



Maximum : 30°C  
Minimum : 13°C  
Humidity : 38%

SUNSET  
Today 06:26 PM  
SUNRISE  
Tomorrow 06:20 AM

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## News Digest

### 2 Women Killed In Hit And Run Accident

SRINAGAR: Two women were killed on Tuesday in a hit and run accident in Rafiabab area of north Kashmir's Baramulla district. Fatima Yousuf and Saleema Bashir, both residents of Wagay Mohalla Rafiabab were walking on a road when a speedy vehicle crushed them near Lasar Mode this evening, reports said. Both the women died on the spot, while the driver managed to flee from the spot. A police official told news agency KNT that efforts were on to identify the driver.

### Drone Dropped Arms Seized In Jammu

Jammu: An arms consignment believed to have been dropped by a drone from Pakistan-based militants was seized in Akhnor sector here in the early hours of Tuesday, a senior police officer said. Senior Superintendent of Police (Jammu) Shridhar Patil said two packets containing two AK assault rifles, three magazines with 90 rounds and a pistol with two magazines and 14 rounds were seized in a joint P-02

### 5 Doctors Sacked Over Unauthorized Absence

Jammu: The Jammu and Kashmir administration has terminated the services of five doctors, posted as medical officers in different health institutions, for unauthorised absence from duty, according to an official order. The order by Financial Commissioner, Health and Medical Education Department, Atal Dulloo said the medical officers had been served notices by the director, health P-02

## Militant Killed In Chrar-e-Sharif Encounter

Observer News Service

SRINAGAR: A Jaish-e-Muhammad militant was killed by government forces in an overnight encounter in Chrar-e-Sharif area of central Kashmir's Budgam district, officials said Tuesday.

Acting on a specific input, army's 53 RR, special operations group (SOG) of police and CRPF laid a siege around Nowhard in Chrar-e-Sharif on Monday evening and launched a cordon and search operation, a police spokesperson said Tuesday. He said the militants hiding in the village opened fire



Ko File Photo Abid Bhat

and lobbed grenades at the search team when they were given opportunity to surrender. In the initial exchange P-02

**PEOPLE ARE REQUESTED TO COOPERATE WITH POLICE TILL** the area is completely sanitized and cleared of all the explosive materials, if any," the police spokesperson added.

## NIA Carries Out Raids In Baramulla, Srinagar

Press Trust Of India

SRINAGAR: The NIA on Tuesday carried out searches at nearly a dozen places in Baramulla and Srinagar districts of Jammu and Kashmir in connection with two separate cases related to arrested Deputy Superintendent of J-K Police Devender Singh and alleged misuse of cross-LoC trade, officials said.

The agency swooped on different locations and seized several incriminating documents and digital devices during the search-

es, a spokesperson of the National Investigating Agency (NIA) said.

He said multiple locations were searched in Baramulla and one location in Srinagar in connection with Hizbul Mujahideen militant Naveed Babu who was arrested along with Singh and two other associates early this year.

The NIA had filed a chargesheet against Singh and others in July for alleged militant activities in the country.

In the Hizbul Mujahideen case, the spokesperson said P-02

### Summoning Journalist 'Blatant Abuse Of Power': CPJ

SRINAGAR: Terming the assault on Kashmiri journalist Auqib-Javeed by police as alarming and blatant abuse of power, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) on Tuesday demanded immediate action against the accused officers.

Auqib, an accredited journalist with Kashmir Observer, was verbally summoned by the Cyber Police station on September 18 over his story titled, 'The real cyberbully: Police in Kashmir question Twitter Users' which appeared in 'Article 14' P-02

### Srinagar Jolted Was it a Quake?

SRINAGAR: Srinagar and adjoining areas were jolted by a big bang late on Tuesday with fearful residents rushing out of their homes in panic. This took place exactly at: 21:40:29 IST.

Before any official would comment social media exploded with plethora of posts some suggesting an earthquake and some a massive explosion. The reason it was not taken as a usual earthquake was because quakes don't usually strike with a bang and don't create sound. The bang was heard far and wide.

The rumours amidst looming war like situation on borders was but natural with unregulated social media news pages only adding to the confusion and panic. The strongest rumour was P-02

### LS Passes J&K Official Languages Bill

NEW DELHI: The Lok Sabha on Tuesday passed a bill under which Kashmiri, Dogri and Hindi, apart from the existing Urdu and English, will be the official languages in the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

Introducing the Jammu and Kashmir Official Languages Bill, 2020, Minister of State for Home G Kishan Reddy said it was a demand of the people of Jammu and Kashmir that the language they speak should be the official language. P-02

## 18 More Covid-19 Deaths In J&K, Toll 1044

Observer Monitoring Desk

SRINAGAR: At least eighteen more people succumbed to coronavirus in Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday, taking the number of fatalities due to virus in the Union Territory to 1044.

While nine more coronavirus deaths were reported from Jammu division, the rest were confirmed from Kashmir valley by the officials here. Among the victims in Valley included a 68-year-old woman from Pattan Baramulla, who died at SKIMS Soura, 11 days after admitted to the tertiary care hospital.

Officials said an 82-year-old woman from Takiyabal Sopore died at the SKIMS hospital, 12 days after he was admitted. Also, a 75-year-old man from Magam Budgam who was admitted to the hospital on September 19 also died at the hospital, they said.

A 75-year-old man from Ramban died four days after he

### 106 Security Men Among 1235 New Cases

Jammu and Kashmir reported on Tuesday 1235 new cases of coronavirus, including 106 army, BSF and CRPF personnel besides seven minors and two doctors, taking the total P-02

was admitted to the hospital, officials said. They said that a 65-year-old man from Kralapora Kupwara, admitted with bilateral Community Acquired Pneumonia died at a hospital here.

Besides them, a 60-year-old man from Qamarwari who was admitted with bilateral CAP on September 15 died at SMHS hospital, they said.

A 55-year-old man from Alochi Bagh Srinagar died nine days after he was admitted to CD hospital, one of the exclusive facilities P-02

### Patients To Be Discharged After 10 Days Without Test

The Jammu and Kashmir government announced on Tuesday that COVID positive patients will be discharged after 10 days without any requirement of a negative test report provided they have been asymptomatic for three days. P-02

A unique initiative to address public issues and grievances at grassroots level

# Block Diwas Youm-e-Block

Today September 23

in Block/ Sub Divisional Headquarters

All are invited to participate

All departmental functionaries to be available at Block Headquarters

On spot disposal of applications, grievance redressal, issuance of documents etc

DC/SP/District Level Officers to visit Block Diwas locations



Government of Jammu & Kashmir



3 WEEK PRE-B2V3 PROGRAMME

**JAN ABHIYAN**  
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September 10-30, 2020

- Service Delivery
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- Public Grievances Redressal at Block and District Level



**Back to Village-3**  
B2V3

Governance at Peoples' Doorstep

Begins October 02, 2020



## Ladakh Parties Announce Boycott To Seek Constitutional Safeguard

Press Trust Of India

**LEH:** In a major development, the recently floated People's Movement for Sixth schedule for Ladakh, a powerful platform representing various politicians, religious and social organisations, on Tuesday announced boycott of the upcoming elections to the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC) Leh.

The LAHDC Leh is scheduled to go to polls on October 16 -- the first such exercise in the region after Ladakh was carved out from Jammu and Kashmir and granted the Union Territory status on August 5 last year following the abrogation of special status to the erstwhile state.

The apex body of People's Movement for sixth schedule for Ladakh, unanimously resolved to boycott the ensuing 6th LAHDC Leh elections till such time the constitutional safeguard under sixth schedule on the lines of Bodo Territorial Council is not extended to the UT Ladakh and its people, veteran politician and former Lok Sabha MP Thupstan Chhewang told reporters here.

The People's Movement for the Sixth schedule for Ladakh was formed last month when prominent political and religious leaders, leaving behind their ideological differences, came together to demand

safeguards for the Ladakh region in the form of 6th schedule and more powers to the twin hill councils, the other being LAHDC Kargil.

It is demanding inclusion of Ladakh in the 6th Schedule of the Constitution, having more than 95 per cent tribal population.

Chhewang, who resigned from the BJP in November 2018, expressed hope that the people of Leh would stay away from the polls and those planning to fight the elections will not file their nomination papers.

We are confident that we will get full support from the entire population and our struggle will continue till our demands are met, he said.

Reading out the resolution passed by the apex body of the movement and signed by a dozen prominent leaders, including president of powerful Buddhist Association P T Kunzang, Chhewang said the decision to boycott the polls was taken after a thorough discussion and deliberation by the leaders.

Besides Chhewang and Kunzang, the resolution was signed among others by former Rajya Sabha Member Skyabje Thiksey Khampo Rinpochey, former minister Chhering Dorje Lakrook, former minister and president Ladakh Congress Nawang Rigzin Jora, district president BJP Nawang Samstan and convenor Aam Admi Party, Leh, T Phustsog.

## Art-370 Should Be Restored For Peace In J&K: Farooq

Observer Monitoring Desk

**SRINAGAR:** National Conference leader Farooq Abdullah said on Tuesday that revocation of Article 370 should be taken back and Jammu and Kashmir's statehood restored for bringing "peace". Abdullah, who spoke briefly in the Lok Sabha, said there was a need to think about the steps taken on August 5 last year.

"Encounter is going on in central Kashmir even today. There is no peace. Until we don't think that the step we have taken on August 5 last year... peace will come only when those steps are taken back. There can be no peace without it," Abdullah said.

