav timan darwaaz band. Tim kya wanan" (How could we deny entry to someone visiting us? They won't feel good about it?).

My question is simple. Why can't we? Nobody has Covid positive or negative written on their face. What if they bring the virus to us again? Who is going to stay in hospital and tend to the sick? How will things be managed? Why do we need to take such a suicidal risk in the first place?

Covid is a huge opportunity, if we look at it that way. A catalyst that can help us change things around. For the better.

It has quite effectively reduced the extravagant weddings of Kashmir. For years we have been doing things to show off wealth in the society and to feed the distant relatives. Calling over a 1000 people for Walima, 500 for Barat. For a valley which claims sainthood and the people claim to be religious, this is something that the religion does not preach. It is just a societal construct. And bad in many, many ways.

First, simple weddings are promoted in Islam, so it is wrong in the religion the people claim to belong to. Second, it puts undue pressure on a woman's family. So much so that a girl's birth is mourned upon. One can see people crying and wailing, as if visited by Azrael, when a girl is born. Third, whatever one does, someone still finds a fault.

So the virus gave everyone an excuse to stick to the basic and correct their act. Yet, we see more cancellations than simple weddings. Because, "Lukh kya wanaan" (What will people say?)

## Minor's Death Sparks Protest...

SSP Ganderbal, Khali Poswal confirmed the death of the minor girl in a Tweet and assured action against the trucker.

"A minor girl died in an accident at Hariganiwan, great loss, my sympathy with the grieved family. Legal action taken and shall ensure justice is done," Tweeted Poswal.

## 10 Absent Employees...

During the visit, the DDC asked the concerned Engineers to pace up the work and ensure completion of these works within the stipulated time. The DDC placed six officials from Animal Husbandry and Rural Development Department under suspension for their un-authorized absence from duties.

The District Heads of these officials have been directed to enquire into the matter and furnish a report within 21 days.

## Eight Injured In Poonch...

reached on the spot and shifted injured to SDH Mendhar. The condition of two of them, Majid Ali and Mazar Hayat, is stated to be critical. BMO Mendhar Dr. Parvaiz Ahmed Khan confirmed that eight injured persons were brought to the Sub District hospital."Two critically injured persons have been referred to Government Medical College Rajouri," he said.



# Advisor chairs meeting on revival of Business sector in J&K

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 20:- The Committee constituted for exploring the ways and means for the revival of the business sector in Jammu and Kashmir met today under the Chairmanship of Advisor to Lt Governor KK Sharma.

Members of the Committee including Financial Commissioner, Finance, Dr Arun Mehta, Commissioner/ Secretary Industries and Commerce, Manoj Kumar Diwedi, Commissioner/ Secretary Tourism, Zubair Ahmad, Chairman, Jammu Kashmir Bank, R.K Chibber and other senior officers attended.

Detailed discussions were held on various interventions needed for the much needed business revival in the Union territory of Jammu and Kash-



mir. It was decided that suggestions would be taken from different stakeholders including

industrialists, Tourism operators, Small Entrepreneurs and others related to trade and com-

merce, so that a comprehensive document can be made. The Committee also decided

that detailed meetings would also be held with the both chambers of Jammu and Kashmir, besides also other trade federations so that they can also effectively project their view point and come up with suggestions as well as demands.

The Committee also decided that an Additional Secretary level officer from the Finance department would be appointed as nodal officer for liaising with different organizations and taking their view points. Besides, people would also be made aware through advertisements in print and electronic media for coming up with suggestions for reviving the business sector in Jammu and Kashmir which has taken a severe hit like other parts of the country due to COVID-19.

## Minority-Scholarship (2020-21) Applications invited from eligible students

JAMMU, AUGUST 20: Social Welfare Department, J&K Government, has invited on-line applications from eligible students belonging to the Minority Communities (Notified by the Central Government viz; Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Zoroastrians (Parsis) & Jains of the UT of J&K) pursuing studies in India, in a Government or Recognized Private University/Institute/College/ School.

The On-line implementation of Pre-matric, Post-matric and Merit-cum-Means Based Scholarship will be done through the common National Scholarship Portal at [www.scholarships.gov.in](http://www.scholarships.gov.in) (a link of the site is also made available in the website of this Ministry i.e [www.minorityaffairs.gov.in](http://www.minorityaffairs.gov.in) of Mobile App-National Scholarships (NSP).

Only online applications under these Schemes will be accepted and no request for Offline applications will be entertained. It will be necessary for the eligible applicants to provide Aadhaar number, while applying for scholarship and in case an individual does not possess Aadhar one can provide the details of alternate identification documents as stated in the Gazette Notification available on National Scholarship Portal (NSP).

The Scheme-wise Time-line for submission/verification of online applications for Scholarship by Students/Institutes, besides eligibility criteria for the same has also been prescribed by the department.

Submission of Online applications for all the three categories viz Pre-Matric Scholarship, post-Matric scholarship and Merit-cum-Means Based Scholarship, for students is open from August 16, 2020 to October 31, 2020 and last date for verification of online applications by Institute Nodal Officer (First Level) is November 15, 2020.

The academic eligibility criteria for pre-matric Scholarship is 50% or equivalent grade in the previous final examination and the income criteria is Rs 1 lakh. The course being pursued should be of minimum one year duration.

Similarly, the academic eligibility for Post-Matric Scholarship and Merit-cum-Means Based Scholarship is same as for pre-Matric (50% or equivalent grade in the previous final examination), while the income criteria is Rs 2 lakh and Rs 2.50 lakh, respectively.

The applicants are advised to apply online against any one of the scholarship schemes on the website of National Scholarship Portal. The Scholarship will be provided to only two students of one Parent. A scholarship holder under this Scheme will not avail any other scholarship/stipend for pursuing the same course/class from any other agency/Department. The Students are advised to read the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) section available on the National Scholarship Portal (NSP) homepage of the website for filling up of Online application and greater clarity.

## Steps underway for promoting, reviving traditional Arts: Advisor Sharma

SRINAGAR, AUGUST 20- Advisor to Lieutenant Governor KK Sharma today said that requisite steps for incentivizing weavers, artisans to increase their income besides also ensuring the revival of traditional arts and crafts have already been taken.

The Advisor was speaking at the meeting convened to discuss working of the Craft Development Institute (CDI), Srinagar besides also the issues being faced by it.

The meeting was attended by Director Skill development and Director CDI, Sajad Ahmed Gania, Member faculty CDI, Yasir Mir and other senior officers

The Advisor also directed for putting in place a robust mechanism for ensuring the revival and propagation of the traditional

arts and crafts of Jammu and Kashmir especially Pashmina weaving, maintaining that the measures should be put in place so that it regains its popularity especially at the National and International level.

Advisor while appreciating efforts of Institute directed to develop Basholi Pashmina craft and align skill courses on NSQF pattern. He also asked for widening the ambit of the institute so that more traditional arts and crafts of Jammu and Kashmir get benefited by its interventions.

Director CDI informed the Advisor that the mandate of the Institute is to be a catalyst in transforming the regional craft sector through education, research, innovation, training and integrated development.

### Public Notice

I Manzoor Ahmad Wagay S/O: Mohd Ramzan Wagay R/O Woyen Imamasahib Shopian Md M/S: Muzamil Masla Mills Located At Industrial Estate Gagren Shopian. The Unit Is Formally Registered And Line Of Activity Is Grinding Of Masala. Now i would change The Line Of Activity Of The Unit to Data Processing Unit under name and style "Rainbow Graphics". Hence if anybody having any objection in this regard he/she may contact general manager DIC shopian within a week.

Manzoor Ahmad Wagay  
S/O Mohammad Ramzan Wagay  
R/O Woyen Imamasahib Shopian.

**JAMMU & KASHMIR PROJECTS**  
**CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION LIMITED**  
**OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY GENERAL MANAGER JKPCCLTD UNIT 1ST SRINAGAR**  
**NOTICE INVITING e**

**Tendering/DGM/IST/SGR/JKPCCLTD OF 20**  
 For and on behalf of the Managing Director JKPCCLTD, e cover system  
 are invited on contractors of PWD of UT of J&K and other states, CPWD,  
 Railways for following work.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| construction of Septic Tank & Soakage Pit and wash rooms for site office inside the premises of Excise & Taxation complex at Solina Srinagar. |  |
|---|--|

**Position of AAA/TS :**  
 The Bidding documents consisting of specifications, bill of quantities (B.O.Q) Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/ downloaded from the website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) as per schedule of dates given below:

**Position of funds:**

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Date of Issue of Tender Notice             |  |
| Date of publishing of NIT Online           | .2020 from   |
| Period of downloading of bidding documents | .2020 from   |
| <b>Start Date (Online)</b>                 |  |
|  | .2020 upto 4:00 PM   |
| Date & time of opening of Technical Bids   | .2020, after 10:30 AM in the Office of the Dy. General Manager, J&KPCCLTD. |
| Date & time of opening of Financial Bids   | To be notified after technical bid evaluation is completed.                |

**Deputy General Manager**  
 DIPK-NB-1900/20  
**Tendering/DGM/IST /SGR/JKPCCLTD**

**UNIVERSITY OF KASHMIR**  
**REVISED DATE SHEET**

For Backlog candidates of BG 6TH SEMESTER (Session July, 2020) for Jammu & Kashmir (Batch 2015).  
Timing:- 6th Semester: 12:00 Noon to 1:30 P.M.

| DAY & DATE             | FACULTY  |   |   |
|------------------------|--|---|---|
|                        | SCIENCE/HOME SCIENCE/B.SC. IT  | ARTS/SOCIAL SCIENCE/ FAZILA/ B.A.HONOURS  | B.COM/BBA/BCA/MCMP  |
| Tuesday<br>01/09/2020  | Textile & Clothing (H.Sc.)<br>Chemistry<br>Software Engineering (BIT-604)  | Paper-25 Non-Fictional Prose (BAH-6 <sup>th</sup> )<br>Education  | Economic Env. of Business (BCOM-604a-6 <sup>th</sup> )<br>Advanced Auditing (BCOM-604b-6 <sup>th</sup> )<br>Investment Management (BCOM-604c-6 <sup>th</sup> ) VAT-Theory & Practice (BCOM-604d-6 <sup>th</sup> ) |
| Thursday<br>03/09/2020 | Electronics<br>Geography<br>Bio-Chemistry<br>Bio-Technology<br>Resource Management (H.Sc.)   | Geography<br>Kashmiri<br>Psychology<br>Arabic Grammar & Composition (BF-602)<br>Media Script Writing  | International Business (BBA-603-6 <sup>th</sup> )<br>Multimedia & Animation (MCMP-602-6 <sup>th</sup> )<br>Computer Graphics (BCA-SVI-03-6 <sup>th</sup> )  |
| Saturday<br>05/09/2020 | Geology<br>Clinical Bio-Chemistry<br>Horticulture  | Geology<br>Paper-26 Literature in Translation-II (BAH-6 <sup>th</sup> )<br>Hadith & Jurisprudence (BF-605)  | *****   |
| Tuesday<br>08/09/2020  | Industrial Chemistry<br>Electronics Equip. & Maintenance<br>Sericulture<br>Environment & Water Mgt.<br>Information Technology<br>Computer Application<br>Nutrition & Dietetics | Functional English<br>Computer Application<br>Travel & Tourism Management<br>Mass Comm. & Video Prod. (MCVP)<br>Philosophy<br>Arabic Language & Literature (BF-603) | Auditing (BCOM-602-6 <sup>th</sup> )<br>Linear Algebra (BCA-SVI-04-6 <sup>th</sup> )  |

**Note:**  
1. The revised Centre Notice is available on the official website [www.kashmiruniversity.net](http://www.kashmiruniversity.net). The candidates should check their examination centre thoroughly as some examination centers have been changed.

| Center No. | Previous Center                        | New Center                              |
|------------|--|---|
| 03         | Govt. Degree College, Anantnag (Boys)  | Govt. Degree College, Anantnag (Women)  |
| 16         | Govt. Degree College, Pulwama (Boys)   | Govt. Degree College, Pulwama (Women)   |
| 18         | Govt. Degree College, Baramulla (Boys) | Govt. Degree College, Baramulla (Women) |

2. The candidates must carry valid Identity Cards and Roll No. slips with them on each day of examination for verification by the supervisory staff.  
3. The pattern of Question Paper for this backlog examination shall be the same as was in vogue for the Regular/Fresh Private Examination held in June-July, 2018.  
4. The students without face masks will not be allowed to sit in the examination.  
5. The students having symptoms of COVID-19 are not allowed to appear in the examination.  
6. The Principals of the Govt. Degree Colleges are requested to ensure strict observance of COVID-19 protocol and expenditure if any, on this account shall be debited to their local fund. They shall get the venue of examination fumigated in and outside on every day of the examination. The Centre Superintendents shall ensure physical as well as vertical distance in the examination hall as prescribed.

**No: F (Revised Date Sheet-6th Sem Backlog (B-15))KU/20**  
**Dated: 18/08/2020**

**Sd/- Assistant Controller of Examinations (UG Wing)**

**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: 26  |
| ZUHR    | 12: 35 |
| ASR     | 5:18   |
| Magrib  | 7:17   |
| ISHA    | 8:42   |

## This Day In History

- 1541- Ottoman Turks under Suleiman the Magnificent capture Buda, the capital of the Hungarian Kingdom. Dominate central Hungary for 150 years
- 1573- Spain begin siege of Alkmaar in the Netherlands
- 1598- Deed of Transfers proclaims Netherlands independence
- 1673- Sea battle at Kijkduin: De Ruyter defeats English & French fleet
- 1703-The Edirne Event: Turkish army removes Sultan Mustafa II, lessening the power of the sultans
- 1808- Battle of Vimeiro: British and Portuguese forces led by General Arthur Wellesley defeat French force under Major- General Jean-Andoche Junot near the village of Vimeiro, Portugal, the first Anglo-Portuguese victory of the Peninsular War.
- 1914- Belgium: German troops occupy Tarnines
- 1914-French offensive in the Ardennen/Sambre
- 1915- Italy declares war on Turkey in World War One
- 1942- World War II: a Nazi flag is installed atop the Mount Elbrus.
- 1943- Japan leaves Aleutian Islands
- 1953- Sultan Sidi Mohammed Am Joesssoef V of Morocco deposed
- 1957- 1st launching in Baikonur, Kazakhstan (R7 "Semiorka"-rocket)
- 1965- Gemini 5 launched into Earth orbit (2 astronauts)
- 1968-Radio Prague (Czechoslovakia) at 12:50 AM announces a Soviet led invasion
- 1968- Warsaw Pact forces continue their invasion of Czechoslovakia to end the reform movement known as the Prague Spring
- 1972- US orbiting astronomy observatory Copernicus launched
- 1972- 33rd Venice Film Festival opens
- 1986-Volcanic eruption in Cameroon releases poison gas, killing 2,000
- 1989- Voyager 2 begins a flyby of planet Neptune
- 1991-Latvia declares its independence from USSR
- 1993- NASA loses contact with Mars Observer
- 1994- The last French troops pull out of Rwanda, ending their highly controversial mission there
- 2001- NATO decides to send a peace-keeping force to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.
- 2014- Israeli airstrike in Rafah kills Mohammed Abu Shammala, Raed al Atar and Mohammed Barhoum - 3 of Hamas's top commanders
- 2015- Oldest "message in a bottle" - more than 108 years after put in sea by UK Marine Biological Association announced found on beach in Amrum, Germany
- 2015- 1st British unmanned drone hit on UK citizen outside a conflict - ISIS fighter Reyaad Khan in Raqqa, Syria

## From KO Archives

## 'Illiterate' Appointed Instead Of Namesake

MUSHTAQ AFTAB

CHADURA (BUDGAM) - Even as numerous scandals of fake appointments have surfaced in various government departments over the recent years, incidence of the wrong doing is far from being stamped out. Some diehards still manage to get a job in one or the other department by manipulating records and documents, and by tapping the 'right' person and the 'tight' timer. An illiterate villager has got a government job allegedly by impersonation, and got away with it, assurance of the finance minister to get the wrong undone notwithstanding. In the process, the genuine claimant for the appointment continues to be jobless. Reports said Nazir Ahmad Dar r/o Abdul Kabir Dar R/o Badipore, has passed his 12th (TDC) clam examination. But, it is his namesake in the neighbourhood who, though illiterate, has allegedly got a government job. The only difference between the two is in the names of their grandfathers. While the former's grandfather is named Abdullah Dar, the latter's name is Ahmad Dar. According to reports, the uneducated Nazir Ahmad Dar was appointed in the horticulture department in 1996. He is posted in the district office at Budgam. Sources in the department said Dar managed to procure the certificates of his educated namesake which he produced in support of his claim. The department did not entertain the 'genuine' claim of the educated Dar. Though the serious case of alleged swap was brought to the notice of the state vigilance organisations, no action has been taken so far. The educated Dar approached the finance minister, Abdur Raheem Rather, who also happens to be his neighbour. He had assured him to get the right person appointed against the post. However, justice still eludes hint despite lapse of about four years. In another case, Mushtaq Ahmad Zargar s/o Ghulam Ahmad Zargar r/o Badipore has managed to secure a job allegedly by producing a fake certificate of academic qualification. According to reliable sources, he is barely read up to 4th standard. However, he managed to get a certificate of having passed his 9th class (under metric) examination from the government higher secondary school, Nagam, in 1996 allegedly, through his brother, Abdul Rasheed Zargar, who is a teacher at Badipore. On the basis of the alleged fake certificate, Zargar was appointed as a peon in the animal husbandry department. He has been working at the veterinary dispensary here for about three years past. Sources said the department did not take any action to unravel the facts and bring the accused to justice even after the matter was brought to its notice.

(Kashmir Observer, August 21, 2000)



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## A normal Kashmir?

Centre has withdrawn around 10,000 paramilitary forces personnel from J&K a year after they were deployed in the former state in August last in the run up to the revocation of Article 370. The decision has been taken after the Union Home Ministry reviewed the deployment of the Central Armed Police Forces in the union territory. Last year, around 38000 paramilitary personnel had been sent to the Valley to curb the then anticipated outbreak of the protests.

But a large force still remains in the Valley. The CRPF has a strength of about 60 battalions with each battalion having 1,000 personnel in the Valley alone. Similarly, there are other units of paramilitary troops also here. It can be hoped that in future more withdrawals may take place.

In a sense, withdrawal of the forces was long overdue. Over the past year, Kashmir has remained largely calm. Other than the intermittent protests that followed the withdrawal of Article 370 for a short duration, the Valley has been peaceful, albeit uneasily so. As a result, there was no need for more paramilitary personnel in the Valley.

At the same time, withdrawal of the paramilitary forces underlines a certain contradiction in the government's approach towards the situation in the union territory. While, on one hand, the situation is peaceful enough for pulling out the excess security personnel, it is not conducive enough for the restoration of 4G - albeit, the administration has recently allowed the internet in two districts of the former state - one each in Jammu and the Valley.

Truth is that the Valley continues to be under siege, more of it now invisible to the eye. A year on from the repeal of Article 370, there's little that's normal about Kashmir: the economy has been completely shattered with thousands of people having lost their jobs. The Covid-19 lockdown has come as a double whammy, creating a situation of a lockdown within a lockdown.

Similarly, all kind of a normal political activity has come to a halt. The political parties across the mainstream-separatist divide can't hold any activity. This has time and again been demonstrated when government has prevented the parties from convening a meeting, let alone hold a rally. Also, many leaders, including the PDP chief Mehbooba Mufti, continue to be under detention or house arrest. And there's little hope that they will be released anytime soon. So, in a sense, the larger siege remains in place and it can only be deemed to have been lifted once the economy is back on rails and the local politics is back in action. Also, the one big indicator of this normalcy will be the complete restoration of 4G internet.