The Parliament had in August last year approved a resolution to repeal Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir and passed a bill for bifurcation of the state into two union territories- Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

Meanwhile, in a statement issued here, a party spokesperson said that Abdullah also demanded the unconditional release of political, youth, civil society detainees arrested following the Aug 05 decisions saying that it was imperative to restore long-

lasting peace in J&K.

Earlier, the spokesperson said Abdullah along with Member of Parliament of Dravida Munetra Kazhagam (DMK) Kanimozhi Karunanidhi, NC Members of Parliament Hasnain Masoodi, Muhammad Akbar Lone; Rajya Sabha members Fayaz Ahmed Mir of PDP, Nazir Ahmed Laway; protested in front of Gandhi Statue in the foreground of the Parliament house and demanded restoration of the constitutional position to Jammu and Kashmir as per 1952 Delhi agreement, 1975 accord and restoration of the Articles 370, 35-A which were "unconstitutionally, undemocratically" abrogated by GoI on the 5th of August last year.

"The protesting Members of Parliament said that there was no peace in J&K, and that there could be no long-lasting peace in the region unless the undemocratic measures undertaken by the GoI on Aug 05 2019 are not reversed," he said.

"The Party's Members of Parliament led by Party President Dr. Farooq Abdullah had earlier called on the Lok Sabha Speaker and urged him to enable discussion on the situation in J&K," he added. (With ANI inputs)

## J&K Govt Issues 18.52 Lakh Domicile Certificates

Press Trust Of India

**JAMMU:** Jammu and Kashmir Government has issued over 18.52 Lakh domicile certificates against over 21.99 lakh applications received till Monday (September 21,2020), an official spokesman said here.

As per the consolidated figures coming from across twenty districts of Union territory, a total 21,99,513 persons applied for seeking the Domicile certificate, of which 20,87,815 applications were found complete in all respects, while rest 1,11,698 were rejected for want of prescribed documents. However, against 20,87,815 complete applications, 18,52,355 persons (88.72%) were issued the DCs till today and the rest

are in the process.

Of the total Domicile certificates issued in the UT, over 1627461 were issued under clause 1(a) and Clause 1(b) (PRC holders and their children), while 172565 were issued the certificates under clause 2(a) and Clause 2(b) (to state subject applicants and non-state subject applicants and their children), including 119730 to state subjects and 50123 to non-state subject; 34473 to the students under (clause3) including 24508 state subjects and 9870 non-state subjects; and 19479 to Registered Migrants/ children ( Clause 4).

Total DCs issued to the Non State Subjects excluding WPRs, Balmiki and Gorkhas is 30,445 ie 1.64 % of the total 18,52,355 DCs.

Similarly, the total DCs issued to the Non State Subjects stood at 59,993, including 17,978 to West Pakistani Refugees, 1,825 to Balmiki community and 755 to Gorkhas which cumulatively amount to 20548

The total certificates issued include over 497238 in Kashmir division and 1335643 in Jammu division.

The process of issuing domicile certificates in the union territory was started in the last week of June, 2020. The application for the issuing of the domicile certificates can be submitted in tehsildar offices, even as eligible persons can also apply online. The online facility has also been made available to avoid gatherings in view of Covid threat.

## HC Asks Govt To Facilitate Detained Sopore Youth's Exam

**SRINAGAR:** A person under detention cannot be prevented from taking the examination unless there are pressing circumstances, the Jammu and Kashmir High Court on Tuesday directed government to facilitate appearance of a young detainee from Sopore in the 12th class examination.

A bench of Justice Sanjay Dhar passed the directions after hearing an application on behalf of one Omer Akbar Mir, seeking a direction for shifting of him from District Jail Bhaderwah to District Jail Baram-

ulla or Central Jail, Srinagar, so as to enable him to write examination commencing from September 22.

A resident of Mir Mohalla Brath Kalan Sopore, the detainee as per his counsel has to appear in Class 12th examination for which revised date sheet has been issued. The counsel submitted that in case Omar is not permitted to appear in the examination, he would lose one year of his career.

Upon verification, government counsel certified that the

examination of the detainee is going to take place from September 22.

"In view of the submissions made and the documents placed on record, I am of the view that a person under detention cannot be prevented from taking the examination, unless there are pressing circumstances, which may even involve the security of the detenu itself," the court said and directed government to make requisite arrangements to facilitate appearance of Omar in exam. (GNS)

## Woman's Killing In Batmaloo Unfortunate: DGP

Press Trust Of India

**SRINAGAR:** Jammu and Kashmir Director General of Police Dilbag Singh on Tuesday termed very unfortunate the killing of a civilian woman during an encounter in the Batmaloo area here and said usually the government forces handle such situations with discipline and professionalism.

The woman, identified as Kaunsar Riyaz, was killed during a gun-battle between militants and security forces on September 17. However, the son of the deceased woman charged state forces for killing her mother.

"It was very unfortunate that during the Batmaloo encounter a civilian lady got injured

in the cross-firing and later on she succumbed to the injuries...In most of the operations, police and security forces are displaying their discipline and professionalism in handling such situations," Singh said while interacting with the Police Component Srinagar.

The DGP distributed cash rewards and certificates of appreciation for commendable work done by the officers and personnel of the component. He appreciated the work done by the officers and personnel of the Police Component Srinagar in handling difficult situations along with other security forces during the recent operations at Pantha Chowk and Batmaloo.

Singh hailed them for successfully accomplishing en-

counters and neutralising militants while taking due precautions.

The DGP said the Jammu and Kashmir Police's efforts can be judged by the fact that the families were called to persuade the militants to surrender during the encounter at Pantha Chowk.

Despite the killing of one of our finest officers in that encounter, our personnel gave a chance to militants to surrender, he said.

Singh stressed upon the officers to be more watchful and alert as the militants and their handlers in Pakistan have plans to stir and step up violence in Jammu and Kashmir to take out their desperation to recent losses to militant cadres.

## GoI Offers Medical Courses To Militancy Hit Youth In J&K

Press Trust Of India

**NEW DELHI:** The Union Home Ministry has sought applications from the spouse and children of victims of militant attacks for pursuing MBBS and BDS courses in medical and dental colleges under the central pool.

In a communication, the home ministry has conveyed to all states about allocation of MBBS and BDS seats from the central pool to the spouse and children of militancy victims and made it clear that no separate examination will be conducted and selection will be made only on the basis of marks obtained by the students in NEET and possessing necessary education qualification.

Children or spouse of a person who has been killed in an act of militancy is eligible for application under the scheme, a home ministry official said. "It is requested that the State government(s), Union Territory administration(s) may kindly give wide publicity while inviting application(s) from eligible candidates as indicated above for the academic year 2020-21 for allocation of MBBS and BDS seats from central pool for spouse and children of terrorist victims," the ministry communication said.

The states and UTs were requested to ensure that complete application of eligible candidates in the prescribed format in duplicate en-

closing all necessary documents in respect of their states and UTs along with due verification or authentication and counter signatures of the competent authority should be sent to the home ministry within 15 days after the declaration of the results of NEET-UG 2020.

The scanned copies of application along with all documents should be sent to email: rajiv.kumar67@nic.in or speedpost or registered post to Rajeev Kumar, Under Secretary (CT-II), Room No 81, North Block, New Delhi - 110001. Among the beneficiaries of the central pool of MBBS and BDS seats include states and UTs which are deficient in medical education, children of families where a parent or a direct family member who has been killed in an act of militancy or has been innocent victim of cross firing or firing by armed forces in combating militancy in UTs of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh.

Children of such people who are exposed to substantive risks due to their assignment mainly related to combating acts of militancy, children of people who have come in the 'hit list' of militant organisations and children of such families who have migrated from Kashmir due to the current situation and have lost their means of livelihood including their business or use of their properties are also eligible for the central pool of MBBS and BDS seats.

## India, Pak Spar Over Kashmir At UN

Observer Monitoring Desk

**NEW YORK:** The representatives of India and Pakistan on Monday exchanged heated words at the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) during which Kashmir issue was raised by Pakistan.

During his address to the high-level meeting on the commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the world organisation, Pakistan Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi raised Kashmir issue and asked the global body to fulfill the commitment made to the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

"The Jammu and Kashmir and Palestine disputes are the organization's (UN) most glaring and longstanding disputes. The people of occupied Jammu and Kashmir still await the fulfilment of the commitment made to them by the United Nations to grant them, their right to self-determination," Qureshi said.

Exercising India's right to reply, First Secretary in the country's Permanent Mission to the UN Vidisha Maitra said: Pakistan is a country which is globally recognised as the epicenter of terrorism, which by its own admission harbours and trains militants, and hails them as

martyrs and consistently persecutes its ethnic and religious minorities.

We reject the malicious reference made to the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir, which is an integral part of India. If there is an item that is unfinished on the agenda of the UN, it is that of tackling the scourge of terrorism, Maitra said.

With Pakistan yet again raising the Kashmir issue at a UN platform, Maitra said India had hoped that during this solemn commemoration of a shared global milestone, the General Assembly would be spared another repetition of the baseless falsehoods that have now become a trademark of Pakistan's interventions on such platforms.

However, for a nation that is bereft of milestones, one can only expect a stonewalled and stymied approach to reason, diplomacy and dialogue.

What we heard today is the never-ending fabricated narrative presented by the Pakistani representative about the internal affairs of India, she said.

Strongly rejecting the reference made to Jammu and Kashmir, Maitra said Pakistan "will do well to turn its attention inwards to immediately addressing these pressing concerns instead of diverting attention from them by misusing the UN platforms.