OTHER OPINION

## Dangerous new world

The nuclear weapons dropped over Hiroshima and Nagasaki 75 years ago this week wreaked a devastation never before seen in human warfare. Yet they were firecrackers compared with the nuclear weapons that were soon developed — bombs, warheads, shells, torpedoes and other devices capable of vaporizing the human race in an apocalyptic flash.

For decades, that thought cast a pall of acute anxiety over America and the world. Whether because of that fear, a strategy of effective deterrence, chance or all the above, the United States remains the only country to have used nuclear weapons in combat. With the end of the Cold War, anxiety around nuclear war has receded. Most people probably are not aware that a harrowing and expensive new arms race is now underway.

Today Americans are more likely to identify climate change as the greatest man-made threat to the planet. Last year, in the list of what Americans fear compiled annually by Chapman University, "North Korea using nuclear weapons" and "Nuclear weapons attack" ranked 27 and 29, far below "Corrupt government officials" (No. 1) or "Pollution of oceans, rivers and lakes" (No. 2).

Yet even with the Cold War long over and stockpiles of nuclear weapons in the Russian and American arsenals sharply reduced through a series of nuclear arms treaties, to fewer than 6,000 warheads each, there are no grounds for complacency. The world can still be destroyed in a flash.

Nine states have nuclear weapons — the United States, Russia, Britain, France, China, India, Pakistan, Israel and North Korea. Iran's nuclear program has been the focus of intense concern for years, and Saudi Arabia has vowed that if Iran develops a nuclear weapon, it will follow suit. Consider also that two men have the power to unleash a nuclear barrage entirely on their own — President Trump and Vladimir Putin, the Russian president, who are both working assiduously on modernizing their arsenals.

The 75th anniversary of Hiroshima is a good time to revive serious public concern about nuclear weapons. The pandemic may leave little room for other fears, but public health and economic recovery should not have to compete for resources with a needless and enormously expensive new arms race. As Jessica Mathews, former president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, writes in the current issue of The New York Review of Books, it would be good for the five original nuclear powers — the United States, Russia, Britain, France and China — to formally endorse the principle set forth by Presidents Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev at their 1985 summit, that "a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought."

Above all, the wrenching images of scorched rubble where Hiroshima had stood ought to be cause for serious reflection on what nuclear weapons do — and what they cannot do.

The New York Times

Shruti Rajagopalan

Harris no doubt realises she will never be black enough for some African Americans, or Indian enough for some Indians and Indian Americans. But, as the successful daughter of two successful immigrants, now running for the second-highest office in the land, she couldn't be any more American

# Why India wants to claim Kamala

Birth matters above all in India, but Harris is defined more by her choices than ancestry



For very different reasons, both Indians and US conservatives are emphasising Senator Kamala Harris's Indian heritage. This shouldn't be entirely surprising. Indians have always been quick to appropriate successful members of their diaspora. And right-wing commentators and even US President Donald Trump are seeking to spread suspicions about the Democratic vice-presidential candidate's citizenship by emphasising her mother's Indian background and father's Jamaican heritage. In reality, though, Harris is the very definition of American.

Indian society still largely believes that identity is determined more by one's birth and family than by individual choices and actions. Especially for the very large conservative faction in India, caste and religion are assigned at birth, never to be altered. One cannot technically convert to Hinduism. And the caste system, maintained by marriage, ensures very little social mobility. In India, the birth lottery is everything.

So, Harris and other US political leaders such as Bobby Jindal and Nikki Haley will always be claimed as "Indian" even though they are American-born and their public service has been devoted almost exclusively to Americans. By contrast, someone like Sonia Gandhi, who has spent more than five decades in India and led the Indian National Congress party successfully through two national elections, is routinely described as "Italian-born" or a "foreigner". Had Gandhi not married into the first family of India, her political rise would have been impossible.

That's not to say Harris's Indian roots haven't fundamentally shaped her. Her mother ShyamalaGopalan was born in India and raised in a Tamil Brahmin family, which likely afforded her the Indian equivalent of white privilege. Because of this Brahminical edge, families such as Shyamala's (and mine), boast multiple generations of college graduates in a country that has yet to achieve

100% basic literacy.

Not unusually for "Tam-Bram" families, Shyamala and all her siblings were encouraged to pursue advanced graduate degrees. In Shyamala's case, this included a rare opportunity move to the US to attend Berkeley, creating the possibility of joining the Indian-American elite, or what scholars have dubbed "The Other One Percent." This educational foundation in turn, would have helped ease Harris's own entry into the ranks of the American elite.

The idea that anyone who comes to this country and works hard can change their fortune is still the essence of America, though. While social mobility is limited in certain demographics, the accident of birth matters less in the US than in almost any other country in the world. The American dream remains a cherished personal and policy goal.

### The shame of Brahmins of Besant Nagar

What really sets Kamala Harris apart is not the caste or ethnicity of her mother, but the choices her mother made. At 19, Shyamala was relatively young when she came to the US and she quickly became very active in the civil rights movement. That's how she met and married fellow immigrant Donald J. Harris, who is now professor emeritus of economics at Stanford University.

That ShyamalaGopalan married outside her caste and ethnicity would have been extremely unusual for someone of her background in the 1960s. Even more remarkably, she got divorced within a few years. I doubt this was an easy choice. The Brahmins of Besant Nagar, a suburb of Chennai, who are now so eager to claim links to the Gopalan, likely have ancestors that shamed Shyamala's choice of husband. Only recently another Tamil Brahmin, renowned classical vocalist SudhaRaghunathan, was pilloried when her daughter married an African-American man.

In her memoir, Harris writes that her mother also "knew that her adopted homeland would see Maya

and me as black girls, and she was determined to make sure we would grow into confident black women." The two girls sang in a choir at a Black church and learnt about Black leaders at a local childcare centre. Kamala herself chose to attend historically black Howard University rather than an Ivy League school.

Whether this makes her any more or less "Indian" is irrelevant. Identity is a complex thing, even without throwing in immigration, mixed parentage, exogamous marriage and more. Kamala Harris is probably a little of everything she appears to be — and yet the sum of the parts is very different from the components. Like other Brahmin immigrants, she is well-educated, professionally a unicorn and financially successful. But contrary to the expectations of a "Gopalan," Harris enjoys pork chops. And to her proud Jamaican father's displeasure, Harris makes jokes about pot-smoking Jamaicans.

### Harris' identity as a woman of colour

As the campaign unfolds from here, Harris will have to be careful. Hopefully, the birthed slurs will be ignored. But Indians can also turn quickly on those they consider their own when they don't conform. Any critiques of India's handling of Kashmir, for instance, will be perceived as those of a traitorous "Indian," not an American politician. Similarly, many in the Black Lives Matter movement will have trouble reconciling Harris' identity as a woman of colour with her prosecutorial record.

Harris no doubt realises she will never be black enough for some African Americans, or Indian enough for some Indians and Indian Americans. But, as the successful daughter of two successful immigrants, now running for the second-highest office in the land, she couldn't be any more American. (Bloomberg)

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## COVID-19 and Altered Behavioural Paradigms

Covid 19 is a prodigious global event. But unfortunately, not a happy one. It has been full of transitions — big and small. The world's facing a humongous economic and psycho-social crisis because of it. On the side of the "trivial", we've turned from a handshake to a foot shake and moved from a high-five to a low five. It has profoundly changed the experience of being a customer, an employee, a citizen and a human.

The effects of the pandemic are definitely going to outlive it. It will continue to impact the way we consume, work, interact and live in general. In fact, Covid-19 has already had a great impact on basic human aspects such as health, social life, and work.

Health is certainly the major concern now. Individuals have become more health and fitness conscious. Ger-

mophobia has become all pervasive. People are afraid of everything from germs to the virus and even to people. To combat it, cleanliness and hygiene have taken central importance in everyday life. Telemedicine, virtual health care, robot appointments and healthier transportation options are the new norm. A less touch-feely health scenario is becoming desirable.

Physical distancing which has unfortunately translated into social distancing is also changing everything. Isolation is impacting each one of us in different ways. People have embraced opposites and shifted to extremes; from fast-food to natural foods and from real to online lives. Paranoia of big crowds and gatherings is bound to be the new normal for a while. In fact, we are back to basics now.

Our homes have become the cen-

tre of everything. Social distancing has altered social dynamics to large extent which may apparently imply social strain, volatility, individualism, emptiness and loneliness. However, on the brighter side, family and relationship appreciation is being witnessed, intergenerational relationships have strengthened, and local communities are being valued.

Additionally, everyone is reinventing ways to survive. E-commerce is booming and there is a deeper appreciation for convenience. Consumers want things that are close to them and easier to buy. Companies and businesses that are thriving right now are those that are upgrading their services to meet the new challenges.

Professional dynamics have also changed and become more casual, informal and accommodating. Even as

millions of people are unemployed and have incurred huge business losses; more and more people are showing meaningful empathy and support towards each other especially those who are out of jobs or are running small businesses.

Therefore, the pandemic has bought sweeping changes in affective, cognitive and conative realms of humans. Surprisingly, technology has played an enabling role during the pandemic. It appears that in our journey from pre to a post Covid world, technology might be a bridge. Interestingly, it is technology that will allow us to be more humane.

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THE MONTH of *Zil Hijjah* has just passed and the sorrowful month of *Muharram* has emerged, bringing along with it all its grief, sadness, and mourning as the new year commences. It was in the year 60 A.H. when Imam Hussain (peace be upon him) and his family made the intention to perform Hajj in the sacred *Haram*. However, just before the commencement of the pilgrimage, he suddenly left *Makkah* without performing Hajj! This was the time when huge crowds were entering *Makkah* for Hajj that Imam Hussain was going out of that Holy City with his family and followers. This strange event must have elicited questions in the minds of everyone as to why the grandson of the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him and his progeny) was leaving *Makkah* just on the eve of Hajj without performing Hajj. Why did he leave *Makkah*, when he embarked on this spiritual journey in order to complete what is one of the best deeds in Allah's eyes? Why didn't he wait just a few days until he finished the necessary rituals of pilgrimage? After all, based on our human judgment, nothing could be more important than the pilgrimage that would deserve interruption or cancellation, right?