### Militant Killed in Char-e-Sharif

of gunfire, police said a soldier received splinter injuries. The injured soldier, he said was shifted to hospital for treatment. The intermittent exchange of fire continued for several hours. However, the operation was halted due to the darkness yesterday, and with the first light this morning, the operation was again resumed. "In the ensuing encounter, a militant was killed and his body was retrieved from the site of encounter," the police spokesperson said. He identified him as JeM militant Asif Shah of Samboora area of Pulwama. "Incriminating materials including arms & ammunition were recovered from the site of encounter. All the recovered materials have been taken into case records for further investigation and to probe his complicity in other crimes," the police spokesperson said. The body of the militant, he said shall be sent to Handwara for his last rites after conducting medico-legal formalities. He said a case under relevant sections of law has been registered in Police Station Char-i-Sharif and investigation has been initiated.

"People are requested to cooperate with police till the area is completely sanitized and cleared of all the explosive materials, if any," the police spokesperson added.

### Srinagar Jolted Was it a Quake?

however about an explosion. This had its origin in a recent missile by the Indian Air Force through which it had announced that it was conducting a massive demolition practice of 100 to 120 kg bomb in Srinagar.

"Air Force Station Srinagar is conducting a massive demolition practice in coming days while locals living around the station have been asked to stay alert and take all precautionary measures. The demolition practice of 100 to 120kg bombs were scheduled to take place on 30 Aug and 6 September between 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm, but this practice has been suspended and new dates will be fixed for the same in coming days", the document said.

The villages that had been asked to stay indoors include Gogoo, Lagaon, Ompora, Buchroo, Guduassatu, Noaroo, Ichgoan, Kazibagh, Khnapora, Humhama and Sheikhpora, all located in Central Kashmir's Budgam district.

"There is no need to panic. It will be a routine exercise. Locals living adjacent to Air Force Station need to stay indoors instead of remaining under open sky," a local news agency had quoted a Security Officer as saying. When at 9.45 first official reaction came that too didn't help dissipate the panic. Srinagar Deputy Commissioner Shahid Iqbal Choudhary tweeted "THIS WAS SCARY. HOPE EVERYONE IS SAFE. #EARTHQUAKE".

However speculations were put to rest at 10.25 PM when Srinagar Meteorological Department chief Sonum Lotus declared that this indeed was an earthquake.

"FRIENDS IT WAS AN EARTHQUAKE", Lotus sent one line message on his official WhatsApp handle.

With this Lotus provided EQ Parameters: M: 3.6; Date: 22.09.2020;; Time: 21:40:29 IST;; Lat: 34.15N; Long: 74.70 E; Depth: 5 Km; Region: Srinagar, J&K

### LS Passes J&K Official...

The minister pointed out that 53.26 per cent of the population of Jammu and Kashmir speaks Kashmiri language.

Reddy said 26.64 per cent of the population of the UT speaks Dogri while Urdu, which is currently its official language, is spoken only by 0.16 per cent population there. Still for the last 70 years, Urdu continues to be the official language of Jammu and Kashmir, he said, adding that 2.36 per cent population in the UT speaks Hindi. Opposing the bill, Hasnain Masoodi (National Conference) said the central government does not have the legislative competence to frame a bill in this regard. He said it is not a fact that only 0.16 per cent population of the UT speaks Urdu which is a link language between Jammu region and Kashmir. Masoodi said if only 0.16 per cent people in the UT speak Urdu, then why would the government include it as an official language. No other state has five official languages, he said. Intervening in the discussion, Union minister Jitendra Singh said he wondered why the NC was opposing the inclusion of Kashmiri as an official language. He alleged that the NC has done politics in the name of "Kashmiriyat" and still it was opposing the bill. The bill was later passed by a voice vote. Sikh and Gujjar communities have protested the exclusion of Punjabi and Gojri languages from the bill.

### NIA Carries Out Raids In ...

the houses of five close associates of accused Tariq Mir were searched. Mir is a resident of Maldera village of Shopian who was arrested by the NIA on April 29 for his role in smuggling and supply of weapons to the militants of the outfit.

The house of Mir's wife Shareen Bibi at Chinad village of Baramulla, Azad Ahmad Pir's house at Dardkote (Uri), Haleema Begum's house at Boniyar (Uri), Shaheen Lone's house at Kansipora Baramulla and his father-in-law's house at Waza Mohalla Palhallan in Baramulla district and Tafazul Parimoo at Rehmatabad-Hyderpora in Srinagar district were searched, the spokesperson said.

He said the instant case was registered on January 11 when Babu and Rafi Ahmad Rather were apprehended along with Singh and Irfan Shafi Mir alias 'Advocate' near Qazigund on the Jammu-Srinagar national highway. The investigation had revealed a deep-rooted conspiracy hatched by Pakistan-based Hizbul Mujahideen leadership and Pak ISI and an OGW network that facilitates the supply of funds and arms and ammunition to the HM militants in J&K, the spokesperson said. He said the searches were also carried out at the premises of four traders in connection with illegalities in cross-LoC trade which remained suspended last year for allegedly funneling illegal weapons, narcotics and fake currency into India.

The house of Peer Arshid Iqbal alias 'Ashu' and Tariq Ahmad Sheikh, both of whom are in jail in connection with separate narcotics cases, were searched at Khwaja Bagh and Tawheed Gunj in Baramulla respectively, the spokesperson said.

While Iqbal is lodged in Kathua jail, Sheikh is undergoing detention in Baramulla jail.

The others whose houses were searched include district level Hurriyat leader Bashir Ahmad Sofi at Khwajabagh and Abdul Hamid Lone of Gundpura village of Sopore.

Searches have yielded several incriminating documents and digital

devices. Further investigation in the case is continued, the spokesperson said.

### Summoning Journalist ...

a New Delhi based web portal.

According to Aqub, he was slapped twice by a masked cop outside the room of Superintendent of Police of the Cyber Wing, Tahir Ashraf Bhatii when he was on way to meet the officer on Saturday. The SP, he said had also hurled choicest abuses at him. Taking to its official handle, ICJ wrote "Reports that journalist @Auq-ibJaveed was slapped and harassed by @JmuKmrPolice are alarming and a blatant abuse of power. Police should immediately take action against all officers involved and stop retaliating against critical reporting." This is not the first time state forces; especially the police is under sharp criticism over the attacks on the journalists. Before Aqib, police had slapped stringent charges against several journalists for their writings critical of government policies.

### 18 More Covid-19 Deaths In...

for the management of the covid-19.

Regarding Jammu cases, the officials said among other the victims included a 60-year-old woman from Gandhi Nagar, a 75-year-old woman from Talab Tillo, a 60-year-old man from Purani Mandi and an 80-year-old from Gandhi Nagar.

With these deaths, the toll in Jammu and Kashmir due to Covid-19 reached 1044.

### 106 Security Men Among...

number of people infected by the virus in Union Territory to 66261.

Giving district-wise breakup of the cases, official sources said that Srinagar reported 210, Budgam 59, Baramulla 30, Pulwama 62, Anantnag 28, Bandipora 36, Kupwara 22, Ganderbal 21, Kulgam 12, Shopian 19, Jammu 253, Rajouri 68, Udhampur 64, Kathua 41, Doda 98, Samba 52, Poonch 73, Ramban 35, Reasi 15 and Kishtwar 37.

### Patients To Be Discharged...

The decision was taken a high-level meeting chaired by Chief Secretary BVR Subrahmanyam after visiting GMC Jammu, an official spokesperson said Tuesday.

In the wake of the surge in COVID-19 cases in the Jammu province, the principal of GMC hospital was asked to ensure an adequate supply of oxygen and other essentials in the hospital, besides the recruitment of adequate manpower to overcome the problems during this pandemic, he said.

The chief secretary directed the installation of 150 CCTVs at the GMC for better patient management and monitoring, besides establishing a special COVID counter in the emergency block of the hospital to act as one point contact of coronavirus testing and the subsequent segregation of symptomatic, asymptomatic and negative cases, the spokesman said.

The Health and Medical Education Department was asked to conduct serological surveys and antibody tests to ascertain the spread of infection and associated immunity in the population, he said.

While reviewing the discharge policy, the chief secretary said that

it has been successful in lessening the burden on the tertiary health care system.

In this regard, the concerned officers were directed to discharge the non-symptomatic patients in the hospitals after 10 days without conducting any subsequent tests, the spokesman said.

The concerned officers were directed to strictly implement the home isolation guidelines for asymptomatic patients and ensure that they are free of co-morbidities and provided with government-sponsored oxymeters, before being sent to home quarantine, besides using the Arogya Setu app to monitor their status, he said.

### Drone Dropped Arms Seized...

operation by police and special forces of the Army from Sohal Khad, located at an aerial distance of 13 km from the border.

"We have successfully scuttled the attempt to send weapons to the militants active in Jammu and Kashmir... Dropping weapons from drones is a new technique being used by militant organizations," he told reporters here.

He said investigation is on to identify the group which is behind the dropping of the weapons.

"A case has been registered in connection with the recovery of the weapons and further investigation is on," Patil said.

He said security agencies are aware of the threat posed by the use of drones to drop weapons in India from across the border and "we are tackling it by the use of technology and human intelligence. Human intelligence played a key role in today's recovery".

The arms and ammunition were packed in blue thermacol with wooden fittings, wrapped by adhesive tape, the officer said, adding that two rolls of parachute thread about 300 metre in length was also seized.

The SSP said a joint operation was launched after credible information was received about a planned attempt by anti-national elements to smuggle arms into India.

"The search operation was started at various places in Jammu, including Sohal Khad, Shamsan Ghat, Punnu Chowk, Sohal Market in Akhnour sector. While recovering a packet containing arms, the sound of a drone was heard but it was not visible due to darkness," he said.

Patil said continuous search led to the recovery of another packet of arms and ammunition.

### 5 Doctors Sacked Over...

services, Jammu, allowing them to report back to their duties.

The doctors whose services were terminated include Medical Officers Lalit Kumar who was posted at the district hospital, Reasi, Sandeep Bhardwaj at Community Health Centre, Ramnagar, Neeraj Gupta at District Hospital Udhampur and Mubashir-ul-Haq and Mohammad Irfan Banday at CHC Bhaderwah.

The order said the case of unauthorized absence of the doctors has been thoroughly examined in the department in light of the rule position governing the subject and "it has been found that since these medical officers have not resumed their duties despite repeated notices and opportunities granted to them, this act on their part is a voluntary act and warrants initiation of necessary action against them".



(Kashmir Observer, September 23, 2000)



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### K O V I E W

## Story Versus State

The story about the journalist Auqib Javeed's ordeal at the Srinagar 's cyberpolice station carried by an online portal Article 14 makes for a chilling reading. In the story Javeed says he was called to cyberpolice station and slapped and bullied there over a report that ironically highlighted the similar treatment allegedly meted out to other journalists and social media users over the past some time.

It beggars belief that a journalist has had to go through so much for a story done professionally and that also carried the version of the police. Going by the police rebuttal of Javeed's version of the events at the cyberpolice station, it is clear that police has problems chiefly with the headline and the photograph of the story. But Javeed was not responsible for both of them. Headline and the photographs are the discretion of the editors and the reporter's job ends once he has sent the report that has all the necessary facts and accounts of all the sides involved.

Given the sensitive nature of the story filed by Javeed and his consequent mindfulness about the reaction of the state agencies, he had left no stone unturned to make the story as objective as possible. He talked to the Superintendent of Police at Cyberpolice station Tahir Ashraf about the growing incidence of the journalists and the social media users being allegedly summoned and harassed over their stories and the posts. Ashraf was quoted in the story so were the alleged victims of police harassment. Normally, there should have been no reason to find fault with the story. But that was not to be. Javeed had to allegedly go through a distressing experience similar to the victims in his story.

And it is a tragedy. Journalists in the Valley have been doing their jobs against tough odds. The long troubled situation, more so, the ongoing turmoil, has made it ever more difficult to report. The profession of journalism as a whole is in a crisis: While economic sustainability of the local papers is becoming moot by the day, scores of journalists who have no regular jobs have taken to freelancing for outside publications to make ends meet. They are paid peanuts for the stories for which they run the risk of being hauled to police stations and sometimes having serious cases instituted against them. As things stand, they seem to have become a fair game for the police which now keeps a hawk's eye on even the full stop and comma of the stories being reported from the Valley. Ironically, the same police also overlooks the worst personal attacks on the institution when these are mounted from outside J&K. It is time that this stops. Government should ensure Kashmiris have the same normal freedom of expression exercised by the people in other parts of the country.

### OTHER OPINON

## The vaccine protocol

The developers of the most promising coronavirus vaccines are making a concerted effort to convince people they will uphold scientific standards in their clinical trials. First, they signed what was described as a historic safety pledge. They declared they will seek emergency approval for their candidates only after a phase 3 trial is complete, and the priority would be to ensure the safety and well-being of vaccinated individuals. Last week, some of them went a step further, disclosing granular protocols and yardsticks for these trials. The information is typically considered a trade secret.

History is littered with examples of what happens when scientific process is victim to public anticipation and political pressure. The earliest of this was the Cutter Incident of the mid-1950s, when tens of thousands of children in the United States were accidentally injected with a live polio virus. It was the culmination of ignored warnings, skipped safeguards and impatience. A similar tale (although here, the errors lay more in development than manufacturing) played out in 1976 when a small but statistically significant proportion of people who got a swine flu vaccine developed an autoimmune condition. The incidents are now among several cautionary tales that have fed into how vaccines, drugs and therapies are developed today.

For the leaders of some of the world's leading powers, these tales seem to have faded from memory. Russia last month approved for public use a vaccine that is yet to complete phase 2 trials. China has begun inoculating thousands of people with its experimental jabs. The president of the United States said that a vaccine could be approved as early as October, less than a month before he faces an election. How any of this is possible till short- and medium-term safety implications of these experimental shots are determined is a question beyond the scope of scientific reasoning. It is important to insulate the worst health crisis in generations from political ambition and nationalistic bravado. The political rhetoric in India, in this regard, has been measured. It is encouraging that the health ministry has indicated that it will wait for adequate data before gambling on any vaccine, even if it is one touted by an all-weather ally. The country's leaders must now make sure they don't give in to the wrong examples. The best way for it is to let the scientists take the wheel.

Hindustan Times



# Repeal of Article 370 and its discontents

Hindus in J&K and Buddhists in Ladakh are anxious about loss of jobs, land and identity but they fundamentally differ with Muslims as to the solution

RIYAZ WANI

Revocation of Article 370 and subsequent constitutional measures have served to dilute the political centrality of the Muslim majority Kashmir Valley. Power, both at a political and a psychological level, has shifted to minorities in the newly created union territories – Hindus of Jammu in J&K and Buddhists of Leh in Ladakh

In a development hitherto unknown to Ladakh, there has been a rare call for boycott of the elections to Ladakh Hill Development Council (LAHDC) pending inclusion of the union territory under 6th schedule that will guarantee constitutional protection to region's demography, land, environment and culture. The call has been given by the former chairman of the LAHDC Rigzin Spalbar. And in doing so he has taken a stand that resonates with popular sentiment in Leh if not in the neighbouring district of Kargil that has its own LAHDC.

Deprived of the constitutional protections under Article 370, Leh feels suddenly vulnerable to influx of people from rest of the country and consequent dilution of its identity. In addition, as a union territory, Leh has even been deprived of local self governance. In the new scheme of things, the democratically elected LAHDCs, both of Leh and Kargil, have become redundant. The region is now directly ruled by the centre through a Lieutenant Governor. So, elections to LAHDCs mean little for regional empowerment.

Earlier this month, a resolution was moved in LAHDC-Leh, otherwise controlled by the BJP, seeking protection of jobs, land rights and businesses for locals. The resolution offered the centre several options to address the issue: that Union Territory of Ladakh be granted constitutional safeguards either under 6th schedule or under Article 371 or Domicile Act of the constitution of India "to protect the tribal rights of indigenous people of Ladakh".

However, LAHDC-Leh's stand met with a stiff opposition from the LAHDC-Kargil. The latter, instead, has demanded reversal of the revocation of J&K's autonomous status and sought to be made a part of the Muslim majority Kashmir Valley.

Centre has so far baulked at

granting any kind of constitutional safeguards to Ladakh, although it hasn't said no to it.

The situation in Leh is by and large mirrored in Hindu majority Jammu division of J&K. The region is also experiencing a deep sense of anxiety about the post-Article 370 state of affairs and for more or less similar reasons: loss of jobs, land and identity. A majority of people apprehend that the militancy in Kashmir Valley will persuade all eligible outsiders to settle in Jammu. People from outside are expected to find Jammu safer and culturally favourable. The new law has already granted citizenship to West Pakistan refugees, Gurkhas and Valmikis, who had been living in Jammu for decades without a J&K citizenship.

Jammu's fears are real so are that of Leh. And interestingly, there are similar fears in Kashmir Valley, in Kargil and in Muslim majority areas of Jammu. But there is a fundamental difference: Non-Muslim populations of Jammu and Leh largely support the withdrawal of Article 370 while as the Muslims want reversal of the move. Recently six political parties with Muslims as their core or majority support base got together to jointly fight for the restoration of Article 370. They released a joint statement that termed "the series of measures undertaken on 5th August 2019" as grossly unconstitutional and a challenge to the basic identity of the people of J&K.

It is improbable that Hindus in Jammu division and Buddhists in Leh would identify with Muslim majority's demand for restoration of autonomy. And the reasons for it are understandable: Revocation of Article 370 and subsequent constitutional measures have served to dilute the political centrality of the Muslim majority Kashmir Valley. Power, both at a political and a psychological level, has shifted to minorities in the newly created

union territories – Hindus of Jammu in J&K and Buddhists of Leh in Ladakh. And the two communities would hardly be in a mood to let go off this advantage. More so, in J&K where the ongoing twin exercises of granting permanent residency rights to outsiders and the delimitation of constituencies is not only expected to dilute the Muslim majority character of the region but also give more legislative positions to Jammu division.

This is expected to bring first a parity in political power between Kashmir and Jammu and subsequently decisively tilt it in favour of Jammu. So, no matter what fears Jammu has about the potential dilution of its Dogra identity and the loss of land and jobs, it stands to gain in the long term. It could be a matter of time before J&K reverts to Dogra rule, this time in the guise of democracy. Delimitation of the constituencies, if it stays true to the apprehensions in the Valley, will serve to turn the region's demographic majority into a political minority.

Ditto for Ladakh, where despite Muslims being in a slim majority and wanting to stay as a part of Kashmir Valley, it is the demand of Buddhists for a union territory that was accepted.

If anything, it shows that in the new scheme of things, minorities in J&K and Ladakh have disproportionately more political heft than the majority. So, why would they want it reversed. As for their anxieties about identity, land and jobs, they would want these addressed under a post-Article 370 dispensation. It remains to be seen how centre will respond to them and whether it can extend such redressal without, in the process, accommodating the concerns of the majority community as well.