History tells us that the Imam discovered that some of the followers of Yazid had entered *Makkah* as pilgrims, with the mission to kill him during the rites of Hajj with the arms they carried under their special pilgrimage dress (*the Ehraam*). So Imam Hussain shortened the pilgrimage rites and decided to leave. Amidst the vast crowd of people, he stood up and announced in a speech that he was setting out for Iraq, he declared that he would be martyred, asked the Muslims to help him in attaining the goal he had in view, and to offer their lives in the path of God. The next day, he set out with his family and a group of his companions for Iraq. But it was not his own life that he was fearful for; rather, it was the life of Islam that Imam Hussain had his eyes set on! The proof for that is that he knew very well that he would be killed in *Karbala* and was literally walking towards his own death! So why interrupt his Hajj only to die in another land, if not for a noble reason?

The prime reason for leaving *Makkah* was that Imam Hussain did not want to be killed in a manner that the tyrants might remain hidden and undetected. In the huge rush of pilgrims assembled from all corners of the world, it would have been impossible to apprehend the killer, and particularly to ascertain the real killer behind the curtains.

Secondly, Imam Hussain's ultimate aim was to expose Yazid, and the Imam was determined not to give his allegiance to this corrupt oppressor. In this way, the question of why Imam Hussain refused allegiance to Yazid came to the forefront of discussion among all individuals and groups who assembled for Hajj as they noticed that Imam Hussain left *Makkah* without performing the Hajj. If the Imam were to be killed now, it would be assumed that Yazid must have arranged his killing, and this is what actually happened. Yazid stands clearly, openly and directly exposed as the perpetrator of the crimes which formed part of that tragedy and his un-Islamic ideas; the beliefs and acts lie exposed to the world. The very people who had been silenced by fear and awe of the murderous tyrants were so moved to the core of their hearts by the tragic events of *Karbala* that they began picking up courage to express themselves against Yazid. In a very short time, there was a widespread uproar of protests against him and his government. This was possible only because of the superb way in which Imam Hussain carried out his plan of meeting Yazid's violence with the strength of his character.

It would be an erroneous statement to say that the Imam skipped or canceled his Hajj that year! In fact, Imam Hussain abandoned the ritualistic Hajj to perform the true essence of Hajj, which is embodied in his sacrifice on the plains of *Karbala*!

We learn from Imam Hussain that there was a more important goal for him to accomplish than completing the rituals of Hajj and risking bloodshed

# From Makkah To Karbala

Jerrmein Abu Shahba



“The prime reason for leaving *Makkah* was that Imam Hussain did not want to be killed in a manner that the tyrants might remain hidden and undetected. In the huge rush of pilgrims assembled from all corners of the world, it would have been impossible to apprehend the killer, and particularly to ascertain the real killer behind the curtains.

in the *Haram*. Actually, it would be an erroneous statement to say that the Imam skipped or canceled his Hajj that year! In fact, Imam Hussain abandoned the ritualistic Hajj to perform the true essence of Hajj, which is embodied in his sacrifice and bloodshed on the plains of *Karbala*! Quite frankly, many of the ritualistic acts of Hajj symbolize the tragedy of *Karbala*, most notably the slaughter on the day of Eid al-Adha. Even though we celebrate that day out of gratitude that Allah spared the grief of father and son, Prophets Ibrahim and Isma'il (peace be upon them) from the slaughter ordered by Him, our moment of joy doesn't last long because it is soon replaced by the Great Slaughter (Dhibh Adheem, as mentioned in 37:104-108 of the Qur'an) which is personified in Hussain ibn Ali. The grief we feel is further intensified as we remember the pain of separation between Imam Hussain and his son Ali Akbar, which was not spared like that of Isma'il and his father. The 10th of Dhil-Hijjah is only a few weeks away from the 10th of Muharram, reminding us of the true sacrifice that was offered in *Karbala* one month later!

When we think of Lady Hajra's plight in fetching water for her son Isma'il, we are reminded of Imam Hussain's pain of watching his youngest son, Ali Asghar, die out of thirst as he tries his best to seek water from the enemy by raising his infant in his arms in the hopes of moving their hearts and quenching his son's thirst. Unlike Hajra, whose heart was solaced when a spring of water erupted to save her son's life, Imam Hussain found nothing but a tri-headed arrow to pierce the neck of Ali Asghar!

It is narrated that when Lady Hajra saw with her own eyes the marks of the knife on her son's neck, she fainted from that scene; one can only imagine what overwhelming emotions Lady Fatima experienced when she witnessed her son's headless body trampled by the hoofs of the horses after dying in a state of extreme thirst!

When we walk the distance between Safa and Marwa, we are reminded that it is the same distance as that between the holy shrine of Hazrat Abbas ibn Ali and his brother, Imam Hussain. This exact match in distance is certainly not a coincidence, and it reminds us of the challenge which Hazrat Abbas underwent as he sought to bring water to the thirsty children who had all their hopes pinned on him.

As the pilgrims rush to attain the blessings of the holy water of Zamzam, they are to be reminded of that water which Imam Hussain was denied until he died in the state of thirst, when even animals are given a last sip before being slaughtered!

The pilgrims in Hajj wear their clothes of *Eh-raam* for the sake of Allah, and Imam Hussain also wore his clothes of *Eh-raam* for His sake while abandoning the pleasures of this life only for these *Eh-raam* clothes to be drenched in his own pure blood to irrigate the tree of Islam!

The pilgrims stone the symbols of Shaytan numerous times to expel the whisperings of the devil which we are all prone to every second of every day. Hurr ibn Yazid al-Riyahi and Umar ibn Sa'd also experienced whisperings from Shaytan to attain the glory of power. However, Hurr stoned the whisperings of Shaytan and made the right decision to join

Imam Hussain, while Umar followed the whisperings and became a Shaytan himself!

When the pilgrims go to Mina where the final sacrifice is given, this stage of Hajj symbolizes our intention to sacrifice everything beloved to us for Allah just like the Imam did, and the tents are a reminder of his family's tents which were burned down and destroyed in *Karbala* after the Great Slaughter!

When the pilgrims visit the Holy Ka'ba and circumambulate it, they are reminded of the honor Allah gave Prophet Ibrahim in rebuilding this sacred House of God. They are also to be reminded of the rebuilding of the pure Mohammadan Islam by Imam Hussain when he offered his pure blood to give a jump-start to this Deen, which was on its way to corruption and deviation.

It is important to note that a pilgrim who performs Hajj without recognizing *Karbala* to be its true essence does not gain the real fruits of his/her pilgrimage. In the words of Dr. Ali Shariati: Imam Hussain did not complete his Hajj in order to teach the pilgrims that if there is no Imamate and there is no true leadership, if there is no goal, if Hussain is not there and Yazid is there, making Tawaaf around the house of Allah is equal to making Tawaaf around the idol-house. (Hajj)

All the pilgrims stone the Shaytan, all of them wear the robe of *Eh-raam*, and all of them circumambulate the Ka'ba and walk the distance between Safa and Marwa. But not all who physically stone the Shaytan have truly rid themselves from his temptations. Not all who wear the *Eh-raam* have forbidden themselves from that which Allah has forbidden them. Not all who sacrifice an animal have their offer truly accepted by Allah, and it is only those who sacrifice their souls like the blessed companions of Imam Hussain, and exhibit readiness to die for the Imam and the mission he represents, whose offer is accepted by Allah. Not all who raise their voices and call out *La ilaha illa Allah* have truly recognized the essence of Tawheed, and it is only by fulfilling the conditions that one has truly pronounced the word of Oneness. As Imam Ali ar-Ridha (peace be upon him) relayed to his companions: The Almighty Allah said, I surely am the God besides whom there is no god, so worship Me. Whoever comes with the testimony of Tawheed sincerely, he has surely entered My castle; and whoever enters My castle, he shall be protected from My chastisement.' When some of the companions expressed excitement from that statement, Imam Ridha immediately added, Yes this is true with its conditions. This condition is to acknowledge and submit to the Imamate and Wilayat of Imam Hussain and his descendants.

If we recognize the essence of Hajj as being intertwined with the tragedy of *Karbala*, we can then understand why Allah's mercy encompasses the pilgrims visiting the holy shrine of Imam Hussain on the day of Arafah, even before the pilgrims of Hajj! (Kamil al-Ziyarat) We will then understand why a special Ziyarat is to be recited for Imam Hussain on the day of Arafah, which is one of the most important deeds that one can do. We will then realize that it is not a coincidence that one of the key recommended deeds to be performed on the day of Arafah is to recite the special beautiful supplication of Imam Hussain for the day of Arafah, which speaks volumes of the level of Irfan and wisdom which Imam Hussain possesses as he summarizes to us in concise words the fundamentals of Tawheed. We will then understand why, according to authentic hadith, visiting the holy shrine of Imam Hussain is worth 90 Hajj and 90 Umrah performed by the Holy Prophet himself! It is common knowledge that Hajj is obligatory on all Muslims if and only if they have the means to do so and all the prerequisite requirements are met. However, supporting and treading the path of Imam Hussain is incumbent and obligatory upon every human at all times, whether Muslim or non-Muslim!

Egyptian by birth author is Clinical Research Scientist by profession. She contributes as a writer for different Islamic journals.

## COVID-19: When A Negative Result Is Positive News

The coronavirus test was free, but I spent a sleepless night

P. Nagarjuna Rao | Gulf News

“I expressed my fears to her since we are all set to travel back home (for good) in the next few days. But it was too late. She had already given her ID card and phone number and was seated in the chair for her swab sample to be collected.

We tend to gravitate towards anything that's on offer. A 25% extra in any of the foodstuff, including potato chips, or +2 bars of your favourite chocolates in the pack, and Buy 2 Get 1 Free or the other way round, we don't let go off those offers. Though you know potato chips are bad for health, nothing will stop you from reaching for a couple of packets from the shelves.