The author is the Political Editor of Kashmir Observer



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## On International Day of Sign Languages

The International Day of Sign Languages (IDSL) is celebrated annually across the world on 23 September every year, along with the International Week of the Deaf. The day acknowledges that early access to sign language and services in sign language, including quality education available in sign language, is vital to the growth and development of the deaf individual and critical to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals. It recognizes the importance of preserving sign languages as part of linguistic and cultural diversity. It also emphasizes the principle of "nothing about us without us" in terms of working with deaf communities. Greeting someone by joining our

hands, cricketers showing the victory symbol "V" with their fingers after winning a match, a smiling face expressing a feeling of delight. There are several gestures or signs we are used to using in our everyday life.

The sign language is a system of communication using visual gestures and signs, as used by deaf people worldwide. It is expressed through manual articulations in combination with non-manual elements. Sign languages are full-fledged natural languages with their grammar and lexicon.

The 2011 Indian census cites roughly 1.3 million people with "hearing impairment". Contrast that with numbers from India's National Association of the Deaf, which estimates that 18 million people — roughly 1

percent of the Indian population — are deaf. This is a large number.

The society is still incapable of apprehending its significance in language. It is developing a big barrier of communication for the deaf community. A few deaf people use Indian Sign Language (ISL). However, it is not popular in the whole country.

Our school education is purely based on verbal languages and it is a founding inconvenience for deaf children because they are incapable to speak and understand verbal languages.

The ISL is not used in deaf schools to teach deaf kids. Instructor training programs do not orient educators towards teaching methods that use ISL. No teaching material incorporates

sign language. Parents of deaf children are not aware of sign language and its ability to remove communication barriers.

The deaf community is an integral section of our society and we should protect their rights and self-respect. They have the right to communicate with society and fully participate in every activity. This can be possible if the government and community accept sign language widely. A worthwhile effort needs to be initiated in this direction to encourage wider acceptance of sign language in India.

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# Remedies for NH-44 during Landslides

-Part 2

Part 1 of the series about understanding landslides in Kashmir elucidated the science behind it. Part 2 will try to suggest remedies to make NH-44 friendly, secure and less inaccessible during landslide hazards

Dr Afroz Ahmad Shah

Therefore, it is important to map, understand, and work on a remedial planning to make the NH-44 traveller friendly and safe, which could be possible if the road is widened, properly maintained and closely monitored.

The occurrence of landslides, particularly at and around the urbanisation sites (e.g. construction areas), and specifically along the track of Jammu and Kashmir National Highway NH-44 is a common concern that has caused severe problems in the past, and it continues. The length of road is just 287-km, therefore, travel should ideally complete only in a few hours. However, since it is curly for most of its length, it often takes more than 6 hours by small cars, and even a longer duration for bigger vehicles to complete the journey.

A typical Kashmiri shudders with pain, agony, and unrest on discovering that one of their dear ones will be using NH-44 to travel to Jammu. It reminds them of past incidents of road blockage, landslide, and unfortunate deaths. Therefore, the highway that reveals some of the most beautiful sceneries in the world has become synonymous with death and destruction.

The travellers and drives are usually filled with stories of sorrow, distress and helplessness, which are partly because the road is narrow, and dangerous. It is cut through mountains, which at various places is prone to various kinds of downslope movements that often cause road blockage and severe problems to travellers. Unfortunately, this makes it one of the most dangerous roads for road related accidents.

During winters the road is usually closed because the snow related incidents force the authorities to either allow one sided transport or restrict/stop the movement. It is then that the entire Kashmir is cut-off from the rest of the globe as it is the only road link that connects Kashmir with the outside world.

Therefore, it is important to map, understand, and work on a remedial planning to make the NH-44 traveller friendly and safe, which could be possible if the road is widened, properly maintained and closely monitored. Below, I am providing a framework that could help in minimizing the downslope movements to a large extent.

### Construction of roads

Construction of roads is always a challenge in mountainous regions, and such challenges multiply with time because maintenance is also quite difficult and costly. When roads are constructed in mountainous rough terrains then dynamite is used to break the mountains, which also makes rocks weak by the formation of induced fractures during blasting. These cracks and fractures can become future sites of rock slides downslope, and can potentially damage the road.

This problem becomes severe in re-



gions, which are geologically weak and have structural discontinuities that are exacerbated by blasting. Therefore, special care has to be taken while constructing roads or any other structure that could become unstable because of the imposed stress and new environmental conditions that makes weathering, erosion, and instability of slopes much easier.

Proper slope stability procedures should be adapted. It is achievable if, at least, geologists and engineers work together because it needs expertise of both professions.

### Landslide hazard mapping

Landslide hazard mapping is not only important but also a vital step to secure life of roads, buildings, and people. Therefore, proper landslide hazard mapping should be immediately started throughout Jammu and Kashmir, and particularly in regions that are prone to downslope movements, which include the vital NH-44.

People ought to know when to travel and when not, and that should be properly monitored through a dedicated website where all of the information on NH-44 should be made available. It should have all hazards maps where people can easily know more about the science and procedure of landslide movements along the highway. Big road sign boards with information on landslide hazard zones have to be placed along the entire strength of NH-44, which will greatly help people.

### Mapping of slope material

It is logical to think that any material which can destabilize the slope can cause down slides. Therefore, the physical and chemical properties of slope material are very important to understand the landslides. For example, solid rocks (like granite) can form stable slopes even at greater

slope angles because of their stronger internal strength. However, some stronger rocks can become inherently weak if these are underlain by weaker rocks. For example, if a slope is made up of different layers of rocks, which have different physical and chemical properties, the chances of a landslide will increase. If a weak rock (e.g. mudstone) is sandwiched between hard rock layers (say sandstone), it will make the slope susceptible to failure, because this layer has low shear strength. Similarly, loose unconsolidated sand has no cohesive strength, which can become prone to sliding. Clay minerals are particularly interesting, because their properties directly affect landslides. Some of these minerals can expand when water enters their structure.

For example, such types of clay minerals are smectites or montmorillonites. Once water enters them, it increases their volume because of water absorption. However, when these minerals dry out, which means the water is taken out; it causes contraction. The expansion and contraction can make a rock layer weak and therefore prone to sliding. This kind of behaviour is also quite remarkable in Peat, which is an organic-rich material and is accumulated in the bottoms of swamps as decaying vegetable matter. The soils which contain such materials are called Expansive and Hydrocompacting Soils.

Some soils (called Sensitive Soils) have clay minerals arranged in a random fashion and therefore, there are a number of pore spaces (voids) between the particles, which are usually filled with fluids (this arrangement is referred to as the "House of Cards"). Often the grains are glued together by salts (such as gypsum, calcite or halite). However, when water infiltrates into the soil, it is absorbed on the clay surface and also enters the pore

spaces to dissolve the salts, which leads to the complete collapse of the house of cards. If such soil is put through contraction or some sort of disturbance then the structure is rearranged and the spaces are reduced. This can cause the landslide movement, because the shear strength of the material is reduced. Therefore, it is important to map the type of rock and soil in regions that are prone to downslope movements, so that a scientifically robust landslide mapping is achieved, which is definitely missing at the moment. It also requires a proper drainage system so that water is not allowed to weaken the rock or soil, which will facilitate the slope failure.

Furthermore, bedding planes are again another critical aspect, which could cause landslides; because in the geological sense these are the planar layers that are formed during the sediment deposition and compaction processes. It means bedding planes are weak boundaries, and water or fluid can enter along these planes and can enhance downslope movement. Therefore, these are also called the planes of weakness and in rocks these usually record a change in depositional circumstances, which are generally represented by changes in grain size, composition, colour etc. Similarly, faults, fractures, joints can cause structural weakness, because along these planes the fluids can penetrate the material and can cause the contraction or expansion, which enhances the weathering and erosion of the material and ultimately it may cause landslides. Also, if these weaker planes are parallel to the sloping surface, the material can easily be taken down the slope under the influence of gravity. Metamorphic rocks are those rocks which are formed due to changes in pressure, temperature, deformation and fluids over a long period of geological time. Generally, due to the intense deformation these rocks form closely spaced layers (called foliation, similar to bedding), along which the material becomes susceptible to failure. These planes are the planes of structural weakness, because fluids can enter through these surfaces and alter the material through physical and chemical processes. Also, if these weaker planes are parallel to the sloping surface, the fluids reduce the shear strength of the material, which can easily be taken down the slope under the influence of gravity.

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Did the Indian Premier League change cricket? Yes, it did. It revolutionised the game in India. The IPL served as a shot in the arm, thrusting Indian cricket into the centre stage of the world. Cricketers and crowds benefited enormously, while cash registers kept ringing endlessly. Twelve years later, IPL still hasn't lost its allure.

Cricket has always been very popular in India, but IPL raised the popularity by several notches. The T20 format is a perfect incubator for edge-of-the-seat dramas and thrilling finishes, providing an adrenal-in rush for most people after a hard day's work. The shorter duration and night matches helped set up fan bases that prefer IPL to soap operas on television. It brought a whole new audience to cricket. An audience that included Bollywood stars and celebrities.

That infused more glamour into the game. Not that cricket was short on glamour and celebrities. IPL is where cricket meets Bollywood. Several Indian film stars own franchises, and Bollywood actors regularly turn up at the stadiums to support the teams. And the crowds love it. Here IPL may have borrowed a page from the playbook of the Cricket Beneficiary Fund Series games in Sharjah.