Your wardrobe may be bulging at the seams, but you tend to grab that offer of an extra shirt or dress. Is it value for money? Why not, when something's offered free. Exactly!

We were at Sharjah City Centre the other day to buy a pair of jeans. We saw a serpentine queue leading to the space below the escalator that brings you to the ground floor and next to the one that takes you up to the first floor where health workers in PPEs were taking nasal swab samples.

My eyes fell on a small poster announcing FREE COVID-19 TESTING, and soon we (my wife and I) found ourselves at the tail-end of the male and female queues.

The line moved slowly. After a good 20 minutes, I realised I have just moved a few paces from where I began. Wondered how long it'd take me to reach the testing area.

That's when it crossed my mind: 'What if we are tested positive?'

### My fears and a restless night

Instantly I called my wife on the phone as I could not see her from where I stood in the queue.

I expressed my fears to her since we are all set to travel back home (for good) in the next few days. But it was too late. She had already given her ID card and phone number and was seated in the chair for her swab sample to be collected.

Now nothing can be done — or rather undone. I was thinking of all the possible scenarios in the



event we tested positive. It's only in medical tests we find that positive doesn't mean something to be happy about. It's quite the opposite!

Do we have to be in self-isolation or will we be quarantined? Would we be hospitalised and put on a ventilator? Do we have to postpone our travel date and would there be any repatriation flights or will the regular flights resume? And the more worrisome question playing on my mind was would any of my friends or relatives visit us either at home or the hospital?

While the thoughts were running riot, the queue had moved quite a bit, and after a few more agonising moments, it was my turn to give my sample for the PCR test. The medic greeted me with a 'hello' and inquired how I felt. 'I'm fine, thank you', I quipped

as she explored the nasal cavity with a swab. I felt a painful, irritating and tingling tickle and started sputtering, coughing, sneezing and wincing all at the same time.

Soon the ordeal was over, and I was told the test results would be sent through SMS. Believe me when I say I hardly slept through the night, perturbed by the prospect of negative news. But indeed I got negative news, I mean COVID-negative result, which is actually positive. Oh, forget it. Quite confusing!

The fact of the matter is I am 'fit to fly'.

P. Nagarjuna Rao is a journalist based in Hyderabad, India



“WE ARE USING VIRTUALLY ALL OF our leftovers, where we used to waste food because we would forget to pack it and just pick up fast food on a lunch break,” said Parry, who is married and works as a master model builder at Legoland in Michigan.



# Lockdown Life, Leftovers And Reduced Food Wastage Is A Climate Boon Amid Pandemic

## Agencies

Clint Parry ransacked every kitchen cupboard and scoured all corners of his fridge during lockdown in Detroit, hunting for lost ingredients and leftovers to whip up meals. The 33-year-old is one of many people across the world to have embraced thriftiness and cut down on food waste during the Covid-19 pandemic, according to experts. They say the new habits, if maintained, will provide a major boost in tackling another global crisis: climate change. “We are using virtually all of our leftovers, where we used to waste food because we would forget to pack it and just pick up fast food on a lunch break,” said Parry, who is married and works as a master model builder at

Legoland in Michigan.

The U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization estimates that a third of the world's food is wasted every year. Forests are cleared, fuel is burnt and packaging in produced just to provide food which is thrown away. Meanwhile, rotting food in landfills releases more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. As a result, food waste is responsible for around 8% of global greenhouse gas emissions, a similar amount to road transportation. “The next crisis will be the climate crisis and the best thing you can do as a consumer is reduce food waste,” said Toine Timmermans, program manager for sustainable food chains at Wageningen University in the Netherlands. Household food waste in Britain, to take one country, fell sig-

nificantly in the early phase of the lockdown in April with just 14% of four key items - bread, chicken, milk and potatoes - thrown away, according to research by environmental group WRAP, which conducted thousands of interviews. Pre-lockdown, an average of 24% had been wasted. Waste had begun to rebound by June, with a second WRAP survey putting waste of those products at 18%, but remained significantly below pre-lockdown levels. “Although people are reporting wasting more food as restrictions lift ... the positive news is that 70% of people want to maintain their new-found food management behaviors in the long term,” said Richard Swannell, director at WRAP Global which works with governments to reduce food waste. “This is an encouraging sign

that people are taking this opportunity to adopt less wasteful habits in life after lockdown.” **PLAN MORE, COOK MORE** Food security has been a major concern during the pandemic as consumers panic-bought basic goods, migrant workers struggled to get to the fields, meat-packing plants shut, and farm goods produced for shuttered restaurants rotted. But the lower household food waste has been one bright spot. Out of necessity, consumers have become more organized in planning menus, developed new cooking skills, checked their cupboards and fridges more before they shop and found better ways to use up leftovers, according to food waste experts. “What people have been forced to do during the pandemic is plan ahead because they're now shop-

ping less frequently,” said Dana Gunders, executive director at ReFED, a nonprofit dedicated to reducing wasted food across the United States. “They're being forced to cook more and build those cooking skills.” Laura Brooks, a stay-at-home mother of five in Weymouth, Massachusetts, said she had developed useful habits during the lockdown that she would keep. “I think as things go back to normal, I may continue with less frequent shopping trips. When I go more often, I find that the new produce pushes the old produce out of sight and things get wasted more easily,” she added. Increased frugality could prove a valuable habit in the economic and unemployment crisis caused by the pandemic; Gunders said a family of four in the United States

was estimated to throw out food worth about \$1,800 a year. **TOO GOOD FOR THE BIN** A survey from Germany's Food and Agriculture Ministry also showed consumers had started to show more concern about wasting food during the coronavirus crisis. The government had launched an anti-food waste campaign called “Too good for the bin” before the crisis, urging the public not to automatically throw food away after the sell-by date but to smell and taste it to see if it was still in good condition. The ministry's survey, undertaken during the pandemic, found that 91% of German consumers questioned were now checking food after its sell-by date and not automatically throwing it away.

This compared to only 76% in a similar survey in 2016. Food waste is not restricted to the home but it is the biggest source in many countries. The European Union has published a study estimating that 53% of food waste was in households and 11% in production, with the balance in areas such as processing and retailing. China's President Xi Jinping said this month that the amount of food wasted in China was “shocking”, prompting many local governments to launch related campaigns. **For Parry in Detroit, and many others, thrift is here to stay.** “Our food costs have definitely gone way down, since we are not buying out when we have perfectly consumable leftovers in the fridge at home,” he said.

## Scientists Invent Low-Cost Emergency Ventilator

### Press Trust Of India

Using standard parts that cost less than \$400, scientists have developed an emergency ventilator which could be an affordable option when more sophisticated technology is not available, or in short supply, an invention that may help save the lives of those suffering from COVID-19. While in the simplest ventilators, doctors squeeze a self-inflating bag by hand to pump air into the lungs, and high-end automated versions use complex electronics to control multiple parameters, the current innovation, described in a yet-to-be peer-reviewed study in medRxiv, is a cost-effective device with a mechanism that automatically squeezes the self-inflating bag. “We wanted to build the simplest device that could be effective. Our acute shortage ventilator is exactly that, and we now want to get it into use as quickly as possible. Our acute shortage ventilator is exactly that, and we now want to get it into use as quickly as possible, said Martin Breidenbach, a co-author of the study from Stanford University in the US. The researchers, including those from Stanford University in the US, said ventilators are life savers for those who can't breathe sufficiently on their own -- a common problem for those severely affected by COVID-19. They explained that the device compresses oxygen-rich air and



pushes it through tubes into a patient's lungs, expanding them, and helping take up oxygen, following which the lungs contract on their own, pushing the air back out. The current innovation, according to the scientists, is based on a simple model, with the addition of a mechanism that automatically squeezes the self-inflating bag. They said the system also incorporates modern, inexpensive electronic pressure sensors and microcomputers with sophisticated software that precisely controls the squeeze. According to the study, the microcomputers also drive a small control panel, and operators can control the system with that or with a laptop computer. While several groups across the world have developed low-

cost emergency ventilators in recent months, the scientists believe their current invention stands out as a fancier version of the simplest ventilator design. They said they could build the ventilator at a cost less than USD 400 per unit, compared to USD 20,000 or more for a professional-grade system with field support. “These qualities should make the ventilator particularly helpful for mid- and low-income countries, where medical resources are scarce,” said study co-author Michael Bresack from Stanford University. While the team or the university does not produce or distribute the ventilator, the researchers said they are offering the technology at no cost to others who want to build the ventilator and deploy it after having obtained regulatory approvals.

## Study Reveals Nitrate Supplementation Could Help In Breathing, Lung Clearance In The Elderly

### Agencies

New research shows that nitrate improves function in the diaphragm, the muscle involved in coughing and breathing, by improving power. The study was done in old mice, if replicated in humans, could provide a strategy for helping elderly people clear the lungs more effectively and avoid infection. The study was published in The Journal of Physiology. Previous studies showed nitrate was helping muscles by improving the use of calcium in the muscle. This finding that it's additionally affecting power is significant, especially in



the context of COVID-19, because the diaphragm is the primary inspiratory muscle used for breathing and coughing, the latter being relevant for clearing the lungs. The research team at the University of Florida found that dietary nitrate supplementation elicited a pronounced increase in contractile function (power)

of the diaphragm, a respiratory muscle, of old mice. They made their measurements during maximal activation, so the effects observed seem to be caused by an improvement in the function of contractile proteins rather than calcium handling. Few short-term interventions have such a profound impact on muscle contractile function, as was observed in this study. Dietary nitrate is readily available for humans and could be used, under proper supervision, to improve respiratory muscle dysfunction that contributes to shortness of breath and morbidity in the elderly.

The researchers gave sodium nitrate to old mice in their drinking water daily for 14 days. The control group received regular water. Diaphragm muscle contractile function cannot be assessed directly in live animals or humans. Thus, they tested diaphragm function in muscle tissues under controlled conditions for muscle stimulation and oxygenation. The main limitations are that mouse and human diaphragm have different percentages of fast and slow muscle cells. Mouse diaphragm consists of 90% fast muscle cells; the human diaphragm consists of 25-50% fast muscle cells depending on several factors that include and age and sex.