T20 cricket was born in New Zealand in the 1990 as Cricket Max, but it became a tournament in England in 2003 to arrest the waning spectator interest. IPL turned that into a money spinner in 2008. The brand value of the IPL in 2019 was Rs475 billion (\$6.7 billion), according to Duff & Phelps.

An IPL game is more than a cricket match. The atmosphere is electric. Blaring music, brightly clad cheerleaders, Mexican waves, full-throated cheers and shrill whistling greet each ball racing to the boundary, as flame-throwers light up the packed stadium. The frenzy and the razzmatazz mark out IPL from the T20 leagues of the world. It's a total entertainment package.

An entertainment package it is, but cricket is very much at the heart of IPL. Cricket is what tens of thousands of people come to watch. Millions more follow on television; a record 462 million viewers watched IPL 2019. And that prompts players to give off their best. After all, they are paid handsomely; some of them earn in a season more than what they would earn in their careers. Pat Cummins is the highest paid overseas player this season with a Rs155 million (Dh7.7 million) contract from the Kolkata Knight Riders.

### STARDUST

For the superstars, IPL is an opportunity to rake in the big bucks in the prime of their careers. For the fading stars, it offers a chance to boost their retirement funds. The retired stars too are in demand. They find

## IPL 2020 in UAE: How IPL changed the face of cricket

IPL is a complete entertainment package with cricket as its soul

SHYAM A. KRISHNA

jobs as coaches, analysts, mentors and team directors. So, everyone wins.

Other T20 leagues offer similar opportunities, but they are not in the same league as the IPL. The Big Bash League is high in intensity, but Australia's T20 competition lacks the lure of IPL. And the lucrative contracts.

The biggest beneficiaries are domestic cricketers. IPL turned them into professionals. Now they make a living from the game. Some of them are millionaires, who would otherwise be slogging away in banks and offices to make ends meet barely finding time for practice sessions.

### INTERNATIONAL NOTICE

IPL was instrumental in resurrecting the careers of several Indian internationals. Rohit Sharma was an enigma. A cricketer with abundant talent, his Test career never really took off. When he dawdled in cricket wilderness, IPL gave him a lifeline. Sterling performances for Sunrisers Hyderabad paved the way for the captaincy of Mumbai Indians. That confidence made him a feared opening batsman in limited-overs cricket.

The impressive spells of Lakshminath Balaji and Ashish Nehra in IPL showed that age hadn't withered their skills. And it allowed them to stage a comeback to international cricket. Ambati Rayudu's wasn't a comeback, but his India debut came on the back of some strong performances in the IPL.

Several young players took the IPL route to India colours. Hardik Pandya, Jasprit Bumrah, Ravichandran Ashwin, Ravindra Jadeja, Shreyas Iyer, Rishabh Pant and several others rode on the strength of their IPL performances to play international cricket. Some of them have good first-class records too, but IPL helped burnish their credentials.

For many domestic cricketers, particularly the youngsters, IPL provides the platform to learn from the stalwarts of the game. Not just the skills, but how

they approach the game. While Devdutt Padikkal can discuss his batting with Royal Challengers Bangalore's chief coach Simon Katich, Delhi Capitals' captain Shreyas Iyer can seek advice from head coach Ricky Ponting, and Chennai Super Kings' Ruturaj Gaikwad will benefit from playing alongside Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Shane Watson and Dwayne Bravo.

### OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

Cricketers in India also get a chance to pit their skills against the best in the business. When a young Sanju Samson lifts pace ace Dale Steyn over the straight boundary, it does wonders to his confidence. All this help raise the quality of first-class cricket in the country.

There's a downside to it as well. With IPL having such a massive influence on youngsters, the future of the longer formats be in jeopardy. Many of them prefer the limited-over variety as it offers a shorter route to riches and stardom. When youngsters shun Ranji Trophy, the talent pool for Test cricket shrinks drastically.

When the base price in an IPL auction is Rs200,000, why would youngsters spend their time perfecting the outswinger? They would instead learn to bowl a variety of slower balls and an indypping yorker. They would opt to work on the reverse sweep and the slog to the cow corner. A backfoot defence and a square-cut with wrist rolling over will become endangered strokes.

This is not an IPL problem. It's a fallout of the burgeoning popularity of limited-overs cricket. Shorter games and more pay, you can't argue with that.

Purists may thumb noses at limited-overs cricket, but it has given a new lease of life to Test cricket. Tests no longer produce dull, drab draws over five days. The high rate of scoring in ODIs and T20 Internationals has seeped into Test cricket along with risky strokes and athletic fielding. The revival of leg-spin owes a lot to one-day matches. All that means most Tests will have results, and more people will come to watch the five-

day game.

International cricket had restricted opportunities to players from the major cricket playing countries. T20 leagues of the world changed all that, and IPL has welcomed players from all around the world.

### SUCCESS STORIES

There are some fairy tales too.

For K.M. Asif, IPL is a lifesaver. After two failed attempts at making a living in Dubai, the Kerala speedster landed a contract with the Chennai Super Kings. His third trip to Dubai is in the form of a bona fide cricketer, and he has no worries about providing for his family.

If it were not for IPL, the world wouldn't have heard of a Nepali cricketer. Delhi Capitals' Sandeep Lamichhane is a sought-after leg-spinner in the T20 leagues of the world. IPL boasts of an American cricketer too: Pakistan-born Ohio resident Ali Khan.

Overseas cricketers too derived benefit from IPL. The exposure helped them turn into better limited-overs cricketers. England's Jos Buttler and David Bairstow are good examples. IPL action enabled New Zealand captain Kane Williamson to step up the tempo of his innings.

Without IPL, Rashid Khan of Afghanistan would never have been the force he is now. As a refugee in Peshawar, he learnt his cricket in Pakistan, and IPL provided him with the big stage to parade his precocious skills. Today, he's arguably the best leg-spinner in the world.

Shakibul Hasan is one of the greatest cricketers from Bangladesh. His all-round skills bloomed in the cauldron on IPL. And he paid it back by helping Kolkata Knight Riders win the title in 2014. Sunil Narine of the West Indies transformed into a feared spin bowler.

The riches of IPL gave rise to a new breed of cricketers. The so-called mercenaries. They don't play for the country; they prefer the IPL. The big pay cheques are a bigger attraction than a place in the national team. Some even turn down central contracts to make themselves available for IPL.

When cricketers reach the twilight of their careers, the focus turns to IPL. The shorter format is easy on their bodies. And it helps bolster their nest eggs. Adam Gilchrist did it. So did the Hussey brothers, Michael and David. Now Shane Watson, Dwayne Bravo, Lasith Malinga and several others use the same template. And they still play significant roles in the success of their franchises.

Age doesn't matter, performances do. That's the IPL mantra.





“ONE PERSON’S IDEA OF AN ELDERLY PERSON MAY BE VERY different from another’s. We are currently uncovering whether our technique might expose unconscious associations, for example by looking if the computer always renders old people as, say, smiling men.”

Agencies

Researchers at the University of Helsinki have developed a technique in which a computer model visual perception by monitoring human brain signals. In a way, it is as if the computer tries to imagine what a human is thinking about. As a result of this imagining, the computer is able to produce entirely new information, such as fictional images that were never before seen. The study was published in the Scientific Reports journal in September. Scientific Reports is an online multidisciplinary, open-access journal from the publishers of Nature. The

technique is based on a novel brain-computer interface. Previously, similar brain-computer interfaces have been able to perform one-way communication from brain to computer, such as spell individual letters or move a cursor.

As far as is known, the new study is the first where both the computer's presentation of the information and brain signals were modelled simultaneously using artificial intelligence methods. Images that matched the visual characteristics that participants were focusing on were generated through interaction between human brain responses and a generative neural network.

**\*Neuroadaptive generative modelling**

The researchers call this method neuroadaptive generative modelling. A total of 31 volunteers participated in a study that evaluated the effectiveness of the technique. Participants were shown hundreds of AI-generated images of diverse-looking people while their EEG was recorded. The subjects were asked to concentrate on certain features, such as faces that looked old or were smiling. While looking at a rapidly presented series of face images, the EEGs of the subjects were fed to a neural network, which inferred whether any image was detected by the brain as matching what the subjects were looking for.

Based on this information, the neural network adapted its estimation as to what kind of faces people were thinking of. Finally, the images generated by the computer were evaluated by the participants and they nearly perfectly matched with the features the participants were thinking of. The accuracy of the experiment was 83 per cent. "The technique combines natural human responses with the computer's ability to create new information. In the experiment, the participants were only asked to look at the computer-generated images. The computer, in turn, modelled the images displayed and the human reaction toward the images by using human brain responses. From this, the computer can create an entirely new image that matches the user's intention," says Tuukka Ruotsalo, Academy of Finland Research Fellow at the University of Helsinki, Finland, and Associate Professor at the University of Copenhagen, Denmark.

**Unconscious attitudes may be exposed**

Generating images of the human face is only one example of the technique's potential uses. One practical benefit of the study may be that computers can augment human creativity. "If you want to draw or illustrate something but are unable to do so, the computer may help you to achieve your goal. It could just observe the focus of attention and predict what you would like to create," Ruotsalo says. However, the researchers believe that the technique may be used to gain an understanding of perception and the underlying processes in our mind. "The technique does not recognise thoughts but rather responds to the associations we have with mental categories. Thus, while we are not able to find out the identity of a specific 'old person' a participant was thinking of, we may gain an understanding of what they associate with old age. We, therefore, believe it may provide a new way of gaining insight into social, cognitive, and emotional processes," says Senior Researcher Michiel Spape.

According to Spape, this is also interesting from a psychological perspective. "One person's idea of an elderly person may be very different from another's. We are currently uncovering whether our technique might expose unconscious associations, for example by looking if the computer always renders old people as, say, smiling men."

## Study Focuses On Effective Way To Increase Capacity For Mental Health

Agencies

A recent study has stressed the importance of providing mental health care facilities, at a time when anxiety and depression rise among people amid the pandemic, at a time when primary care clinics, especially in rural areas, are facing increased patient needs.

Researchers at UW Medicine found that primary-care physicians and rural clinic staff felt more skilled in delivering mental health care if they used a model known as collaborative care.

The results were published in the Annals of Family Medicine and added to the evidence supporting collaborative care's effectiveness.

In the model, primary-care physicians retain primary responsibility to treat behavioral health disorders with the support of two team members: a care manager and a consulting psychiatrist. Consulting psychiatrists provide recommendations on patient care through weekly caseload reviews conducted online.

"We found that primary-care doctors involved in this collaboration got better at diagnosing, prescribing, and working as a team," said lead author Dr Morhaf Al Achkar, associate professor of family medicine at the University of Washington School of Medicine.

In the qualitative study, researchers interviewed 17 clinical, support, and administrative staff at three rural clinics in Washington state. All interviewees said the consultations improved their competence to identify and treat psychiatric disorders.

Researchers concluded that weekly systematic case reviews using telepsychiatry consultation functioning both as a model for patient care and as a workforce training and development strategy. The study was conducted by Rural PREP (Collaborative for Rural Primary care Research, Education and Practice), a UW School of Medicine-led collaboration funded by the U.S. Health Resources and Services Administration to improve the training of rural primary-care professionals. "The learning was bi-directional," said Al Achkar. Primary-care doctors learned how to better work with patients.



Government of Jammu and Kashmir.

Department of Urban Local Bodies Kashmir Srinagar

OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE KUNZER

QUOTATION

For and on behalf of Hon'ble Lt. Governor, Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir sealed quotations affixed with Rs 5/- (Rupees Five only) revenue stamp are invited from experts of the relevant fields for minor repairs/ painting of Town Hall Kunzer Building at Kunzer which should reach office of the undersigned by or before 26/09/2020 upto 2.00PM. the intending party may visit the site (Town Hall Kunzer) before quoting the rates on any working day from 10.00 AM to 4.30 PM. The quotations shall be opened on the same date or any subsequent day convenient to the opening authority in presence of the quotationer's who wish to be present. the undersigned reserves the right to reject any or all of the quotations without assigning any reasons thereof. The rates shall be offered in the following format:-

S.No.	Category	Rate per day (6 Hours)
1	Skilled carpenter/ Painter/ Mason	Rate to be quoted
2	Semi skilled carpenter/ Painter/ Mason	Rate to be quoted
3	Labour	Rate to be quoted

Terms and conditions:-  
1. The rates offered by the party shall remain unchanged and valid throughout the contract period.  
2. The payment shall be released only after successful and satisfactory certification to be issued by the Committee constituted by the Municipal Committee Kunzer for the purpose.  
3. Further details can be had from office of the undersigned on any working day during office hours

No.MC/KZ/G/2020-21/  
Dated: -  
DIPK-NB-2517/20

Executive Officer  
Municipal Committee  
Kunzer

Government of Jammu & Kashmir

OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER

PWD(R&B) DIVISION KULGAM

NOTICE INVITING TENDERS

Fresh NIT No. 72/2020-21/RnB/Kul/e-tendering/4247-67 dated 09-09-2020

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

S.No	Name of Work	Est. Cost (Rs. In Lacs)	Cost of T/ Doc. (In Rs.)	E/M (In Rs. )	Time of completion	Time & Date of Opening of Bid	Class of Contractor	Major Head of Account
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Upgradation of Hanger Painoo Noonmia Turigam road by way of earth work cutting for berms/filling (RD 45-345 Mtrs) including filling of Nallah Much on Berms on either side (Agg. Length 1200 Mtrs), P/L of G-I-III in stretches, Construction of cement concrete drain at RD 365-375 and RD 747-808 Mtrs) construction of R/Wall at RD 228-270. RD 670, 216, RD 1036-1097 (Agg. length 153 RM) P/L of RCC pipes including development of Berms (Agg. length 153 RM)	28.48	1100	56960	30 days	30-09-2020 at 11.00 A.M	Aay & Bee	NABARD

Position of AAA : Accorded

Position of funds: Project approved under NABARD RIDF XXV

1. The NIT Consisting of qualifying information, eligibility criteria, specifications, Bill of quantities (B.O.Q), Set of terms and conditions of contract and other details can be seen/downloaded from the departmental website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) from 22-09-2020 10.00 A.M 29-09-2020 4.00 P.M

2. The Bids shall be deposited in electronic format on the departmental website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) from 22-09-2020 (11.00 AM) 29-09-2020 upto 4.00PM.The bids uploaded on the Web Site upto due date and time will be opened on 30-09-2020 at 11.00 AM in the Office of Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Kulgam in

3. presence of the bidders who wish to attend. In case of holidays/Office happens to be closed on the date of opening of the bids, bids will be opened on the next working day at the same time and venue.

4. The complete bidding process will be on line.

3.1 Critical DATES

1.	Date of Issue of Tender Notice	19-09-2020
2.	Period of downloading of bidding documents	From 22-09-2020 10:00 A.M to 29-09-2020 4.00 P.M
3.	Bid submission Start Date	22-09-2020 from 11:00 A.M
4.	Bid Submission End Date	29-09-2020 up to 4.00 P.M
6.	Date & time of opening of Bids	30-09-2020 at 11.00 A.M in the Office of the Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Kulgam

4. Instruction to bidders regarding e-tendering process.

4.1 Bidders are advised to download bid submission manual from the "Downloads" option as well as from "Bidders Manual Kit" on website [www.jktenders.gov.in](http://www.jktenders.gov.in) to acquaint bid submission process.

4.2 To participate in bidding process, bidders have to get 'Digital Signature Certificate (DSC)' as per Information Technology Act-2000. Bidders can get digital certificate from any approved vendors.

4.3 The bidders have to submit their bids online in electronic format with digital Signature. No Financial bid will be accepted in physical form.

4.4 Bids will be opened online as per time schedule mentioned in Para-2 & 3.1.

4.5 Bidders must ensure to upload scanned copy of all necessary documents like CDR/PAN/TIN/ GST certificate Treasury Challan/ Receipt with the bid.

Note: - Scan all the documents on 100 dpi with black and white option.

5. The department will not be responsible for delay in online submission due to any reasons.

6. Scanned copy of cost of tender document in shape of Treasury Challan/ Receipt mention with Name of work/ref: to NIT duly credited to MH 0059-Rev.Misc: and Earnest money/Bid Security if applicable Pledged to the Executive Engineer (R&B) Division Kulgam payable at Kulgam must be uploaded with the bid..

7. Bidders are advised to use "My Documents" area in their user on R&B e-Tendering portal to store such documents as are required.

8. All other terms and conditions are as per PWD Form 25 (Double Agreement Form)

NO: -4268-70  
Dtd: 19-09-2020

DIPK-6118/20

Sd/-  
Executive Engineer  
(R&B) Division Kulgam



## Pak Opposition Parties Form Alliance, Accuse Army Of Helping PM Imran Khan

### Agencies

Islamabad: Half a dozen major Pakistani opposition parties have joined forces to denounce the army which they accuse of meddling in politics and rigging the 2018 elections to bring Prime Minister Imran Khan to power.

The six parties and some smaller groups signed a statement late on Sunday announcing the creation of the Pakistan Democratic Movement to begin nationwide agitation, possibly culminating in a January march on the capital, Islamabad.

"The (military) establishment should stop every kind of interference in politics forthwith," said the statement, which accuses Imran Khan of failing on multiple counts, from the economy to foreign policy.

The armed forces, which have ruled Pakistan for half of its history since independence in 1947, deny meddling in politics or electoral wrongdoing.

The alliance didn't give a schedule for the street protests except for announcing the march on the capital if the government didn't stop victimising political opponents. It demanded electoral reform to ensure

"no role for the armed forces and (intelligence) agencies". The next general election is scheduled for 2023.

Opposition parties and civil rights groups have long held that the army interferes in politics and runs governments from behind the scene.

Imran Khan's minister for planning, Asad Umar, said the army and civilian government work together. The government's majority hinges on a few votes in parliament, while the opposition has a majority in the upper house.

"Our struggle is against those who have brought Imran Khan (to power)," former three-time prime minister Nawaz Sharif, who was removed on corruption allegations in 2017, said by video link to the gathering from London.

Nawaz Sharif's third term as prime minister ran from 2013 to 2017, when he was removed by the Supreme Court amid revelations over his personal wealth. He fell out with the generals over differences how to handle terrorists. Information Minister Shibli Faraz said the opposition was "ganging up" to pressure the government to close corruption cases, that would not happen.



## Palestinians quit Arab League role in protest

### Agencies

Jurealem: The Palestinians have stepped down from a key Arab League role in protest at the regional bloc's failure to take a stand against Israeli-Arab deals, an official said Tuesday.

Palestinian foreign minister Riyad al-Maliki announced the decision to resign from the rotating presidency of the Council of the Arab League, after its failure to agree a draft resolution condemning a normalisation accord between the UAE and Israel.