## Virus Uses Decoy Strategy To Evade Immune System: Study

### Agencies

New Zealand scientists have discovered more about how viruses operate and can evade the immune system. According to the study, published in the journal mBio, the research team is now using their discovery to help learn more about Covid-19. The recent study specifically looked at the Oryctes rhinoceros nudivirus (OrNV) virus, an important biocontrol agent against the coconut rhinoceros beetle, a devastating pest for coconut and oil palm trees in Southeast Asia

and the Pacific Islands. The researchers found the virus used a “decoy” strategy to evade the immune system and explained that these findings are a small step in the bid to better understand infectious disease. “We have used the same technique to investigate changes in cells infected with SARS-CoV-2 and are continuing work in this area,” said study author Dr Mihnea Bostina from the University of Otago. The research team used electron microscopy to investigate cellular changes occurring during nudivirus infection and found a unique mechanism for



how the virus works. The study revealed that the virus acquires a membrane inside the nucleus of the infected cell and it gets fully equipped to infect new cells at this precise location. According to the researchers, this is in contrast with other en-

veloped viruses - like coronavirus, which is also an enveloped virus - which derive their membranes from other cellular compartments. “After it gets fully assembled, the virus uses a clever tactic of passing through different environments, packed inside various membrane structures until it gets released at the cellular membrane,” Bostina said. Study researcher Sai Velamoor said that this strategy implies that many of the viruses released by the infected cells will be enclosed in a cellular membrane while travelling inside the infected organism.



## Abbas: UAE stabbed Palestine in back by normalizing with Israel, others must not follow suit

Agencies

Jerusalem: President Mahmoud Abbas has railed against the United Arab Emirates (UAE) — which long portrayed itself as an advocate of Palestine's cause — for stabbing the Palestinian nation in the back by making peace with Israel, warning other Arab countries not to follow in Abu Dhabi's footsteps.

He made the remarks at a meeting of the Palestinian leadership in the West bank city of Ramallah on Tuesday night, which was also attended by representatives of different Palestinian factions, including the

in secret...this is rejected, and we the Palestinians will continue to absolutely reject this, no matter which country does this. You must respect the decisions on which you have signed off," he said.

Last week, Israel and the UAE announced in a joint statement, issued by the White House, that they had agreed to the full normalization of relations, sparking anger among Palestinians and other supporters of the Palestinian cause against Israeli occupation.

Upon a request by US President Donald Trump, it claimed, Israel "will suspend declaring



Gaza-based resistance groups of Islamic Jihad and Hamas. Abbas condemned the UAE's decision to normalize ties with Israel was a "stab in the back of the Palestinian people."

He reminded the Arab countries that based on the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative any Israeli normalization should come after an agreement is reached between the Palestinians and Tel Aviv, and not the other way around.

"Some countries have begun moving, both openly and

sovereignty" over parts of the occupied West Bank.

Abbas delivered the warning after media reports, citing experts, speculated that Bahrain was likely to toe the UAE line in normalizing ties with Israel.

On Tuesday, Israeli media also cited Sudanese government sources as announcing an "impending" normalization agreement with Tel Aviv. Sudan's acting foreign minister, however, denied knowledge of such talks with Israel.

## 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 "superspreaders" 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 services," 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.

Agencies



## Mystery Grows Over Virus Spread Via Contaminated Food Packaging

Agencies

Beijing: Evidence shows that food is an unlikely route of transmitting the coronavirus across borders, but contaminated items continue to grab the spotlight, deepening the uncertainty over whether the \$220 billion cold chain industry could be implicated in the spread of Covid-19.

China has repeatedly found traces of the pathogen on packaging and food, raising fears that imported items are linked to recent virus resurgences in Beijing and the port city of Dalian. In the nation's strongest action since it began testing food items in June, a major Chinese city on Sunday banned imports of frozen meat from coronavirus hotspots.

Cold-storage facilities and meat processing plants are ideal environments for the virus to spread, as the pathogen thrives in cold and dry environments. But there has been no concrete evidence the virus can be transmitted through food, and experts remain doubtful that it's a major threat.

"We know that viruses usually can survive being frozen. So

that means in theory it's possible that infection could spread that way," said Benjamin Cowling, head of epidemiology and biostatistics at the University of Hong Kong. "But in reality, it's a very low risk that that would happen because so many steps would need to be involved."

The virus would need to survive freezing and then defrosting. It would need to get onto someone's hands and then into their nose or mouth, and still survive. "I don't think it would be a frequent mode of transmission, but it is possible," he said.

China's top respiratory disease expert Zhong Nanshan, who advises Beijing on its Covid-19 response, downplayed the role frozen food can play in transmission. "It is relatively rare to detect the virus from imported frozen food," he said. "Let's not exaggerate it."

Guangzhou Ban

Amid a lack of conclusive proof, China is taking precautionary steps, creating major disruptions with its trading partners. The Cold Chain Association of China's southern coastal city of

Guangzhou ordered all member companies to suspend imports of frozen meat and seafood from coronavirus-hit areas.

The order was issued after the local government in the nearby city of Shenzhen found the virus on a surface sample of chicken wings imported from Brazil. Hong Kong has also suspended imports from that plant. China has otherwise refrained from wider nationwide moves against imported meat due to the reliance of its population on the food source.

New Zealand originally considered the possibility that a new cluster, which suddenly emerged last week after 102 days without a local virus case, could have been linked to a cold-storage plant, as the first person to test positive worked at an Auckland Americold facility.

Ruled Out

But preliminary findings from environmental testing at the plant have debunked the theory that the route of transmission was through chilled surfaces on materials arriving from overseas, Director-General of Health Ashley Bloomfield said Tuesday.

## Trump's former adviser Steve Bannon arrested, charged with fraud

Agencies

New York: US President Donald Trump's former top adviser Stephen Bannon was arrested on Thursday and charged for his role in defrauding thousands of donors in connection with an online crowdfunding campaign known as 'We Build the Wall' that raised more than USD 25 million.

Bannon, 66, was charged in an indictment along with Brian Kolfage, 38, an Air Force veteran from Florida, Andrew Badolato, 56, a financier also from Florida and Timothy Shea, 49, of Colorado. Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York Audrey Strauss said on Thursday.

The men were arrested on Thursday morning and Bannon will be presented in the Southern District of New York, while others will make their court appearance in their jurisdictions.

"As alleged, the defendants defrauded hundreds of

thousands of donors, capitalizing on their interest in funding a border wall to raise millions of dollars, under the false pretense that all of that money would be spent on construction," Strauss said.

It was assured to donors that Kolfage, the founder and public face of 'We Build the Wall', would not be paid a cent but the defendants secretly schemed to pass hundreds of thousands of dollars to him, which he used to fund his lavish lifestyle, he added.

The men are each charged with one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and one count of conspiracy to commit money laundering, each of which carries a maximum penalty of 20 years in prison.

Inspector-in-Charge Philip R. Bartlett said the defendants allegedly engaged in fraud when they misrepresented the true use of donated funds.

"As alleged, not only

did they lie to donors, they schemed to hide their misappropriation of funds by creating sham invoices and accounts to launder donations and cover up their crimes, showing no regard for the law or the truth. This case should serve as a warning to other fraudsters that no one is above the law, not even a disabled war veteran or a millionaire political strategist."

According to the indictment unsealed in Manhattan federal court, starting in approximately December 2018, Kolfage, Bannon, Badolato and Shea, and others, orchestrated a scheme to defraud hundreds of thousands of donors, including donors in the Southern District of New York, in connection with an online crowdfunding campaign ultimately known as 'We Build The Wall' that raised more than USD 25 million to build a wall along the southern border of the United States.

## Iran Announces Locally Made Ballistic And Cruise Missiles Amid US Tensions

Agencies

Dubai: Iran displayed a surface-to-surface ballistic missile on Thursday that Defence Minister Amir Hatami said had a range of 1,400 kilometres and a new cruise missile, ignoring US demands that Tehran halt its missile programme.

"The surface-to-surface missile, called martyr Qassem Soleimani, has a range of 1,400 km and the cruise missile, called martyr Abu Mahdi, has a range of over 1,000 km," Hatami said in a televised speech.

Pictures of the missiles were shown on state TV, which

January in a US strike on their convoy in Baghdad airport.

"Missiles and particularly cruise missiles are very important for us ... the fact that we have increased the range from 300 to 1,000 in less than two years is a great achievement," said Iranian President Hassan Rouhani.

"Our military might and missile programmes are defensive."

The announcement comes as Washington is pushing to extend a UN-imposed arms embargo against Iran, which is due to expire in October under Tehran's 2015 nuclear deal



it said was "the newest Iranian cruise missile that will further strengthen Iran's deterrence power".

Soleimani, head of Iran's elite Quds Force, and Iraqi militia commander Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis were killed in

with world powers.

Tensions have been high between Tehran and Washington since 2018, when President Donald Trump pulled out the United States from the deal and reimposed crippling sanctions on Iran.

## Iran detains UAE ship and its crew after fishermen killed

Agencies

TEHRAN: Iran on Thursday said it seized a United Arab Emirates-registered ship violating its territorial waters this week after the UAE coastguard killed two Iranian fishermen on the same day.

The foreign ministry said the boat was seized on Monday

over the incident.

The UAE foreign ministry declined to comment when contacted by the Reuters news agency.

Although incidents regarding fishing boats are frequent between Iran and its Gulf Arab neighbours, Iran warned of "any aggression against its interests and citizens", saying in the statement: "Tehran will



after UAE coastguard vessels "opened fire on several Iranian fishing boats ... leading to the deaths of two fishermen".

"On Monday, an Emirati ship was seized by the border guards of Iran and its crew were detained due to illegal traffic in our country's waters," state-run TV quoted a ministry statement as saying.

"On the same day, UAE guards shot dead two Iranian fishermen and seized a boat ... The UAE has expressed regret for the incident and in a letter on Wednesday announced its readiness to pay compensation."