"The state of Palestine... refuses to record in its history the association of its presidency with the regression in values and principles that was evident in the last meeting of the council of foreign ministers," Maliki said in the West Bank town

of Ramallah.

The Palestinians presided over the council's latest session earlier this month and had been due to stay in the role until March.

Their delegation had tabled a draft resolution at the meeting of the council, which brings together foreign ministers of the 22-member bloc, to condemn the normalisation accord.

The Cairo meeting came ahead of another such deal being announced by Bahrain with the Jewish state. Both deals were signed in Washington on September 15.

The Gulf agreements broke with years of Arab League policy on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and were condemned by the Palestinians as a "betrayal".

In 2002, the bloc adopted a Saudi-proposed peace plan which was re-

newed as recently as 2017.

It offered normalisation only in return for a full Israeli withdrawal from territories it occupied in the 1967 Six-Day War, a Palestinian state with east Jerusalem as its capital and a just solution for Palestinian refugees.

The Arab plan has been pushed aside by the US administration, which after several delays unveiled a controversial peace blueprint of its own in January.

It promised Washington's blessing for Israel's eventual annexation of swathes of the occupied West Bank. The United Arab Emirates government hailed a clause in its US-brokered deal that appeared to put any Israeli annexations on hold.

But Israel retorted that any delay would be short-lived and its annexation plans remained on the table.

## Democrats release digital ads in 14 Indian languages to woo South Asian voters in US

### Press Trust Of India

Washington: The Democratic Party in the US has released digital graphics in 14 Indian languages to encourage South Asians to vote and support their presidential candidate and former vice president Joe Biden in the November 3 elections.

Ajay Jain Bhutoria, Asian

forward in this series of outreach in 14 plus languages, he said.

He said that people connect with music, food, language, and culture.

Bhutoria said there is huge enthusiasm in the Indian-American community to elect Biden as the next president and Kamala Harris as the first Indian-origin



American Pacific Islander Leadership Council and National Finance Committee member of the Biden campaign, said: By leveraging technology and the reach of our partners, we educate South Asian Americans about how to register, sign up for election reminders, request mail-in ballots, learn about early voting options and go Vote for Biden-Harris.

'Chale Chalo Biden ko vote do' (Let's go vote for Biden) musical video was viral, superhit with the community and this new series of graphics 'Jaago America, Jaago, Bhul Na Jaana Biden-Harris ko Vote Dena' (Wake up America, wake up, don't forget to vote for Biden-Harris) is a step

vice president.

Earlier this year, California-based Bhutoria launched an outreach to the Indian community in 14 Indian Languages.

'America Ka Neta Kaisa Ho, Joe Biden Jaisa Ho' (How should be America's leader, just like Joe Biden). This was translated into 14 Indian languages and the graphics went viral on social media, he said.

The Democratic Party, he said, has been working with various grassroots organisations to get Indo-Americans and the greater South Asian community registered to vote, phone bank, and text bank in 14 distinct South Asian languages.

## Russia says 'not afraid of US sanctions' over arms trade with Iran

### Agencies

Moscow: Russia has played down the US threat of sanctions over any arms trade with Iran following the expiry of a UN arms embargo that Washington failed to keep in place, saying such bans cannot stop the growth of Moscow-Tehran defense cooperation.

"We are not afraid of US sanctions, we are used to them," Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov told TASS news agency on Monday. He also predicted that Moscow-Tehran defense ties will develop regardless of any US restrictive measures.

The US arms embargo on Iran "will not affect our policy in any way. Our cooperation with Iran is multifaceted, defense cooperation will progress depending on the two countries' needs and mutual willingness," he said. "Another executive order will not change our approach."

Earlier, the administration of US President Donald Trump announced an executive order and new unilateral sanctions against Iran after an abortive push to re-



instate UN sanctions against the Islamic Republic.

US goes it alone after UN rejects demand to restore Iran sanctions. It named 27 individuals and entities, including officials at the Iranian Defense Ministry, the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran and anyone found trading in conventional weapons with Tehran.

American officials said they had enforced an indefinite ban on weapons sales, which allows for sanctions on any international companies or individuals that seek

to violate the embargo.

The news of American sanctions followed Washington's failure to trigger the so-called snapback provision in the 2015 nuclear deal aimed at re-imposing UN sanctions against Iran.

The UN Security Council member states challenged Washington's rationale that it was still a participant state to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), citing its withdrawal from the multilateral agreement in May 2018.

## Top US Health Body Says Coronavirus Is Airborne, Then Retracts Warning

### Agencies

Washington: The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on Monday took down its guidance warning on possible airborne transmission of the novel coronavirus, saying that the draft recommendation was posted in error.

The now-withdrawn guidance, posted on the agency's website on Friday, recommended that people use air purifiers to reduce airborne germs indoors to avoid the

Presently, the agency's guidance says the virus mainly spreads from person-to-person through respiratory droplets, which can land in the mouth or nose of people nearby.

Earlier this month, US President Donald Trump took exception to comments from the CDC director, who said masks might be even more effective than a vaccine for the novel coronavirus that could be broadly rolled out in mid-2021.

That followed a New York Times report that guidance



disease from spreading.

"CDC is currently updating its recommendations regarding airborne transmission of SARS-CoV-2. Once this process has been completed, the update language will be posted," the agency said.

The CDC did not immediately respond to Reuters request for comment on when the guidance will be updated.

The health agency had said that COVID-19 could spread through airborne particles that can remain suspended in the air and travel beyond six feet.

about novel coronavirus testing posted last month on the CDC's website was not written by the agency's scientists and was posted over their objections. The World Health Organization has not changed its policy on aerosol transmission of the coronavirus, it said on Monday.

The agency still believes the disease is primarily spread through droplets, but that in enclosed crowded spaces with inadequate ventilation, aerosol transmission can occur, said Mike Ryan, executive director of the WHO's emergencies program.

## Facebook Vows To Restrict Users If US Election Descends Into Chaos: Report

### Agencies

Washington: Facebook Inc will take aggressive measures to "restrict the circulation of content" on its platform if November's presidential election descends into chaos or violent civic unrest, the Financial Times reported on Tuesday citing a company executive.

The company had drawn up plans for how to handle a range of outcomes, including widespread civic unrest or "the political dilemmas" of having in-person votes counted more rapidly than mail-in ballots, the report said, citing an interview with Nick Clegg, Facebook's head of global affairs.

Facebook did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment.



The company had drawn up plans for how to handle a range of outcomes, including widespread civic unrest or "the political dilemmas" of having in-person votes counted more rapidly than mail-in ballots,

## NEWS MAKERS

### TikTok Says It Removed Over 104 Million Videos For Violating Guidelines

ByteDance-owned short-video app TikTok said on Tuesday it removed over 104 million videos from its platform globally in the first half of the year for violating guidelines or terms of service.

"Of those videos, we found and removed 96.4% of videos before a user reported them, and 90.3% were removed before they received any views," TikTok said in a transparency report.

TikTok started fact-checking programs in the first-half of the year to verify content related to the novel coronavirus and elections.

The report comes at a time China's ByteDance has been racing to avoid a crack-down on TikTok after the US Commerce Department said



it would block new downloads and updates to the app.

US officials had expressed concern that personal data of as many as 100 million Americans that use the app was being passed on

to China's Communist Party government.

The company said on Tuesday it got 1,768 requests for user data, with 290, or 16.4%, of those from US law enforcement agencies.

### Prisoner On Death Row Digs 100-Foot Tunnel To Escape From Jail Cell

Tangerang: A Chinese drug trafficker on death row escaped from a jail near Indonesia's capital after digging a 30-metre (100 feet) tunnel from his cell, police said.

Cai Ji Fan, sentenced to death in 2017 for trafficking 110 kilogrammes (230 pounds) of methamphetamine, broke out of Tangerang prison in Banten last week via the narrow tunnel, which connected to a sewer, officials said.

"This is the second time he escaped," said Tangerang police's chief Sugeng Hariyanto, adding he also managed to get out of the National Police Criminal Investigation Department cells in Jakarta while on remand.

Officials said Cai had invited his cellmate to join him, but he had declined.

Authorities said they had recovered a crowbar, chisel, screwdriver and other tools used to dig the hole, speculating he may have got them

from building work being done on a prison kitchen.

Cai's first escape was in January 2017 via a hole he made in a bathroom wall using an iron rod.

Along with other prisoners, he then climbed a 2.5-metre (eight-foot) wall, but was recaptured in West Java three days later.

Although rare by foreigners, jail-breaks are common in Indonesia, where most prisons are overcrowded and poorly staffed.

In 2018, some 90 inmates escaped a prison in Banda Aceh after tearing down a fence during a prayer gathering.

A year earlier more than 400 inmates broke out of an overcrowded prison in Riau province.

Also in 2017, four foreigners dug their way to freedom from Bali's notorious Kerobokan jail.

A Bulgarian and Indian were captured in East Timor a week later, but an Australian and Malaysian were never found.

### Ardern set to return in October vote: Opinion poll

New Zealand's governing Labour Party has lost some support since July as the coronavirus resurged in Auckland, but it is still set to win the upcoming general election on October 17 comfortably, an opinion poll has shown.

The 1News-Colmar Brunton poll on Tuesday showed support for Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern's party, which is seeking a second term in office, at 48 percent, down 5 percentage points since the last poll in late July.

The main opposition National Party also lost 1 percentage point taking it to 31 percent, under newly elected leader Judith Collins.

The results mean Labour could get 62 seats and would be able to govern alone without any coalition.

Small parties such as the Green Party got 6 percent support while the ACT New Zealand surprised with 7 percent support.





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