Iran summoned the UAE charge d'affaires in Tehran

take all necessary measures to protect its vessels and citizens in the Persian Gulf."

'Big mistake'

UAE official news agency WAM reported on Monday the Gulf state's coastguard tried to stop eight fishing boats that violated its territorial waters northwest of Sir Bu Nu'Ayr island, without reporting any casualties.

The incident comes amid high tensions between the two countries following last week's surprise announcement that the UAE has agreed to normalise ties with Israel under a US-brokered deal.

## NEWS MAKERS

## Russian opposition politician fighting for life after drinking 'poisoned' tea: Spokeswoman

Kremlin critic Alexei Navalny was fighting for his life in a Siberian hospital on Thursday after drinking tea that allies said they think was laced with poison.

A fierce critic of President Vladimir Putin, Navalny started feeling ill on a plane returning to Moscow from Tomsk in Siberia on Wednesday morning. He was carried off the plane on a stretcher after it made an emergency landing at Omsk.

Kira Yarmysh, his spokeswoman, said he was in intensive care in a serious but stable condition, and on an artificial lung ventilator in a hospital in Omsk, about 2,200 kilometres east of Moscow.

"We assume that Alexei was poisoned with something mixed into his tea. It was the only thing that he drank in the morning. Alexei is now unconscious," Yar-



mysh said.

Doctors gave contradictory information about his condition, saying it had stabilised and that he was in a coma but also that there was still a threat to his life and they were working to save him.

Navalny's wife, Yulia, flew from Moscow to be with him, but Yarmysh said hospital officials had so far prevented her from seeing her husband, citing a lack of patient consent.

Not the first time

There is a long history of Kremlin foes being poisoned or falling ill after suspected poisonings.

They include Alexander Litvinenko, who died in London in 2006 after drinking tea laced with polonium-210, and Sergei Skripal, a former double agent who was poisoned with a nerve agent in 2018 in Salisbury, England.

The Kremlin has repeatedly denied involvement in those and other incidents, calling them anti-Russian provocations.

It said on Thursday that doctors were doing everything they could to help Navalny and wished him a speedy recovery.

Any poisoning would need to be confirmed by laboratory tests, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said.

## Obama slams Trump as unfit, says US democracy is at risk



an unusually harsh appraisal of one president by another — although Trump has rarely hesitated to attack Obama, often leveling accusations of misconduct without evidence.

Obama blamed Trump for the 170,000 Americans who have died from the coronavirus, the millions of jobs lost to the ensuing recession and the

diminishment of the country's democratic principles at home and abroad.

His assertion that Trump, a Republican, is incapable of meeting the demands of the presidency echoed the remarks from his wife, Michelle Obama, on Monday, that Trump "simply cannot be who we need him to be."

"Donald Trump hasn't grown into the job because he can't," Obama said. "And the consequences of that failure are severe."

On Twitter, Trump responded to Obama's appearance in all capital letters, suggesting Obama's decision to endorse Biden only after his Democratic rivals dropped out indicated doubts about Biden's candidacy.

But on Wednesday, Obama delivered a full-throated endorsement of Biden and vice presidential nominee Kamala Harris, saying they "actually care about every American, and they care deeply about this democracy."

Biden, 77, was formally nominated on Tuesday night to take on Trump, 74, in the November 3 presidential election. Obama, 59, was unsparing in his praise for his former vice president, saying Biden became a "brother" to him.



# Parliamentary Panel On IT Summons Facebook On September 2



**NEW DELHI:** The parliamentary standing committee on Information Technology has summoned Facebook on September 2 to discuss the issue of alleged misuse of social media platforms in the wake of claims that the US firm did not apply hate speech rules to certain BJP politicians.

A day before, the panel also discussed the issue of internet shutdowns.

Besides representatives of Facebook, the committee has also asked representatives of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology to remain present on September 2 to discuss on the subject of "safeguarding citizens' rights and prevention of misuse of so-

cial/online news media platforms including special emphasis on women security in the digital space".

The notification came on a day when senior member of the committee and BJP leader Nishikant Dubey wrote to Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla seeking removal of Shashi Tharoor as the panel's chairman, alleging that the Congress leader was using the platform for a political agenda.

For the September 1 meeting, representatives of ministries of communications and home affairs have been called, as also those from Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir and Delhi governments, according to the agenda notifications issued by the Lok Sabha Secretariat.

Representatives of Information and Broadcasting Ministry, News Broadcasters Association, Press Council of India and Prasara Bharati have been invited for the discussion on 'Ethical Standards in Media Coverage. PTI

**FOR THE SEPTEMBER 1 MEETING,** representatives of ministries of communications and home affairs have been called, as also those from Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir and Delhi governments, according to the agenda notifications issued by the Lok Sabha Secretariat.

## 15-Year-Old Schoolgirl Raped By Five Men, One Arrested



**DUBAI:** Another minor was raped in India this week, this time a 15-year-old schoolgirl. She was allegedly attacked by five people in the Indian state of Tripura.

On Wednesday, police in the state shared details about the incident that took place in Sepahijala district of the state. Twitter users in the country have shared news reports, demanding justice for the victim and punishment for the accused.

Reportedly, the girl, who studies in the eighth grade knew one of the five men who entered her home on Sunday night, and physically assaulted her, police told local media.

Some reports mention that the men took her to a nearby jungle and raped her.

After she told her parents about the incident, on Monday, they filed a complaint at the local police station.

According to media reports, the police arrested the main accused, identified as Bhiku Debbarma. A police officer has said that the other four are on the run.

Indian Twitter users are

once again questioning the country's rape laws, and the time taken to mete out punishment, saying "justice delayed was justice denied".

Tweep @nabakishore1967 posted: "In India punishment is not that strict compared to other countries for which the rogues are taking advantage of it. If punishment becomes strict either financially or physically, India can be a safer country."

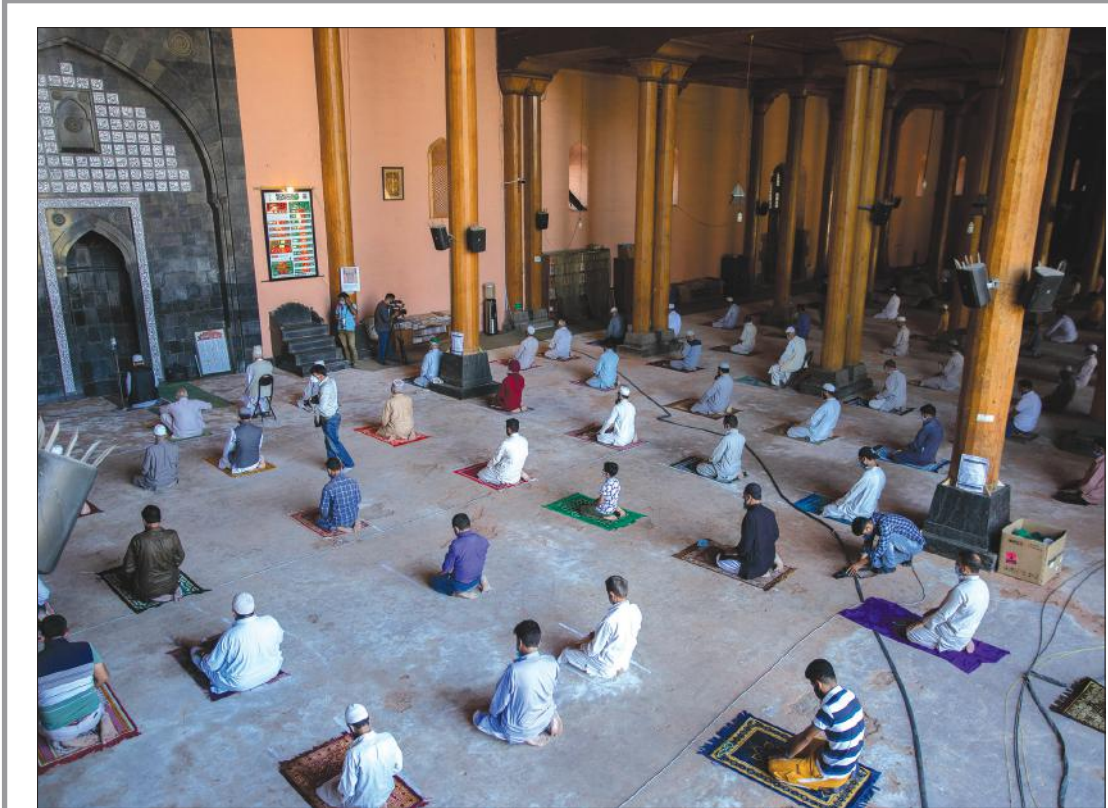
And, @taamardhwaj tweeted: "There is no fear of punishment, we may be able to control coronavirus in the near future but can we control these horrendous crimes, or do we not want to....?"

The arrested man was produced before a local court which set him to five days of judicial custody.

Apparently, the suspect was also the accused in a murder case last year, and had been on the run.

Facebook user Tanvi Ghosh wrote: "Murderers and rapists are walking free, unpunished. How can women feel safe?"

The girl is admitted at Bishramganj hospital.



PRAYERS being offered with physical distance at Jamia Masjid. KO Photo Abid Bhat

## SC Gives Prashant Bhushan 2 Days To Reconsider His Tweets, Refusing Apology

The Supreme Court Thursday granted two days to lawyer Prashant Bhushan to reconsider his "defiant statement" refusing to apologise for his tweets judged as against the judiciary.

Bhushan told a bench headed by Justice Arun Mishra that he would consult his lawyers and think over the apex court's suggestion.

Attorney General K K Venugopal urged the bench, also comprising Justices B R Gavai and Krishna Murari, not to award any punishment to Bhushan in the contempt case saying he has already been convicted.

The bench said it cannot consider the request of Venugopal unless Bhushan reconsiders his earlier stand of not apologising for his tweets.

The tone, tenor and content of Bhushan's statement makes it worse; is it defence or aggravation, the court told Venugopal.

The top court said it can be very lenient if there is realisation of mistake, and posted the matter for further hearing on August 24.

At the outset, it rejected the submission of Bhushan's counsel that another bench hear the arguments on the quantum of sentence to be awarded in the case. A contemnor can be punished with simple imprisonment of up to six months or with a fine of up to Rs 2,000 or with both.

The bench gave assurance to Bhushan that no punishment will be acted upon till his review against the order convicting him is decided.



The bench told senior advocate Dushyant Dave, representing Bhushan, that he is asking them to commit an act of impropriety by saying that the argument on sentencing be heard by another bench. Justice Mishra said that he will be retiring soon and adjournment should not be sought and the review will be decided after this matter is decided finally.

The bench said it is not inclined to hear the application filed by Bhushan on Wednesday seeking deferment of hearing on the sentence till his review petition is decided.

At the outset, Dave sought deferment of hearing on the quantum of sentence in the case saying that he would be filing a review petition against the conviction order.

The top court on August 14 held Bhushan guilty of criminal contempt for his derogatory tweets against the judiciary saying they cannot be said to be a fair criticism of the functioning of the judiciary made in the public interest. During the hearing, on Thursday, Dave told the bench that heavens are not going to fall if the apex court will suspend the hearing on quantum of sentence.

You are asking us to commit an act of impropriety that arguments on

sentencing should be heard by another bench, the bench said.

It added: Has it been ever done that hearing on sentencing has been undertaken by the other bench when the main bench is existing?

The bench told the Attorney General that it will first hear Bhushan on the issue of sentencing. When Dave said that Venugopal should be allowed to argue first, the bench said, Don't remind us of the professional norms.

Bhushan, who himself addressed the court, said that he has been grossly misunderstood.

I am dismayed and disappointed that the court did not find it necessary to provide me the copy of the contempt petition, he said. My tweets simply showed my bonafide belief.

Bhushan said that open criticism is necessary in democracy to safeguard the constitutional order.

My tweets were a small attempt to discharge what I consider my highest duty...", he said.

"I do not ask for mercy. I do not appeal for magnanimity. I cheerfully submit to any punishment that the court may impose...", said Bhushan. The hearing in the matter is still undergoing.

On August 14, in its 108-page verdict, the top court had said: The tweets which are based on the distorted facts, in our considered view, amount to committing criminal contempt.

In the result, we hold alleged contemnor No.1 - Mr. Prashant Bhushan guilty of having committed criminal contempt of this Court.

## 27% Students Have No Phones, 28% Lack Electricity For Online Classes: NCERT Survey

**NEW DELHI:** At least 27 per cent students do not have access to smartphones or laptops to attend online classes, while 28 per cent students and parents believe intermittent or lack of electricity is one of the major concerns hindering teaching-learning, according to a survey by the NCERT.

The survey with over 34,000 participants, including students, parents, teachers and school principals from Kendriya Vidyalayas, Navodaya Vidyalayas and CBSE affiliated schools, has pointed out that lack of knowledge of using devices for effective educational purposes and teachers not being well-versed with online teaching methodologies, caused hindrance in the learning process.

Approximately 27 per cent of the students mentioned the non-availability of smartphones and laptops. The maximum number of stakeholders



have opted for mobile phones as a medium for teaching-learning during the COVID-19 period," the survey by the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) said.

"About 36 per cent of the students used the textbooks and other books available with them. Laptops were the second most favoured option amongst teachers and principals. Television and radio were the least utilized devices for the teaching-learning in the pandemic situation. The absence of enriched interaction between the teacher and the students was one of the reasons as identified by the stakeholders," it added.

The survey noted that almost all of the responsive states use physical (non-digital) mechanisms to track the progress of learners with majority of them either practising home visit by teachers or systematic parental guidance via phone calls.

"About half of the students stated that they did not have the school textbooks. Although the e-text books are available on NCERT website and DIKSHA, the probable reasons behind this feedback are that students are used to studying from the hardcopy of the textbooks, there is lack of awareness regarding the availability of the e-textbook and paucity of devices with students and teachers," it said. The majority of the stakeholders pointed out that mathematics as a subject was difficult to learn via online medium.

## Construction Of Ram Temple In Ayodhya Begins

**AYODHYA:** The construction of Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Mandir has "begun" and the engineers are now testing the soil at the site, Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra tweeted in the morning on Thursday.

The shrine will be built by adhering to the country's ancient and traditional construction techniques. It will also be built to sustain earthquakes, storms and other natural calamities.

Notably, "the iron will not be used in the construction of the temple," the Trust further informed on the micro-blogging site.

"For Mandir construction, copper plates will be used to fuse stone blocks with each other. The plates should be 18 inches long, 30 mm wide and 3 mm in depth. 10,000 such plates may be required



in total structure. We call upon Shri Rambhaktas to donate such copper plates to the trust," Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra stated in another tweet.

Notably, Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Ayodhya on August 5 to take part in the "Bhoomi puja" at Ram Janmabhoomi site.

Besides, Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, Governor Anandiben Patel and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat among several others were also present at the site for the ceremony.

## Cricket: England V Pakistan, Third Test: No Holding Back, Skipper Joe Root Tells His Players



England captain Joe Root said on Thursday he wants his players to give it their all in the third Test with Pakistan which gets underway this week as it could be their last for a while.

England lead 1-0 and have to avoid defeat at the Ageas Bowl on Friday to seal what would be their first series win over Pakistan in 10 years.

It would make it a perfect summer having beaten the West Indies 2-1 earlier in the season.

England's next scheduled Test series is in India in the new year but the coronavirus pandemic may make that impossible – playing it in the United Arab Emirates could be a possibility.

However, Root says the players should perform as if this is the last Test till next summer and "leave no stone unturned."

"My message to the guys today was quite simple really," he said at his eve of match press conference.

"We don't know when the next time is that we'll play Test cricket.

"Let's make sure we leave no stones unturned and we give everything to each other and the badge going into this last game.

"I fully expect everyone

to give everything over the next five days and make sure we give ourselves the best chance of finishing the series 2-0."

Root, who missed their only Test defeat of the summer in the first clash with the West Indies due to becoming a father, said even playing without spectators beat what he feared might happen at the beginning of the season.

"We feel extremely lucky to have got the opportunity to play right now," said the 29-year-old.

"At the start of the summer, we were dreading the thought of not seeing any international cricket."

Root paid tribute to both the West Indies and Pakistan for agreeing to tour and having to live in a bubble to reduce the risk of them getting the virus.

"Credit to both touring teams for coming over and giving us that opportunity to play, and to both boards," said Root.

"It's been amazing to be a part of this experience. Hopefully we can have a great finish to it.

"There's been some really exciting games and I think it's made for some entertaining viewing at times."

**ROOT, WHO MISSED THEIR ONLY** Test defeat of the summer in the first clash with the West Indies due to becoming a father, said even playing without spectators beat what he feared might happen at the beginning of the season.

### NEWS MAKERS

#### Shooter Arrested For Salman Khan Murder Plot

Indian police arrested a sharpshooter on August 15 who had reportedly carried out the murder of Bollywood actor Salman Khan's house in Mumbai and was part of a murder plot in January this year.

According to local media reports, the shooter is affiliated with Lawrence Bishnoi, gangster in India who is currently lodged in a prison in Rajasthan.

The accused was arrested by Faridabad Police in the Indian state of Haryana.

Police told Indian media, the accused, 27-year-old Rahul alias Sanga alias Baba Alias Sunni, hails from Bhiwani and was arrested from Uttarakhand on Saturday. He is accused of murdering Praveen, a Faridabad resident who ran a ration depot, on June 24.

"During questioning, it has emerged that Rahul had trav-



elled to Mumbai in January to conduct a reconnaissance for the murder of Salman Khan. He went to the actor's house in Bandra for the purpose and stayed in the area for two days," a police official was quoted as saying.

"He conducted this reconnaissance at the behest of Bishnoi and Sampat Nehra, another member of the gang, who had also conducted a reconnaissance for the same crime before he was arrested in June 2018," he added.

Nehra had been arrested

from Hyderabad for allegedly plotting Khan's murder, also at the behest of Bishnoi.

Lawrence Bishnoi is a member of the Bishnoi community, a Hindu religious sect found in the Western Thar Desert and northern states of India, which reveres black bucks.

According to police, the fact that Khan had killed two black bucks in 1998 in Jodhpur led to Bishnoi targeting him.

"Rahul conducted the reconnaissance on the directions of Bishnoi and later apprised him of the findings. However, they were unable to take their plan to the next stage because of the coronavirus outbreak," the police official told Indian media.

Unlike Nehra, who police say was Bishnoi's "right hand man", Rahul was a relatively newer member of the gang.

#### NRA To Conduct Online Test For Jobs Twice A Year: Jitendra Singh

**NEW DELHI:** Terming the setting up of a National Recruitment Agency as "historic", Union minister Jitendra Singh on Wednesday said it will conduct an online Common Eligibility Test for shortlisting candidates for majority of central government jobs twice a year.

He said the multiple recruitment examinations are a burden on the candidates, as also on the respective recruitment agencies, involving avoidable or repetitive expenditure, law and order or security-related issues and venue-related problems.

Mr Singh, Minister of State for Personnel, said on an average 2.5-3 crore candidates appear in each of these examinations, but a Common Eligibility Test (CET) would enable these candidates to appear once and apply to any or all of these recruitment agencies for the higher level of examination.

"This would indeed be a boon to all the candidates," he said.

Mr Singh said there will be two tests per year under the NRA and the scores of the candidates will remain valid for three years.

He said, besides Hindi and English, tests will be conducted in 12 languages in due course and efforts will be made to include all the languages mentioned in the eighth Schedule of the Constitution, according to a statement issued by the Personnel Ministry.

Mr Singh said the decision of the Union Cabinet to set up a National Recruitment Agency to conduct a CET is a "historic, visionary and revolutionary reform" in the field of recruitment for central government jobs.

Briefing the media here, he said the decision marks a paradigm shift in the government recruitment process.

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